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NEW DEVILS FOR OLD

IT is entirely possible, no doubt, to obtain a modest sum of factual information from reading the newspapers, but to study the papers, in particular the headlines, as a revelation in human attitudes, may be far more educational. In the international area, for example, and to a lesser extent in local news, most of the stories are given We-and-They headings—telling about what "they," the people whom we distrust, are doing, and what we, the righteous ones, are doing to stop them. The terms "we" and "they" are used here instead of the obvious substitutions of the United States and Soviet Russia for the reason that the "We-They" psychology represents a typical and historic attitude which is much more important to recognize than the antagonist of the moment.

As a MANAS article of about a year ago suggested, "we are all philosophers," and this "We-They" approach to human events is a kind of philosophy or theory of good and evil. Newspaper philosophy, of course, is only fragmentary, and completely imitative. The headline writer borrows from his readers their prevailing notion of good and evil and simplifies it according to the number of letters that will go in a two-inch column of his paper. The general effect is that the readers find their notions confirmed in the headlines, and complacency reigns supreme.

It is difficult, without using some imagination, to conceive of any other kind of theory of good and evil. We have much the same attitude toward crime, and, to use the theological term, toward "sin." And it makes little difference whether "conservative" or "liberal" or "radical" doctrines are involved. The conservatives inveigh against the bureaucrats who are wasting the public substance and who want to throttle the course of free trade with unworkable controls; the "liberals" see the menace of a "fascist" mentality on every hand and regularly issue catalogs of human infamy with rosters of the offenders; while the radicals attack the ideology of entrenched privilege and divide society into two great segments of exploiters and exploited, with the exploiters marked as the origin of evil in human life.

The problem is not so much one of deciding which of these partisan claims has the most truth in it, but of recognizing, instead, the futility of them all. Nor would this be a discovery of any great novelty. At least two current points of view admit the uselessness of locating the source of evil in any one group or class of human beings, although our understanding is not greatly benefitted by their conclusions. One of these viewpoints is associated with if not typical of the brand of modern Christian mysticism which says, "Not just 'they,' but I, you, all of us, are guilty, too. Sin is everywhere. The human being is cursed by an irreducible moral error, and whatever you say of another, that sin or defect or weakness nestles like a secret infection, an untold lie, in your own heart. Be silent, and learn to pray."

The other viewpoint is usually called the "scientific" attitude. It rejects the idea of evil entirely—of evil, that is, as a violation of "moral law"—and presents the picture of a world in which there are no real *moral* events, but only chains of morally neutral causation, of which human beings and their various traits and tendencies are the incidental products. This idea, or something like it, was Clarence Darrow's explanation of human behavior, and he made it the intellectual justification for his universal compassion for all men, regardless of whether organized society condemned them as evil or praised them as good.

These two viewpoints, while they may serve to support "tolerance" and "humility," are not solutions of the problem of good and evil, but

escapes from facing up to it. If evil is as omnipresent as the air we breathe, nothing can be done to prevent it; and if there is no evil, really—if it is only a theological invention—then nothing needs to be done about it. Probably the great majority of people will never be persuaded of either of these views, which seem a kind of mutilation of the facts of psychological experience. The cry of self-debasing piety, "I, too, am guilty, Lord," is annoying to healthy minds, while the argument that evil is a mere superstition can never overcome the inner *sense* of the reality of good and evil. The following wartime dialogue, repeated by Harold R. McKinnon, illustrates the practical difficulty in denying the moral responsibility of human beings:

> The philosopher asked, "Is there, then, no essential, qualitative difference between man and brute?"
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> The answer was, "No, there is a mere quantitative difference."
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> "Then why are you angry at Hitler?"
>
> "What do you mean?"
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> "Well, I know you are angry at Hitler, as are all good men, but tell me why, and I will tell you what I mean."
>
> "Well, he is a tyrant and a murderer of innocent people."
>
> "But we kill animals with impunity. Therefore, if there is no essential difference between man and animals, why may not a strong man kill a weaker one?"

Overlooking the questions of whether being "angry" is a necessary consequence of recognizing wrongdoing, and whether we are able to kill animals with complete "impunity," the point, we think, is well made. We *do* judge actions according to some broad standard of right and wrong. So long as we are human, we are compelled by some inward factor of our being to admit the reality of good and evil.

Does this bring us back to about where we began? Must we, after all, continue in our habit of picking out the good people—usually ourselves—and condemning the bad people because they are bad, and seem determined to stay that way, regardless of what we say or do?

There are other approaches to the question. Where, in the first place, do we get the idea that some people can be mostly or all bad, and others mostly or all good? Very little immediate human experience suggests that morality is as simple as this. The all-bad and all-good idea, so far as the Western world is concerned, seems to come chiefly from religion. God is all-good, and the Devil is all-bad. That is the traditional, externalized theory of good and evil taught in Christianity. You praise and fear God, and you condemn and hate the Devil. The Devil took advantage of man in the Garden of Eden (why God let him has never been clear), and ever since man has had difficulty in getting out of the clutches of this Foreign Power. This was the Original Sin, or the Fall, the dire consequences of which can never be overcome without the intervention of another outside Power, namely—God.

Whether or not very many people believe literally in the old-time theological explanation of good and evil has little to do with the fact that the same moral values seem to dominate modern life. We still have a "blame" psychology of evil, and if the Devil is no longer the principal scapegoat for our troubles, we find little difficulty in choosing others to take his place. And for God, we substitute various symbols of the Forces which are on our side.

But there are further considerations. The "blame" psychology seems always to involve its victims in some kind of moral hypocrisy. In this "neurotic" world of ours, perhaps the best evidence for the moral sense in man is the secret sense of guilt he sometimes betrays when busily engaged in blaming someone else for all his troubles. Somewhere, somehow, he feels that no one is more responsible for what he is than himself, and because this feeling contradicts his theory of evil, he suppresses the feeling, and, as

the psychiatrists say, begins to manifest neurotic symptoms. It hardly needs pointing out that a man who has the habit of blaming others is usually very quick to rise to his own defense. He is "touchy" about criticism. He picks up the casual remark as a personal attack. Sometimes he argues with considerable excitement, sometimes he just sulks. In any event, he feels his own weakness so much that his alertness of mind is mostly devoted to covering it up. He lacks self-confidence, so, naturally, he blames his troubles on others. The world has not given him a square deal.

The popular theory of evil—the newspaper philosophy of what is wrong with the world—caters to this common human weakness, building up the false front of self-justification. The more we blame others, the better we feel, ourselves, for a while. And while we are feeling good, we buy the newspapers and the publishers get rich. Nothing is quite so profitable, in a neurotic world, as to offer for sale a plausible theory of good and evil. That is why, when it comes to human exploitation, the cleverest people are always found in either religion or politics. In past centuries, when the world was run by religious institutions, the men who knew how to "manage" other people by manipulating their hopes and fears ended by becoming bishops and cardinals. Then, in the age of Nationalism, they became either demagogues or totalitarian spellbinders. In the future, we shall probably find them becoming a little of each—both politicians and priests.

Why is it that so many people go through their lives hiding the depths of their self-distrust under a strained and unnatural gaiety? What is it that gnaws at their hearts? The simple feeling of worthiness seems so elusive, these days. Perhaps there is indeed some common crime in which we all participate, which has induced an obtuseness of the spirit, leaving only a vague and unassignable anxiety to tell us that something is wrong. Can there be such a thing as a "group" or "mass" bad conscience?

This theory would differ from the theological explanation of guilt in that theology finds the distinctive human failing in the mere fact of being a man—conceived in sin and born in iniquity—whereas we are now suggesting the idea that the disturbed conscience of the age results from what man *has done*, and what, perhaps, he may undo, without benefit of clergy.

Just the habit of blaming others all the time may be enough to create this feeling of inner dissatisfaction. If there should be, within ourselves, some intuitive monitor that knows better, this kind of habitual lying to ourselves and to the world is enough to sicken the human spirit and drive it to excess. But then the question becomes, If we do not blame others, whom or what shall we blame? Ourselves?

This is too simple. Probably, the right answer is that we should not blame even ourselves, but *our delusions about* both others and ourselves. We should blame, not ourselves, but the false ends we have set for ourselves to achieve—ends which, in pursuing so furiously, we have led others to admire and to strive after in competition with us.

Our great sin seems to be letting other people decide for us what is good and what is evil, for this starts going the whole vicious circle of depending on outside powers for good, and when the good does not come, of blaming other outside powers for our unhappiness and failure. If we expect others to do us good, it is natural to feel betrayed when the good does not come. A man who really depends upon himself cannot be betrayed. Not, that is, in relation to his personal welfare—although he can be and often is betrayed when he joins with others in some common attempt for the public welfare. If Jesus had remained a carpenter, or Pythagoras a mathematician, no one would have bothered to betray either one. It was only when they entrusted their hearts and hopes to others—less self-reliant men—in the attempt to found a truly moral community on earth, that they became vulnerable to the deep insecurities of people who distrusted

themselves. To share a strength, you must wear a weakness, even though it is not your own, or so it seems from the lives of the saviors of history.

By a parity of reasoning, no one can ever do permanent harm to anyone but himself. To be convinced of this would wipe out the significance of revengeful acts and clear the world of all human bitterness. This done, we might look about with unprejudiced eyes to see what little is left of evil in the world.

Of course, to have these views would mean to become a philosopher, and even a metaphysician—a man who is willing to think intensively about the meaning of human existence and to act upon the result of his reflection. But only a little thinking ought to be enough to suggest that no other course can promise anything but the pain of smashed illusions and the fears of what other men may do to us. Whatever else we do, we have first to restore our self-respect.

Letter from CENTRAL EUROPE

VIENNA.—More than four years have passed since the "Big Four" divided Austria into four occupation zones. While a tremendous amount of technical equipment was confiscated and taken to the victorious countries, the Austrians have had to pay for maintenance of the foreign troops and also to meet other expenses, obliging the Austrian Government to introduce heavy new taxes.

During the past six months, responsible observers have pointed out that Austria will never be able to recover so long as these conditions continue. A committee of Austrian representatives, having investigated the costs of public administration, has declared that normal public expenses, besides those involved with the occupation, have increased from year to year. The committee advocates vigorous cuts as an economic necessity.

Connected with this problem is the extraordinary development of bureaucracy in Austria, as elsewhere. Overproduction of industries in the thirties, want of suitable markets, unemployment, wars, lack of food and clothing, shortage of coal and electrical power have created successive demands for reorganization, and as it always seems easier to found a new branch of administration than to liquidate existing ones, the entire apparatus has grown more complicated from year to year. A few months ago it appeared as if the first step in the direction of an acceptable solution was to be taken—when the industrial unions declared themselves ready to absorb about 20,000 men who—up to that time—had been employed by government bureaus. The possibility still exists, although it is now said that the plan would probably be torpedoed by the Government itself.

As practically every Austrian—excepting a probable majority of the civil servants themselves—has the understandable desire to see this super-bureaucracy come to an end, there is no wonder that this problem has become a domestic political issue of great importance. Meanwhile, the prospect of general elections this fall explains the numerous promises of the various political parties with regard to dealing with the problem.

Since crude statistics show that the total number of working and therefore producing people has not diminished, it seems on the surface that the present liability of Austrian economic life still has to be regarded as a direct consequence of the war. But the details reveal something different—namely, that the number of actual producers is getting smaller in comparison to those who are either too young or too old to do any fruitful work. Statisticians usually draw a pyramid, showing the youth from 0 to 19 years of age as the foundation, when they wish to illustrate the structure of a nation's population. But they can no longer do this with the Austrian population, for the persons over 60 are nearly as numerous as those up to 19. In other words, there are hardly sufficient births to keep up the population, while medical science has succeeded in increasing life-expectancy more than at any time during past centuries.

These facts are not without effect upon the working population. While, in 1934, about 30 per cent of the workers were between 19 and 24 years old, and 10 per cent were between 45 and 54, the equivalent figures for 1948 were 19 per cent and 17 per cent; and while in 1934 more than two thirds of the working population were under 35, in 1948 only about half were in this age-group. And the trend shows that this is only the beginning of a long-term development.

What have these figures to do with the enormous growth of public expense? The answer is that, in certain sections of professional life, older workmen or employees produce much less than young persons. More people are needed to do the work. It is also true that the older civil servants, being in most cases married, are either afraid or too much at ease to give up their positions, thus hiding the fact that their particular

occupation has lost its original meaning behind an air of importance. Further, the State is not only obliged to pay higher salaries (higher age—higher salary), but to provide lifelong pensions for twice the number of people cared for twenty years ago.

Cutting down the number of civil servants to an absolute minimum sounds like a practical solution, but its success would, in the long run, be only illusory. Meanwhile, although there are doubtless ways of increasing industrial production without adding to the number of hands, it seems obvious that the only real solution will be one which puts the needs of the individual human being in the center of all reflections and considerations. This, of course, would require that our present world change into one of spiritual and economic collaboration.

CENTRAL EUROPEAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
ANOTHER GREAT PRISONER

"OUT OF EXILE" is another book by one of those political "criminals" who have spent a long portion of their lives in the prisons and interment camps maintained for "security" purposes by the "democratic" powers of Europe. The writer is Soetan Sjahrir, organizer, with Soekarno and Hatta, of the Indonesian Revolution. He was Premier of the Indonesian Republic from November, 1945 to June, 1947, and then spokesman for his country and his countrymen before the Security Council of the United Nations at Lake Success.

There are times when it is pertinent to remark that the Dutch have always been "good" colonists. This is not one of those times. It is rather a time to affirm that here is a book by a citizen of the world, intellectually speaking—a book that inevitably calls to mind Jawaharlal Nehru's autobiography, *Toward Freedom,* also written while the author was in imperial custody. It is not, of course, the same as Nehru's book. *Out of Exile* is largely made up of letters by Sjahrir to his wife in Holland and to various Dutch friends, while he was in prison in Java in 1934; in the desolate and unhealthy internment camp, Boven Digoel, New Guinea, during 1935; and in another center for political exiles in the Moluccas from 1936 to 1942—until the Japanese invaded Indonesia.

Sjahrir, who was forty years old last January, is another link between the cultures of the East and the West. Robert Payne devotes a good third of his *Revolt of Asia* to the Indonesian Revolution and can hardly say enough in praise of Sjahrir; now, having read his letters, we can understand why. The extraordinary thing about the new Eastern leaders is their psychological penetration—they understand the delusions of imperialism so well that they pity rather than hate the representatives of the colonizing powers who have ruled their homelands for a century or more. Sjahrir's political standing among the Indonesians has frequently been endangered by the failure of his people to understand his tolerance of the Dutch and by his desire to come to some workable compromise with them.

Much more than a book about revolutionary events, *Out of Exile* is a book of a revolutionist's reflections. It is the self-portrait of a man struggling to find the truth; not just The Truth, but all the various truths, and of his endeavor to know them according to their various relativities. Of necessity, there is wisdom in this book, but even more evident is the sense of an honest man—a man who is naturally, not ostentatiously, honest—who is determined never to be self-deceived. Love of country, love of mankind are in it. The theme of the useful life as the only life worthwhile forms its core, and yet there is no rhetoric. Sjahrir's words are not spoken from a platform, but in the simplicity of private correspondence, without thought of publication. The day of heroics is over, even if heroism continues in new embodiments, and Sjahrir makes his reader realize how empty are the slogans of contemporary political address. He writes, for example, of

> the current exaltation and apotheosis of superficiality and mediocrity, and with the disguise of ignorance and impotence behind the mask of anti-rationalisrn. In reality, it is another example of the rule of Babbitt. It is also worth mentioning that Babbitt is not specifically an American phenomenon, but rather the archetype of man in our time, at least in so far as Babbitt represents the narrow one-track mind of the professional "expert" of modern society: the specialized "expert" whose vocabulary consists only of those mottos and platitudes for the common man that the press and radio spread so widely.
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> This spiritual side of the division of labor and of specialization is a problem in itself, and a problem of real magnitude. . . . Each thinks only in the terminology of his specialty and his profession, and outside of his own field he faces such a gigantic unknown expanse that he feels completely impotent before it, and decides definitely not even to attempt to encompass such an awesome scope....
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> This, I think, is why mediocrity and superficiality can rule at present. To create a spiritual

> totalitarianism, you have to be able—to invent catchwords and slogans; the cheaper—that is, the emptier and simpler—the greater the sale and the stronger the totality of the totalitarianism. This is the strategic wisdom behind the politics of recent years.
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> The slogans must serve to replace the ruptured spiritual and intellectual unity of the people. This substitution, of course, is shabby and illusory, and at best—where the effort is made honorably—one can only speak of an attempt to make a virtue out of need, to make the best out of a bad situation.

Sjahrir was imprisoned in 1934 for his activities on behalf of widespread education for Indonesians. Sent, after some time in prison, to malaria-infested Digoel as one who threatened "public tranquility and order," he found there some four hundred other exiles in various stages of physical and mental decline. Digoel was supposed to be reserved for "communists," until Sjahrir and some other groups arrived, but not one of the unhappy inmates, he reports, could properly be called a communist in the true sense of the word. There were even very few actual revolutionaries among them. Many were simply undeveloped villagers who had followed the lead of someone who they felt would bring about better conditions for Indonesia. Dutch officials recognized that the conditions at Digoel soon caused the inmates "to show signs of mental wandering." By far the greater number were mentally ill. Sjahrir wrote in 1936:

> It is almost unthinkable, and yet it is true, that all the inmates of Digoel are tortured without the tormenters' and torturers' knowing consciously what they are doing, because they haven't the least idea of the mental suffering they are inflicting. The exiles are simply "trash, scum, and criminals"; how could they possibly experience mental suffering? Such suffering is only for Europeans with their more highly developed souls and sensitivities!

The passages dealing with Europeanized Indonesians are of particular value. The young Indonesians who go to Europe for their education and then return home are subjected to a severe emotional ordeal. In Europe, they become cosmopolitan and practically forget the racial differences between themselves and other cultivated Europeans. Then, back in Indonesia, they naturally deal with the Europeans there on the basis of equality, which makes much trouble for them. Sjahrir describes the various stages of adjustment through which one young European-trained Indonesian artist passed after he returned to the Islands. First, he took the Dutch point of view toward his countrymen: he saw their "indolence," their "dishonesty," and their "submissiveness." The submissiveness was particularly offensive. Sjahrir continues:

> Then he came to learn the other side of the problem. He began to feel that he was "oddly" treated in his studio at the Museum. He found that the Europeans here did everything "oddly." He had his first clashes. You can't, of course, blame the Europeans for not being able to read on his face that he, Soelaiman, had been accustomed to being treated on the basis of equality, and that he could not feel himself inferior to them. Soon he was discharged for "impertinence," and remained without work for months. Slowly he became more "broken in," since he was obliged to. He gradually was becoming a part of his environment, and slowly but surely the realization of his status as a "native" forced itself upon him. The "Dutch" arrogance began to lose its striking quality, and without even being consciously aware of it, Soelaiman began to move aside to allow Europeans to pass on the street. And here was the "native submissiveness" about which he was at first so indignant!

Sjahrir himself encompasses these subtle impacts without submitting to them. He understood their influence and knew, therefore, what had to happen in psychological terms for the Indonesians to be really free. That is one reason why he has always been devoted to the cause of Indonesian education.

His understanding of the Dutch colonial administrator equals his penetration of the psychological problems of the Indonesians. The situation of the planters and others who have been too long in the Indies is as tragic, he says, as that of the "natives." They, too, are victims of abnormal colonial attitudes. The very sense of superiority which they acquire in relation to the

Indonesians, since it is artificial, gives them a corresponding sense of loss when they leave. At home in Holland, they have not the elevated social status which mere skin-color gave them in the islands. Adjusted to a life of self-inflation and the distorted social values of colonialism, they are as much the victims of the system as the Indonesians themselves.

Seeing this, Sjahrir cannot "hate" the Dutch. Instead, he is eager to work with intelligent Dutch administrators, provided that this is possible without essential compromise of Indonesian freedom.

Sjahrir is a man of few illusions. He certainly has no illusions about the "wisdom of the East," in its conventional reference, for he sees that this glamorous idea has been allowed to sanctify mere impotence and passivity. Nor does he romanticize the Indonesian people. Instead, he loves them and tries to serve them.

We have not really begun to speak of the fine qualities of this book—its distillation of the best of Western culture, its prophetic genius, and the friendliness—almost affection—which it generates in the reader for the author. Our space having run out, we can only urge that it be read. It is published by John Day at $3.00.

COMMENTARY
THE MISREPRESENTATIVE PRESS

BERNADO DE VOTO, who contributes "The Easy Chair" department to *Harper's*, is always an able advocate. In *Harper's* for May he adds the strength of his probing mind to the "Front against Disaster." MANAS for last Dec. 15 referred to the *Time* (Nov. 8) review of recent books by William Vogt and Fairfield Osborn—both dealing with soil depletion and impending world famine as "distorting and minimizing." Mr. De Voto discusses the *Time* review point by point, proving it to be "a stultifyingly ignorant story based on research so superficial and incomplete that it falsified the facts."

Both Vogt and Osborn maintain that the modern world is hastening toward a crisis in food supply—along the lines indicated in this week's Frontiers, in which Vogt is quoted. The *Time* article, entitled, "Eat Hearty," ridiculed Vogt's claims and implied that *real* scientists see no danger of a world food shortage. Mr. De Voto set himself the task of finding out who these "real" scientists are, who are in such disagreement with Vogt and Osborn, and then printed his interesting discoveries in "The Easy Chair." Apparently, he drew extensively on work done on the same problem at Dartmouth:

> When the Great Issues course at Dartmouth College set up "Eat Hearty" as an exhibit of slanted journalism, it needed ten pressboard panels twenty-eight inches high and eleven inches wide merely to list errors, distortions, and misrepresentations.

Time, which makes a great show of printing criticisms from readers, did not publish a letter objecting to "Eat Hearty" from the president of the National Association of Soil Conservation Districts, who said that the review was "one of the most confused and misleading articles I have ever read." Dr. Hugh Bennett, Chief of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, regarded by many as the world's greatest living authority on soils, also dissented from *Time's* conclusions.

Time, of course, is not alone in the practice of biased journalism. *Harper's* for April contains an equally valuable piece by Milton Mayer on "How to Read the Chicago Tribune," and in May, along with Mr. De Voto on *Time*, presents Fred M. Hochinger's account of the bad reporting which has come to American newspapers from occupied Germany.

These *Harper's* features should be carefully read. They add weight to our theory that it is quite possible to get along without the daily newspapers, and some of the weekly ones, too.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

A SHORT time ago, we reprinted here three dialogues by Carl Ewald, designed to encourage simple and philosophical understanding in relation to the very young. Response from readers was warm, making it seem that considerable thinking was stimulated by Mr. Ewald's delicate treatments (see MANAS for Feb. 2, 9, and 16). One such question, we think, calls for immediate comment.

> Without meaning any criticism of Mr. Ewald's remarkable insight into the needs of children, it seems to me worth remarking that these stories leave out of account the kinds of problems which might arise for children in a large city where there are extremes of great wealth and poverty, with corresponding environments for children. There were the Detroit race riots, for example, during the war, and the "zoot-suit" conflicts in Los Angeles. The relatively small and homogeneous communities of Denmark would hardly intrude these sordid and tragic elements of experience on children, and yet, in the cities mentioned they are ugly realities which cannot—and doubtless should not—be entirely ignored. What about a discussion of the impact on children of problems of this sort ?

One of Mr. Ewald's implicit contentions is that all children, everywhere, have the same basic needs in psychological education, and that the same principles and methods apply regardless of differing environments. The questioner assumes that Ewald's conversations with his son would be oversimplifications in our present American society, but it seems to us that the reverse may be the case—we may habitually *over-complicate* our social and moral problems. After all, children do not learn very much about moral and social equality from reading articles in papers which report race riots and strikes, nor from a parent's theoretical explanation of them. The child learns from the events which affect his own life directly, and innumerable incidents in the life of each child give scope for Ewald's approach.

Perhaps as social critics and reformers we are habitually inclined to miss the trees in looking at the forest. A race riot or a zoot-suit conflict, for instance, is usually—and properly—viewed with alarm, but improperly regarded as a problem for *masses* of men. All "group action" is, in the last analysis, an oversimplification of basic human issues, and similarly, it would seem that attempts to find mass solutions for our mass problems are likewise misleading. Actually, there are no such things as "strikers" or "zoot-suiters" or "race groups." No human event is so completely collective. The child is in an excellent position to appreciate this. Groups are too big for him to consider, for their ends and purposes are always marvelously abstract and beyond his scope. And this gives the child an advantage over ourselves.

While "groups" are beyond *our* scope, too, we don't seem to recognize the fact. Therefore, before we endeavor to complicate the child's life with abstract social theory, we should perhaps endeavor to simplify our own vision by reducing events to simple psychological human equations as they affect individuals.

What the child is in a position to know, and what we usually forget, is that all of the rioters and even the racially intolerant are human beings like the rest of us. They derive a measure of happiness from the same things we do and go through somewhat similar categories of experience, even though they may gain less or more from these experiences than ourselves.

At this point, we can return once more to Lincoln Steffens' story of his childhood. Steffens conceived a great liking and admiration for a man known as an extremely dubious character—one whose operations actual*ly were* detrimental to the better interests of society. But young Steffens saw that individual as a Man. Because he saw him as a man, he probably exerted more influence, even as a child, as a retarding force upon the man's undesirable propensities than any adult theorist possibly could. So it may be that anything we can do with our children to keep them from becoming theorists about "groups" is all to the good. There is either only one group—the human

race—or there are no groups. Any other view would seem to be illusory and, in the end, productive of further division.

What the child actually encounters, if living in the environs of a race riot, is illusory or divisive attitudes of mind. Two opposing factions are separated by these two attitudes of mind, and not, as they think, by intolerable or dangerous conditions which surround them. This must be the starting point in education. Only subsequently may it be important for the child to understand the points of view loosely attributed to "factions." But he should never be encouraged to hold an over-simplified idea of a "group." An understanding of the whole liberal movement in its efforts to produce a greater economic and racial equality on earth can be encouraged without factional dislike for, say, the capitalists, or the "fortunately born." We can learn to understand international problems without being guilty of political animism—i.e. thinking of *"Germany, "Japan,"* etc., as personal realities possessing attributes. And, of course, there is no collective Russia, either.

We cannot, it must be admitted, overlook the fact that the "small and homogeneous communities of Denmark" are conducive to a healthful mental atmosphere, but our own effort should be toward introducing such small and homogeneous communities into the life of our children. To the limit of our immediate capacity, we should seek to give the child something better than the environment of frenzied conflict which urban living encourages. He needs to come closer to the soil and to simplicity—and to the simple directness of honest thought, free of adult subterfuges designed to protect or advance personal status. If and when he becomes the recipient of this sort of heritage from us, he will be able to view the human needs of strikers and race-rioters in similar terms. To lead society out of the habits of belligerence is no easy task, but it should be obvious that it must begin by supplying a better mental and psychological environment to those most within our influence —our children.

FRONTIERS

One Man's Meat

A GENUINE horror story lies behind the statistics of world food supply. The story has been told again and again, and eventually, as the horror spreads, it will be believed. But by the time undernourishment and hunger overtake the people who are in a position, now, to reduce the tragedy that already haunts so large an area of the habitable surface of the earth, it will be too late for them to do much of anything about it. At least, whatever is done, then, will be come widely effective only after a long, long time.

How real is the horror, today? Last October, the UNO Appeal for Children Committee declared: "Half the people of the world are living close to the starvation line, and 40 per cent of them are children. . . . Even with the most wholehearted effort, many of the 462,000,000 children needing help have little hope of survival."

One reads this, feels oppressed by the thought . . . and turns to other things. It is a gray and vague abstraction, this idea of half a billion children starving to death. Yet people are not intentionally cruel. They do not know what to do. What they might do, as individuals, seems of no importance. To send a few dollars to a relief organization can mean little or nothing when entire fortunes given would not be enough: "even the most wholehearted effort" . . . will fail to save many of the children. People seldom give to make a project less of a failure. They want to do something splendidly complete.

Last month a little three-year-old girl in California fell down into an abandoned well. Millions sat near their radios, stunned by the occurrence, awaiting news of the rescue-crew's efforts. Men worked night and day to save her. When they failed, the millions were deeply moved. As a gesture of gratitude for the labors of the men who had tried to rescue the little girl, some $40,000 in gifts were voluntarily contributed to reward them. It makes a strange contrast—the arousal of the sympathies of millions and of the active energies of at least hundreds by the peril of one little girl, while, at the same time, millions of little girls are wasting away hourly in other parts of the world, and no one caring very much. Men will dig furiously, working twenty-four hour sifts, to try to save a single life, but the complex disaster of mass hunger is remote and incomprehensible to them. Even if it were fully explained, they still would not know what to do.

We have raised this question, not to add to the general sense of impotence in the face of inaccessible misery, nor to hold up a mirror to the apathy of which the great majority of the well-fed may be justly accused. The horror story has been told before for these purposes—well told, with drama and emotional appeal—and it has had only a benumbing or an appalling effect. Instead, we speak of the hunger of the world because, in recent months, some voices have been heard to suggest a practical solution in which all may participate. This solution has an unsentimental consistency with all the facts that have been assembled on the subject of world food supply and world hunger.

The primary fact is that the meat-eaters of the earth are starving the rest of the world to death. The following substantiation of this statement is summarized from Roy Walker's pamphlet, *Bread and Peace,* and from an article by him which appeared in the Spring 1949 *Vegetarian News*, published in London.

> One fifth of the millable wheat and barley grown in Britain this year is being fed to raise a million extra fat hogs for slaughter. This loss in calories from taking our nourishment from the plant world in animal form is tremendous. About eighteen calories of feed are required to produce a single calory of beef. According to conclusions reported by John Lindberg in the League of Nations 1946 Report, *Food and Famine Relief,* a human diet composed of half animal and half vegetable calories consumes four times as many primary vegetable calories as a pure vegetable diet.
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> As to the use of the land, Dr. Norman C. Wright, Scientific Advisor of the British Ministry of Food, has this to say: "As regards acreage, statistics show, that while roughly equal areas were devoted to roots and green crops required for animals and man, the area producing cereals for livestock was [before the war] nearly twice that producing cereals for direct consumption. In addition, livestock utilized a vast acreage of grassland for grazing and for the production of hay. Summarizing the total figures, it is apparent that, while only three million acres were devoted to human food crops, over twenty-seven million were allocated to the maintenance of the country's livestock. . . .

> In terms of dry matter, livestock consumed nearly ten times the quantity of home-produced food consumed by the human population; in terms of energy they consumed eight times as much and in terms of protein over fourteen times as much. To these figures must be added the nutrients contained in imported foods and feeding-stuffs. Here, again, however, the peacetime claims of animals considerably exceed those of man; over two thirds of the total imports were destined for stock, the protein and energy contents being roughly in the same proportion. Thus, taken as a whole, the livestock population consumed about ten times the crop nutrients normally consumed by the human population."

Only one important qualification that we know of applies to the obvious implications of these figures. Milk production requires five feed calories for one milk calory, as compared to eighteen to one for beef, so that keeping livestock for dairy purposes is much less of a drain on agricultural resources than the raising of beef for slaughter.

At present, a human diet including meat requires about 1.6 acres of arable land per person fed, according to British estimates. Of this total, only .3 of an acre is needed for all the bread, butter, milk, cheese, potatoes, fruit and vegetables, the rest of the land—1.3 acres—being devoted to meat production. Other experts estimate the land-need per person much higher, but taking the lower figure, there is still not enough land to support the total world population on the basis of a meat-eating diet. According to data assembled by William Vogt, author of *Road to Survival,* "the really productive areas of the world are so limited that there is only about two tenths of an acre per person"—a patch about ninety feet square. Vogt, incidentally, asserts that 80 per cent of the range land in the United States is over-grazed and advocates large-scale importation of meat and wool in order to feed and clothe Americans without wearing away the landscape into barren wastes.

The gist of Mr. Walker's solution is in the following paragraphs:

> A few months ago, the Secretary of the Bombay Humanitarian League put this question: "Roughly speaking, what is the area of irrigated land needed to support an adult human being on a diet of fruits, nuts, cereals, with fruits as the predominating and staple diet? Mr. C. V. Castle, farm adviser for the State of California, replied that "using yields as would ordinarily be obtained on irrigated lands in California and using 2,500 calories a day, I would say that one-third of an acre would be required."
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> If we want to allow for rather more than 2,500 calories and for some dairy produce as well, we might increase that third of an acre to, perhaps, a half-acre. We are still able—on Pearson and Harper's middle estimate of an acre a head—to support twice the present world population of human beings at full nutritional standards, provided we plan to feed them on a vegetarian basis.

Mr. Walker seems to have won his argument completely. It is now possible to become a vegetarian simply on the basis of common human decency, without being accused of "spiritual" tendencies or ambitions. At any rate, it is difficult to see how eating a piece of meat can fail to evoke a distinctly uncomfortable feeling, once Mr. Walker's facts have been absorbed.

It is true, for example, that India, regardless of religion, must remain vegetarian, for the Indian people have only seven tenths of an acre per person. Raising beef for slaughter on a large scale there would be the practical equivalent of murdering millions of Indians by enforced starvation. And when the people of the United States are told that they cannot send enough food abroad to feed the hungry millions of Europe and Asia, it means only that a *meat-eating* America cannot afford to send the food.

Much more could be said on this subject—and is said by Mr. Walker in *Bread and Peace* (published by C. W. Daniel, Ashingdon, Rochford, Essex, England, at one shilling)—but we have, we think, covered the major points. It seems likely that he has made--or summed up—a contribution to the modern world which will become increasingly important as the years go by, and will eventually be recognized as such.