

ANSWERS TO THRASYMACHUS

A CORRESPONDENT, referring to the leading article for Nov. 24—"Affirmation on Freedom"—writes:

I am opposed to pacifism. While I have a good deal of liking and admiration for the pacifist, I think that society has no final answer to Thrasymachus except preservation of its institutions by force. You must remember that there is no *rational* answer to the morally depraved person who chooses to place himself outside the pale of society's laws. Writ large, this attitude is Hitlerism and while Gandhi's civil disobedience was effective against the British, it would have had, I think, little effect on the Japanese. Pacifism presupposes a certain amount of rationality and decency on the aggressor's part—which does not necessarily exist.

Thrasymachus, it will be remembered, is the chief opponent of Socrates in the *Republic*. Socrates is the champion of rational means, and his goal is the attainment of justice, virtue, and knowledge. Thrasymachus, however, is a forerunner of Machievelli—a believer in personal power and in the satisfactions which personal power is supposed to provide. The answer of Socrates to Thrasymachus was, as everyone knows, to drink the hemlock. This, from the viewpoint of Socrates, was a moral victory—he refused to relinquish his principles, even unto death—while from the viewpoint of Thrasymachus the death of Socrates was a confession of defeat. Before pursuing the questions involved in this problem, we should like to deal briefly with points of current history mentioned by our correspondent. He says that Gandhi's method would have had small effect upon the Japanese. But there is more to Gandhi's method than standing up bravely and non-violently to certain death. Gandhi always sought first for a meeting of minds. If the critic of Gandhian non-violence insists upon saying it won't work in some hypothetical situation where it was not applied, he ought to be willing to consider what might have

happened if the Gandhi spirit had been applied to the situation before the crisis was reached. For example, had Gandhi been able to determine the policies of the United States in 1941, he most certainly would have taken advantage of the offers of the Konoye Cabinet to confer with President Roosevelt concerning a peaceful adjustment of the difficulties between the United States and Japan. Non-violence is a moral position in relation to the whole of life; it is not something you pick up and wave like a wand at a military aggressor who, until that moment, has been goaded into desperation by policies which have no consistency at all with non-violence.

On the question of how mass civil disobedience and Satyagraha might have affected the power of the Nazi regime, both critics and defenders of the Gandhian program are reduced to hypothesis. So far as we know, there was no resistance of this sort to the Nazis at all—no group resistance, that is. But it can be said that the prosecution of the war against Germany to the bitter end of unconditional surrender—the last stage of irrational means—was a tragic betrayal of the resistance forces that did exist inside Germany, for the demand for unconditional surrender made it seem to the German people that everything that Dr. Goebbels had told them about the Western Powers was undoubtedly true. And the insistence upon unconditional surrender surely had a part in creating the present "irrational" situation in Berlin. Will it be admitted that to the extent that the "righteous" nations use irrational means beyond the point of absolute necessity, they are as guilty as the unrighteous nations for the suffering caused by war?

Then there is the question, How should the measure of "absolute necessity" for war be determined? So far, this decision has been in the hands of high-level diplomats and national leaders

who are supposed to "know" the answer to such questions. Do they?

So far as we can see, the argument of pacifism versus violence is often a last-ditch argument which becomes wholly pertinent only when individuals are forced by circumstances to choose between the anarchist position, on the one hand, and bowing to military totalitarianism on the other. This choke, which will probably have to be faced by us all sooner or later, is usually expressed in terms which by-pass the real issue confronting the present-day member of a democratic society—the issue of personal moral responsibility in connection with the authority of organization.

Take the statement of our correspondent that Hitlerism is moral depravity "writ large," and must be met by the irrational means of war. No one will argue, we think, that *all* Germans were morally depraved, under Hitler. The depravity attached, according to most opinions, to the individuals who controlled the nation-state of Germany and who required *obedience* of all Germans. Nor will anyone argue that it would have been "wrong" for any German minority to practice Gandhian resistance to the orders of the Nazis.

The war, therefore, prosecuted against the Germans, punished them for two reasons; first because they had depraved leaders, and second because they obeyed their leaders—they were "good" citizens, loyal to the abstraction called the Nation, the Fatherland, the State.

Similarly, no one would think of saying that the civilians, the women and children of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, were "guilty" of aggression in the sense that the Japanese leaders are held to be guilty. They were punished because they were members of a guilty organization—the Japanese nation-state.

We shall not offend the intelligence of our correspondent by suggesting that he thinks that war can in any sense accomplish "justice." War reeks of all manner of injustices, lies and major

and minor infamies—from the intellectual dishonesty and the historical distortions necessary to stir up the war "spirit" in the population, to the impersonal crimes against the unborn children of defeated peoples. War, he would probably say, is the last desperate measure or means for sheer survival—and for preservation of our "institutions."

But war, and the conditions of preparation for modern war, are also the means by which our "institutions" will be finally corrupted and destroyed. This is not a question of either victory or defeat, but of the processes of war itself, regardless of who wins. The institutions we speak of are, we trust, the same institutions as those cherished by our correspondent. We mean the ballot, the writ of habeas corpus, the right to a jury trial, religious liberty, and freedom of speech, press and assembly. What, actually, are these institutions in essence? They are mechanisms for the free expression of individuality. They are means devised to protect the individual from the tyranny of the majority. They represent the decentralization of authority and its distribution among all individuals—or, according to the doctrine of Natural Rights, they represent a legal means to secure to individuals their inalienable rights as human beings. We have not the space to argue at length how the processes of war, and even preparation for war, will erode and finally wear away those rights. It is, we think, fairly self-evident, for the reason that a successful war, now, more than ever, depends upon an opposite distribution of authority—its absolute centralization at the "top." Attention is once again invited to Harold Lasswell's article in the *American Journal of Sociology* for January, 1941, "The Garrison State," in which the institutions of a permanent war society are accurately described. They are not the institutions for which a man who believes in freedom will be willing to give his life. They are the repressive institutions which are already in formation in the modern world—which are in different stages of evolution, depending upon the degree of fear of war which obsesses the

peoples of the various nations, and their leaders or statesmen. They are institutions whose sole excuse for being is the endlessly repeated phrase, "Lest we be killed, lest we be invaded, lest our sacred institutions and our glorious culture be destroyed."

The appalling thing about this course of development is that it redefines all the virtues in terms of conformity and obedience, and uses the abstract goal of "Survival" as a threat to enforce an almost religious belief in the new scale of values. Where this method succeeds, it obliterates independent judgment and replaces humane standards with a barbarism that knows nothing of the moral vision it has blotted out. Obviously, a time *could* arrive when it would be better, from almost any point of view, for a people to renounce all violence and war—to choose to stand with men like Gandhi and take whatever may come. We do not see how any thoughtful individual can fail to admit that such circumstances are entirely possible. But unless we start questioning our present circumstances, *now*, we shall not be able to recognize that time when it arrives. We will be too busy reciting the ritual, "Lest we be killed. . .," and, as the hour of decision passes, will proceed to cremate half a planet or more in the name of our "sacred institutions." Or be cremated ourselves.

So far, we have tried to maintain this discussion more or less on the ground of our correspondent, arguing from premises he would be willing to admit. We should like, now, to revert to our own grounds, and to discuss the probable basis for individual moral independence. It seems much more important than arguing about Pacifism to consider how the nations of the world might be prevented from getting into the hands of "morally depraved" leaders. Of course, looking back on the past, it is extremely difficult to find any conflict in which the lily-white democrats were all on one side, and all the moral depravity on the other; but, granting the existence of one or two wars which were "different," and that the

Nazis came about as close to cold-blooded moral depravity as an organized group can get, the problem may be stated anew in the question: How is it possible for such individuals to rise to political power, and to stay in power, after their character is known?

It will be recalled that Hitler was very careful, during his various advances to the office of Reichschancellor, to preserve the similitude of legality. He understood the deep respect for "order" felt by the German people. He knew that they would obey, almost mechanically, a duly constituted authority, while a revolutionary usurper would encounter resistance on every hand. Hitler shrewdly recognized that to gain the support of the masses, he would have to deal in symbols which the masses respected. And that is what he did. His manipulation of symbols to unify Germany under Nazi rule, both before and during the war, was so effective that a leading American psychiatrist, watching Hitler's performance, observed that the United States was at a serious disadvantage in lacking the Nazi techniques of nationalist pageantry. We should, the psychiatrist urged, exploit the emotions of patriotism for our "good" purposes, in order to oppose more successfully the driving power of Nazi propaganda.

The difficulty in this, which the psychiatrist did not mention, is that you cannot further the principles of self-government by putting on great fascist tableaux and trying to get people to wallow in a swamp of blind, nationalist fervor. Training in democracy is training in immunity to nationalist fervor. A democrat is a man who is constantly reminding himself of the limited powers of his government, and of the reasons for that limitation. He is a man who insists upon always matching symbols with the actualities they are supposed to represent.

Finally, a democrat is a man who does not believe that government—not even the most benevolent government—can work out his salvation for him. He believes that he has to work

out his salvation for himself, and that it is important for him to get on with it.

It is no coincidence, we think, that totalitarianism grew up in five countries where there was a prevailing belief that a man's salvation can be worked out by some outside institution—in Catholic Italy and Catholic Spain, where the Church is responsible for salvation; in Germany, where the State commanded extraordinary reverence; in Japan, where worship of the Emperor was the national religion; and in Russia, where the State is engaged in molding the millions of many races according to the formulas of Marx, Lenin and Stalin, or what passes for their formulas.

It seems to us plain that you can not have a free society without people who believe in an individual moral destiny—who have, that is, some idea of the soul as a creative being, operating in a physical body, for evolutionary purposes of its own. When that idea decays and becomes nominal, the importance of moral freedom fades from the social consciousness, and a worship of external symbols, increasingly totalitarian in character, takes its place. It is when this happens that the arguments of Thrasymachus become irresistible, that Socrates is poisoned by a resentful mob pretending to be "democrats," and finally, that the Alexanders, the Napoleons, and the Hitlers arise to make a tyrant's destiny for men who would not make their own.

Letter from **CENTRAL EUROPE**

SALZBURG.—An American weekly periodical recently expressed astonishment at the fact that, today, nearly four years after the war, Austria has not yet regained the position in the arts and sciences which was universally acknowledged to be hers before 1938. It is the more perplexing, the writer says, since Austrian university buildings have in general not been seriously damaged, and as the production of literature and music does not depend on laboratories, machines or capital.

In its basic statement, the weekly paper is right—the quality of Austria's scientific research and artistic production, once recognized the world over, has faded since March, 1938, when our small country lost her sovereignty and became part of Germany. But the supposition that, with unharmed university buildings and the independence of the fine arts from material conditions, there is no good reason for that decline, will not stand exact scrutiny. The university buildings cannot be useful for the development of science, so long as they are empty. Once the actual fighting was over in this country, the university buildings, like other buildings, were used as dormitories by soldiers and fugitives and bombed-out families. Valuable libraries and the apparatus in the laboratories were damaged during those months, both accidentally and intentionally. After the occupation, much scientific equipment was confiscated by the Allied authorities.

From 1934 to 1938, during the Dollfuss-Schuschnigg regime, the socialist officials, teachers, scientists, composers and writers were stopped from further work; they either lost their positions, were put in prison, were executed, or emigrated. From 1938 to 1945, during the Nazi regime, the remaining professionals who did not commit themselves to the Nazi doctrines either were discharged, landed in a concentration camp, or died of harsh treatment, were shot, or

emigrated. And from 1945 to 1948, during the Allied Military Occupation, the National Socialists (many of whom had joined the party only nominally) were driven out of their homes and positions, a part or the whole of their property confiscated, and they were put for a year or more in a camp.

How many people were left untouched? Few Austrian men between twenty-five and forty-five years of age have not seen a prison, a concentration camp, or at least a barbed-wire camp, from the inside.

The direct consequences of all this weigh heavily. Many posts, once occupied by men of the highest scientific or technical qualities, are still vacant. Others are filled by men who lack by far the skill or knowledge of their predecessors. Certain branches of research or art are altogether orphaned, as their representatives have emigrated, taking their assistants along or urging them to follow, later on.

The worst effects, however, which make the rebirth so difficult, arise indirectly from psychological causes.

This has nothing to do with cowardice: How can any government expect the sciences and the arts to revive, when—after a change of political regime—scientists or artists are stamped as criminals because they had developed a chemical formula which afterward was adapted to some purpose of war; or because they had composed the music for a song, the words of which were written by a member of another race; or because on some unimportant occasion they uttered a sentence which could be regarded as critical of a party which came into power since, or will come into power tomorrow? The fact alone that some particular line of research was financially supported or that a theatre accepted a play might cost a scientist or an author his position and his freedom, should a reversal of government take place.

Most Austrian professional men feel that the

time for these extreme possibilities is not over. And many others, not only scientists and artists, are of the opinion that the worst is still ahead. Is not the growing reserve of these men understandable, when one realizes that the Western Powers have issued a warning to all persons who may have connection or association with those who are under suspicion?

To speak out frankly, next to the fact that many talented men are no longer available, or are prohibited from working and creating, fear is the principal reason why Austria's cultural output has not been restored. Most people behave noncommittally. Some go even further. A friend of mine told me recently that in the city where he lives the prominent members of the right-wing political party as well as those of the left-wing are inundated with social invitations, but these invitations do not come from people of the same mind: a crowd of leftists wants to be seen in the company of a prominent rightist from time to time, and vice versa, so as to possess a two-way political alibi in the event of either a Western or an Eastern victory. And a group of Nazis, being released from a prisoners' camp, told me that the official in charge of the camp had asked them, before leaving, to sign a paper stating that he had treated them well—in case, he explained, that. . .

From the metaphysical point of view, fear judges and acts on the basis of appearances only, and should, therefore, be rejected as a motive. It is hoped that the number of individuals who comprehend this will increase, as overcoming fear would certainly mean giving up strife, war and evil altogether. Austrians, however, have hardly reached that point yet—and any other people, put in the same position, would surely behave in much the same way.

This doesn't sound heroic. But it is true.

CENTRAL EUROPEAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW

TREATISE ON PREJUDICE

CAREY McWILLIAMS' latest book *A Mask for Privilege* (Little, Brown & Co., 1948), may be represented as the most valuable of his productions. His well-chosen title introduces a history and an analysis of American anti-Semitism, and because of the size and complexity of this task, he is compelled to weigh many of the imponderable psychological factors vital to an understanding of the roots of all social disintegration.

One of the most complimentary things that can be said about this book is that in it Mr. McWilliams makes no effort to oversimplify the problem. In a concluding chapter, called "No Ordinary Task," he quotes the following from Dr. Clyde Kluckhohn:

Freedom from fear is the best way to cure group prejudice. This means freedom from the fear of war, from the fear of economic insecurity, from the fear of personal unworthiness. . . . The frustrations of modern life are sufficient to breed any number of latent and unconscious prejudices. In the larger sense these are more threatening than any specific overt manifestations that have yet occurred. For "race" prejudice is not isolated—it is a part of a chain of tendencies.

Mr. McWilliams argues persuasively that while we must analyze many of the roots of anti-Semitism in psychological terms, we must deal with its correction by social and political means—means which will occur to us only if we become thoroughly informed in all civil rights questions.

Tracing the history of anti-Semitism from its first public appearance in America, Mr. McWilliams repeats a valuable passage from Thorstein Veblen's *The Theory of the Leisure Class*:

The wave of revulsion seems to have received its initial impulse in the psychologically disintegrating effects of the Civil War. Habituation to war entails a body of predatory habits of thought, whereby clannishness in some measure replaces the sense of solidarity, and a sense of invidious distinction supplants the impulse to equitable, everyday serviceability. As an outcome of the cumulative action of these factors, the generation which follows a

season of war is apt to witness a rehabilitation of elements of status both in its social life and in its scheme of devout observances and other symbolic and ceremonial forms. Throughout the eighties, and less plainly traceable in the seventies, also, there was perceptible a gradually advancing wave of sentiment favoring quasi-predatory business habits, insistence on status, anthropomorphism, and conservatism generally.

Anti-Semitism was virtually unknown in the United States until the period following the Civil War, its first significant instance occurring in 1877. By this time the country had already felt the full effects of what Charles Beard has called "the second American revolution"—the revolution of industrial procedures which brought the development of all the characteristics of present-day capitalistic enterprise. The tempo of life was enormously increased by the sanctification of the profit motive, while hundreds of thousands of men and women in the lower income-brackets became a labor commodity, being for the first time forced to compete with new immigrant labor. It was also in the year 1877 that a Presidential cabinet meeting debated whether several states should be placed under martial law, since the riots following the spread of unfair employment practices coincided with the turmoil of reconstruction in the South, producing an atmosphere of tension and violence throughout the country. Class hatred became a definite note in American life:

With the industrial machine came the political machine. Dating from 1870, the "boss system" had become so thoroughly entrenched in American politics by 1877 that public life was everywhere discredited by the conduct of high officials. Men began to question the value of democracy as they saw the robber barons ride roughshod over the rights of the people and as they witnessed an almost universal corruption of the ballot. This questioning led, in many cases, to an eventual repudiation of the earlier American ideals and traditions. In one field after another, the wealth of the new millionaires was used to corrupt the tastes, the standards, and the traditions of the American people.

One of the first political encouragements of international anti-Semitism in modern times was the passage in the United States of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882—a time when an anti-

Semitic movement had just been organized in Germany. The action taken by Congress was used by German anti-Semites as an example of the way in which they thought the Jewish people should be treated. The attitude and philosophy which allowed the exclusion of the Chinese was a far cry from George Washington's dream of America as a welcoming beacon to the oppressed of the world.

It is well to study Mr. McWilliams' evidence of our culpability in promoting social discrimination, especially if we accept his thesis that social discrimination is the most potent cause of the overt political mistreatment which Americans profess to deplore so thoroughly. On social discrimination against Jewish persons, he reports:

Up to 1933 the exclusion of Jews from clubs, hotels, summer resorts, and residential districts was neither as obvious nor as deep-seated in Germany as in the United States. In fact, nearly every comparison of European and American anti-Semitism has stressed the fact that social discrimination has always been more flagrant here than in Europe.

One of Mr. McWilliams' most interesting paragraphs occurs in his discussion of the ominous portents for the present and the immediate future:

Paradoxically, religious tensions are mounting at a time when secular influences were never more pronounced in our culture. It is the general crisis of the times, however, that is producing this heightening of religious tensions just as it is emphasizing group differences of all types. The fact that synagogues were desecrated in a dozen or more American cities in 1946, and that some thirty anti-Semitic acts of violence were reported in New York in the last half of 1945, merely indicates how group differences are being aggravated today.

Returning to the relationship of war to class prejudice, we can find a partial explanation for the anti-Semitic occurrences in 1946. The "religious tensions" to which Mr. McWilliams refers are also part of the paranoid chain-reaction following the mass violence of war. (Much has been heard about the democratizing effect of a brotherhood in arms, but we need to learn about some of the *after* effects of war, as well). All sectarianism is based upon the

principle of exclusion. Mr. McWilliams correctly scores the released-time program for religious education as having "had a tendency to emphasize religious differences and, at the same time, to create subtle pressures against minority religious groups."

While giving much deserved attention to the economic origins of anti-Semitic discrimination, Mr. McWilliams makes it plain that the psychological roots of anti-Semitism are not easily discoverable. Anti-Semitic prejudice is certainly different from the discrimination against other cultural or racial minority groups. Half the anti-Semites use "Capitalist" and "Jew" interchangeably; the other half identify the Jews with Communism. The Jew, therefore, is uniquely an object of hate at both ends of the economic scale. Mr. McWilliams has no complete explanation of anti-Semitism, but he does furnish material for further reflection. We see "the Jewish people" as the victims of the paranoid reactions of all dominant majorities which fear the competition of a group of industrious, homeless people. It is small wonder, then, that paranoid tendencies have also developed within the Jewish culture, completing a vicious circle which emphasizes cultural differences. But the anti-Semite is the number one paranoid. In building a scapegoat legend around the most vulnerable victims of social exclusion, he prepares the way for political fascism—both by the elaboration of the propaganda of hate, and by increasing his own susceptibility to paranoid appeal.

Mr. McWilliams devotes some time to emphasizing the value of legislation against discrimination. We think that his recommendations are valid and that his supporting arguments should be read.

COMMENTARY

ARCHITECT OF LIVING FORM

THE material presented in *Frontiers* for this week is suggestive of matters discussed in "The Hypothesis of the Soul," in *MANAS* for Dec. 1. While *Frontiers* is concerned with brain waves in relation to intelligence, we recall research in other departments of science implying a similar connection between patterns of electrical energy and the origin of biological form. In 1935, three workers at Yale, Drs. H. S. Burr, anatomist, Cecil T. Lane, physicist, and Leslie F. Nims, physiologist, developed an instrument capable of measuring electrical changes in the body as small as five-millionths of a volt. Years later, after extensive experimentation, they announced: "The simplest assumption with which to explain all the evidence so far gathered is that of the existence in the living organism of an electro-dynamic field"—and this held, Dr. Burr added, is the "true" architect of the organism.

Each species of animals, the experiments revealed, has its characteristic electrical field, similar to the lines of force produced by a magnet. One press report said:

This electrical field, having its own pattern, fashions all the protoplasmic clay of life that comes within its sphere of influence after its image, thus personifying itself in the living flesh as the sculptor personifies his idea in stone. . . . The Yale scientists have succeeded in revealing the master architect at work, and even to catch the first outlines of his configuration in space, showing him to be in absolute control of the organism as a whole and of its parts, and at all times correlating the workings of the parts with the whole.

So, it appears that after twenty-three hundred years, Aristotle's philosophical postulate of an *entelechy*, a self-realizing "form" or "soul," working within and through, and shaping, the body, has attained a kind of experimental verification. Not only the physical world is to be thought of in terms of "fields" of energy, but the world of organic life as well. Remains the

question, is there also a field of "mind"—a kind of sea of impersonal cosmic intelligence—a continuum of thought containing areas of specialization, or particular "minds," just as matter, according to the field theory of physics, exists where there is the greatest concentration of energy?

We do not see that such discoveries point to the existence of a single God, the creator of all; rather, they imply the possibility of a natural polytheism, with limited creative agencies at work in every phase of organic life and nature. We can think of no scientific or ethical objection to this idea.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

A SALINAS (California) probation officer recently performed a useful though unofficial civic service by calling public attention, through letters in two local newspapers, to an article on juvenile delinquency, "The Case that Rocked New Jersey," which appeared last summer in the *Saturday Evening Post* (Aug. 7). This article is indeed worth reading, for it exposes a dimension of the juvenile problem which has received too little attention.

Four boys, belonging to wealthy homes in Orange, New Jersey, began a crime wave of considerable proportion, extending over many months. It terminated with the brutal shooting of a middle-aged man whom the youthful gang had decided to rob. These boys had no great need for money. The leader of the gang, in particular, seemed to have more than ordinary advantages. His father was a fifteen-thousand-a-year executive, his mother a devoutly religious Catholic. His record in school and in his Boy Scout troop was considered reputable. But somehow, "Frankie," as he was called in John Kobler's *Post* report, conceived a passion for crime and developed a callousness which allowed him to participate in brutality and thievery with no feeling of remorse. A sentence from this article is particularly significant in revealing that the Orange case is not altogether unique, although the crimes of the sons of wealthy parents seldom meet the light of publicity. "One factor," Kobler observes, "that baffles police everywhere when confronted with juvenile crime is that some carefully reared children are entirely lacking in moral sense." The juvenile court judge in the case remarked that there was nothing whatever in the neighborhood environment of the New Jersey children "which could be termed conducive to the delinquency of juveniles."

Probably all parents familiar with the facts of the New Jersey tragedy have asked themselves the

disturbing question, "Could this happen to my boy?" and none of the juvenile authorities is able to give them a reassuring response. The findings of the psychiatrists who interviewed the children were inconclusive. We still do not know the ultimate determinants of the moral sense; and now, we know that we do not know.

After you have read the "Case that Rocked New Jersey," think over for a while the enormity of its implications. It is impossible not to realize from this article that any simple explanation of delinquency misses the mark entirely. Some priests and men of the pulpit will doubtless say that it indicates the real existence of "devilish" forces in human affairs—an explanation which, if not good enough, is still nearly as good as any other offered so far. Some metaphysical philosophers may conclude that there are indeed malignant souls, and that sometimes these seek each other's company in ways of crime, despite the conditionings of an apparently "good" environment. There may, for all we know, be an important truth in such an idea.

But one other approach to the problem is possible, although it is one which does not exclude the possibility that some beings are born "innately evil" in outlook and influence. This approach begins with admitting the possibility that conventional judgments of the influences of environment have been rather stereotyped for a long time; we may have been overlooking matters of crucial importance. For instance, the fifteen-thousands-a-year executive and the devoted Catholic mother—isn't it conceivable that both these parents, one in the field of business and one in the field of religion, were living highly institutionalized lives? Is it not certain that stereotyped institutionalism helped to drain the "moral sense" of many Germans under the Hitler regime? Can anyone be dominated by an institutional pattern without losing essential concern for the welfare of others? Does not respect for the lives of others depend upon respect for individuality? Are we so sure that some of our

army men and some of the captains of industry, if suddenly bereft of the restraining mores and manners with which they are familiar, would not behave something like beasts of prey? It appears that there may be more than a little truth in the theory that when human beings come to depend entirely upon institutional values, they lose their moral sense. If this happens, their children may grow up in a moral vacuum.

Some words by the novelist, Franz Kafka, seem to us to apply here: "Probably all education is but two things, first, parrying of the ignorant children's impetuous assault on the truth and, second, gentle, imperceptible, step-by-step initiation of the humiliated children into the lie." Kafka may have been distraught, even morbid, but this particular expression may have given some of his readers a necessary jolt. Kafka is saying that the conventional patterns of our society are conducive to immorality—that they represent "lies" because they are always compromises between rival conventions, never founded on straightforward or principled convictions. We usually live our lives at one remove from the well-springs of independent inspiration. We make obeisance to what is "expected" of us, and seldom in any home is there genuine worship at the shrine of individual integrity. And when morals have become only manners—when man's life is a continual adjustment to the external pressures and requirements of society, he ceases to make independent moral decisions and loses touch with the Moral Self.

Successful education to avoid juvenile delinquency will oblige parents to examine their daily lives in search of that illusive factor, moral content. Certain it is that we cannot live in an institutional pattern and create or preserve moral content. Formal religion is no guarantee, nor formal patriotism. In the name of both, the greatest historical crimes against humanity have been committed—the Catholic Inquisition and the subjection of individuality in the Nazi State. It is true that the Catholic Inquisitors and the Nazi

supervisors of death camps rationalized their behavior by declaring a peculiarly distorted "moral" purpose, while the delinquents of "The Case that Rocked New Jersey" seemed to have no conscious purpose in mind—that is, no ideological self-justification. Quite possibly, we reason ourselves out of morality, and in so doing encourage the irrational immorality of future generations. We departmentalize our lives into such formalizations as "business," "religion," and "national duty." The direct heritage, in the New Jersey case, is indicated by the complete lack of awareness on the children's part that there was anything inconsistent between their church attendance and their schemes to rob and kill defenseless citizens.

There was indeed something unique and startling about the behavior patterns of these particular New Jersey children. It is probably an oversimplification to suggest that an environment providing sufficient moral content would have redirected their tendencies completely. Yet unless we are able to believe that something better might have been brought out of the confused capacities of these youths, we have no recourse save a return to the notions of the eternally damned and the reign of unalterable evil.

FRONTIERS

Mind and Brain

THE current discovery by Tufts College psychologists that intense thinking produces special and easily identifiable "brain waves" opens up the way to an interesting train of reflections. Science—the sort of science that relies upon measurements, whether of matter or force, for its precise facts—has always recognized the "real" or independent existence of physical matter and physical energy, so-called, but has shied away from allowing the same dignity to such intangible factors as "mind" and "thought." Ever since Cabanis, more than a century ago, coined the expression, "The brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile," thought has had a secondary place in nearly every kind of scientific theory. Huxley, the nineteenth-century agnostic, proposed a similar view by suggesting that thought stands to the physiological processes of the brain as the creaks and squeaks of a machine stand to the wheels and moving parts that produce them. Huxley named this theory of mental operations, "Epiphenomenalism," which asserts that the mind and thought are wholly derived from and dependent upon the physical body.

The correlation of thought with brain waves does not, of course, "refute" the epiphenomenalist theory. This discovery is only one in a series of developments in the study of brain waves, showing that the exercise of intelligence and the electrical activity of the brain are closely related. But it does show that thinking in some sense "causes" the brain waves, or one particular type of brain waves, and not the other way around. Specifically, subjects wearing electrodes connected with an electro-encephalograph produced characteristic wave-motions on the chart when they tried to solve mathematical problems. As the Tufts psychologists put it, "Difficult discriminations evoke kappa bursts"—"kappa" being the name given to the "think" waves produced by mental concentration. (*Science*, Nov. 12.)

This is not the first research attempting to connect brain waves with intelligence. In 1939 Dr. George L. Kreezer of Cornell reported that there are notable differences between the brain waves of normal people and those of mental defectives. Further, every individual has his own wave pattern—his "thought-print"—which is often sufficient to identify the subject, although not so reliably as with fingerprints.

Harvard professors, working with brain waves, found that emotional reactions, such as the irritation felt by a person who is interrupted while speaking, are reflected in the wave patterns. Ordinary waking consciousness is characterized by waves in what has been named the "alpha" pattern, which recurs about ten times a second. Slower, stronger waves, called "delta," appear in sleep.

The alpha waves are most clearly evident when an individual has his eyes closed and is not trying to think, while the kappa waves reported at Tufts College, although resembling alpha rhythm in frequency, occur under almost opposite conditions—when thought is intense. According to the Tufts psychologists, "Mental arithmetic often inhibits alpha, whereas kappa waves appear frequently during mental addition or multiplication. . . . It is evident that kappa bursts are frequent and are unrelated to alpha activity." (It should be noted that the electrodes for recording alpha waves are placed in the occipital region, whereas the electrodes for kappa waves are placed near the eyes.)

Knowledge of brain waves has proved of practical value in medicine. Tumors of the brain can be located with a high degree of accuracy, and there are special patterns for grand mal and petit mal epilepsy. The brain waves of epileptics in convulsions are violent, high-voltage patterns, and at other times there are symptoms which make it easy to identify persons with a predisposition to epilepsy. Extensive research in this field has been done by Drs. Frederic A. and Erna Gibbs of the Boston City Hospital, who found that the blood of

persons subject to severe fits contains a high concentration of carbon dioxide, while the victims of mild seizures have an abnormally low concentration. The Boston brain specialists connect the irregular concentration of this gas in the blood with the fluctuations of the electrical currents of the brain, and with the nerve reactions typical of an epileptic fit.

Various drugs affect the brain waves differently. Nitrous oxide, or laughing gas, which is inhaled, creates the highest frequency among a number of anesthetics tested. Readers who have taken nitrous oxide while undergoing minor surgery will be interested, in connection with the curiously elevating effect of this drug, to recall that the prophetic *mania* of the ancient Pythias at Delphi was produced by inhaling intoxicating vapors which brought on some sort of abnormal state. While we find no suggestion that the waves characteristic of epilepsy are similar to those caused by inhaling nitrous oxide, there is at least the presence of a gas, inhaled, and therefore voluntarily taken into the blood, in one case, while another gas, a waste-product of the respiratory system, is present in the grand mal epileptic. It would be interesting to have an electro-encephalogram that would show the brain waves of the priestesses of Apollo while they were in mantic frenzy, pronouncing portents of the future to the ancient Athenians!

Brain waves seem to reflect a two-way passage of stimuli to the brain. That is, when thought is generated, presumably by an act of the will, the "metaphysical" motion of the mind induces a corresponding electrical pattern, representative of the thinking process. Emotional disturbances, on the other hand, are of a more external origin, affecting those whose wills are relaxed, and who are in a more or less passive condition. Such disturbances, it appears, bring on the delta waves which are thought to originate in the "old brain," the hypothalamus, possessed by man in common with the animals. Then there are the waves of insanity and convulsion, which occur

when control is virtually absent.

There is hardly enough material here to form even the beginnings of a theory of independent mind, and yet, the facts about brain waves are suggestive. The trouble with most "spiritual" theories of the human being is that they are too simple. God created the soul, and that is that. But if there is really an integral, spiritual intelligence in the body, or using the body, the relationships between body and soul must be extremely complex. Of course, the best evidence for the reality of soul is the fact of reflective self-consciousness. This is the power possessed by every human being, but exercised not at all equally, to correct for personal bias, to substitute for the partisanship of family and nation, of time and place, the spirit of universality—sometimes called love, or moral greatness.

But belief in the soul, we think, has greatly suffered from a lack of curiosity about its nature—from a complacent indifference concerning the minutiae of psychic and moral processes. A big intuition of the soul is not enough. One suspects that the soul, if it exists, has a kind of metaphysical anatomy and definite modes of action in relation to the body and in relation to other souls. It is even possible that some types of brain-waves are modified and somewhat denatured shadowgraphs of the activities of the soul, rendered into the terms of energy configurations in the cells of the brain.

Well, we promised no great revelation at the beginning of this discussion . . . but only "an interesting train of reflections" . . . interesting to us, at any rate.