

TRAVAIL IN ASIA

THE depression which overtook many thoughtful Europeans in the late 1930's—a feeling of apprehension that World War II bitterly confirmed—is now spreading eastward. There is irony in the fact that the new republics of Asia have come into being and have shaped their political institutions after the patterns of the West, just at the time when these European and American models are showing signs of breaking down. To get the good out of Western institutions without succumbing to the weaknesses of Western culture this is a difficult project and not likely to be carried to a finish without disheartening failures along the way.

We have a letter from a reader in India—a man who has had opportunity to observe Indian affairs in widely varying perspectives—which reflects the gloom of this recognition. He writes:

Indian society as it is at present has reached its lowest pitch, from both an Eastern and a Western point of view. At best it is a caricature of the West, half of England and half of America, but without many of the good points of Western civilization. We have the superstructure of democracy, but lack its spirit. We have an administration which has a big facade, but is empty inside. Our radio, which is a department of the Government, never tires of telling people how much is being done, but little of all this is felt in the life of the community. There is corruption which the Government tries to minimize, but does not deny. Some responsible Indian magazines and papers are very critical of the Government, and of administration in particular. Our rulers have developed a sort of apathy and insensitiveness to public opinion; they think and behave as if they were some breed of Superman, and the public absolute nincompoops. It is only when the public takes the law into its own hands that the Government condescends to listen, after some firing, or a strike. Though it is said that in democracy the wearer knows where the shoe pinches, in India it is the Government which knows where the shoe pinches. In reality we do not have democracy, but oligarchy. Recently, a big strike of postal workers and many other

Government servants was averted just in time. There is thus a vicious circle, people not caring for Government and Government not sufficiently sensitive to the needs and sentiments of the people. What is a man like myself to do?

We would not ordinarily print a letter of this sort without other voices to give a more balanced picture of Indian affairs, but this discussion will be an attempt to get at the possible *causes* of these difficulties rather than to pay tribute to the manifest achievements of the Indian republic—achievements realized in spite of the tremendous problems which faced India at the time of her liberation, and still face her today. In fact, that a thoughtful Indian can stand off from the life of his country and make these depressing observations, without bothering to balance the ledger himself, can be regarded as a sign of strength. What communist would be psychologically capable of this?

It should be recognized that India is having to assume the burdens of Western cultural disintegration at the same time that she is attempting to forge the framework of a new society. India must be judged—and judged by Indians—with full consideration to the vast task which she has undertaken. The problems confronting India are much subtler and more complex than those which afflict non-democratic societies. It would be egotistical indeed for Indians to suppose that they can negotiate this undertaking without experiencing many narrow escapes and even occasional disasters.

From what background and past does India confront the present and the future?

No Indian needs to be told that India is the mother of empires and civilizations. Every Western culture bears the impress of ancient Indian thought, philosophy, art and science, however transformed by the centuries. European

languages, European literature, the notation of mathematics—even the philosophic systems of Pythagoras and Plato—have roots in India. The rediscovery of Indian metaphysics and epic literature in the nineteenth century brought an infusion of new cultural life to the West that may some day be compared in effect to the rediscovery of ancient Greek philosophy and science by Europeans at the birth of the Renaissance.

Just why India should have fallen into decadence, becoming easy prey to British imperialism, we leave to the cultural historians. Such questions really turn on philosophical issues. Indians who cleave to their ancestral religion doubtless believe that the decline of Indian civilization and its vulnerability to the invasion of the Moguls, followed by the British, resulted from India's "Karma." Possibly the failure of the Buddhist reform in Indian religion played a part in the decline. Buddhism, at any rate, had practically disappeared from India by the time the Mohammedans arrived on the scene.

The conquest of India by Islam occupied a thousand years. The last great Mogul emperor, Aurangzeb, was succeeded by rulers who are not worth mentioning except as "debauchees or puppets." The last of the Mogul line lived under the shadow of British protection and was banished to Burma by the British for siding with the "mutineers" of the Sepoy Rebellion, just one hundred years ago.

The mood of Indian culture during the last days of Mogul power, at least in the courts of kings, is revealed by a letter which Aurangzeb wrote to his tutor:

You told my father Shah Jehan that you would teach me philosophy. 'Tis true, I remember very well, that you have entertained me for many years with airy questions of things that afford no satisfaction at all to the mind and are of no use in humane society, empty notions and mere fancies that have only this in them, that they are very hard to understand and very easy to forget. . . . Have you ever taken any care to make me learn what 'tis to besiege a town, or to set an army in

array? For these things I am obliged to others, not at all to you.

This was a far cry from the spirit of India's great past—from the temper of such rulers as Chandragupta of the Maurya dynasty, as Asoka, the great Buddhist monarch, or even Akbar.

The British, at any rate, knew how to besiege towns and to set their armies in array, and after a little over a hundred years, in 1877, they made their Queen Victoria the Empress of India.

While the awakening of India to the dream of freedom doubtless came from many causes, and although the emergence of the Indian National Congress was preceded by movements—the *Arya Samaj* and the *Brahmo Samaj*—which combined religious revival with cultural nationalism, there can be little doubt that the *viable* form of the Indian revolutionary movement began from the stimulus of European influence. Under British rule, an Indian bourgeoisie slowly formed. In his *Glimpses of World History*, Jawaharlal Nehru wrote:

Meanwhile the power of Indian capital was also increasing, and it demanded more elbow-room to grow. At least in 1885 all these various elements of the new *bourgeoisie* determined to start an organization to plead their cause. Thus was the Indian National Congress founded in 1885. . . . It took up the cause of the masses and became, to some extent, their champion. It challenged the very basis of British rule in India, and led great mass movements against it.

When first founded, however, as Mr. Nehru points out, the Congress was a fairly conservative body. At the outset, it was "the organ of the English-educated classes chiefly, and it carried on its activities in our step-mother tongue—the English language." Only gradually did the Congress adopt the revolutionary point of view. "The hard facts of Indian politics drove it step by step, almost unwillingly, to a more and more extreme position."

The point, here, is that the social forces which began the Indian struggle for freedom—a struggle carried to completion in 1947—first appeared

according to the classical pattern of eighteenth-century revolution in Europe and America. They were not peculiarly *Indian* phenomena, but belated expressions of a world trend. The Indian Nationalist movement, in fact, was largely inspired by European examples and influence. The Young Italy Movement was studied by the Indians. An English intellectual, Allan O. Hume, who had been active in the Theosophical Movement in India, is referred to by Gandhi (in *Hind Swaraj*) with great respect as having stirred the Indians to work for Congress objectives.

In short, the adoption by Indians of Western attitudes and methods, and Western motives in their economic life, was not an after-thought or an accident, but an integral part of the historical development of modern India. Thus the presence in India, today, of typical Western problems is not the result of an "alien" influence, but grows out of the natural interblending of cultures in Asia during the nineteenth century. The reality of modern India is not a nostalgic and static memory of past greatness, but a dynamic "melting-pot" of the social and political forces of both East and West.

It is true that Indian history unfolds against a background of archaic splendor. Indians have no reason to forget this. India's past enables our Indian correspondent to make his judgments of present-day India with force and reason. What interests us, at this juncture of world events, is the possibility of a recapture by India of a sense of world destiny—a sense of destiny comparable, perhaps, to the inspiration felt by the Founding Fathers of the United States at the close of the eighteenth century.

Our correspondent is troubled by the fact that India is not living up to the vision and the example set by her great prophet, Gandhi. In this respect, there are certain facts to be faced. Modern India is a country of nearly four hundred million people. While India's heritage is great, her recent past gives little to brag about. The British did not win India half so much by force of arms as by causing Indians to imitate them uncritically. And Indians

can never do what the British do as well as the British. Only now are Indians learning to be themselves. Genuine culture is the product of centuries, and the India of today has hardly begun the task of creating a new culture which is distinctively Indian in the new sense—the sense of an Asian culture which has absorbed the impact of European culture, "naturalized" it, and created a unified form of civilization.

What is Indian literature, today? One reads the journals which come from India, but the expressions are still a mixture—not a synthesis—of East and West. The one novel of authentic power that has come out of India (there may be others, but we have not seen them) is Bhabani Battacharya's *So Many Hungers*. There is much scholarship, but little fire. India's Tolstoy, her Dostoevsky, her Walt Whitman, have yet to be born.

This is not reproach. First things must come first, and the evolution of the arts can come only with a clarification of concepts and of the profounder meanings of the times.

India has risen from a century of injured pride and practical humiliation. Her great men—the greatest, perhaps, of the epoch—are untouched by these ignoble emotions; also her masses who labor in the fields; but Indian culture suffers from unsightly inheritances. India, alas, is still "competing" with the West, and trying to "prove" what Westerners of intelligence long ago conceded. And today, the spectacle of an India in the grip of the weaknesses which beset all other nations brings an added agony, for now, when the apparently external causes of India's ills have been removed, Indians, it is found, are not supermen, but suffer the common lot of mankind in the twentieth century. Since India's administrators have had but ten years' experience in coping with the unpleasant realities of human nature in the mass, and her people have a like ignorance of the responsibilities of self-government, it is not remarkable that no miracles have occurred.

India cannot, of course, be content with the fact that she has had and has great leaders. Leaders are not enough. But leaders always make the beginning. A large part of India's greatness grows out of her ancestral philosophy. It is the task of philosophers to cope with disaster. "A man confirmed in spiritual knowledge," said Krishna, "is not disturbed by *anything* that may come to pass." One of the troubles of India, today, it seems to us, arises from a misconception of what "spiritual knowledge" is. Dozens of little magazines published in India reach this country with their rhetorical freight of what is assumed to be spiritual knowledge. They are filled with quotation and paraphrase of Indian scriptures. There are moments when we suspect that Aurangzeb must have been favored with instruction of this sort by his tutor, leading him to have more respect for knowledge of military tactics. This "wisdom from the past" is no doubt wisdom, but the world has known the Greeks since it was set down, and Hegel and Marx, and the scientific revolution. Wisdom must *live* down through the centuries, not just echo. Wisdom can never be allowed to become merely traditional. One suspects that India has had too long a vacation from living philosophy to know a great deal about "spiritual knowledge," these days. When MANAS speaks highly of Gandhi, the editors sometimes receive from India letters which assert that Gandhi was a useful political figure, but that he did not understand "spiritual" matters. Yet Gandhi *understood the needs of the human beings of his time*—above all their spiritual need, which was for dignity and self-respect. A spiritual knowledge which is unable to comprehend this is not worth noticing. Why should the next *avatar* of Vishnu bother to come to India at all, if the role of Gandhi is not understood?

It might be noted that other countries besides India enjoy the presence of leaders with wise comprehension of the new "meeting of East and West" in Asia. Soetan Shjarir of Indonesia wrote at the time of the Indonesian revolution:

In penetrating deeper and being made more receptive to the riches of the Western mind, they [the Asians] regained their inner certainty. They allowed themselves to be influenced by those elements of culture that could be fertilizing and developing, to form free and harmonious personalities. And at the same time they realized that it also belonged to the Western tasks to conform to standards of truth, beauty and goodness. These were the same ideas that had already been proclaimed by the prophetic figures of the East, though differently formulated and applied.

The West itself has also been in a process of revision and purification for a long time. Among themselves they knew that the application of knowledge and technique could have fatal results, if at the same time moral standards were allowed to be overthrown. The chaotic condition existing among the world powers with all that it implies (annihilation by the atom bomb) arises from man's self-doubt and from the lack of inner moral resistance.

The essential task of modern man today, whether he comes from the East or the West, is to rescue himself from this abyss by endeavoring to fix again his known position, and reestablish his absolute presence, his destination in the cosmos. In all this he must be led by standards of truth, beauty, and kindness, which form the components of human dignity. These universal values are today no monopoly of the East nor of the West; these are the tasks of fundamental man. . . .

Shjarir sets the problem clearly—in terms of "the tasks of fundamental man." What, then, are the circumstances under which these tasks must be performed? Some years ago, Suzanne K. Langer, a contemporary thinker in the United States, contributed to *Fortune Magazine* an article which describes with precision the changed situation of the modern world—the situation which confronts both India and all Asia, and all the West. Mrs. Langer wrote:

For thousands of years people lived by the symbols that nature presented to them. Close contact with earth and its seasons, intimate knowledge of stars and tides, made them feel the significance of natural phenomena and gave them a poetic, unquestioning sense of orientation. Generations of erudite and pious men elaborated the picture of the temporal and spiritual realms in which each individual was a pilgrim soul.

Then came the unprecedented change, the almost instantaneous leap of history from the immemorial tradition of the plow and the anvil to the new age of the machine, the factory, and the ticker tape. Often in no more than the length of a lifetime the shift from handwork to mass production, and with it from poetry to science and from faith to nihilism, has taken place. The old nature symbols have become remote and have lost their meanings; in the clatter of gears and the confusion of gadgets that fill the new world, there will not be any rich and sacred meanings for centuries to come. All the accumulated creeds and rites of men are suddenly in the melting pot. There is no fixed community, no dynasty, no family inheritance—only the one huge world of men, vast millions of men, still looking on each other in hostile amazement. . . .

. . . we are no longer in possession of a definite established culture; we live in a period between an exhausted age—the European civilization of the white race—and an age still unborn, of which we can say nothing as yet. We do not know what races shall inherit the earth. . . .

The change from fixed community life and ancient loyal custom to the mass of unpedigreed human specimens that actually constitutes the world in our industrial and commercial age has been too sudden for the mind of man to negotiate. Some transitional form of life had to mediate between those extremes. And so the idol of nationality arose from the wreckage of tribal organization. . . .

At first glance it seems odd that the concept of nationality should reach its highest development just as all marks of national origins—language, dress, physiognomy, and religion—are becoming mixed and obliterated by our new mobility and cosmopolitan traffic. But it is just the loss of these things that inspires this hungry seeking for something like the old egocentric pattern in the vast and formless brotherhood of the whole earth. While mass production and universal communication clearly portend a culture of world citizenship, we cling desperately to our nationalism a more and more attenuated version of the old clan civilization. . . .

Nationalism is a transition between an old and a new human order. But even now we are not really fighting a war of nations; we are fighting a war of fictions, from which a new vision of the order of nature will someday emerge. The future, just now, lies wide open—open and dark, like interstellar space; but in that emptiness there is room for new

gods, new cultures, mysterious now and nameless as an unborn child.

Small wonder that India, which is having its political and social and industrial revolution all at the same time, and in a world environment of utter confusion, should be having some difficulties. It is not false optimism to suggest that in India a great birth is going on, and the greater the birth, the greater the travail. Similar births are going on elsewhere. There is both comfort and courage in recognizing the meaning of what is happening to us all.

REVIEW

"WESTERN ADVENTURE"

IN periodically noting the efforts of writers of western novels to outgrow the old gory formulas, we have intended chiefly to call attention to an evident demand for more believable psychological content as an accompaniment of gunplay adventure. Frank O'Rourke's *Legend in the Dust*, a current paperback, is a good illustration of this trend, with its tale of a retired law officer who rebels against the taking of human life in defense of the law. In the first place, Glendon has decided that there isn't such a big difference between the outlaw and the average law-enforcing agent; as a man of action, the western sheriff or marshal would take the law into his own hands, if the occasion demanded. Finding himself obligated to pick up a gun once more to save his county from a gang and its ruthless leader, Glendon discovers that the man he must "get" holds him in high regard. In turn, he feels sympathy and a liking for his quarry. These passages, representing a dialogue between the heroine and Glendon, illustrate the sort of subtlety of which Mr. O'Rourke is capable:

"Pat, how do *you* feel about Buck?"

She was trapping him, perhaps innocently, and if he talked his own past could not remain hidden, the lessons learned would show in his words. He said slowly, "I'm holding no case for Buck. He killed a man tonight and it affected him no more than rain water on a duck. He left here singing; he'll forget it tomorrow. That's wrong. Any way you look at it, that's dead wrong. You can't kill a man and let it slide off that easy unless—"

"Unless?" she said quickly.

"Buck's a funny boy," Glendon said. "I don't know where he came from, what's behind him, but he's riding the rail these days. One side of him is all laughs and fun, having a good time. He's generous, if he likes a man he makes a friend, and I think he values friendship because he hasn't had much of it. That's the good side. The other—" Glendon drank coffee and moved unwillingly into the skein of words that marked him, that told of dangers met and men known, of experience that had brought a dozen Bucks under his eyes—"is bad. Buck's riding a rail and he can tip either way in the time it takes to say the word. I've seen it happen before, I know how it comes to a boy like Buck."

"And yet you like him?" she said.

"I like him now," Glendon said, "for the good part in him. Just as I'd like any man who treated me honestly, who offered me friendship with no strings."

"But if he changes," Swift said. "Goes off the wrong side of the rail, as you call it. What then?"

"That would end it," Glendon said bluntly. . . ."I can never abide a killer."

"How can you say that?" she asked.

"You're drawing me out," Glendon said. "Yes, you are, and I think you know why. I've known too many killers, Swift. I've lived in Kansas and you've heard the stories out of Kansas the last few years. Stories about so-called gentlemen with a gun. Tear that tinsel away, all that romance those Eastern writers build up around a killer. It means less than the cheap words they write, the cheap stories they spread. There is no apology for a killer, he can give no valid excuse for his action."

Hugh Fosburgh's *The Sound of White Water* provides lusty adventure without violence, and, incidentally, offers excellent reading for teenagers who feel any attraction for the out-of-doors. This is the story of a two-week canoe and fishing trip undertaken by two veterans and a novice on a wild and deserted river. Against a background of the courage required for shooting rapids, a great deal of "western" type philosophy emerges. Pete, a trapper who, at fifty-four, is as vigorous as most high school youths, describes why it is that a man must learn to conquer fear—yet need not do so by proving his superiority to others through violence. The greatest courage is required to triumph over one's own personal weaknesses and anxieties, and this may be done against a natural background far more effectively than in destructive competition with others. But Pete, the wilderness Socrates, says it better:

"The first fifty years are the toughest," said Pete. He stood there grinning, very pleased with himself about the lure and about climbing the cliff.

"Don't you know enough to be scared?" asked Tony.

"Sure. I'm scared. Lots of times." Pete lay down on his belly and peered over the cliff. "Not as often as I used to be. I used to be scared all the time." He turned on his side, looking at Tony. "I suppose I'm nuts or something."

"Are you?"

"I don't know." Pete turned back on his belly and looked down at the Hell Hole. "Maybe I'm not very bright, but there's a lot of people I don't understand. I don't understand how a lot of people can be scared of a lot of things and not do anything about it. You know what I mean? They decide that they're scared of something and that's the end of it—they stay scared of it till they're dead. You know what I mean? Like getting lost in the woods. Just about every hunter is jittery about getting lost so he plays it safe—he doesn't go where he's never been before. I can understand being scared about it—that's natural—but I can't understand why those people don't do something about it, why they don't go out and get themselves lost. They'd find out soon enough it wasn't too bad, and then they wouldn't be scared of it the next time. But they won't do that. They'd rather stay scared all their lives than find out that there's a lot worse things than a broken arm, or a leg, or something like that. You know what I mean?"

"I know."

"I'll show you what I mean. Take this trip we're on. Most people—people like that Bucky Newsom—think we're crazy damn fools to take a trip like this. We might get hurt. We might get drowned." Pete glared at Tony. "So what?"

"So what?" said Tony.

"Tell me something," demanded Pete. "Are those people happy? Do they have any fun? Do they really get a kick out of living? I'd like to know."

Tony shrugged. "What would the insurance companies do without them?"

"That's it. That's just it. They're always saving up for something. They're saving themselves up. Tell me—what are they saving themselves for that's so damn important?"

"I wouldn't know."

"I'll tell you something—I don't like the idea of dying any more than those people do. That's a fact. But I sure don't see that there's anything extra special about dying in bed of old age. I can't get myself steamed up at that idea."

Although *The Sound of White Water* is not an orthodox western, we should say that Mr. Fosburgh knows the secret of adventure story appeal. No matter how prosaic our lives, we cannot fail to respond to the bold doings of those who "sure don't see that there's anything extra special about dying in bed of old age."

This is what W. Macneile Dixon was getting at, in his *Human Situation*:

How false it is to suppose that human beings desire unending ease, unthreatened safety, that their *summum bonum* is cushioned comfort, a folding of the hands to sleep. That way madness lies. What then is left to occupy their interest and attention? They desire rather difficulties, such is their nature, difficulties to elicit their powers, to keep them alert and wakeful. They wish to be alive. In the absence of resistance to desires, desires decay, and an intolerable, an appalling tedium invades the soul. Whose lives do we read with interest and admiration? The lives of men lapped in comfort from cradle to the grave? Or of those who in the face of odds have accomplished their ends, good or bad? When the soul of man rises to its full stature, with what disdain does it regard the sweetmeats and the confectionery.

We started off on this random selection of Westerns with the thought of recommending some better-than-average paperbacks for summer reading. To those already mentioned we might add Vechel Howard's *Sundown at Crazy Horse*, a tight and briefly told tale. Louis L'Amour's *Last Stand at Papago Wells* is a story of rare endurance and bravery, while Noel Loomis' *The Maricopa Trail* is a good one for those who like their westerns buttressed by authentic historical background.

COMMENTARY BOOKS FROM INDIA

WHILE preparing this issue for the press, we received for review three books from India, which may be appropriately noticed in connection with this week's lead article. There is a particular logic, moreover, in suggesting that readers who are interested in India get books about India which are written by Indians and published in India. It has seemed to us a great injustice that American instead of Indian publishers should have capitalized on the world-wide interest in Gandhi and acquired the rights to publish Gandhi's autobiography, and profited thereby.

Two of these books, *The Cardinal Doctrines of Hinduism* and *Modern Leaders on Religion*, are by Srimat Puragra Parampanthi, and published by the author. The other is *Bapu*, a new and revised edition of F. Mary Barr's story of her experiences of Gandhi during her fifteen years' close association with him. (Miss Barr is better known as "Mary Behn.") *Bapu* is published by the International Book House, of Bombay.

The book on Hinduism seems to be a reasonably simple and impartial account of the prevailing religion of India. Western readers are likely to find of interest the chapter on caste, which is probably as sensible an apologetic as can be offered on this controversial subject. (Coomaraswamy's *The Bugbear of Literacy* should also be read concerning the complex issues of "caste.") If we were to find fault, it would be with the way in which the writer explains the Hindu concept of the personal-God idea. The "personal" aspect of *Brahman* (the highest, impersonal reality), called *Ishvara*, is personal because it may be thought of as present in embodied beings. This is very different from a great, supernatural, "personal" being like Jehovah. The author does not point this out; nor does he remark that *Ishvara*, as a principle, is really the philosophical basis for polytheism, far more than it is the basis for the personal-God idea as

understood in the West. In the West, Pantheism is in fundamental opposition to the personal-God idea, which is enough to show the difference between the East and the West on this subject.

Mr. Parampanthi's other book, *Modern Leaders on Religion*, offers essays on both Eastern and Western thinkers—Caird, Paulsen, James, Tolstoy, Bergson, Whitehead, Einstein, and Aldous Huxley; and Vivekananda, Tagore, Gandhi, and Radhakrishnan. The quality of the book is evidenced by the author's thoughtful definition of religion: "The fundamental urge of human nature to transcend the limitation of every kind to harmonise itself with a principle of Order which is simultaneously immanent and transcendent."

The book on Gandhi is a warmly sympathetic record of personal contacts with Gandhi, by one who was both an independent spirit and a devoted supporter of India's leader. It has a living touch with his greatness.

Books of this sort may be purchased by mail from Perkins Oriental Books, 1603 Hope Street, South Pasadena, Calif. or from any dealer who specializes in Asian books.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

PROGRESS IN DESEGREGATION

ONCE again, gratitude is due the Public Affairs Committee, whose pamphlet (No. 244), *What's Happening in School Integration?*, provides a concise report on the aftermath of the historic 1954 decision of the Supreme Court to outlaw segregation of white and Negro children in the public schools. The key words of the Court's unanimous opinion put a cap on one phase of a legal debate that has lasted for over a century:

To separate [Negro children] from others of similar age and qualifications solely because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone. . . . We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of "separate but equal" has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal.

Hostile reactions to this ruling have been fewer than expected, even, perhaps, by the Court itself. In the North and the West, general opinion, as reflected by the press, indicated approval, on the ground that a dark blot on the U.S. escutcheon had finally been removed. In the South, although there were attempts to revive the Ku Klux Klan and to organize "white rights" groups, most comment was restrained. By the time the Court had issued an implementation ruling—May 31, 1955—seventeen States and the District of Columbia, where school segregation had previously been compulsory, were required to "make a prompt and reasonable start" toward desegregation if they had not done so already. Though Florida, North Carolina, and Virginia have offered stiff resistance, and while South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana defied the authority of the Supreme Court, most of the States are moving slowly but surely toward equality of educational opportunity.

As an example of the way in which progress has been made in "divided States," there is this

account of procedures adopted in Washington, D.C.:

The seat of the nation's capital is under the direct control of the federal government. For several years prior to the school decision, the government's policies had been aimed at the elimination of segregation in Washington. Longstanding racial barriers were lowered by hotels, restaurants, parks, and public housing projects, as well as in federal operations themselves. A number of voluntary organizations were working to prepare the city for desegregated schooling. Immediately after the 1954 ruling, the District Board of Education ordered "complete desegregation" with the least possible delay. By the 1955-56 school year, 147 of the District's 169 public schools had racially integrated classes, and a majority of the schools had both white and Negro teachers.

Unlike most cities of comparable size, Washington has a high proportion of Negro residents—about 43 per cent—and an even higher proportion of Negro pupils—now approximately 68 per cent. Moreover, the housing pattern does not provide the kind of "natural" segregation that is common in other big urban centers. For those reasons, Washington's swift compliance with the Supreme Court edict has had sweeping effects.

Segregationist critics have sought to discredit the Washington experience as an abject failure. They have spotlighted the relatively few unpleasant incidents involving white and Negro children. They have also emphasized the drop in scholastic levels in newly desegregated schools. But school authorities maintain that behavior problems have showed no abnormal increase and are generally of the same variety as those found in any metropolitan school system.

No one contests the fact that integration has sharpened academic problems. But educators deny that these problems are fundamentally racial in origin. Rather, the lower achievement records of most Negroes reflect their inadequate schooling under the old dual system, and to some extent the poorer socio-economic setting from which many of them come. Thus Washington's schools are confronted by an acute educational problem which is chronic in most large public school systems: that is, how to give children with underprivileged backgrounds the special attention they need without penalizing the more advanced pupils.

Washington has recently instituted a remedy for this problem called the "four-track" plan of education. On the basis of present ability and achievement, children are assigned to one of four curricula, ranging from an honors course to a "basic" course in the elementary skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic. The aim is to give the individual child, white or Negro, the chance to learn at the level for which he is equipped. If a pupil's performance warrants, he may move from one "track" to another.

Maryland also has an excellent record. Despite previous acceptance of segregation—Maryland rural communities have always been strongly identified with the traditional South—the wise leadership of a progressive governor has assured respect for the Supreme Court decision:

Baltimore and eight out of the 23 counties in the state had mixed classes in 1955-56; three others said that requests of Negroes to transfer to white schools would be considered. Only 12 per cent of the state's Negro enrollment was in desegregated schools, but the proportion rose in September 1956. Now the state has approximately 200 desegregated schools.

The impact of desegregation has been cushioned in Maryland by the use of the free-choice method. Pupils are permitted but not required to transfer to schools formerly closed to them. This has led there—as it has elsewhere—to a markedly gradual transition. Baltimore, which granted unrestricted choice in September 1954, enrolled only 1,576, or 3 per cent, of its Negro school children in formerly white schools during the first year. In the 1955-56 term, the figure rose to 4,601 and an additional 2,701 were attending all-Negro schools in which white pupils had enrolled.

The important point is that Baltimore has displayed a steady determination to comply in good faith with the Supreme Court's decision—despite the fact that its 41.3 per cent Negro population is greater than that of many deep South cities. In the first weeks of desegregation, demonstrations touched off by pro-segregation organizers were halted abruptly by firm official action. By every present indication, Maryland is moving slowly but steadily toward full desegregation.

In final summation, Harold Fleming and John Constable, authors of this Public Affairs Pamphlet, remark encouragingly:

The trend toward integration is the result of various forces: the war-inspired concern for minority

rights which has been enhanced by a growing awareness of the effect of our racial policies on world opinion; action by Negroes themselves, human relations agencies, church and civic groups, enlightened school administrators and public officials; the growing realization that it is often cheaper to integrate than to provide new or improved facilities for Negro pupils and last but not least, the spirit of the Supreme Court's decision.

What's Happening in School Integration? (25 cents) may be obtained from the Public Affairs Committee at 22 E. 38th St., New York 16, and at reduced rates in quantity. The Fund for the Republic has shown interest in these publications, and Fund research has been utilized in the data provided on the desegregation issue. It is certainly in the interest of the cause of education, everywhere, as well as in the interest of human rights, for teachers and parents to realize that informed opinion does *not* hold that Negroes are "slower learners" or better fitted for labor than for the professions. Almost all the influential educators of the District of Columbia, for instance, agree that "slow learning" among Negro children who have recently entered white schools is due to the inferior instruction and equipment provided when segregation was in effect.

FRONTIERS

The Only Clean Bomb is a Dud One

LISTENING to the current disarmament talks in London is like watching the old movie serial, "The Perils of Pauline." As each week begins, the news indicates that some drastic step will finally be taken to cut short the arms race or ban atomic tests. Indeed, Russia and the U.S. appear on the verge of agreement, with all the world hovering on the edge of peace. But always by the end of the week someone comes forward to rescue us from the perils of disarmament. Sometimes the United States gets the credit for injecting a technical detail that prevented agreement; sometimes we owe our salvation to the Russians who, in the very nick of time, produced a hidden clause.

And so it goes in London. Both Russia and the United States seem determined to avoid any real step toward disarmament, but of course, in view of world opinion, each nation valiantly and adroitly maneuvers to make the blame fall on its opponents.

If there is tragicomedy in this ritual dance of death around the issue of disarmament, there is a truly macabre humor in recent U.S. statements on the question of testing atomic weapons.

Faced by almost overwhelming public opposition to the tests, including at this point the Pope, Albert Schweitzer, Walter Reuther, Adlai Stevenson, numerous religious leaders, thousands of scientists, and untold millions of citizens, the U.S. finally did offer the suggestion in London of a ten-month suspension of tests.

But the military wasn't going to give up so easily. Faced by the clear and present danger of having their atomic toys taken away from them, they rallied their wits, marshalled their forces, and sent a small band of atomic scientists—headed by the redoubtable Mr. Teller—to see President Eisenhower, and to plead for permission to continue the tests. Their plea was made in the

name of suffering humanity, for, as they explained to the President, they were on the very verge of developing a *clean* bomb. Yea, verily, only a few more years of testing and the United States could go down in history as the pioneer of clean Hydrogen Bombs.

President Eisenhower, widely known as a man of peace and humanitarian instincts, agreed that it would be a shame to end the tests now when we are so close to ushering in the age of clean Hydrogen Bombs. He added, however, that in view of public opinion he didn't want to retract the offer the U.S. had made for a ten-month suspension of tests. Someone did raise the question about what would happen if we tested clean bombs and the Russians used dirty ones, since the fall-out hits the whole world equally. And someone jokingly suggested that the next step would be for the U.S. to offer Russia the technical information on how to build clean bombs. But this, as it turned out, was no joke, for the following week various high-ranking officials were proposing just that.

Grown men very often resemble children and seldom has this been more obvious than in the present situation. After executing the Rosenbergs on the charge of passing atomic secrets to the Russians, the U.S. is now considering giving these secrets to the Russians free of charge in the hope that if Russia will agree to use clean bombs, the world will forget what the bombs are for in the first place and let the military and political leaders continue to live in their time-worn rut of relying on violence and the threat of violence to solve all basic problems.

At the risk of sounding trite, we would like to point out that the very cleanest bomb is meant to kill people. A great many people. It will dissolve in fire whole populations. It will crack the bones and cinder the flesh of countless tens of thousands. The blast from a clean bomb will turn sleeping children to jelly. The direct radiation from a clean bomb will strike old and young alike with ruthless equality, so that the hair falls out,

sores open upon the face, the body shakes with fever until it passes into death.

If war comes, we suspect that the slowly dying survivors will have little interest in whether the bomb which mortally wounded them was clean or dirty. At the risk of heresy we suggest that the peoples of the earth, in the event of war, will view all talk of "clean" death as a strange intellectual abstraction.

Familiarity breeds content. In 1945 the world met the atomic age with horror, with shame, with fear and with trembling. Mass movements for world government grew up overnight and here in the U.S. some state legislatures even voted to surrender their cherished sovereignty, not merely to the national government, but to an international government, if only we could padlock the bomb. Now, a dozen years later, when the original atomic bomb has been outmoded by the Hydrogen Bomb, we have become so accustomed to the idea of nuclear weapons that we permit our national leaders to seriously debate continuing atomic tests in the hope we may develop a clean Hydrogen Bomb.

It should be clear that it is the desire of our leaders (and the Soviet leaders) to fit atomic weapons into some kind of pattern which they can understand, and thereby continue to live and function as they did before the atomic Age. During World War II, when Hitler bombed Rotterdam to the ground, the world was stunned. But today our leaders talk hopefully about producing clean bombs that can be used as tactical weapons. By which they mean the destruction of whole cities, as opposed to the destruction of whole nations.

Of course there is also talk of producing smaller and smaller atomic bombs, and the ability to do this is linked with the need to continue testing. From the way in which these "smaller" atomic bombs are discussed, one is almost led to believe the U.S. government is committed to a crash program of developing atomic bombs that

are not only clean but are also so small as to be only slightly more dangerous than firecrackers.

Actually, the question of whether or not to limit tests of atomic weapons is irrelevant. Everyone—and this includes our labor leaders and scientists—who merely calls for an end to testing atomic weapons is basically siding with the military and political leadership, which hopes to continue using the techniques of yesterday in the world of today. The issue is not atomic tests. It is not even atomic bombs. The issue is war.

We say this because the world has undergone fundamental changes in the past fifty years. We are living in the midst of one of the great social revolutions in human history. The political symbol of this period was the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. The technological symbol was Hiroshima. Although blindly and unwittingly, we have in fact created a new world, and unless we learn to live in that world, we shall not live at all. This is not a stage of civilization when we can have war and continue to have civilization. That is the basic problem on which men should fix their attention.

War, however, cannot be ended by pacts and treaties. The manifest inability thus far of the major powers to take so simple and so logical a step as ending atomic tests should be clear evidence that they are unable—and in a real sense unwilling—to carry out the revolutionary tasks of our time.

There is no simple solution to this crisis. Every person who continues to look for the easy solution or who continues to hope the world of tomorrow can be built through the institutions and with the methods of yesterday only delays the basic change which is imperative.

For armaments and atomic bombs do not arise from a simple "misunderstanding" between Krushchev and Eisenhower that can be settled amicably at a conference table. Armaments and atomic bombs grow out of the tensions between power blocs and those tensions have basic social

roots. America, for example, would be plunged instantly into depression if she disarmed. The Soviet system can survive only through terror and it is unable to disarm lest its whole empire break up. Without an army, how would Russia deal with another Hungarian Revolution?

The problem which is basic to this period is not whether we shall suspend atomic testing for ten months, or two years, or forever. The problem is shaping a program of social revolution which can resolve those basic tensions which lead to war. The call for disarmament must also be a call for social revolution, or it is completely without meaning.

If anyone accuses us of raising only a question and offering no answer, we plead guilty. But there are times when asking the correct question is more important than avoiding the wrong answer. Indeed, there are times when there are no answers, only a question. We must not therefore despair, or fret at those who insist on posing the question. Man survives because he is able to adapt himself to new situations and new environments. Our hope for survival today rests entirely in recognizing that the environment has changed fundamentally. Either war goes or man goes. And if war is to go, it will take more than an end to bomb tests or another Geneva. It will require that men and women throughout the world recognize that the present social orders are part of the past, that they grow and live in the past, that they cannot and will not produce the answer. It will require that we learn to think for ourselves again, stumbling through success and failure toward a new social and cultural pattern. Such a pattern—a pattern for survival—will not come from either the Pentagon or the Kremlin. It will come from us, as responsible individuals, or it will not come at all.

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