

TWO NATIONAL LEADERS

IT is refreshing to read the words of a leader of a great, national state who readily admits that he has no particular clarity on the problems of the world, who feels free to examine the clashing ideologies of the time without either anxiety or prejudice, and whose major conclusion is that, today, only ethical conduct is *practical* conduct.

We hardly need say that Prime Minister Nehru is the man responsible for these utterances. They are found in a paper originally written in the form of a letter which he circulated among his friends. These readers thought the letter should have wider circulation and persuaded him to allow its publication in the journal of the Indian Congress Party. Believing the Indian statesman's views to have both news value and general interest, the New York *Times* published the letter in the *Times* Sunday magazine section for Sept. 7.

Unlike some other national leaders who seem to think that the troubles of the world are mainly caused by nations committed to evil, Nehru seeks a better explanation:

The old civilizations, with the many virtues that they possess, have obviously proved inadequate. The new Western civilization, with all its triumphs and achievements, and also with its atomic bombs, also appears inadequate and, therefore, the feeling grows that there is something wrong with our civilization. Indeed, essentially our problems are those of civilization itself.

In Nehru's view, we, no more than ancient peoples, can answer the question: "What is the meaning of life?"

The conquest of the physical world by technology has eliminated many of the hazards and limitations confronting the peoples of past times. "Man need no longer be the victim of external circumstances, at any rate to a very large extent." Yet our modern technological society reveals man as incapable of ordering his existence:

Conquering the physical world, he fails to conquer himself.

That is the tragic paradox of this atomic and sputnik age. The fact that nuclear tests continue, even though it is well recognized that they are very harmful in the present and in the future; the fact that all kinds of weapons of mass destruction are being produced and piled up, even though it is universally recognized that their use may well exterminate the human race, brings out this paradox with startling clarity.

Again, unlike American statesmen, who practice conventional piety as though their life (their political life, doubtless) depended upon it, Mr. Nehru makes candid appraisal of the role of religion in the modern world:

Religion, as practiced, either deals with matters rather unrelated to our normal lives, and thus adopts an ivory-tower attitude, or is allied to certain social usages which do not fit in with the present age. Rationalism, on the other hand, with all its virtues somehow appears to deal with the surface of things, without uncovering the inner core. Science itself has arrived at a stage where vast new possibilities loom ahead.

Mr. Nehru speaks in simple generalities. They are, however, extremely pertinent generalities. He makes the intelligent sort of summary of our time which any thoughtful private citizen ought to be able to make. The interesting thing, here, is that his role in the national politics of India does not inhibit the free expression of his thinking in the least. He charges religion with the perpetuation of superstition and social usages which "overwhelmed the real spirit of religion," finally bringing disillusionment. He writes as freely about Communism as he does about other matters:

Communism comes in the wake of this disillusionment and offers some kind of faith and some kind of discipline. To some extent it fills a vacuum. It succeeds, in some measure, by giving a

content to man's life. But, in spite of its apparent success, it fails, partly because of its rigidity, but even more so because it ignores certain essential needs in human nature.

There is much talk in communism of the contradictions of capitalist society, and there is truth in that analysis. But we see the growing contradictions within the rigid framework of communism itself. Its suppression of individual freedom brings about powerful reactions. Its contempt for what might be called the moral and spiritual side of life not only ignores something that is basic in man but also deprives human behavior of standards and values. Its unfortunate association with violence encourages a certain evil tendency in human beings. . . . Its language is of violence, its thought is violent and it does not seek to change by persuasion or peaceful, democratic pressures, but by coercion and, indeed, by destruction and extermination. . . . This is completely opposed to the peaceful approach which Gandhi taught us. Communists, as well as anti-communists, both seem to imagine that a principle can be stoutly defended only by the language of violence, and by condemning those who do not accept it. For both of them there are no shades; there is only black and white. That is the old approach of the bigoted aspect of some religions.

Mr. Nehru points out not only the wrong of violence, but its futility as well: "The basic thing, I believe, is that wrong means will not lead to right results, and that is no longer merely an ethical doctrine."

The world, he suggests, suffers from lack of a philosophical approach. Concerning democracy and socialism, he says:

Democracy and socialism are means to an end, not the end itself. We talk of the good of society. Is this something apart from, and transcending, the good of the individuals composing it? The touchstone ... should be how far any political or social theory enables the individual to rise above his petty self and think in terms of the good of all.

The law of life should not be the competition of acquisitiveness but cooperation, the good of each contributing to the good of all. In such a society, the emphasis will be on duties, not on rights; the rights will follow the performance of the duties. We have to give a new direction to education and evolve a new type of humanity.

Mr. Nehru speaks of the idea "that everything has a spark of what might be called the divine impulse, or the basic energy of the life force which pervades the universe." He continues:

I do not propose to discuss these metaphysical aspects, but every argument indicates how the mind searches for something basic and underlying the physical world. If we really believed in this all-pervading concept of the principle of life, it might help us to get rid of some of our narrowness of race, caste or class and make us more tolerant and understanding in our approaches to life problems.

Turning to immediate problems, the Prime Minister makes critical examination of capitalism, showing that it has been leavened by socializing influences. He then proceeds to an analysis of socialism. His conclusion, here, is that political ideologies and systems are not magical—they perform no miracles:

It is clear that, in the final analysis, it is the quality of the human beings that counts. It is man that builds up the wealth of a nation, as well as its cultural progress. Hence, education and health are of high importance so as to produce that quality in human beings.

India, he points out, has to find its own way, evolve its own system, suited to its own conditions. He ends:

In considering these economic aspects of our problems, we have always to remember the basic approach of peaceful means; and perhaps we might also keep in view the old pedantic ideal of the life force which is the inner base of everything that exists.

It seems no exaggeration to say that Mr. Nehru is one of the few real statesmen on the present-day scene. What is a real statesman? He must be many things, but first of all he is a man who is able to recognize the limit of what can be accomplished through politics and who feels free to speak of that limit. Politics, one might say, is the art of releasing the energies of the people in a constructive direction. But if the energies are lacking, politics is impotent. Mr. Nehru is careful to return the non-political problems to the people, where they belong. He experiences no reluctance in telling the people that it is their quality which

counts, not his own, or his party's, competence to do them good. This is fundamental honesty. A leader who fails to make such facts clear to the public is betraying them with false promises. We have not had a statesman of Mr. Nehru's calibre in the United States for a long, long time.

India has another political leader—one who has for the time being left politics—who is just as outspoken, although in another way. Jayaprakash Narayan gave up his role as the active head of the Socialist Party of India several years ago to work with Vinoba Bhave in the Bhoodan movement. Lately he has been expressing himself on the traditional forms of Western political democracy. In an address delivered last March in Bombay (printed in the *Radical Humanist* for June 15), he said that parliamentary democracy "may be a government with the consent of the people, but it is not a government by the people." Mr. Narayan's comments may, like some of the things said by Mr. Nehru, seem "obvious," yet he refuses to accept the prevailing forms of democracy simply because they exist. He says:

Under such a system [parliamentary democracy] political parties are formed and *the parliamentary democratic system becomes inevitably a party system*. Either we have a two-party system which we have more or less in the English-speaking countries, or we have a multi-party system which we have in Western Europe, particularly in France and Germany.

The idea of a one-party system is foreign to parliamentary democracy. There must be at least two parties—one in government and one in opposition—or more than two parties. Political parties no doubt rise from the people. No doubt, they have their own following among the people, but yet they are not the people. Every political party claims to represent the interests of the people better than every other political party. *Out of this party system we get party machines which are highly centralised*—party machines which have their own funds and their own means of propaganda. The people are given the opportunity to elect their representatives but as a result of the working of the party system these choices which are given to the people become very much limited. When there are highly organised parties with funds, highly publicised leaders and so on, it is very difficult for independents to win elections and in all organised

parliamentary democratic systems the number of independents fighting elections is very small. *The choice of the people in the selection of their representatives is limited by virtue of the fact that political parties which are organised set up candidates and the people merely have to select them*. As a result, elections for a poor country like ours have become very costly and everyone is conscious of it. But yet no solution is found. No doubt, there are certain fixed limits to the expenditure which a candidate might incur. But you all know that the rule is observed more in the breach than in practice. When elections become so expensive is it possible for the people to exercise their choice in the selection of their representatives? Parties with large funds organise and manage elections and win the people's votes. Has a poor candidate any chance of winning an election under these conditions? Has a poor man's party any chance? These are serious defects which it is necessary for us to consider.

In the opinion of Mr. Narayan, such arrangements are not good enough for the twentieth century. You can hear the tired sighs of the worldly-wise who believe that nothing can be done about these things. But the worldly-wise are never innovators. What we have to remember is that we live in a revolutionary epoch. Revolutions come about through the actions of men who are determined to do something about things which other men have let go, thinking them inevitable. A lot of people thought that war is inevitable. Well, Gandhi did something about war. He did not stop war, but he may have greatly reduced war already, for all we know. He may have spread about a temper which is already having tangible effect all over the world. A great number of people, comparatively, are vociferously against war. They speak against it, campaign against it, demonstrate against it, all the time. They are already a factor in the making of popular attitudes. Who knows how many lives will end naturally, instead of in violence, as a result of Gandhi's labors?

Two hundred years ago, many conservative, orthodox people thought that self-government—what we now call parliamentary democracy—was a ridiculous, even a dangerous, idea. But parliamentary democracy was *an idea whose time*

had come. Now we are hearing from other men who have still other "revolutionary" ideas. Today, India is making a new beginning with democracy. Why shouldn't Indian leaders try to start afresh, profiting by the mistakes or weaknesses of others? Jayaprakash Narayan went to school in the United States. While he was here an American University conducted a survey which disclosed that "17% of the citizens did not know who their President was." This sounds unbelievable, and Mr. Narayan thinks we have since bettered this situation. But his point is that the party system makes for neglect of individual responsibility. "I am sure," he says, "that Bombay has its own Tammany Hall, a few political bosses manipulating corruption and all kinds of nepotism." He continues:

I should like to ask you whether in a centralised order of society democracy has much of a chance. Pandit Nehru or Mr. Macmillan or Mr. Eisenhower may be a democrat and a good democrat at heart. But *the whole of the social organisation is such that power is concentrated in a few centers.* How could it be possible, in spite of their best feelings, for democrats to function as democrats or to give their people a democratic way of life? As all of you know, the trend is more and more toward statism. . . . *The vital decisions in a centralised society are taken by a few people, decisions which affect the lives of millions of people. Would you call that democracy?*

...

In a few words, Jayaprakash Narayan makes his position clear:

You will ask then what is to be done? I should like all of you friends to think about it. What is to be done? *There is one attitude of mind which resigns itself to the so-called forces of society.* There are these social forces at work, there is no use swimming against the current, pitting ourselves against the trend of events—all these things are going to happen and let us try to save democracy as much as possible. *The other view is that there are certain objectives, certain aims and values in life which one is not prepared to compromise.* Each one is prepared to fight for them in the extremest circumstances. Such an attitude of mind is a revolutionary attitude. . . .

I am pleading not only for an economic change, a social change or a political change, but a change in the entire outlook on life, in the fundamental

valued of life. . . . This is a change in the inside of us—the inner change that is necessary for the development of democracy, for the development of a society in which coercion, outward coercion, has been reduced to the minimum. A fully democratic society is a society in which there is no outward coercion.

This is what Jayaprakash is saying to the Indian people after twenty years of activity in Indian politics. We shall probably wait a long time before we get the kind of democratic society he is talking about. But that is not the point. The point is that we are beginning to get leaders in the world who are willing to settle for nothing less.

The difficulties which stand in the way of getting such a society are legion. But we cannot let these difficulties blind us to the fact that this man is speaking the truth. What he says about party politics, about centralized power, about vital decisions being made by a handful of people—it is all exactly true. It doesn't matter much what kind of politics people have if they are unwilling to recognize the truth. And it follows that they will get better politics than they have now only by recognizing the truth. If Mr. Narayan ever returns to public affairs, it will be interesting to see how he is received by the voters. For he is a man determined to scale political decision to a size or shape where individuals can make the decisions for themselves. Right now, this seems practically impossible. It is certainly impossible for the people of the modern power State. Obviously, one of the things Mr. Narayan intends is the abolition of the modern power State. We wish him well.

There is of course some contrast between the statements of these two Indian leaders. Mr. Nehru is the head of the Indian State and of the incumbent Congress Party. On this basis, the freedom of his expression speaks well for the Indian people, who have not yet confined their political representatives to the repetition of slogans and chauvinistic clichés. Mr. Narayan, on the other hand, is a leader without office and a member of the "opposition," so far as Indian

politics is concerned. Narayan looks to the future with an unqualified idealism. His conceptions of the good Society are really trans-political—political only in the sense that they have to do with the *polis*, the human community. He preaches a politics without expediency, something altogether new for the modern world.

If, out of Asia, so heavily burdened with problems, can come this bright integrity and unhampered vision, there is reason to look forward to a rebirth of social idealism at a new level of human aspiration for all the world.

Letter from the UN

GENEVA.—A friend remarked some time ago that working in the Palais des Nations in Geneva is "like travelling in a first-class cabin on a sinking ship." This comment supports a view to which I came several years ago, that the bitterness of criticism of the UN one encounters is in direct proportion to the closeness of association of the critic. If you are outside, you can ignore it if you like; if you are inside, you will tend to develop a strong critical sense simply because, of course, you can't ignore it.

It used to be said of the League of Nations that it lived on paper. The UN does, too. One is confused and overwhelmed by the constant flow of paper. But releases, reports notwithstanding, since coming to Geneva ten weeks ago, when I began a two-year assignment in Europe, I have observed that UN public servants I have met are a disciplined, serious and responsible group of people. Doubtless there are some dead-beats; unquestionably, the necessity of considering the claims of the several member nations adversely affects personnel selection. In a field agency for which I once worked there were too many examples of unemployed European ex-nobility to suit my book, and the retired generals equally failed to arouse unrestrained enthusiasm. That sums up the honest, legitimate case for the critics. But here, now, in Geneva in the summer of 1958, I have met intelligent, hard-working, able officials in meteorology, public health, refugee affairs, labor relations, public administration. Among them is a well-developed international sense, a commodity which might well exist in increased quantity in a good many places, beginning, at a random shot, with the Los Angeles School Board.

And it is well that this quality of international public servant does seem to exist, in view of the complexity of the problems facing us on the world front. Geneva is not, of course, the center of world politics. Long-term UN work in Geneva is largely that of specialists and specialized

agencies—the WHO, ILO, the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, etc. But technical problems and relationships assume a frightening complexity when faced, as they must be, in the full light of political realities. The Conference on Atoms for Peace, just ended, provides some fairly simple and enlightening examples of this complexity.

ITEM: The matter of race relations in South Africa. What has this to do with atomic energy? Only that South Africa has one of the world's three really large deposits of high-grade uranium, the one upon which Britain to a degree depends for her atomic fuel. So Britain is most tender toward South Africa on this subject of race relations, refusing to provide any lead for the rest of a Commonwealth very concerned over the issue, lest her atomic requirements be jeopardized.

ITEM: What about peaceful coexistence? Sir John Cockcroft, of the British delegation to the Atoms Conference, was asked point-blank by a correspondent whether Britain would sell an atomic reactor for electric power production, of a type now ready for commercial production in Britain, to Czechoslovakia. The straightforward answer, an unadorned "No!"

ITEM: India, one of the nations to which atomic power production could be most beneficial, refuses to accept atomic fuel from the International Atomic Energy Agency (set up as a direct result of President Eisenhower's Atoms-for-Peace speech), because of conditions set by the original supplier of the fuel. These conditions sound reasonable: for example, return the plutonium resulting from the reactor process because it, in turn, *might* be used for bomb production. Why does India refuse? Because she resents these controls as indication that others think her untrustworthy, and because she wants the plutonium so she can use thorium, in which she is rich, for future power development in what are called "breeder-reactors." Her reasons sound reasonable, too. Who set the conditions to which she objects? The Congress of the United States,

leader of the Free World, who by this restriction may force India to obtain what she needs, after some time, from the USSR. Is there a right and a wrong here? Where?

ITEM: A hopeful note was struck during the Conference when Russia presented to the UN five volumes of original scientific papers, thus in effect opening a large formerly "secret" area. The West, in turn, declassified all information on work on fusion reactions, which made it clear that all are working along substantially the same lines, and all with about the same small amount of success. It has been reported that as a result of moves of this sort, scientists of both the US and the USSR have confessed to having learned a great deal from each other.

Perhaps reduction of secrecy is the most significant result to come from this Conference held at the European headquarters of the UN. It is a small gain, in a world crying for more and larger gains. But it is a gain.

CORRESPONDENT IN GENEVA

REVIEW

"HOW DID I GET HERE?"

NED CALMER'S *The Strange Land*, a war novel first printed in 1951 and now in its sixth edition, might well carry the above sub-title. For Mr. Calmer, who covered World War II in the European theater as a broadcaster, is concerned with a typical tragic theme of our time. For centuries fighting men have wondered what they were doing on a battlefield, or on a battleship, but World War II brought this dilemma into agonizing focus. In this war the complicated motions of human cogs in a vast war machine often proceeded at a great distance from any actual scene of "fighting." So, even if the individual soldier or officer were well-informed, he must, if thoughtful, have wondered about the strange role of impersonal destroyer he was playing.

A paragraph from Calmer's second chapter conveys something of this underlying bewilderment, as a planning meeting at headquarters is discussed:

How much it is all like the standard board of directors meeting, and except for the very small proportion of the business machine doing the actual fighting, how much the whole war is run like a vast corporative enterprise by groups of men like these sitting comfortably in warm rooms after hearty meals, by pot-bellied executives pushing buttons in office buildings hundreds of miles behind the lines, and by the men in the map rooms of London and Washington plotting the campaigns that are ordered by politicians and carried out by little red and black and green pins moved inexorably, no matter what the loss in blood and anguish, across the paper faces of continents and oceans.

War is not real in this room, but that rain outside tonight is real, drifting in billows northeastward along the Allied chain of command, across the black reaches of the champagne country, through streets of desolate half-ruined cities in Belgium, and out on the sodden plain again to swirl around the dragons' teeth in the Siegfried Line. There in the darkness, crouched and hidden, wait the only men for whom war is real. And they are thinking at this moment that tomorrow will be only another day of waiting in the rain, more rain to make more mud, more mud to make more wretchedness. They are shivering and cursing the thing that keeps them there, whatever it is, but now they won't have to wait much longer. General Lambert has a plan.

General Mallon will carry it out. And soon there will be no more time for any of them to wonder what brought them there at all, or what will come afterward to each who has waited so long. Do these men in this room think now of the men who wait in the rain? What is their relationship, as comrades, as humans? Only Hennessy seems to feel it in the slightest. The men in the rain have no brothers.

Mr. Calmer also writes of the typically numb reactions of European civilians to the outbreak of another war. After World War I there was much talk of "never again," but perhaps an underlying despair acknowledged that repetition was inevitable. Calmer sees "inertia" as a major factor in the coming of war. At the time represented by the following paragraphs the war was almost over, save for the mechanical fighting and dying which must run its course before political decision ends the slaughter:

Now they're hoping again for the peace that comes between wars, something in the manner of folk who faithfully hang the lamp in the window for the errant son who has been away so long they have almost forgotten his face.

And indeed the face of peace would look strange in this part of the world, after the years of battle and occupation. I remember the fortified cities like Verdun and Liège, under the melancholy October sky, when the Americans came through not many days ago, when the flags were brought out, and the speeches made, and the war widows whose mothers were war widows stood in line in the place of honor at the mayor's reception, veiled in black. Those people were tired, but for all its fatigue Europe is not yet weary of the symbols of national pride and power and resistance. On the gray hills all around that day the monuments reached up to glorify the vast heaps of sacrificed bones that lay beneath.

There's a war-bitterness in this countryside that nothing could ever erase. So much killing has been done here. And the border cities of death are still standing guard. The Frenchmen and Belgians and Dutch I talked to that day told me of a new dedication, the promise that when this war is done, they will never have another. But their words sounded like Armistice Day speeches at home, the long familiar platitudes of the unworthy past. And even as they spoke the big guns a few miles away were still speaking louder than oratory, and the bombs were still drowning out the sobbing of widows. And husbands, American husbands this time, are still going into battle to die. I wonder if they ask

themselves any more than their fathers did how they can make sure it will never happen again. Why must this tragic inertia be the determining force of history?

The Strange Land will bring uneasy moments to home-front patriots who still believe that the practice of war—by their own legions—always has high purpose and is nearly always chivalrous. When Calmer's officers and soldiers interrogate a prisoner, they do not hesitate to press a naked bayonet into the captive's throat, nor are the threats to slit that throat, if no information is forthcoming, an idle gesture. Such incidents, Calmer is suggesting, are the inevitable result of exposure to the imminent threat of death—especially if the cause for which one is fighting is something less than clear. And, reminiscent of the impact of Humphrey Cobb's *Paths of Glory*, we encounter the decimation of troops in one American sector by our own misdirected bombing—something called "an unfortunate incident" by the ranking officers of the rear echelon.

Even the generals most concerned with advancing their own reputation are pictured, however, as casualties of ethical attrition. Outside the war situation, the most callous officers would hardly perpetrate more evil than that occasioned by misrepresentation of a product or its careless manufacture. It is simply that, save for the few, what men call "conscience" is apt to dwindle, if not disappear, when the acceptance of war is made so manifest by the dedication of total populations to its prosecution. A final passage, again indicative of the malaise of war, is in the words of one of the better officers, a captain whose men respect him:

Now there's a kind of despair around here. It's more than the belief that the top leadership has forgotten this regiment. It's a morale problem I haven't had to face until lately. Not anger, not disobedience. Just a slow, corroding thing with these men. Part fatigue, part monotony, part helplessness. I am the last who should feel it or show it. I hope I don't show it but I feel it. A feeling like having gotten old, very quickly, in a very short time, so that you don't care any more about some things at all, and you can never again care about anything as much as before. That's what it is. And a knowledge that you will never again feel as warm, or as clean, or as tranquil, as you did once long ago. The best time of your life lost, and not to be regained. And, knowing this, you don't care.

War novels are not supposed to end happily, nor should they, save in the sense of the individual who passes through terror and hatred to more encompassing awareness. Mr. Calmer's novel does not end on a bright note of promise, but one does have the feeling that the author looks for an understanding of what is really wrong with the war equation, with the possibility that protests of various populations will compel radical revisions of political and military policy.

According to a recent report, polls in nine out of eleven countries presently allied to the United States have indicated that these people would do everything in their power to avoid joining the United States in war against Russia. The majorities expressing this view, it is reported, range from 56 per cent in England to 94 per cent in Sweden—with an undoubted increase in England's per cent since the date of polling. The NATO nations, in a resolution taken at the Paris conference, took no action to deplore these expressions.

From a statement by the American Citizens in Action Committee (located in Los Angeles) we borrow three quotations which reflect at another level the awakening Mr. Calmer's novel portrays:

I think it possible that the governments of East and West, alike, may learn that their enmity is suicidal. . . . If it cannot be learned, every increase of knowledge will be only a step towards ultimate and complete disaster.—Bertrand Russell.

* * *

To me it is a source of amazement that there are still people who see the escape from . . . danger in the continued multiplication of the destructiveness and speed of delivery of the major atomic weapons.—George Kennan.

* * *

It is clear . . . that what we must do is direct, not destroy the revolutions that stir the Middle East and Southeast Asia. And it will take an imaginative, creative undertaking—not a military one—to do it.—Justice William O. Douglas.

COMMENTARY
MACHIAVELLIAN-TYPE NON-
VIOLENCE?

A RECENT column by Murray Kempton, sent home from Rome, reports on the attitude of Italians toward the State.

Kempton tells about a young Italian scholar who after the war was appointed curator of a small museum in Naples. When he reported for work, he found that the museum janitor had taken advantage of the confusion left by the break-down of the Fascist regime and had moved into the museum basement as living quarters for himself and all his relatives. He even sold some small paintings—property of the museum—to buy food for these dependents.

The curator could not affect the janitor by argument. Meanwhile, the relatives wept at the prospect of being dispossessed—making, in all, a very sticky situation.

The curator decided to apply for advice to Benedetto Croce, Italy's leading philosopher (who died in 1952). Croce suggested to the curator to explain to the janitor that the government inspector of museums would fire him when it was discovered that he had allowed the janitor and his family to enjoy squatters' rights in the museum basement. "Remember," said Croce to the young curator, "the State is your common enemy; no true Neapolitan would leave a fellow human being at the mercy of the State."

It worked. The janitor decamped with his family. All the intruders understood this appeal. Kempton comments:

This then is a truly anarchist country. There are no impersonal relations in it. An un-Italian Affairs Committee would be unthinkable, and the sentence, "Italy expects every Italian to do his duty," is barely translatable into the language.

The Italians, Kempton cheerfully reports, will not tolerate "such extortions as the income tax." Further: "You apparently cannot tax an Italian in his home; he does not even open letters from the

government; you have to clip him face-to-face." The Italian State is obliged to support itself with innumerable excise taxes and with salt and tobacco monopolies. Kempton seems to like the Italians. He certainly admires their apparently successful, if limited, resistance to bureaucratic controls:

This long struggle with his enemy, the State, has left the Italian with a character sadly confusing to Americans. We have, as a nation, been so addled by civics courses that it seems impossible to us that a man who will cheat his government will not cheat us, and that he can at once lack civic conscience and possess a strong personal moral code.

There are doubtless better ways to oppose the State. But the Italians seem to have caught on to the basic idea. Maybe, if Jayaprakash Narayan makes some headway in India, he will be willing to send missionaries to Italy.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves NOTES AND QUOTATIONS

THERE have been two discussions here of the ethics of toy pistol packing by the young generation. Our suggestion that there is almost everything wrong and nothing right with plaything armaments was vehemently debated by at least two readers who felt that this kind of "play" offered a natural release for aggressive feelings. Other subscribers continue to send us clippings confirming the other position.

An article by Dorothy Curtis in *Everywoman's Family Circle* for September is unequivocal in its condemnation of the unfortunate collaboration between TV melodramas and the interests of toy manufacturers. For one thing, Mrs. Curtis points out that, according to the National Safety Council, the annual death toll from accidents with firearms is between 2,100 and 2,300, and that half of these accidents occur in homes. It is easy to see from frequent news stories why Mrs. Curtis feels that most children are shot by other children—because they don't really know the difference between a toy gun and a real one—and that many parents have been killed because they simply went along with the game when their five-year-old popped a cap gun at them and said, "You're dead! "

Having studied the subject, Mrs. Curtis concludes that the habit of "play" killing induces such a strong reflex that it becomes much easier for a teenager to point and use a real gun—either in juvenile warfare or from personal anger. She tells of one instance in which an eight-year-old who shot his playmate with a real gun—presumably knowing it was real—was astounded when his victim did not arise to play more. He had been *told*, but he didn't *know*.

To quote from Mrs. Curtis:

All over the country children play with guns. The American child's favorite toy appears to be his

pair of six guns and holster belt; his favorite game, "Bang, bang! You're dead!"

But are children responsible for this gun craze?

The game is encouraged by parents and relatives who give the guns. It is stimulated by movies, radio, comics, books, and especially by TV. Many families who struggle to pay rent see to it that their six-year-old has his pair of nickel-plate or pearl-handle six guns in embossed-leather holsters. Many a busy mother pauses in her work to lift her hands when her child says, "Stick 'em up!" And she may pretend to fall when he pulls the trigger.

We do not call it "murder." Americans do not murder, they shoot only in a good cause. The children call it cops-and-robbers or cowboys-and-Indians. Two or more little boys in chance encounter need no excuse to pull out their guns, for any group of youngsters is likely to divide into sides (or play every man for himself) and dodge behind trees, house corners, and garbage cans to take turns at banging and sprawling. The grownups call it "good clean fun."

An article in the *New York Times* for June 29 takes time out from raising of similar questions to supply an explanation of the tolerant position adopted by most psychologists regarding such play:

Most child-treatment centers provide guns, since much can be learned from the way a child handles one during play therapy. If he is constantly shooting at younger children, this might mean he resents his baby brother; if at older boys pictured as crooked sheriffs, it might indicate an excessively punishing father. With shy, retiring youngsters, gunplay may be encouraged to accustom them to stand up for their rights. It is only the disturbed child who loses sight of the game element and thinks he has actually killed someone with a cap pistol.

The toy gun provides a release for negative, protest feelings, but it also has a strong positive value.

But the most pertinent consideration in this article by Gerald Walker is this:

Will this early aggressiveness have a delayed reaction as the child grows older? Is there any connection between increasing sales of toy guns and the rising rate of juvenile delinquency? Is it morally right, in a century that has had its fill of war, to permit and perhaps tacitly encourage youngsters to handle toy duplicates of lethal weapons? Are we inadvertently promoting the idea that violence is the final arbiter of human conflicts? Has our youngest generation—be the cause TV Westerns, comic books or a succession of hot and cold running wars—gone suddenly gun-crazy?

As Mr. Walker points out, at Toyland in Macy's half of the counters are given over to toy guns and simulated implements of war. Two million toy guns are manufactured annually, or about two guns for every three boys and girls in the country between three and ten years of age. The makers of toys, who do a sales volume of six million dollars a year, have promoted the buying of "imitative" toys on the ground that toys sometimes serve to stimulate a child to an activity "which might not be thought of without the suggestion offered by the toy." Mr. Walker quite reasonably asks: "Does this apply to toy guns as well? And how do toy manufacturers answer the oft-raised charge that they are placing an item potentially harmful—psychologically as well as physically—in the hands of children?"

* * *

The Law of the Bill of Rights—A Report on An Experiment in Community Education, issued by the Freedom Agenda Committee (through a grant from the Fund for the Republic), makes important reading. The intent of this 43-page pamphlet is to tell how an educational program for secondary school teachers in the meaning of civil liberties may be planned and how impressive the response may turn out to be.

The first page of the pamphlet serves as a good introduction:

During the 1956-57 school year, a group of noted lawyers, social scientists and educators combined their respective professional talents in an experimental course for New York City teachers. The course was sponsored by the Carrie Chapman Catt

Memorial Fund (an educational fund created by the League of Women Voters) under a grant from the Fund for the Republic, and administered by the New York City Freedom Agenda Committee with the cooperation of The Association of the Bar of the City of New York.

What began as a one-semester experiment is being repeated this year (1958). Essentially the problems and procedures are the same. The response has been overwhelming. Over 1300 public school teachers made advance registrations for the Course. Since the capacity of the auditorium available for the Course is 400, over 900 teachers could not be accommodated. Many of these have asked that a third course be organized for the fall term.

The course on the law of the bill of rights has in the opinion of those responsible for it been a rewarding experience and a practical contribution to community education. It is the hope that concerned individuals, bar associations, teachers' groups, and other civic organizations will be encouraged to organize similar courses in their communities.

The sponsors feel that those individuals and community groups interested in educational projects might wish to examine the processes and techniques through which the course was organized, as well as the substance of the course in operation. Accordingly, we present here the record—including hurdles, pitfalls, and strengths of IN-SERVICE COURSE NO. 601: "The Law of the Bill of Rights."

While this program begun by the New York Freedom Agenda Committee has been restricted to schools and community centers in the vicinity of New York, the aim is to pioneer an activity which other communities will wish to adopt. Grants from the Fund for the Republic are likely to be available for other groups wishing to prepare for community education about the "Bill of Rights." While the first objective is to reach secondary school teachers, so that they in turn may pass on a growing comprehension of the meaning of our Constitution to their students, other groups in the community could easily plan and perhaps secure help for a similar program. In every community are lawyers, judges, political scientists and writers who are probably willing to give time to this sort of project.

FRONTIERS "The Dignity of Man"

HALBERT L. DUNN, of the U.S. Public Health Service, has prepared a paper with this title which brings into focus many of the meanings of this often repeated expression. Probably no popular phrase is used so frequently as this one, with so little appreciation of what it implies. That is, the developments peculiar to modern industrial civilization tend to obliterate the dignity of man, at just the time when it is said to be the most important thing in social philosophy and in political practice.

"The concept of the dignity of man," says Dr. Dunn, "rests upon faith in man's worth as an individual." The idea of individuality is related to man's "uniqueness"—uniqueness in the sense that individuality is effaced when a man's freedom to be "different," to think and act for himself, as a unique individual, is destroyed by the cultural environment. The current crisis in human dignity is traced by Dr. Dunn to the increasing dominance of organization over human activities. The objective, as he sees it, is to learn to enjoy the advantages of organization without allowing its mechanics to stultify individuality. Dr. Dunn sets the problem:

In our times, the industrial man of the Free World and the dialectical man of the Communist world might be considered the two chief representatives of the organization man.

"The vigor and strength of the free enterprise system," says the industrial man, "depends upon cooperation and pulling together as a team."

"The principle of individual liberty," says the Marxist, "prevents the solution of the problems facing society."

The dignity of man is being stifled both by industrial man and by dialectical man. Individuality of the industrial man is largely lost in the uniformity of the group. A society patterned after the machine is relatively insensitive to imaginative and spiritual adventure, love, and beauty. Dialectical man is primarily oriented toward the social organization for his welfare, happiness, and life purposes, since he is

fashioned by the State from early childhood to fill his niche in its society.

It is true that a few individuals fight their way to positions of power and social prestige in the societies of organization man, and thus win a degree of dignity for themselves as individuals in the eyes of others, but the very dedications which they have had to make in their struggle to power and control tend to follow rigid patterns and thus to limit their own uniqueness as individuals. In this way, those who control organizations tend to reflect the conformity of the times and to be the guardians of the status quo, rather than the leaders toward a better future.

The projection of organization man into the future is not a pleasant picture for humanity to contemplate. . . .

The balance of this paper is devoted to a study of the foundations of the idea of human dignity and to proposals for rebuilding those foundations on a rational basis. Dr. Dunn has what might be called a "functional" conception of the support of human dignity. It comes, he suggests, from balanced perception of both the inner and outer worlds of human experience, from active participation and achievement in the work of life, and from altruistic action. By these means, he believes, the role of organization can be limited to increasing human efficiency in action, without suffocating individuality.

Dr. Dunn proposes that the neglect of man's inner life and world has resulted primarily from "the methods of modern science," which are concerned almost exclusively with "the outward material world rather than the inner world of thought and spirit." One can agree with this diagnosis, while adding that the externality of traditional dogmatic religion, with *its* emphasis on organization, and the collectivist (by association) theory of salvation, is just as guilty as science in its neglect of the inner world. The inner world of man knows nothing of dogmas and creeds and is lost entirely in an atmosphere of religious conformity or orthodoxy.

The weakness of individuality in our time Dr. Dunn traces to a fear to "explore" our inner world. Why should such inward search be feared?

"This fear," he says, "is probably due largely to the fact that so many of our most moving experiences of life are accompanied either by pleasure or by pain." But the idea of "sin" surely plays an important part in creating this fear. Here, again, is the mark of religious influence. The reluctance of men to search their inner lives is prompted by the expectation of finding dark elements of which they would feel ashamed. Guilt, as the casebooks of the psychotherapists make clear, is a characteristic accompaniment of the belief in Western religion, making a barrier to free and independent investigations of psychic reality.

On the other hand, it is a question whether a purely humanistic foundation for the idea of the dignity of man can stand the test of the agonizing pressures produced by our civilization. There is a profound longing in human beings for a transcendental conception of the self. While trans-physical thinking about the self often succumbs to the temptations laid in its way by theology, it is nevertheless possible to maintain the same kind of impersonal rigor in metaphysics as the scientist demands of his own procedures. In any event, there must be a direct relationship between the idea of the dignity of man and the idea of the self.

What sort of a self is capable of the creativity and the delicate moral perception which Dr. Dunn assigns to human individuality? It seems that he has formulated the concept of *soul* without naming it. Perhaps this is just as well, for the time being. The recovery of the idea of soul by our civilization ought to be more than an anxious demand for "spiritual" thinking. A viable conception of soul cannot come easily, nor without the disciplines of philosophy which will protect such developments from sentimentality and dogma. Yet the idea of soul has a sustaining strength which gives substance and duration to the conception of the individual. With the idea of soul, the individual man can achieve a sense of destiny and high purpose in his life. Many men, of course, accomplish this without speaking of "soul"

or the use of a transcendental vocabulary, but it may be said that their attitudes reveal intuitive correspondences of such thinking. For the idea of the dignity of man to gain strength as a *cultural* concept, overtly transcendental thinking may be required. This, we think, is the inner meaning of one of Dr. Dunn's conclusions, when he speaks of the need for "crystallizing a goal for mankind as a whole which is dynamic, inspiring, and worth living and dying for."