VOLUME XII, NO. 24
JUNE 17, 1959

# THE GOOD VERSUS THE GOOD

THE struggle between good and evil, so far as human beings are concerned, is not half so complicated, and often nowhere near so fierce, as the struggle between the good and the good. The question of who or what is good, and what is evil, is of course open to argument, which helps to explain why people ostensibly devoted to the good have such failings-out among themselves; yet you would think that good-doers would be able to get along with one another a little better than they do.

To say that this problem is not new is putting it mildly. In general, human beings have worked out three solutions for meeting it on rational grounds. We hardly need give attention to the irrational solutions, since they are well known. The irrational solutions are called "Absolutism" and "Authoritarianism"; or, when we condemn them unequivocally, we say they are forms of "Tyranny." The rational solutions are usually spoken of as being "democratic." In religion, the rational solution for human differences of opinion is called Congregationalism—"the church polity that makes the authority of the local congregation supreme within its own domain." In politics, it is Constitutionalism, which is the form of government based upon common assumptions of all the participants, which common assumptions are tested in various ways, and may be altered by the process of constitutional amendment.

A third solution—in theory the only complete solution, yet in practice difficult to apply—is Anarchism, under which no man is controlled by another or obliged to accept any definition of what is good except his own. The obvious limitation of anarchism, or what is by most people seen as its limitation, is the inability of men to organize for doing good without violating the independent decisions of some individuals.

The other solutions, termed "democratic," are plainly compromises between some form of absolutism and the anarchist ideal. The argument to be made in defense of congregationalism in religion, for example, is that if we cannot *all* agree on religious truth, let those of us who *can* agree form an association to work together, and the same idea applies in respect to constitutional government. In theory, the men united by a constitution agree to live by the rules set forth in the constitution of their choice.

Two ideas are critical in these compromise solutions. One is the idea of truth, the other is the idea of how truth may be determined.

A group of people who form, say, a religious congregation, may be united by either idea. They may propose that they *have* the truth, and so define the identity of their group. In this case, they have a *creed*, which is supposed to embody, as well as language can, the nature of the truth they agree upon. This form of association is common among Christians.

The other idea is a theory of how truth is to be found. There are many such theories. In this case the rules of the association focus on the common conception of *method*. The Quakers, for example, are united by the doctrine of the Inner Light, which they hold to represent the way, or an important way, in which human beings gain spiritual illumination. The Quakers could hardly tolerate among themselves activities or attitudes which would inhibit or frustrate or deny the working of the inner light in the lives of individuals.

In consequence of this idea, which is essentially one of method in the determination of truth, Quakers tend to be patient with one another, and tolerant of eccentric personalities in their midst. Who knows? This difficult man may be right, according to his light! And his light, just possibly, could be stronger than ours!

A view of this sort naturally sets limits to the kind of projects Quakers can undertake; on the other hand, it may assure a kind of success in the things

they do undertake that could not be obtained in any other way.

There is a direct correspondence between the Quaker outlook and the democratic order in politics. The good, in democratic terms, is not substantive in relation to "truth," but in relation to method. The democratic constitution does not define the final ends of human life. Instead, it defines a form of human association which is supposed to secure to each member the right to define his final ends and to seek them for himself.

It now becomes evident that the sort of association a man will tend to honor depends upon what he thinks is his own relationship with "truth." If he thinks he *has* the truth in explicit terms, he will wish to belong to an association which represents and will protect his version of truth. If, on the other hand, he takes the humbler view that he does not have the truth, but that he at least has an idea of how it is likely to be found, he will associate with those who share his opinions concerning the quest.

So far, the analysis pursued here is abstract. In actuality, nobody, or almost nobody, is able to live entirely by such principles. The Quakers, who in theory reserve the right of final judgment to the individual, tend to expect the inner light to deliver certain common judgments which reflect the ideas of the Christian tradition. The doctrine of the Inner Light was born within the Christian tradition and it puts quite a strain on the Quaker conception of method in religious search to have to suppose that the inner light might make a Buddhist out of a Quaker, as it has in at least one instance! The Quakers themselves are very much aware of this problem and have been considering it recently in their journals.

The parallel limitations of democracy are well known. If a group of men living under a democracy decide that the realization of final ends may be better accomplished by doing away with private property, they encounter much resistance from other men who disagree. The objections those others offer are various. They may argue that the abolition of private property is "against nature," which is a judgment thought to be based on absolute truth, since "nature" is the way things are. Or they may argue that a man's private property is a region of his freedom—take away his property and you take away that much of his freedom, and that much is *too* much, they say, to take away. One of these objections is a claim to know about "truth," the other is a claim about the method of finding the truth, and both are arguable, just as the socialist proposals are arguable. In practice, the argument about such questions often becomes violent, and with violence or war comes a new form of organization—*military* organization—which has really nothing to do with either socialist or capitalist assumptions about property, and which brushes aside both socialist and capitalist assumptions, replacing them with its own. This sort of succession in authority is justified by all sorts of romantic notions, such as, for example, that the validity of the Communist way of life was proved by the valiant defense of Stalingrad in World War II, or that the American capacity to make an atom bomb and win the war with Japan showed the superiority of American culture and free enterprise over lesser breeds and systems.

It is by such means that the issues of the conflict between the good and the good become confused and transformed into issues belonging to the conflict between the good and the evil. Maybe there have been, are, and will be, lines of conflict drawn between authentic good and authentic evil, but the view that we should like to defend here is that such battles present no moral problem, whereas distinguishing, clarifying, and understanding the differences between the good and the good *is* a moral problem, and the essential labor of human beings. To make over this latter problem into a conflict between good and evil is only a way of dodging the issue and evading responsibility.

We do not lack for illustrations of the struggle between the good and the good. Almost the entire history of Christianity is its bloody record. This is not a question only of the conversion of the original Christian inspiration into doctrinal justification for the heavily institutionalized Roman Church of medieval times (and today), and of the Reformation which tore European culture apart, but also of the behavior of men who acted out of a much more

primary moral conviction, as was the case in the conflict between John Calvin and Michael Servetus. That Calvin burned Servetus at the stake with a fire built of *green* boughs, to make the agony of his enemy last longer, is a dark climax in the story of what one Christian reformer felt obliged to do to another Christian reformer, in the name of religious truth and the salvation of mankind.

The religious persecutions of the past have been replaced by political persecutions in our century. The Moscow Trials were a purificatory rite by means of which the Communists who held the "correct" doctrine purged the body of their organization of those who had fallen into incorrect beliefs, and who therefore threatened the future of the "revolutionary" society. Loyalty oaths have a similar role in the United States.

For the most part, persecutions, purges and liquidations are associated with controversies about what is the true doctrine, as distinguished from differences concerning the best method of finding the truth. Arguments about who *has* the truth are almost always much more bitter and violent than arguments about the best way of determining the truth. The man who insists that he *knows,* stakes his life on the assertion, for if he should be wrong he is a "lost soul," in the terms of either religious or political absolutism.

The man of dogma is usually, although not always, a man of violence.

Lesser controversies between the good and the good focus on questions of method. For example, there is in the United States today a relatively small group of people committed to humanitarian objectives as defined by scientific knowledge and with ethical ideals as arrived at by rational investigation. It is a body somewhat similar, one might say, to the Unitarian church. This group is having its problems in determining the best way to pursue its declared purposes. There are doubtless a number of viewpoints on these difficulties, but an analysis we have seen suggests that the members are divided by different theories of progress. One segment, according to this analysis, takes the view that the organization needs to be strengthened by means of intensive cultivation of the members through regular meetings and discussion groups, etc., assisted by careful definition of the outlook represented by the organization. Others are more interested in provocative discussion of contemporary issues, in an endeavor to engage the attention of a wider public for the conceptions shared by the members. Questions of "control" doubtless play a part, with personal qualities and idiosyncrasies contributing their complications, but these oddities human beings always have with them, anyhow, and the question is whether the common ideal is strongly enough conceived to overcome the minor difficulties they present.

The motives of the conservative side in such controversies commonly take the form of a declaration that the organization involved, which is the instrument of good works, must be protected from divisive, weakening or too expansive influences. The ramifications of this problem are endless, but the basic issue is between those who believe that the most good is done by the spread of provocative ideas, and those who think that the identity of the instrument for doing this sort of work is of the greatest importance.

The Unitarians themselves recently went through a soul-searching adjustment on an issue of this character. The question was whether their magazine should retain its name of *Christian Register* or change it to the *Unitarian Register.* This was a far-reaching question, obliging Unitarians to consider whether they are in fact "Christians" in the limiting sense, or "Unitarians" in a more universal religious sense, and not the inheritors and expositors of a single theological tradition. The "Unitarian" sector prevailed in this decision, so that the name of the magazine is now changed, and it is fair to say that the character of the Unitarian Church is itself changing.

During the war, the people calling themselves pacifists suffered schismatic pains, not so much from a weakening of specific pacifist resolve as from obvious differences in the reasons that pacifists were pacifists, and in what they felt they ought to do about it.

The question of how best to conduct a movement devoted to the abolition of war precipitated partisan controversy over what is "true" pacifism and how a "true" pacifist behaves in his opposition to war. Pacifists were sorely tried by this problem. In one case, a secular pacifist leader who engaged in a bold demand for "Peace Now" was warned against by an important Christian pacifist organization which sent out bulletins to its branches throughout the country, explaining that this man's activities were, in the least, injudicious and should not be supported. Conscientious objectors who chose to go to prison and to hunger-strike in prison against what they regarded as gross abuses of the federal prison system were sometimes said by other pacifists to be "neurotic" and not representative of the best in the movement. Then there were others who held that only the conscientious objectors who went to prison could be deemed faithful to the moral commitments inherent in their declared position. It seemed, at times, that mistaken pacifists were held by other pacifists to be more of a menace to the peace movement than Adolf Hitler.

We do not suggest that there are no real problems, here, which could not be dissolved by a more "tolerant" state of mind. The need is rather for recognition that problems of this sort have haunted human activities in behalf of the good ever since those social formations we term "organizations" have existed, and that the righteous certainty exhibited by people who represent organizational viewpoints is usually open to question.

Individual viewpoints and actions in behalf of the good are also open to question, but the point here is a little different. The individual questions his own conscience, not the security of organizational interests. And yet no man who challenges an organizational viewpoint should do so without making sure of what he thinks about the work of organizations and that organization in particular.

A case somewhat in point is the difference among pacifists, today, on the question of whether or not it is "right" to practice an extreme technique of non-violence, known as the *dhurna*. In the *dhurna*, the objector makes his own body an impediment to the progress of what he is objecting to. For example, if a truck filled with supplies for a missile base is coming along a certain road, the practitioner of *dhurna* will place himself in the path of the truck. He thus makes plain the extent of his moral protest against nuclear missiles. He is ready to be crushed or killed by the truck if the driver persists in making his delivery.

One man has already been injured by a truck during a protest of this sort, carried on at the Cheyenne missile base.

If you tell a man intending this sort of action that you are horrified by what he proposes to do, and that he will not be "understood," he may reply that he is horrified by the prospect of nuclear warfare, and by the indifference of Americans to what it means.

If you tell him that Gandhi thought that the dhurna should be used only under desperate circumstances or not at all, he will say that he thinks the situation *is* desperate, and invite you to share his conclusion.

If you tell him that Americans are not yet morally prepared to undertake such measures, that nonviolence presupposes a long course of discipline and study, he will reply that *he* feels prepared, and, in the circumstances, who can tell him he is not?

What is really at issue in all such controversies is the question of the relation between organizational stances and individual attitudes and actions. The best recent discussion of this problem that we know of is that found in Simone Weil's provocative book, *The Need for Roots*. In the section called "The Needs of the Soul," she wrote:

> Generally speaking, all problems having to do with freedom of expression are clarified if it is posited that this freedom is a need of the intelligence, and that the intelligence resides solely in the human being, individually considered. There is no such thing as a collective exercise of the intelligence. . . .
>
> In fact the opposite applies. Protection of freedom of thought requires that no group should be permitted by law to express an opinion. For when a group starts having opinions, it inevitably tends to impose them on its members. Sooner or later, these individuals find themselves debarred, with a greater or lesser degree of severity, and on a number of problems of greater or lesser importance, from

> expressing opinions opposed to those of the group, unless they care to leave it. But a break with any group to which one belongs always involves suffering—at any rate of a sentimental kind. And just as danger, exposure to suffering are healthy and necessary elements in the sphere of action, so they are unhealthy influences in the exercise of the intelligence. A fear, even a passing one, always provokes either a weakening or a tautening, depending upon the degree of courage, and that is all that is required to damage the extremely delicate and fragile instrument of precision that constitutes our intelligence. Even friendship is from this point of view, a great danger. The intelligence is defeated as soon as the expression of one's thoughts is preceded, explicitly or implicitly, by the little word "we." And when the light of the intelligence grows dim, it is not very long before the love of the good becomes lost.
>
> The immediate, practical solution would be the abolition of political parties.

There is tremendous importance in what Simone Weil has to say, in relation to the illegitimacy of "group" opinions. She does add the following, however:

> A distinction ought to be drawn between two sorts of associations: those concerned with interests, where organization and discipline would be countenanced up to a certain point, and those concerned with ideas, where such things would be strictly forbidden. . . . Associations in which ideas are being canvassed should be not so much associations as more or less fluid social mediums. When some action is contemplated within them, there is no reason why it need be put into execution by any persons other than those who approve of it.

Reflection on the familiar historical causes of conflict between the good and the good, and on the conception of individual freedom of expression as stated by Simone Weil, should be of help in comparing the relative values of organizational reputation, group views of "truth" and righteousness in action, on the one hand, and independent, individual thought and action, on the other. If it were possible to reshape popular ideas about the role of organizations, bringing them more into harmony with the thinking of Simone Weil, the friction between people holding different ideas of the good would be greatly reduced, and the standing of groups, no longer resting on the question of whether or not they possess "the truth," could no longer be jeopardized by the dissident actions of individuals. As for dissident *thought,* it would not exist

# *REVIEW*
## "THE GREAT CAR FIGHT"

A FANTASY Of this title, by Michael O'Connell, contributed to the April 2 *Reporter*, must have afforded a good deal of pleasure to its writer. It is a parody on the bull ring, in which the matadors engage the fiercest and the largest of contemporary automobiles in the Los Angeles Coliseum. The preliminary description runs:

> Joelito flew into Los Angeles the morning of the fight and went immediately to his hotel room to rest. He had not slept for two nights and still limped from a *cornada* received the week before in Boston when an apparently stalled *carro* had suddenly charged and run over his right foot. Shortly after noon George ("Jorge"), his old friend and sword handler, awakened him.
>
> "How are the cars?" asked Joelito.
>
> Jorge frowned and made a wide gesture. "Big as cathedrals."
>
> Joelito shrugged, his young face impassive. "They always are."

Well, it is quite a battle. Joelito's rival almost gets himself killed stabbing through the hood to the distributor of one tail-finned monster:

> When the trumpet sounded for E1 Fenomeno's last *carro*, his face turned ashen. The only way he could top Joelito was to get himself killed, and from the looks of the behemoth across the ring that was going to be a cinch. The result of decades of inbreeding on the testing grounds of Detroit, it was a wide-screen nightmare with fourteen headlights, Moby Dick tailfins rising to needle points, and baroque grillwork so massive that the front tires mushed along permanently flattened.
>
> It emitted a feral blast from its horns and charged straight across the ring, crashed through the barrier, plowed thirty feet under the stands, reversed itself through the debris, roared along the same path back across the ring, and did the same thing on the other side. The fact struck Joelito and E1 Fenomeno simultaneously. This was the carfighter's dream, a *carro* that ran on rails, straight as a train.
>
> Indeed, as the brute thundered across the ring for the third time, they perceived that it couldn't turn. The ability to corner had been eliminated.

Enough of the gory details, save that the families of the two bullfighters receive their posthumous awards—the two halves of the last *carro*—which is quite an idea, since, as Mr. O'Connell suggests, in this way "one would have a *carro* that might not be too big for people to ride in."

The debate about Big cars and Little cars has, as previously noted in MANAS, been taking on a variety of psychological and even philosophical overtones. The Winter *ETC. (A Review of General Semantics)* reviews on this subject John Keats' volume, *The Insolent Chariots* (Lippincott, $3.95). The reviewer, Mr. Geoffrey Wagner, is caustic:

> The automobile, Hayakawa has written, "is certainly one of the most important nonlinguistic symbols in American culture." In a sense it is even more than this: it is a paradigm of technological "advance," of the movement to regard man as analogue of the machine that lies at the very heart of our culture and is essentially responsible for extremism in its forms.
>
> Automobilism has reached that stage of what Thorstein Veblen called "aesthetic nausea" in our country, when "the new style must conform to the requirement of reputable wastefulness and futility." The new Orgy Eight, in short, is committed to that hilarious hodge-podge of built-in futility one sees adorning the 1959[model] simply because of the tyranny of technological "advance."

Mr. Keats is particularly concerned with exposing the psychology of automobile advertisements. In a chapter called "The Ad and the Id," he says:

> The Buick Company, for instance, says that driving a Buick "makes you feel like the man you are"—which is just another way of saying we can't distinguish between illusion and reality, but that buying a Buick will create in our misty minds the *illusion* that we *really are* what we *really are.*

There have been several reports, none of them presently available to us, on the possible invasion of the American automobile market by the Russians. The Soviets are said to be able to make a durable and efficient small car which will import for approximately eight hundred dollars, and function as well as cars from other countries costing double this amount. The rumor is that an effort to market this

car in the U.S. will be part of a Communist plan to demonstrate the superiority of state-controlled production; that while the sale of these cars will be a financial loss to the Soviets, a tremendous gain in prestige will result. After all, they *can* do this if they wish to, without disrupting their economy, while no capitalist entrepreneur could do the same.

On the other hand, an attractive feature of the Soviet approach to automobiling is the established practice of requiring each operator to pass a test in mechanics before obtaining a license. Each Russian car comes equipped with tools and each Russian citizen who wishes to drive must not only know how to use them, but must understand the function of the equipment. On this aspect of the matter, we are prepared to welcome an imitation of the Soviets, for it seems to us that the ominous death rate from automobile accidents in the United States has a great deal to do with plain driver ignorance and ineptitude.

> Summarizing the results of studies undertaken by the National Public Health Service, Daniel Moynihan shows in the April 2 *Reporter* that speed has much less to do with highway fatality than is assumed by law enforcement agencies, usually on "the unspoken assumption that the legal speed limits somehow define the safe speeds." Mr. Moynihan writes:
>
> This is not true. John O. Moore, director of Automotive Crash Injury Research at Cornell University, has reported in the *American Journal of Public Health* that "Approximately 74 per cent of the cars involved in injury-producing accidents were traveling at speeds under 60 mph. . . . Complete and absolutely controlled top speed limits would afford relatively limited reduction in the expectancy of dangerous or fatal injuries in injury-producing accidents; strict maintenance of a top traveling speed of 49 mph would still have seen the occurrence of 60 per cent of the dangerous or fatal injuries." Dr. R. Arnold Griswold, chairman of the Subcommittee on Traffic Injury Prevention of the American College of Surgeons, reports that two thirds of road deaths occur at speeds under fifty miles an hour. And the United States Bureau of Public Roads recently found that more accidents occur on highgrade roads in open country at thirty-five miles an hour than at any other speed.

Yes, the problem is the driver. Mr. Moynihan continues:

> One problem in dealing with such statistics is that the public does not really understand what constitutes speed in an automobile. Anyone who has stood on the bridge of a ship doing fifteen knots realizes that he is streaking through the water. But the lady motorist, cool and comfy on the soft divan of her new hardtop convertible, completely cut off from all vibrations and outside sounds, feels that she is practically standing still at fifteen miles an hour. If she came to a sudden stop against a telephone pole she would find out how fast fifteen miles an hour is—if she lived, that is. Incidentally Mr. Moore of Cornell found only slight increases in frequency of dangerous or fatal injury in speeds ranging from zero to fifty-nine miles an hour.

One of the most effective arguments for the small foreign car, in our opinion, is that, so far, these vehicles require the operator to learn how to drive them. You shift frequently in these cars, making you aware of your increases in speed; you hear enough to let you know that something is going on under the hood or the rear deck which obviously increases your velocity. So, putting all the Big Ones in the bull ring and fighting it out with them, hand to hand, may be a good way of arriving at the "moment of truth."

# *COMMENTARY*
## LIMBO OF THE PRESENT

IT is an interesting phenomenon of present-day radical politics, that as realization of the goal of actual power becomes less and less of a possibility, socialist expression becomes increasingly civilized—that is, concerned directly with human values. It is as though the qualities of the Renaissance Man, which are always present at the beginning of a revolutionary movement, invariably get lost in the political struggle, and are reborn, not from success, but from failure.

Attracted by the first offering of Prometheus Books, a paperback book club, we subscribed, and have now received three well-printed volumes—C. Wright Mills' *The Power Elite;* a book about Dr. Norman Bethune, *The Scalpel, The Sword,* by Ted Allen and Sidney Gordon; and Doris Lessing's *Retreat to Innocence.* We also get a little magazine called *Promethean Review,* which comes with the books. In the second issue of the *Review* is an article which quotes Doris Lessing on the responsibilities of the writer, and what Miss Lessing says touches on questions which have been so much in our minds that we wish we had written these parapraphs:

> Once a writer has a feeling of responsibility, as a human being, for the other human beings he influences, it seems to me he must become a humanist, and must feel himself as an instrument of change for good or for bad. . . . If a writer accepts this responsibility, he must see himself, to use the socialist phrase, as an architect of the soul, and it is a phrase which none of the old nineteenth-century novelists would have shied away from. . . .
>
> The literary products of the socialist third of the world can scarcely be said to lack optimism. Any one who has studied them is familiar with that jolly, jaunty, curiously unemotional novel about the collective farm, the factory, the five-year plan, which is reminiscent of nothing so much as of a little boy whistling in the dark. . . .
>
> Meanwhile, the best and most vital works of Western literature have been despairing statements of emotional anarchy. If the typical product of communist literature during the last two decades is the cheerful little tract about economic advance then the type of Western literature is the novel or play one sees or reads with a shudder or horrified pity for all humanity. If writers like Camus, Sartre, Genet, Beckett, feel anything but a tired pity for human beings, then it is not evident from their work.
>
> I believe that the pleasurable luxury of despair, the acceptance of disgust, is as much a betrayal of what a writer should be as the acceptance of the simple economic view of man; both are aspects of cowardice, both fallings-away from a central vision, the two easy escapes of our time into a false innocence. They are the opposite sides of the same coin. One sees man as the isolated individual unable to communicate, helpless and solitary; the other as collective man with a collective conscience. Somewhere between these two, I believe, is a resting-point, a place of decision, hard to reach and precariously balanced. It is a balance which must be continuously tested and reaffirmed. Living in the midst of this whirlwind of change, it is impossible to make final judgments or absolute statements of value. The point of rest should be at the writer's recognition of man, the responsible individual, voluntarily submitting his will to the collective, but never finally; and insisting on making his own personal and private judgments before every act of submission.

Doris Lessing is said to be "the best of the Angry Young Men," and her book, *Retreat to Innocence,* is said to be concerned with "whether love is greater than politics." Perhaps so. We can hardly judge among the Angry Young Men, having read but little of them, but Miss Lessing's book, which we have read, is certainly spread upon a larger canvas than this phrase implies. It is the story of a brief love affair between a young English girl and a tired and disillusioned European radical who is living in England. The radical is a writer whose books are now becoming "popular" in his homeland, yet he hesitates to go back without the security of a passport which will enable him to leave, should he want to. Meanwhile, the English won't make him a citizen, but trespass upon his life with nosy little questions about his past and his present political opinions.

The book is the portrait of people who are lost in a twilit interlude lying between epochs of positive meaning. There is the man who knows

the revolutionary past, cherishes its courage and its sacrifices, and feels little more than contempt for the indifferent inheritors of what the past achieved. And there is the girl who has never experienced the past, dislikes its memory, and only faintly intuits what was great in the human beings who had a part in it, through her love for the radical. Nothing is resolved. What happens, must happen. The book engages the sympathies of the reader and conveys a little of the sensibility of European radicalism—something most Americans have never experienced at all.

*Retreat to Innocence* is a warm, compassionate work about the agony of a man who is filled with good but is impotent to give it play, and who cannot enjoy merely private pleasures and benefits, even if he should accept them, which he cannot; and about a lovely girl who is blind to the life of principle which is the man's heart, and which she can not share, and certainly not possess.

Many more such books should be written, to restore human understanding of the moral issues in the radical movement, and to supply an objective setting for study of the time in which we live.

The address of Prometheus Books is 100 West 23rd Street, New York 11, N.Y

# CHILDREN
## . . . and Ourselves

THE COLLEGE TEACHER

WE are indebted to the *St. Lawrence University Bulletin* for a special report (April, 1959) concerned with the economic and other predicaments of university instructors and professors. The authors of this report believe that "most teachers teach because they love their jobs," and that it is dedication to the work of teaching which assures continuance of a Higher Learning, making it a matter of public importance to recognize the extent to which teachers and teachers' families suffer economic discrimination. We quote:

> "In a generation," says Seymour E. Harris, the distinguished Harvard economist, "the college professor has lost 50 per cent in economic status as compared to the average American. His real income has declined substantially, while that of the average American has risen by 70-80 percent."
>
> Figures assembled by the American Association of University Professors show how seriously the college teacher's economic standing has deteriorated. Since 1939, according to the AAUP's latest study (published in 1958), the purchasing power of lawyers rose 34 per cent, that of dentists 54 per cent, and that of doctors 98 per cent. But at the five state universities surveyed by the AAUP, the purchasing power of teachers in all ranks rose only 9 per cent. And at twenty-eight privately controlled institutions, the purchasing powers of teachers' salaries *dropped* by 8.5 per cent. While nearly everybody else in the country was gaining ground spectacularly, teachers were losing it.
>
> The AAUP's sample, it should be noted, is not representative of all colleges and universities in the United States and Canada. The institutions it contains are, as the AAUP says, "among the better colleges and universities in the country in salary matters." For America as a whole, the situation is even worse.

In physics, according to a vice chancellor of UCLA, a university has little chance of attracting brilliant Ph.D.'s. The most that UCLA can offer the holder of a doctorate is fifty-five hundred dollars per year, whereas industry will take the young Ph.D.'s without any experience, at between eight and twelve thousand dollars per annum. A women's college dean pointed out to one of the writers of this special report a woman just then leaving the office as one of the best of the college's young teachers; yet she had just decided to leave, and was barely persuaded to withhold her decision until the results of an alumnae drive for money were known. All of this fund was openly earmarked for salary increases in the hope of keeping some of the most capable teachers.

Now, we ourselves have difficulty in believing that a teacher who loves to teach must worry seriously about family deprivations on a salary of fifty-five hundred dollars a year. A university community is usually a good environment for raising children, especially for the family interested in the values of good learning opportunities, cultural background, etc. Moreover, professors or instructors, unlike most professional men, can spend a great deal of time with their children, whether the children are young or in the process of maturing. This, of itself, can be a priceless benefit. Further, frequent vacations and the fairly long summer interim make possible family planning on an extensive scale. Of course, we are assuming that a teacher who really desires to teach in a liberal arts college is apt to believe that too much money isn't good for children, anyway. Most colleges have excellent health insurance plans, and the campus town gives a fair chance for the employment of teenagers. But perhaps the advantages of college teaching as a profession would be more apparent to faculty members if they received the respect which a democratic society should be eager to show them. President J. Seelye Bixler of Colby College is quoted in the *St. Lawrence* report on this point:

> Let us cultivate a teacher-centered point of view. There is tragedy as well as truth in the old saying that in Europe when you meet a teacher you tip your hat, whereas over here you tap your head. Our debt to our teachers is very great, and fortunately we are beginning to realize that we must make some attempt

to balance the account. Money and prestige are among the first requirements.

Most important is independence. Too often we sit back with the comfortable feeling that our teachers have all the freedom they desire. We forget that the payoff comes in times of stress. Are we really willing to allow them independence of thought when a national emergency is in the offing? Are we ready to defend them against all pressure groups and to acknowledge their right to act as critics of our customs, our institutions, and even our national policy? Evidence abounds that for some of our more vociferous compatriots this is too much. They see no reason why such privileges should be offered or why a teacher should not express his patriotism in the same outworn and often irrelevant shibboleths they find so dear and so hard to give up. Surely our educational task has not been completed until we have persuaded them that a teacher should be a pioneer, a leader, and at times a nonconformist with a recognized right to dissent. As Howard Mumford Jones has observed, we can hardly allow ourselves to become a nation proud of *machines* that think and suspicious of any *man* who tries to.

A contributing cause to weakened morale among good teachers is the fact that the formal possession of a Ph.D. accords the professor a social status, even though he be an inferior or inadequate teacher. W. R. Dennes, former dean of the graduate school of the University of California at Berkeley, remarks that the young teacher who hasn't been able to finance a Ph.D. is apt to find only the poorest of teaching opportunities. This condition will last, in Dennes' opinion, "until universities have the courage . . . to select men very largely on the quality of work they have done and soft-pedal this matter of degrees."

William James, in a paper called "The Ph.D. Octopus," fifty-six years ago argued that the conception of formal status in "the higher learning" militates against intellectual excellence. Somewhere, somehow, we hope that a college or university will begin to experiment with the hiring of men and women who can demonstrate genuine effectiveness in teaching—regardless of whether they possess Ph.D.'s or M.A.'s. It seems ridiculous to claim that no means can be devised for making such selections. It is likely that adult education discussion groups in every city could bring to light persons of natural teaching talents and enthusiasms— not many, perhaps, but a few with each passing year.

# *FRONTIERS*

## South African Dilemmas

[The communication printed below is a response to the "Letter from Africa" by Mrs. Corrie van den Bos which appeared in MANAS for May 6. At the conclusion of this reader's remarks we have added some notes on South African affairs which have come in a more recent letter from Mrs. van den Bos.—Editors.]

I have just finished reading the "Letter from Africa" by Corrie van den Bos and am moved to comment. While I have lived in South Africa and know of the admittedly difficult decisions which face the whites, and while I admire this writer's sentiments that South Africans must "build together, not destroy each other," her analysis of how to go about this seems to me to fall short.

To begin with, the division of white South African opinion into three divisions—two small extremes and a "larger than is usually realized" middle group filled with goodwill and tolerance—is unduly optimistic. After all, the Nationalist Party majority in both houses must somehow reflect popular opinion. Lacking better evidence, we must take the public utterances of members of Parliament as reliable clues and motives to Afrikaans intentions. There is, at the same time, nothing to indicate that United Party members and supporters are concerned with safeguarding anything but that which they already have. True, there are occasional dissenters within both parties, but they are paralyzed and made helpless by lack of any significant sympathy among the voters.

Attention should be called to a number of rather important factors which contribute to the putrification of South African race relations. There is, for example, a fabulous gold-bearing reef which runs some fifty miles across the Transvaal. In spite of highly mechanized techniques of mining, extracting, and refining the gold, a great amount of human labor is still necessary. As long as the purchase of gold is fixed at a price dictated by foreign governments, workers will have little to say in wage control. Gold, after all, is not an ordinary commodity which can be bought and sold by individuals. The 250,000 African workers who mine gold on the Rand can agitate all they please; it takes nine of them one day to process one ounce of gold (Rand Chamber of Commerce estimate), and the price of that ounce remains fixed at $36. But the importance of the mineral extends beyond those immediately involved in its production—in South Africa, it has an influence on all commercial activities. And commerce happens to be the particular domain of the urbanized, English-speaking white South Africans. The aims of members of a commercial society should be familiar to us—to get rich and to own plenty of things; also involved is a certain degree of freedom, not the least of which is the freedom to manipulate others. This is why, when I was in high school in Cape Town, I was told to be proud of living in a democracy.

The Afrikaans agricultural utopia ended more than seventy years ago. But the dream of its renascence is powerfully felt today. Perhaps the passion for land is no longer as strong as it was—but those collective qualities which made of the Afrikaaners one people continue to manifest themselves—a belief in divine guidance and a holy mission, a phobia of strangers, a stubborness blind to what most other humans admit to be true. Theirs is a brutal idealism which finds common ground with the more flexible opportunism of English-speaking South Africans in the subjugation of all non-Europeans. It is easy to diagnose the collective Afrikaans myth as a pathological trait. What can we do about it, since they are so strongly entrenched? Certainly more than just wait until they be quarantined in a big isolation ward in that mental hospital in the sky.

The tenor of non-European opinion also deserves attention. Will Africans, Cape Coloureds, and Indians "wait until they are ready" for participation in the decisions which concern them? Perhaps some will: the women who have never left the reserves; the migrants who are confused by the chaos of towns, the harsh patterns

of their masters' authority, the material precariousness of life. Perhaps these are the elements which contribute to that "fate will decide" attitude Mrs. van den Bos finds common. But what about those non-Europeans who are no longer unaware of white instability, unpredictability, brutality, and cruel self-interest? Must they accept with docility the desperate frustration which comes of living in feudal halls with no exit? The pious "weighing the pros and cons . . . and consulting conscience" come too late and in too small a dose. Recommendations for patience and sincerity are admirable, but left alone they become anachronistic. South Africa is no longer a little, isolated world. Our own conscience is also involved in it.

READER

Yellow Springs, Ohio

---

Following are portions of a press report which quotes statements from Prof. D. W. Kruger, of Potchefstroom University:

> "South Africa will be a republic in twenty years, but ex-chief Albert Luthuli, not Verwoerd, might be the first president.
>
> "The Government is losing the support of the young Afrikaaners, who are not concerned with events of the past, but with the South Africa of the future. Apartheid can work only in the form of a federation in which the political franchise is open to all races.
>
> "The Coloureds and Indians must immediately be placed on the common voters' roll.
>
> "Economic integration is not a policy; it is a fact—and has been so since the Voortrekkers introduced squatter labour.
>
> "Skin colour is *not* important; but Western values are, for they have enriched the world.
>
> "I accuse the Government of a lack of consistency in carrying out its own policy."
>
> These are important declarations. It must be granted to the Calvinists that when their conscience is aroused, they are not afraid of anybody, only of God.

Another decisive development is the emergence of a rebel among the Nationalist M.P.'s. Mr. Japie Basson, from South West Africa, has objected strongly to abolition of the Bantu representatives. He was first heard on this question in the party caucus and he will undoubtedly repeat his views in the Assembly.

One must hope that these evidences of awakening do not come too late. The (official) turning-point may be reached in the results of the provincial elections. There is great dissatisfaction among the workers, and responsibility for present unemployment is laid at the door of the Minister of Labour, who is a brother-in-law of Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd. This feeling is sure to find expression at the polls.

CORRIE VAN DEN BOS

Johannesburg, South Africa