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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

A READER has addressed to the editors of MANAS a letter which supplies complete justification for devoting a lead article to the question of what MANAS is attempting to accomplish, and to at least a brief explanation of the policies which are followed in these pages. The letter is of a sort that we wish we received more frequently, mainly because of the importance of the questions and issues which must be dealt with in any reply. This is the letter:

> I have often sensed an air of paternalism in the articles of MANAS. This comes partly out of their very friendly considerations of the philosophical grounds for the caste system as presented in some of India's sacred literature and out of their favorable attention to the society of the Philosopher Kings idea. Coupling this with their constant preoccupation with the philosophical origins and brands of thought, one is led to conclude that MANAS considers itself somewhat above the battle, that its duty is "to cause others to reflect" over issues for which, although the editors may not have the exact answer, they will forever present various solutions (philosophical, of course), seldom indicating which one they believe is true.
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> What do the editors believe in besides rational philosophical speculation? I have the impression that the editors would feel it beneath their dignity to haggle with the man in the market place, as did one of their heroes, Socrates. Not that I consider Socrates' Dialectic "haggling," but he did talk simply to all men and seldom do his arguments sound as learned as those of MANAS. Is this because he had clear convictions?
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> MANAS might reply that, after all, research and open-mindedness are what it strives for. But after years of personal research on the part of the editors, one wonders if they are patient and open-minded to the point of being empty-minded.
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> MANAS discusses the immortality of the Soul, but does it believe in it or not?
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> MANAS cites the stupidity of war, but would it advocate non-participation, as its heroes, Tolstoy and Thoreau, did?
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> MANAS discusses parapsychology, but what experience have the editors had?
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> MANAS discusses the evils of the mass society, but does it have any program or does it accept one which might counteract this tendency?
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> MANAS talks about what *others* say about the worth of individuals and then sits back and says, "What a fine statement." What does MANAS think about the man in the street? Or does it ever?
>
> MANAS talks about social organization and gives some classical examples, but just what form of organization, if any, does MANAS advocate?

Since we recently (August 10) published a rejoinder to another criticism of our article on the caste system, we shall restrict discussion here to actual questions asked by this correspondent. First, then, comes the question of what the editors believe in "besides rational, philosophical speculation," and the comparison with Socrates.

This is a pretty rugged demand to make of anyone, editor or not. The implication here is that Socrates embraced martyrdom for his principles, and spent his life—until the Athenians put him to death—as an educator active in the market place teaching his principles among the youth of his city. Our correspondent wants to know about the market places the editors of MANAS frequent, and how they measure up to the Socratic example. One "market place," of course, is the pages of the magazine. As for the clarity of Socrates' ideas—this places us in competition with Plato, one of the most lucid writers of all time on philosophical subjects. We freely admit that we're not as good as Plato, and our only defense is to invite our correspondent to read eight or ten of the Socratic dialogues to see if they all "talk simply to all men," and are really less "learned" than the pages of MANAS.

But in order not to lose the point of this reader's question, we'll substitute another of our "heroes," Thomas Paine, for Socrates. Why can't we be simple and convincing like "Tom Paine"? Apart from

admitted limitations, there is this to consider: The issues were relatively easy to define in 1776. You can hardly beat the Declaration of Independence (in which Paine is said to have had a hand) for explicit and unequivocal definition.

The editors of MANAS are not among those bold spirits who are sure that the issues of post-war twentieth-century America and the world can be set with the same forthright clarity. Licking George the Third and pushing his redcoats into the Atlantic was almost a picnic (including Valley Forge) compared to the complex sociological and psychological problems of the present. To be simple, you have to have an Enemy, and you have to have an Objective. You then define the Enemy accurately and describe the Objective with whatever particularity is needed to relate it to actual human decision. Paine did this for eighteenth-century America.

Can it be done today? Perhaps, but it is far more difficult. The articles in MANAS are our best attempt.

As for the market places visited by the MANAS staff in their private lives, they are like the market places throughout the rest of the country. If and when the editors feel that their biographies are of sufficient importance to write about, they may find a way to do so. Meanwhile, they like to think they are doing the best they can (and are willing to supply "references" if anyone feels he *has* to know more about them).

The remaining questions are more specific. Do the editors believe in the immortality of the soul? Well, suppose they do. Is that as important as marshalling considerations that seem to bear on the question? Who cares what anybody "believes" in? The belief of two or three people is no more than two or three statistics in a census of belief. The encyclopedias are full of the names of people who believed in things and what they believed in. The interesting part is in how and why they believed or didn't believe. That is what we try to contribute.

Our hero, Socrates, incidentally, never gave out any blueprints on this subject. While he made it clear enough that if it came to a vote, he would decide for immortality, he also explained why proclamations of belief were in his opinion of little value. He said to Glaucon in the *Republic:*

> Now there are two classes of persons: one class of those will agree with you and take your words as a revelation; another class to whom they will be utterly unmeaning, and who will naturally deem them to be idle tales, for they see no sort of profit which is to be obtained from them. . . .

It seems fair to say that, of Plato's disciples and all those who have been influenced by him, the least important thing they learned from him was his beliefs. The great value of Platonic thought is in its spirit and its method of inquiry.

Further, scholars have noted that whenever Plato gets to a subject which ranges beyond rational demonstration—as for example, the subject of immortality—he reverts to *myth* instead of attempting to offer specific teachings which could be turned into "beliefs." The myth is always provocative, but never conclusive. See for example the myth suggesting the Orphic doctrine of rebirth, in the tenth book of the *Republic*. This is Plato's most explicit discussion of immortality, but it is far richer in moral content than a diagrammatic outline of the processes of immortality. And when, in the *Phaedo*, Socrates speaks of the expectation of a future life, Plato makes him add:

> I do not mean to affirm that the description which I have given the soul and her mansions is exactly true—a man of sense ought hardly to say that. But I do say that inasmuch as the soul is shown to be immortal, he may venture to think, not improperly or unworthily, that something of the kind is true.

Buddha, also, refused a flat answer to settle the question of whether there is a life after death, explaining that whatever he said, he would only give comfort to one or another of the schools of dogmatists.

If moral educators of this stature were reticent on the subject, what justification is there for anyone shouting his beliefs, as such? That many millions have believed in immortality is of course important as a historical fact, but the *grounds* of the belief should interest us much more than its statistics.

Would MANAS advocate war-resistance? We would advocate complete honesty on the part of individuals in making such a choice, and as much education as possible on the issues involved. We incline to the opinion that the combination of honesty with a thorough education as to the causes, processes, and effects of war—particularly modern war—would make war-resisters of practically everybody.

What experience have the editors had in parapsychology? Nothing that would perceptibly swell the data already available on the subject. We fail to understand why *our* testimony should have any special importance.

What is MANAS doing to counteract the evils of the mass society? It is resisting and indicting the conformist tendencies in modern publishing. It is advocating a critical approach to all unexamined contentions and attitudes. It reports the activities of persons and groups of people who have in some measure freed themselves of the compulsions of the mass society. It endeavors to expose those subtler influences of a mass society which often affect even those who deplore the conditions that prevail in a mass society.

We may be mistaken, but this question seems to imply that there is an activist, political solution to the evils of a mass society. We doubt this. The basic evil of a mass society is the level of *taste* which determines the decisions of its members. While it is true that there are those who degrade the taste of the people by catering to the weaknesses of human nature and by exploiting the attractions of sensationalism, the only ultimate protection against such corrupting influences is a change in the interests of the people. There may be political measures which, given strong minority support, will contribute to changing those interests, but unless education both originates and consolidates such changes, the lapse to mass levels will swiftly follow. The prime opponent of the mass society is the independent individual. MANAS seeks the welfare and support of independent individuals. It hopes to help to increase their number and their strength.

What does MANAS think about the man in the street? Above all, we try to remember that the man in the street is more than a statistic or a stereotype; that he is entitled, though he may not claim it, to the same respect and opportunity for individual decision practiced by more articulate individuals; that changes in the social order ought to be of a sort that will increase his opportunity for private decision rather than reduce it to the narrow avenue of a reformist formula. In short, we think this is a very complex problem. As we said in MANAS for May 11:

> The difficulty with the abstract, general analyses and criticisms of the mass society. . . is that they somehow pass the intensely human individual by in their ruthless descriptions of his collective behavior. They neglect the currents of hope and wondering which flow behind his aimless, largely manipulated existence.

What form of social organization, if any, does MANAS advocate?

A plan for social organization, if it is honest, and not a propagandistic bid for political power, must define desirable ends and show how they may be realized in practice. If the plan is ideal, it is bound to be utopian—that is, it will involve so much of personal discipline and individual shouldering of responsibility that it will not be politically attractive except to a very few. Such a plan has no political significance, although it may have educational value.

If the plan is not "ideal," but seeks to relate itself to existing levels of political intelligence, it will be filled with compromises that could very easily destroy its value within a few years.

The important question is: What ends do men hold dear and what are they willing to do to reach them? The answer to this question makes an absolute limitation on political achievement. MANAS considers the asking of this question and the reviewing of proposed answers to be more important than the formulation of over-all plans for social organization. Its efforts are in behalf of the individual, the keystone of any social structure.

REVIEW
THE PRICELESS INGREDIENTS

TURNING the pages of Edwin A. Burtt's *The Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha*, a "Mentor Religious Classic," helps to explain the sympathy and interest Westerners feel for the teachings and influence of the Indian Christ. For Gotama, although accepting the reality of higher realms beyond the senses—granting, in fact insisting, that the limitations of ordinary physical existence can be transcended—did *not* teach reliance upon God or Gods, nor upon revelation or priestly authority. This is why, we think, an increasing number of serious people incline to the view that Buddha was the greatest religious teacher of all time; he awakened aspirations and nurtured man's highest ethical ideals—but wisely refrained from attempting to institutionalize the approach to either.

Prof. Burtt's introductory essay and his notes accompanying the various scriptures of Buddhism included in *The Compassionate Buddha* embody the same percipience which characterized his invaluable *The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science.* Commenting on some of Buddha's basic doctrines, Prof. Burtt summarizes the Buddhist synthesis of philosophy and religion:

> Being a philosopher as well as a great spiritual pioneer, Buddha discarded al1 claims to special revelation and all appeals to authority or tradition. He found his standard of truth, and his way of discriminating it from error, in the common reason and experience of men as they can be brought to bear on the universal problem of life. And what is that problem? Well, its nature is set, he was sure, by the harassing ills that life in a world of unceasing generation and destruction inevitably brings, and by the fact that in trying to deal with these ills men and women mistake the way to true happiness for themselves and for others. But Buddha was confident that by the clarifying application of reason to the lessons of experience we can discriminate the conditions of genuine health of personality from their meretricious counterparts, and can likewise discriminate the qualities of mind that dependably further those conditions from qualities that fail to do so or are hostile to them. Especially was he confident that a rational analysis of the basic lessons taught by experience can locate the root of evil as it lies in the inner nature of each human being—that root whose uprooting is necessary and sufficient if any person is to find true well-being for himself and become a source of true well-being for others.

A selection from the *Sutta-Nipata* strikes the same keynote—that of the non-partisan search for the higher truths:

> Delight in their dear views
> makes sectaries assert
> that all who disagree
> "miss Purity and err."
>
> These divers sectaries
> —these sturdy advocates
> of private paths to bliss—
> claim Purity as theirs
> alone, not found elsewhere.
>
> Whom should the sturdiest
> venture to call a "fool,"
> when this invites the like
> retort upon himself?
>
> Stubborn in theories
> which they themselves devised,
> these wrangle on through life.
> —Leave then dogmatic views
> and their attendant strife! . . .
>
> No dogmatist can win,
> by self-concocted views,
> the way to Purity.
> Mere prepossessions point
> his road to "Light"; he "sees"
> his old-time "Purity."
>
> No "Brahmin true" attains
> the goal by mere research;
> no partisan is he,
> nor brother-sectary;
> all vulgar theories
> —which others toil to learn—
> he knows, but heeds them not.

It is of course impossible to deny that in time Buddhism developed its own priestcraft, yet despite all attempts to embroider the original teachings with the moralisms common among professional religionists, the vitality of Buddha's first impartations remains, and reaches around the

world. During the past few years, as reported in MANAS, the Buddhists of all sects and nations have undertaken a two-year series of meetings to strip away some of the veils of useless factionalism. A "World Buddhist Fellowship" has been formed, and at least one Western traveller has remarked that it is from this source that we may expect the most constructive and effective opposition to communist ideological conquest. And this is fitting, because the communist ideologues are dangerous chiefly in their proclivity for a wooden moralistic interpretation of human values. Since this attitude of mind, though then exhibited in a different social scene, was what Buddha attempted to reform, there is special aptness in this great teacher's return to influence today. Twenty-five hundred years before David Riesman, Gotama had explored all of the meanings of "autonomy." He sought to create an atmosphere within which no man would wish to constrain the beliefs or actions of another. Those who upheld doctrines he believed to be false were simply left to the results of their own ignorance; the worst epithet Buddha coined was "useless." The man who was "low, vulgar and ignoble"—or moralistic and sectarian—would in time discover the "uselessness" of these preoccupations; and this discovery would amount to realization of the famous "middle way," which was neither compromise nor retreat, but the way of balance and philosophic synthesis.

A portion of Prof. Burtt's essay on Buddha's life is particularly memorable, for here we see Gotama as one great example of universal man—an adventurer of the mind, one who knew both nobility and simplicity, and an intelligent lover of his fellows. We may, indeed, find in Buddha much of Gandhi, something of Walt Whitman, the finest precepts of the Christ, the mysticism of the Neo-Platonists, and the logic of Socrates. Burtt writes:

> What sort of person did the man whose biography has thus been briefly sketched impress others as being? Gautama the Buddha seems to have combined in high degree two qualities that are rarely found together and each is rarely exemplified in high degree. On the one hand he was a man of rich and responsive human sympathy, of unfailing patience, strength, gentleness, and good will. His friendliness, to all who came to him in sincere search, was genuine and unreserved. He therefore aroused in his followers a wondering, eager, affectionate devotion such as only the greatest leaders of men have awakened. On the other hand, he was a thinker, of unexcelled philosophic power. His was one of the giant intellects of human history, exhibiting a keenness of analytic understanding that has rarely been equaled. He probed through the virtues and the deceptions of the thought of his day, adopting it where it seemed to him clearly sound and abandoning or radically revising it when he saw that it was missing the true and the good. It is in virtue of this characteristic of the Master that Buddhism is the only one of the great religions of the world that is consciously and frankly based on a systematic rational analysis of the problem of life, and of the way to its solution. Buddha was a pioneering lover of men, and a philosophic genius, rolled into a single vigorous and radiant personality.

The Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha contains the entire text of the *Dhammapada*, and extracts from numerous other scriptures. It is priced at fifty cents and is available wherever Signet-Mentor pocket books are sold.

COMMENTARY
ON "SOCIAL ORGANIZATION"

SINCE, from lack of space, the question of social organization received short shrift in our lead article, we may continue the discussion here.

The classical opposition of social theory is between socialism and capitalism. We may say, as we have said many times before, that it seems to us that both capitalism and socialism make the mistake of elevating economic relationships, and in consequence economic ends, to the place of highest importance. We tend to share, therefore, the conclusions of critics like Francois Mauriac, who proposed: "It is not what separates the United States and the Soviet Union that should frighten us, but what they have in common. . . . man is treated as a means and no longer as an end—this is the indispensable condition of the two cultures that face each other."

While this comment involves obvious oversimplification, it will serve to explain why we find it difficult to approve any familiarly labelled social theory.

Actually, we see no important reason why a vastly improved scheme of social relations could not be worked out within the framework of the existing constitution of the United States. Lyman Bryson's *The Next America* comes close enough to developments we should like to see realized for us to approve it heartily. However, we are primarily interested in a *free* society—a society, that is, whose organization is flexible enough to permit all sorts of innovations and experiments by small or even large groups. That the French Communities of Work, for example, are possible in France is a tribute to French social organization. The Communities of Work are socialist or communist societies democratically organized and operated by people who want that sort of society.

It is a commentary on the Soviet style of "revolutionary" society that in Russia far less freedom for social experiment exists than in the "backward" bourgeois countries.

At this point, we are extremely suspicious of pretentious over-all theories of social organization. We like the kind of inventiveness in economics that was described in last week's Frontiers article on the barter system developed in five hundred Indian villages during the past six months; and the kind of intelligent adaptation to a local economy practiced by Scott Nearing for twenty years on a Vermont hillside.

We examine ancient social schemes of organization for what may be learned from them. We can always learn from systems which are very different from ours, since they give scope to qualities that are hidden or suppressed under our own system. The best system will be the system evolved by mature human beings. It is a system which, we think, will have to be grown before it can be blue-printed. And when we have it, we probably shall not care about blueprinting it, since we will have more important things to do.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

WE have a letter in praise of Rudolf Flesch's *Why Johnny Can't Read* which is apparently representative of enthusiastic response from a large segment of parental opinion; at least, so reports the *Saturday Review*. Though the arguments about the role of "Phonics" in the teaching of reading are still very much in confusion, despite Flesch's rather bland assertion that the whole question is absurdly simple, one thing is clear—many parents feel that the teaching of the very young should involve more systematic discipline. On the other hand, many teachers make a different emphasis, for a variety of reasons. There will be, we are sure, a number of follow-ups to the present discussion. The letter from our reader follows:

> Editor: I read with interest your recent discussion of "reading-readiness." As the mother of two six-year-olds, I still find myself wondering why children can't read by this time. We did not teach our children to read before they went to school—trying to follow the trend of the times—but we won't make the same mistake again. The children have memorized their 150 words, but they can't read. They can associate words with pictures, but take the pictures away or add a new word and they are stuck. Everything is given to the child, put down in black and white for him, so the incentive to want to learn, to think for himself, is not needed. If we are to teach our children to think for themselves, one tool we can give them is ability to read. A child can and should be read to from an early age, but this can't take the place of reading by himself.
>
> *Why Johnny Can't Read* by Rudolf Flesch came as a lifesaver. Here is a book any parent who can read can follow—and it works.
>
> We talked to many good teachers who felt that the phonic method was good from the beginning but their hands are tied. It seems to be up to the parents.

The foregoing letter obliged us, we felt, to attempt an investigation of what actually *is* being done in respect to phonic instruction in the public schools. Such an "investigation," unfortunately, cannot be briefly accomplished; schools have to be visited, teachers' manuals inspected, and the "other side" of the phonics issue discussed with those who represent it.

Even acquiring some teachers' manuals and related literature, however, makes it possible to offer a few tentative conclusions, one of which is that a large portion of Mr. Rudolph Flesch's book seems to be beating a dead horse. For instance, though Mr. Flesch quotes Wm. S. Gray's *On Their Own in Reading* (1948) as an example of an "educationist" with blind prejudice against phonics, he quotes very badly and out of context, neglecting to tell his readers that Mr. Gray fully admits the unfortunate results of radical attempts to do away with phonics entirely. Gray actually said:

> By 1920, such a revolt had set in against the old "phonic" readers that emphasis on visual word perception, whether by sight or by phonetic analysis, came to be considered almost disreputable among many school authorities. This trend reached fantastic extremes in many centers during the late twenties and early thirties. Radical thought in these years held that if a child were interested at all in reading, no teaching of specific words by any method was necessary or justified. In many schools, teachers were sternly warned by their superiors against giving any special attention to the visual form of words, whether by sight or by phonetic methods, as a preparation for reading. In these schools meaning was to be considered almost the only factor in word perception, and children were expected to identify new words by "guessing" from context. Fortunately, even in the area of the articulate and vociferous radicals, many sensible teachers were not stampeded and continued to pay some attention to word-analysis skills.
>
> The results of the extreme viewpoints, however, were dramatized in the thirties and early forties in certain towns and cities by groups of young people who were disinterested and inefficient in reading, by the anomaly of intelligent illiterates in high schools, and by large high-school remedial programs which attempted to correct the lack of systematic teaching in the early grades.

The other volumes we have inspected similarly give rise to the suspicion that Mr. Flesch has overstated a case and over-simplified a problem. In a pamphlet recently issued by the

International Association for Childhood Education, *What About Phonics?*, it is made plain that phonics instruction is and must be a definite part of early grade teaching. However, there are qualifications:

> In the light of present understanding of child development and the nature of the reading process, phonics *cannot* assume the role of a complete method of teaching reading. Studies of maturation lead to the conclusion that phonic ability is an aspect of language facility and as such is inescapably related to organismic growth.
>
> Reading is intrinsically a process of getting thought. Without thinking there is no reading. Hence it is not surprising that phonetic instruction which is directed toward the relating of sounds to symbols for the immediate purpose of getting meaning proves itself more effective in reading comprehension than does isolated phonetic training. The kinds of phonetic experience which increase the accurate seeing and hearing of words, which enhance visual and auditory acuity within a framework of meaningful reading, must be sorted out from the myriad of sterile, isolated exercises so easily found in ready-made packets.
>
> In the light of our present knowledge of children's learning and of the nature of our language a good reading program cannot be built around any assumed, pre-arranged ordering of sounds or letters. The reading program must emphatically be based upon children's interests and geared to individual growth. The pursuit must always be the pursuit of meaning. It is upon these premises that superior teachers in many schools incorporate in their language program those types of word study which enhance meaning and build respect for language.
>
> In a curriculum such as this, phonics instruction has a contribution to make, geared to the various stages of maturity and to the needs of differing individuals.
>
> It seems clear that any program of phonetic analysis must be based upon children's levels of maturity and upon individuals' vastly differing abilities to relate sounds to symbols. Further, a program designed to capitalize on children's growing awareness of visual symbols must derive from challenging, vigorous reading for ideas and be closely related to immediate achievement. And a program of word analysis must be geared to children's development in such a way that experience in analysing words leads eventually, when children can make effective generalizations in this area, to putting sounds together meaningfully.

All the teachers' manuals inspected similarly make it clear that the teachers in this particular area of California—and Mr. Flesch claims that teaching instruction is pretty much the same throughout the country—give very careful attention to early phonic teaching. If one surmises that "the swing of the pendulum" may not yet have reached a balance point, one can make a case for books such as *Why Johnny Can't Read*—on the ground that they stimulate parent interest. However, if Flesch's book is read without equal attention to such material as that from which we have quoted, parents are likely to develop a factional hostility to teachers. As in another case involving radical differences of opinion discussed earlier in MANAS, the most sensible course is for parents to visit schools, and to learn at first hand what is being done and why. Flesch, we feel, is a polemicist first and an educator only second, and while he may have hit upon a way of pointing up a need for more specific attention to phonic development at certain stages, his misstatements of fact and out-of-context-references deserve trenchant criticism.

Let's have parents help children to read, yes, but let's suggest that they *try* to do so in such manner as to supplement and complement the efforts of teachers in the schools. A host of embattled parents who like to believe that they now have The Answer, courtesy of Mr. Flesch, would not be a result devoutly to be wished for.

This, however, seems to be a subject upon which a wide diversity of opinion is possible. A friend with considerable experience in education and a special interest in the teaching of reading to children has written out some comments on the Flesch book and the foregoing discussion, and we are glad to print them as reflecting the reaction of a practical teacher:

> Phonics doesn't pretend to be "a complete system of reading," it merely says you must acquire

the tools for word-building. When one learns to see how words are built, he can recognize words readily. When he is facile in recognition, he can move on to *the next step*, which *is getting the meaning* without guessing or agonizing. Phonics is a reading tool.

If parents want to help, let them help in any simple way they can, not by *telling*, but by getting the children to examine the make-up of the words that bother them. If this is done consistently, their spelling and reading will improve, without hurting or criticizing teachers either. There is no need for any acerbity in the situation, and to suggest "embattled parents" is ridiculous. Flesch has waked people up as no other writer has done. It isn't "he may have hit upon a way" he simply tells a way. It is not the only way, but he certainly goes to foundational things, and anyone will get results, without question, who follows his method.

Perhaps his zeal has led him into misstatements of fact and out-of-context reference which deserve trenchant criticism. Not all writers on the subject are as concerned as he, it seems to me.

FRONTIERS

Voices of Sanity

A RANDOM collection of clippings from recent issues of the New York *Times* gives heartening evidence of the presence of common sense in the United States. This is not a period of history in which the struggles of "movements" hold the center of the social stage. It is rather a time of strengthening conservativism, when the supporters of yesterday's movements are licking their wounds and wondering about the element of self-deception in their past enthusiasms. If, then, in such a period, clear expressions of social intelligence can be easily found in the public press, the omens are good for a wiser shaping of the social campaigns and projects of the future for these things seem to happen in cycles. Following are some of the statements which have appeared in the *Times:*

At the commencement exercises of the New School for Social Research, last June, George F. Kennan, former chief of the State Department's planning division and former American Ambassador to the Soviet Union, told his audience that "those whom we regard as our adversaries" do not want war any more than we do. The *Times* report of his address continues:

> These nations may want "other things," he said, "to which, thus far, we have found it impossible to agree; but they don't want another world war."
>
> "Now of course wars can come, even when nobody wants them," Mr. Kennan went on, "but the fact that nobody does want one is a tremendously hopeful fact, to begin with; and it means that we have a better chance than many people suppose of avoiding war, if our policies are wise and moderate coupled always with vigilance and with the maintenance of conciliatory, unprovocative strength."

It is of interest that, in the quoted version of his speech, at any rate, Mr. Kennan limited his concern to the problems of American attitudes and actions in relation to the threat of war, without reference to what we must demand of other nations. Speaking of remaining dangers to the United States, he said:

> "The demagogues and philistines, though hushed and momentarily humbled, are still with us and their influence is still dominant in certain phases of our national behavior," he said. "Some of our international opponents are arrogant, inexperienced and irresponsible people."
>
> Even more serious to the nation, he asserted, are some of the other forces that are endangering the spiritual and creative energies of America. American civilization, with its emphasis on material progress, has not made us a happier and inwardly richer people.
>
> Two great causes for concern, he said, are the "disintegration of real community life" and the "growing domination of cultural and recreational activity by commercial media."

One could wish for more men of Mr. Kennan's caliber in American life.

A similar note was struck by Dr. A. Whitney Griswold, president of Yale, at that university's graduation proceedings. He warned the thousand undergraduates awaiting their degrees that hating communism is as dangerous as submitting to it. According to the *Times* (June 13) report:

> Hatred is far less likely to deter than it is to hurt us, Dr. Griswold asserted. "Somewhere between the extremes of appeasement and hate there is a place for courage and strength to express themselves in magnanimity and charity, and this is the place we must find," he said.
>
> "Whatever we may think of it [communism], to answer those who preach it in kind exposes us to the same fate," the president added.

For the text of his address, President Griswold chose a passage from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans:

> Recompense to no man evil . . . . if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink. . . . be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

He invited the graduating class to choose between the sentiments expressed by St. Paul and the contrasting teachings of Karl Marx.

The Army, too—perhaps we should not say, *"Even* the Army"—is responding to the wave of common sense. After a protest from the American Civil Liberties Union, the headquarters of the First Army at Governor's Island, New York, announced that it had abandoned the use of the booklet, *How to Spot a Communist,* because it "was not appropriate for the purpose for which it was intended when originally issued by Intelligence personnel." The ACLU complaint charged that the pamphlet would encourage citizens to spy upon one another's language and associations. Among the "signs" to be watched for, according to this pamphlet, were words like "vanguard," "colonialism," "progressive," and "materialist." Other alleged danger signals to be noted in the speech of others were "McCarthyism," "violation of civil rights," "racial or religious discrimination," "the military budget" and "peace." Arguments about these issues, the pamphlet asserted, "have been part of the Communist arsenal for a long period of time."

A New York *Times* editorial on the pamphlet probably helped along the Army decision to abolish it. The editorial (June 14) began:

> One doesn't know whether to laugh or cry at the contents of a pamphlet on "How to Spot a Communist," issued . . . for the guidance of intelligence officers in this area. . . .

After listing the "suspicious" words given above, the editorial concludes:

> If Army or police agencies really took seriously these so-called "distinguishing marks" of Communist leanings it is perfectly obvious that any citizen who opened his mouth in protest against virtually any phase or facet of political or economic life risks being listed as a possible Communist. From President Eisenhower down there is probably not a well-informed liberal American today who has not used one or more of the cited expressions and argued about the potentially subversive issues mentioned in this fantastic pamphlet. If our Government and our society thought it communistic to talk about such matters as this pamphlet lists, then we really would be in a hopeless state. But, fortunately, we are not that foolish, and doubtless this pamphlet will be laughed out of existence, as it ought to be.

Another *Times* editorial (July 7) notices a "literary" suppression of a different sort, one far less encouraging. A popular book, *Profile of America,* with foreword by Charles A. Lindbergh and preface by Louis Bromfield, seeks to present American history through photographs and quotations from source material covering "the wide sweep of American civilization." Thinking well of the book, the United States Information Agency asked Congress for funds to distribute both excerpts and complete copies of it to the people of other countries.

However, some members of a House Appropriations subcommittee objected on the grounds that quotations from Henry David Thoreau and Eugene O'Neill might be "misinterpreted." Further, pictures of a dust storm and a flood did not show America at her "best." Such pictures and writings, it appears, fail to present "the stereotyped ideal of American life."

Worst of all, the Information Agency immediately agreed to drop the book, and while the appropriations measure finally passed makes no specific prohibition of this volume, the circumstances, says the *Times,* "leave the clear implication that the book is not to be used." The editorial concludes with this comment:

> The book itself is not the issue. What is at issue is the effort of a handful of Congressmen to impose a kind of censorship on the U.S.I.A., and their immediate appeasement by an Administration that ought to have learned by now that appeasement on matters of principle doesn't pay. What is also, and most seriously, at issue is the kind of thinking that lay behind this incident: a belief that the United States must not be presented whole to the peoples abroad, but only in a sterilized, cellophane-wrapped version that does as little justice to our vitality and dynamism as it does to our good name and our common sense.

Moving to another controversial area—that of religion and the public schools—there is occasion for qualified enthusiasm for the recent ruling by State Attorney General Edmund G. Brown of California that the Bible may not be

read for religious purposes in public school classes, although it may be read as "literature." Mr. Brown also declared that "religious prayers might not be made a part of the public school curriculum." (New York *Times*, June 13.) The following portion of his statement should be of interest:

> "It is true that the majority of our people are Christians or Jews, so that simple prayers to a Supreme Being would not be incompatible with the views of most students," he declared. "Nevertheless, even atheists and agnostics are protected in their beliefs by the Constitution. . . . In the great ideological struggle in which the world is now engaged enforced conformity of thought is one of the evils against which we fight."

On the question of using the Bible as "literature" in the schools, the *Scottish Rite News Bulletin* for August recalls the comment of a Houston, Texas, rabbi on a similar program which was proposed in 1943. The Jewish leader, Dr. Henry Barnston, said:

> Since the question has come up, I will say I do not think it is possible to teach the Bible merely as history or literature. I do not believe it is possible for any teacher to teach the Bible without injecting personal views. . . .

Thinking this over, we probably should admit that it may be difficult for teachers to be impartial about the Bible, even as literature, and in some areas, quite unlikely. But what ought to be remembered is that if you ban the Bible as literature, you have to ban other scriptures as well, and since some of the greatest literature in the world is in the form of scriptures, the idea of banning them all gets a little ridiculous. So, on this basis, Mr. Brown seems to have done exactly the right thing.

Participants in the eighty-second annual forum of the National Conference for Social Work, held at San Francisco last May, heard some sage comments on desegregation in the schools of the South. Dr. George S. Mitchell of the Southern Regional Conference said that racial desegregation of the South's public schools is inevitable despite bitter resistance in some areas behind "the corn pone curtain." He added that desegregation will be greatly helped along if its supporters refuse to "wobble" on principle, if they arrange neighborhood discussion meetings of whites and Negroes, and if they exert pressure on community officials and leaders. Arthur Altmeyer, president of the National Conference of Social Work, offered these comments (New York *Times*, May 31):

> "The movement away from race segregation in the public schools does not involve simply the negative process of desegregation, but the affirmative process of integration whereby all citizens in the community freely accept and truly benefit by the change". . . .
>
> Mr. Altmeyer asserted that "the peoples of the world are aflame as they grasp the vision of democracy." He said that "the great social changes taking place require greater social responsibility and constant improvement in all areas of society if we are to avoid disaster."
>
> "The status quo," he added, "has ceased to exist and we will cease to exist if we do not realize that simple, universal fact."

In St. Paul, Minn., last June, Dr. Garrett Heyns, warden of the Michigan State Reformatory, added his voice to those of other penologists in advocating a drastic reduction of the prison population. (New York *Times*, June 21.) Fully a third of the country's prisoners, he said, do not belong in prison and could make satisfactory adjustment to society after a brief confinement. He predicted that no more large prisons would be built in the United States, and that there would be increased emphasis on probation and parole.

Dr. Heyns spoke at the annual meeting of the National Probation and Parole Association. He pointed out that prisons cannot be made into a deterrent of crime. All that can be hoped of them is that they may "prevent the recurrence of crime." Meanwhile, a major problem of penologists is the education of the public to overcome hostility to an intelligent program of probation and parole.

At this same meeting, a Chicago director of a juvenile delinquency control project, Charles H. Shireman, spoke of how little is known of the actual cause of the offenses of the young. He told of three conflicting theories:

> One group, he said, believes the cause to be the psychological maladjustment of the individual. Another places the blame on anti-social groups with which the individual is compelled by environmental factors to associate. The third holds that the principal causes are the "major ills in our society."
>
> "To me," Mr. Shireman said, "the refusal of any group to consider more than one supposedly universal answer seems only slightly more sophisticated than the man on the street's demand that we meet the whole problem by 'getting tough.' "

Observing that social maladjustment has many causes, Mr. Shireman added:

> "We know too little either about the human personality or about the world in which we live to scorn the contribution of any profession."

Considering the mood and spirit of these various statements and reports—which might be added to indefinitely—the comparison of the present with other historical periods of the break-up of empires and civilizations is subject to important qualifications. The forces of disintegration and intruding change are obviously upon us, but they are met, if not matched, by vigorous analysis and intelligent good will. Greater problems, and even disaster may be ahead, but these can hardly be the prelude to another Dark Age. A rebirth, rather, appears to be in the making.