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HEROES—KNOWN AND UNKNOWN

NOW, more than ever before, the condition of the world is the condition of man. The torments of the world are a reflection of the struggles which go on in human beings, its conflicts the reflection of the unresolved opposition between the controlled and the uncontrolled forces in ourselves.

But that is a simplification. The "uncontrolled forces" are not without a practical discipline. They are given direction and exercised under the order of custom which claims to be "righteous" by serving the interests of a group. By this means every crime on the calendar may be justified as a necessary measure to defeat the forces of evil. The wars of the twentieth century have all been wars between one morality and another, to further the cause of a superior breed or the intentions of those of righteous political belief, on the one hand, or to defend and make victorious the people who believe themselves to be the caretakers of peace, justice, and freedom. The good, the champions of both sides declare, must prevail, and we, because we are right, have the might to make it prevail. You may say, they add, that we are doing evil, but we say we are doing what is necessary to make it good, transforming our means into steps to the good. There are of course, on either side, a great many who are loyal to their cause without bothering with such justifications, who simply fight to win, and their unrationalized and concentrated efforts are welcomed by whomever they fight for.

Was there ever a war between purely good and purely evil intentions? Not, surely, on earth, where having mixed motives seems to be virtually a law of nature. Even individuals who are preponderantly well-intentioned and morally intelligent are led to fight for compromised systems by reason of deep-seated loyalties. Only the few—the very few—such as Henry David Thoreau reserve their ultimate decisions to the personal monitor within, making it the highest authority. Which is to say that wars between unqualified good and evil take place, if anywhere, only in heaven, but not on earth, which is by definition a mixture of opposites.

Only in poetry—in great literature—do we ever encounter, by reason of the poet's power of the imagination, the idealized polarities of good and evil. In life they are always combined, since the struggle between the two is the very substance of our existence. The most any human can do is to eliminate self-interest as a factor in his decisions, which for most people would mean a practical retirement from life, the elimination of so much that "comes naturally" to us and therefore "right" in some ordinary sense. Yet the ideal of self-restraint is kept alive in us by the symbolism of the poets and great teachers who are able to garb the goal of human behavior in the guise of heroic figures—the Arjunas of myth and history—who become the carriers of a classical education.

Often tragedy is the most effective vehicle for what the poet has to teach. As Gilbert Murray has explained:

> We must not forget that Aristotle . . . distinguishes tragedy from other forms of drama not as the form that represents human misery but as that which represents human goodness and nobleness. . . . The powers of evil and horror must be granted their full scope; it is only thus that we can triumph over them. Only when they have worked their uttermost will do we realize that there remains something in man's soul which is forever beyond their grasp and has power in its own right to make life beautiful. This is the great revelation, or the great illusion, of tragedy.

The effect of tragedy is said to be catharsis—purification, the value of which is that it enables us to see clearly, the intervening obstacles being neutralized or removed. One may admit this and

agree, but may then point out that the great mass of mankind does not now go to the theater or read the great plays, and so is denied the realizations that come from literature. But this may be only temporarily so. The comment comes from one who has grown up in a culture in which what is accounted as knowledge is acquired only through literacy, ignoring the fact that there was tragedy well known to oral cultures that existed long before people learned to read and write. Folk tales based upon the epics of India and Greece were the shapers of human character for thousands of years before our time; nobility and self-restraint did not begin with Gutenberg. Nor is the vision of an ideal society dependent upon the complex grammatical structures of written words and the intellectual refinements they make possible.

What, in fact, is the hero of legend and epic up against? In case after case, he struggles against the moral pressures of his environment, not always, at the beginning, understanding why and often feeling guilty and suffering from self-distrust. But eventually he comes to realize that the ideal cherished in his heart is at odds with the customs and morality of his society. He protests, as Arjuna does to Krishna early in the *Bhagavad-Gita,* and then comes to the realization that he must follow the guidance of the teacher within his heart—who indeed is Krishna—and not the systematic compromises of the society in which he was born. *All* societies are ruled by systematic compromises, some coarse and cruel, some sophisticated and rationalized, some better than others, some worse. For each one comes a time when the society must change or die, and then, by what seems a providential intervention, a hero may appear. Minor heroes—Tom Paine, for example, work to get rid of compromises at a single level, in his case the political, although he had deeper problems such as inherited religious beliefs on his mind, and when he attacked those he lost nearly all his following. Lincoln put an end to slavery by fighting to preserve the Union, but both Paine and Lincoln influenced the people of America to think for themselves more than they had before. This was truly a heroic goal.

Intellect is manifestly important in the struggle against compromised systems, although a deeper quality is indispensable. In *The Search for an Eternal Norm* (University Press of America, 1981), Louis J. Halle considers various heroes in literature, one of them Hamlet. He says:

> The quality of the mind and its incorruptibility (often in spite of itself) are alike involved in every case; but in the case of Hamlet what stands out is the quality of the mind and it is against his will that he cannot act by the common conceptions of his environment in obedience to the injunction laid on him by his father's spirit. An important part of his incorruptibility is unconscious and even unwilling.
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> The implicit conclusion of what I have said might be that one must be exceptionally intelligent to appreciate *Hamlet;* But I shall at least qualify this by adding that the need is not for a great brain. I cannot believe that Socrates, by the standard tests, would have proved the best brain in Athens—that he would, say, have beaten everyone else in chess or in the solution of mathematical problems. When the Delphic oracle reported that there was no man wiser, he showed the peculiar quality of his intelligence by interpreting it to mean that his unique wisdom consisted in nothing more than the knowledge of his own ignorance. Men who can solve complicated mathematical problems in their heads will still live by the conventional beliefs of their environments without questioning them, even when those beliefs make no sense. The intelligence that Socrates and Hamlet represent each in his own way, is simply the intelligence that cannot accept without question, that has to think for itself at all hazards. More important than the possession of a great brain, for the appreciation of *Hamlet,* is the retention from childhood of the questioning innocence represented by the little child in Anderson's tale of "The Emperor's New Clothes."
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> There are, however, degrees of appreciation, corresponding to the degree in which each of us is Hamlet. That the play has, for almost four centuries, been generally regarded as one of the greatest monuments of literature shows how many of us must have at least a touch of Hamlet in us, however we may have succeeded in suppressing its appearance in public.

Hamlet was born before his time and was by deepest inclination against it. Uncertain of what he should do, troubled by unconfirmed suspicion of the cause of his father's sudden death, he is confronted by the ghost who stands for the world he has already inwardly turned against. Now, as Louis Halle says—

> Hamlet stands alone in opposition to his environment, unable to adjust himself to the existential world of corruption, unable to make the convenient thinking of others his own. His mind is dominated by a normative model of the world, a conception of what it was intended to be.

His father, who had been a conventional monarch obedient to the goals of the time, could no longer stand as symbol of the ideal world to which Hamlet wanted to belong, for the shade of his father had counseled revenge, as was dictated by the chivalry of the day, while Hamlet, the young philosopher prince, was responsive to another ideal—that of compassion, which had no sanction from the customs of that age. "He finds himself living, however, in the world as it is, and the contrast induces in him a revulsion against it."

> The time is out of joint; O cursed spite
> That ever I was born to set it right!

What are the forces which contend against our resolve when we are in a Hamletesque mood? They are the forces of past choices, the ghosts of yesterday, embedded in the habits and customs of past time, which urge us on to the ruin of the present in the name of duty and honor. This was the problem of Socrates with the Athenian mob—for his jury *was* a mob. It was the problem of Thomas More, confronted by the wanton habits of the English, now focused in the willful ways of their king. It is the problem of the alcoholic, of the drug addict, whose devils are embodied in tempting externalities. A hero is one who struggles against these forces, sometimes arrayed against him in the name of a tinsel patriotism, when they are called duty to home and country, sometimes summed up in the coarse resolve of a previous generation, as in the hollow-voiced ghostly shell of Hamlet's father, whom Hamlet had once loved and admired.

In the concluding essay, on Hamlet, in his remarkable book, *The Meaning of Shakespeare* (University of Chicago Press), at the end of the second volume, Harold Goddard offers this key:

> The prime requisite for an understanding of *Hamlet* is a belief in ghosts. The common reader who has that will come nearer its heart than the most learned man who lacks it—just as a youth of seventeen who is in love is better fitted to comprehend the Divine Comedy than a scholar who has spent a lifetime on it but who has never shared the experience on which it is based. If "a belief in ghosts" sounds too oldfashioned or superstitious, call it, more pedantically, a belief in the autonomous character of the unconscious. The two are the same. . . .
>
> I once asked a young girl (barely over the border of childhood) to whom I had read *Hamlet*, whether she thought the Ghost was Hamlet's father or the devil. I like to get a fresh reaction of innocence to a masterpiece, uncontaminated by traditional critical opinion. "I don't see that it makes any difference," she said, "I should think it would be just the same. " Just the same?" I inquired, arrested. "Well," she explained, "I should think that whoever told you to kill somebody was the devil." Just the same: in a flash those three words show that the Catholic and Protestant views are really one. The Father, in so far as he represents authority and force, *is* the Devil, a power utterly transcending anything human in any common meaning of the term. Shakespeare here, as usual, is a harmonizer of opposites.
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> But it is not just Shakespeare and childhood who agree.
>
> The poets have always seen that the supreme question for humanity is the existence of gods and devils. . . . Or come down, past Shakespeare, almost to our own day, to Dostoevsky. Raskolnikov is speaking of the murder of the Old Pawnbroker:
>
> > Did I murder the old woman? I murdered myself
> > once for all, for ever. . . . But it was the
> > devil that killed that old woman, not I.
>
> And then go back to Shakespeare, to Hamlet. He is apologizing for the slaying of Polonius:
>
> > Was't Hamlet wronged Laertes? Never Hamlet!
> > If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
> > And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,

> Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.
> Who does it then? His madness. If't be so,
> Hamlet is of the faction that is wronged;
> His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.

So it is in our courts today. A man that is truly mad cannot murder, but will be placed in an institution where psychiatrists will try to cure him of his madness. If they are successful, which seems unlikely, except after a long period, he may be released.

But what made him susceptible to madness? How do the devils infect us with their dark and muddy intentions? The psychiatrists have much to do before they can answer this question, although the elements which contribute to healthy-mindedness are not entirely unknown.

Would Hamlet have made a good king of Denmark, had he survived? Fortinbras, who did become the king, thought so. "For he was likely, had he been put on, To have prov'd most royally." And as Goddard says:

> Hamlet had the creative instinct and capacity to alter the royal occupation from what it always had been, war, to what it ought to be, art: not "art" as amusement or distraction, but art in its deepest and most religious sense. "Empire against art," said Blake, putting it in three words. If a Falstaffian Hal could have taught England to play in the common acceptance of the term, Hamlet could have taught Denmark to play a deeper creative sense.

Now, at the end of his book, Goddard unreins his imagination.

> What if, on the death of Elizabeth, not James of Scotland but William of Stratford had inherited the throne! That would have been England falling before William the Conqueror indeed. And it did so fall in the sense that, ever since, Shakespeare has been England's imaginative king, who has taught more men and women to play perhaps than any other man in the history of the world. But if the England of his own day could have crowned him more specifically, by following his spirit, it might have found its way between the Scylla of a decadent Renaissance and the Charybdis of a puritanical reformation and revolution. It might have substituted freedom and imagination for luxury and dogma. . . . Shakespeare—so John Davies of Hereford believed—was fit to be a king of the common people. He still is. He is an unfallen Hamlet.

The import of the books we have been quoting—by Halle and Goddard—is that to establish peace and justice and goodwill in the world we need to learn what is involved in the restoration of literature. There may be some in our time who can do without gods and devils, but no one can do without their symbolic representations since these are the forces at work in our lives. How to begin this, in our atomistic and distraught society of the twentieth century, seems practically unknown, but an effort must be made in this direction—an effort which takes into consideration the failing quality of our institutions, our halls of learning as well as the halls of government.

Thoreau was perhaps the most successful of those who made a serious attempt at the restoration of literature during the past two hundred years. Both he and Emerson accomplished wonders, and still do. We need a literature that is understood and grasped by common folk—not stepped down, but deepened through simplicity of utterance, as, today, in the poetry and prose of Wendell Berry. We have a number of brilliant critics but they lack the inspiration that might give them an affirmative tone. We have no Shelley, no Keats, not even a Vachel Lindsay or a Sandberg, and Coleridge is an almost forgotten man. China has shown a way to health with her barefoot doctors but one never hears of unshod poets and singers, if there are any in the present, and if we had them their fame should never be spread by electronic means. Could there be spontaneous institutions for the arts? Probably not. Institutions and spontaneity are a contradiction in terms, although a hostel or two might come into being to feed and house them overnight. They need both place and occasion, but in our time place and occasion are made only for celebrities.

What we are talking about is not "reform," which ends by being no more than meddling with

the status quo, but a quiet grassroots rebellion by those whose fires of mind unfit them for going on as they are. They also need the blessings of anonymity, at least until their independence is established and confirmed. But no one, obviously, can make rules for such things.

Back in 1960 a professor who was wise as well as learned was asked by the editors of *Life* to write for the picture magazine about America's "national purpose." He wrote, but *Life* did not publish what he wrote. But since it was published elsewhere we can quote a passage that was good. He said:

> One of the troubles with being an editor of *Life* is that one loses the ability to think freely. For that one has to remain an amateur and a person of no public importance—a *non*-V.I.P. Meanwhile *Life* editors think up debates like "What should be our national purpose?" It never crosses their minds that nations do not or should not *have* purposes, that nationality today is almost a synonym for moral purposelessness. A modern nation is a large group of people who have forgotten the purpose of life. Insofar as these people can share in a *national* purpose, it is nefarious, involving mass retaliation and public hatred and tribal religion. National leaders behave like juvenile delinquents.

A nation, in short, simply cannot make peace, which is a principal reason why nations are now obsolete. Any serious attempt to restore literature and culture anywhere in the world must begin with this assumption, and thereafter ignore the state except as an obstacle to cope with from time to time. The institutions that have disappeared from the world are those that humans decided to ignore. Some modest heroes have shown how to do this.

REVIEW
TWO BOOKS

THERE is a certain monotony about the life stories of the alcoholic women which make up *A Woman Like You* (Harper & Row, 1985, $15.95), edited by Rachel V.—said to be "a well-known writer and a recovering alcoholic." The monotony, however, has a use. It convinces the reader that the self-deceptions, rationalizations, and reassurances that alcoholics use to go on drinking are all alike, and the alcoholic will drink until he or she is ready to face the reality of his or her condition. It is then possible to stop. But there is one further condition: The alcoholic must commit himself to care as much about the recovery of other victims as his own. This realization may not come all at once, but grow slowly in anyone struggling to give up alcohol.

There are nineteen brief autobiographies, including that of the editor, in this volume. The contributors are as different in background as can be, but they all have the same ill and the rules for recovery are the same. They all tried different methods and they all finally found the help they needed in the meetings and counsels of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The AA program works. It works for men, women, teenagers, whites, blacks, rich, poor, nuns and priests, unbelievers and agnostics. Sometimes the tellers of these stories are born into families which drink, sometimes to total abstainers. Their identities are concealed by use of their first names only, which may also be pseudonyms. A nun, Sister Rose, for example, grew up in a "loving, caring, Italian family" which served wine only on festive occasions. Rose did not drink as a child and entered a religious community right after high school. She became a Mother Superior quite young. At the beginning of her account she says:

> The first thing that anyone asks when they hear that I'm a sister is "How can a nun be an alcoholic?" And I always say, "Very easy." I am first and foremost a human being subject to all the diseases that people have, therefore I too can have the disease of alcoholism. I believe that I was born with it. I also know that if you are an alcoholic like I am, it is very easy to get alcohol when you need it no matter who you are.

In the nunnery she became sickly at an early age and got thin and couldn't sleep. The doctors prescribed Valium and gave her sleeping pills, but they didn't help much. Finally a doctor suggested that she be given a glass of wine before she went to bed. When left alone she poured it down the sink. "I don't know why, but I suppose that deep down something inside me knew that it was not for me." But then she felt guilty because this amounted to "disobedience," so she took the wine, and it worked. Later it turned out that her adrenal gland didn't produce enough adrenalin, but then she just knew where the wine was kept and began drinking it whenever she felt she needed it. The wine seemed to solve her problem and she advanced in her work, becoming a Mother Superior herself. She had no difficulty in concealing her use of wine; after all, she was the Mother Superior. After a considerable number of years an understanding friend recognized her trouble and helped her to talk to a priest who was himself in a recovery program. She started attending AA meetings. Before long she was asked to talk to other women having problems with alcohol. Then she started an AA meeting for nuns, when she was in her fifties.

There is a great deal of talk of God in AA. Her comment about this may be of general interest:

> If you can help people get a realization of their own personal God, that's where it's at. You don't need a religion for that. God is within us, and it's how we need this power and how we interact with it that really counts. I believe that God is total love, and the love that each of us gives the other person is that kind of love. I also believe that you will never see God unless you can learn to see God in other people. That's my philosophy and my experience as a result of working with this program.
>
> I have to be careful about my language. It's a mistake to limit the idea of God to "Him." I sometimes use that term because it's hard to say what

> I mean simply, and that's the way we were brought up. . . . I believe that for us to limit God in any way is an error on our part. God is much more a spiritual power than anything we can name.

We have left out the nightmarish years Sister Rose endured. Her sufferings and feelings of unworthiness were extremely hard to bear, but she came out on top, as did all the others who tell their stories in this book. Anyone, man or woman, who wonders if he or she is drinking too much will find it not monotonous at all, but filled with vivid illustrations of the experiences which led these people to stop drinking and taking drugs. Total abstinence, they all found, is the only way to health.

* * *

A book we have been struggling to understand, in order to do justice to, is Alfred F. Andersen's *Liberating the Early American Dream* (1986, $12.50 paperbound). At the beginning the author, a Quaker, says:

> This volume takes the position that we shall not see an end to this growing and ever more heated confrontation, now centering on the ominous nuclear arms race between the two super-powers, until the advocates of each find a common ground in a political and economic philosophy which has the merits of both without the evils of both: in short, which transcends both! As long as each uses itself as the ideal standard, the other will continue to be perceived as so evil by comparison that both prudence and moral integrity will continue to dictate to each the continued effort to "remove, restrain, or contain" the other. Thereby the ever more perilous arms race and the various forms of oppression which each Super-Power inflicts (some directly and some indirectly) will continue.

The author takes for his model of the solution the visionary state of mind of the early colonists of America.

> The American Dream which developed over the first century and a half of community-building in North America (about 1630-1780) had at one time great promise. Nor is it yet dead. And this volume presumes to indicate how it can be revived and carried forward.
>
> During the latter part of the 18th century this American Dream wasn't able to keep pace with the challenges posed by that formidable combination of the Industrial Revolutions and the surge of Capitalism. The result was a partial return by way of the royalist political philosophy of Alexander Hamilton and the laissez-faire economic philosophy of Adam Smith, to an economic/political structure favorable, from that time to the present, to the most aggressive and acquisitive members of society. . . . Thus, this volume seeks to revive, "Liberate," and to build on the Early American Dream, and to show a way in which it can be brought to a beautiful, humane, equitable, and ecological maturity in a world which desperately needs the people of North America as part of "the solution" rather than, as now, a part of "the problem." For the Early American Dream was a Dream for the oppressed and disenfranchised of the entire world. Therefore, it was a Dream for all humankind.

We pause here for a moment to say two things. First, we hope that Mr. Andersen can be persuaded to read *Alexander Hamilton* by Broadus Mitchell (Macmillan, 1957), a book by a somewhat radical economist unlikely to be prejudiced in favor of Hamilton, who said that Hamilton "rejected *laissez-faire* as announced by Adam Smith," shared Washington's views, and actually, "far from individualist, he was collectivist." One other book good for Mr. Andersen to read would be the current volume, Richard Morris's *Witnesses at the Creation* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1985), which tells the story of the writing of the *Federalist Papers* by Hamilton, Madison, and Jay.

The other thing we want to say is that Mr. Andersen seems convinced that a new constitution is the way to alter the behavior of the people of the United States. But it is actually the other way round. He is also convinced that the institutions of higher learning, if reformed, can change society. As he puts it:

> In short, the universities of the world, especially of the high-tech world, have a crucial role to play in "Liberating The Early American Dream" by way of their own liberation from the "complex" with which they are in such deep complicity. And I am persuaded that unless the universities of the world

> assume such greater social responsibility that we will see violent disruptive revolutions in the industrialized countries also, including the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.!

Much of the early part of his book is devoted to discussion of the dependence on government subsidy of the universities in this country. He says, for example:

> As this is being written there is a continuing protest, now of several years running directed at the University of California because of its role in administering *all* research and development of nuclear weapons for the U.S. military. The public is still almost completely unaware that even though much *applied* research presently conducted at our universities is very ominous indeed, the Pace at which Knowledge-Power is being fed into our civilization will create even more ominous crises and dilemmas for the future.

"Reforming" such places seems wholly out of the question. Disdaining government subsidy would change their character entirely, and they are not about to submit to that.

The second part of the book outlines the author's plan for a new constitution, in which his plans seem vaguely like running the country as if it were a Quaker business meeting, although, of course, far more complicated than that. Yet one cannot help thinking well of this writer in many respects. He served time in prison as a conscientious objector, discovered the work for community done by Arthur Morgan, finds much to think about in Albert Camus' *The Rebel*, and has filled his book with useful quotation from a wide variety of sources. He lives in Ukiah, California, where he heads the Tom Paine Institute, publisher of the book, at 1155 S. Dora Street, Ukiah, California 95482.

COMMENTARY
WHAT IS GOOD FOR THE WORLD

THE first sentence of this week's lead article seems so important that it should have an illustration or two—actually, a great many illustrations to make its meaning clear. We have been reading lately in Wendell Berry's *Recollected Essays* and in one called "A Native Hill" found a passage which may serve in this way. Writing about the gradual disappearance of the great forests of Kentucky, where he lives, he says:

> The country, as we have made it by the pretense that we can do without it as soon as we have completed its metamorphosis into cash, no longer holds even the possibility of such forests, for the topsoil that they made and stood upon, like children piling up and trampling underfoot the fallen leaves, is no longer here.
>
> There is an ominous—perhaps a fatal—presumptuousness in living in a place by the imposition on it of one's ideas and wishes. And that is the way we white people have lived in America throughout our history, and it is the way our history now teaches us to live here. . .
>
> Until we understand what land is, we are at odds with everything we touch. And to come to that understanding it is necessary, even now, to leave the regions of our conquest—the cleared fields, the towns and cities, the highways—and re-enter the woods. For only there can a man encounter the silence and darkness of his own absence. . . . Perhaps then, having heard that silence and seen that darkness, he will grow humble before the place and begin to take it in—to learn *from it* what it is. As its sounds come into his hearing and its lights and colors come into his vision, and its odors come into his nostrils, then he may come into *its* presence as he never has before, and he will arrive in his place and will want to remain. His life will grow out of the ground like the other lives of the place, and take its place among them. He will be with them—neither ignorant of them, nor indifferent to them, nor against them—and so at last he will grow to be native-born. That is, he must re-enter the silence and the darkness, and be born again. . . . We have lived by the assumption that what was good for us would be good for the world. . . We have been wrong. We must change our lives, so that it will be possible to live by the contrary assumption that what is good for the world will be good for us. And that requires that we make the effort to know the world and to learn what is good for it.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
LEFT OUT OF PEACE STUDIES

THE opening article in the *Christian Science Monitor's* 10-page supplement on "Peace Studies" (Jan. 31) begins:

> "What we know about peace is either wrong or insignificant." That's what a leading peace researcher says now. But he could be proved wrong in the future, as the current, growing effort toward peace education takes effect.

The ten articles accompanying this introduction report on peace studies in the universities, colleges, and high schools, describe the contributions of foundations, and tell of the developments which are called "part of a larger effort to direct new ideas and resources toward helping humanity overcome its historical enslavement to violence and war." After reading these twelve pages, we felt somewhat dissatisfied that nowhere in the somewhat learned discussions did we find a reference to Gandhi, Tolstoy, or Martin Luther King. There is however some useful critical analysis, as in the statement by Robert Elias, chairman of the Peace and Justice Studies Program at Tufts University. He said:

> Critics bemoan the political bias of peace studies, yet in doing so often reveal their own biases. . . . Few observers criticize the absence in most international-relations or security courses of any materials on peace research. They ignore the vast amounts of money spent on military education in the public schools and private universities as well as the military academies.
>
> Opponents also ignore how we, as university researchers, must rely for much of our funding on the money and goodwill of the Pentagon or other parts of the military establishment. They disregard how many of our universities not only research, but also produce, "military hardware," while devoting no work to developing "peace hardware."

What on earth, one wonders, is "peace hardware"? "Peace software" would perhaps have a meaning, but as to hardware, perhaps he means spades and plows!

The introductory article (by Robert Marquand) draws on Elias, who says that peace studies have evolved into two basic categories:

> The first deals with the geopolitics of nuclear weapons and war, explores nuclear weapons systems and the history of arms control, analyzes regional and national conflict, and seeks alternative security means.
>
> The second focuses on a far broader range of issues in the social justice area: economic equality, roots of conflict, racism, sexism, nonviolence, mediation, and citizens' movements.
>
> The study of human rights is an important component of this category. Students delve into sources ranging from Amnesty International's newsletter to historical documents such as the Magna Carta and the U.S. Declaration of Independence and religious books like the Koran and the New Testament to explore what rights are, where they come from, and how they have been defined and guaranteed in various societies. Much study is devoted to the causes behind social transformations—the abolition of slavery in the United States, for instance, and the recognition of women's rights.

Investigation of such questions, it is hoped, "will lead students to think about ultimate questions—the nature and relationship of freedom and moral inquiry, human consciousness, science." According to Peter Dale Scott of the University of California in Berkeley, these questions have been neglected in our century. "Our institutions now train us *not* to look at the large questions which the Platonic Academy and universities originally addressed." A student at Earlham College said that this is the reason why we "don't understand the root of the problems in the world." Elise Boulding, recently retired head of the peace program at Dartmouth, is now studying the "mistakes of failed utopias." Researchers once were confident that they were on the right path. This was the mood at the time of the founding of the Carnegie foundation and similar organizations. Many felt, says Mrs. Boulding, that "we would get the peace issue quickly settled and move on to solve hunger and poverty." That was in 1911, but three years later Europe began World War I, and within a score of years after the peace following that war embarked on World War II.

What, one wonders, were Mrs. Boulding's thoughts about the failure of utopias? She is a capable lady and it would be good to have a record of her conclusions. Lacking this, we turn to a book she may be familiar with—Arthur Morgan's *Nowhere Was Somewhere* (North Carolina Press, 1946), in which he examines the great Utopias of literature and endeavors to track down their sources and inspiration. He offers impressive evidence that Thomas More had available to him historical accounts of the Inca civilization, Morgan's point being to show that Utopias have a historical origin. In his chapter on the "Failure of Utopias," he shows that when utopian ideas are put to work in various ways, we simply stop calling them "utopian"! He says, "Harrington's *Oceana* has almost lost its status as a utopia because it was so widely used in making actual constitutions." He comments:

> The chief value of a great utopia is not primarily in bringing about a sudden revolution, but in contributing new and useful elements which may be incorporated in the process of gradual development. A utopia has not failed so long as it is a productive part of the fabric of men's thoughts.

Morgan discusses what is called the failure of Utopia roundly, showing that the shortcomings are usually due to the author, who introduces certain weaknesses in his plans in order to give full scope to attractive ideas. He concludes this chapter:

> When we examine some of the causes of the failure of utopias, we must reach the conclusion that many of these causes run deep in the cultural patterns of mankind. No legislative changes, no revolution in the form of society, will take away the necessity for the long, slow growth which must prepare men for a new Golden Age. Yet, as wax is rigid when cold, pliable when warm, and flows freely when hot, so, the spirits and habits of men may seem rigid and frozen, they may become ductile or even liquid, and may take on new forms with surprising rapidity, if they are warmed by a great personality, by great trials, or by great events. Then it is fortunate if a great pattern has been envisioned and is ready for them.

The fulfillment of utopian longings would indeed create the conditions of enduring peace—at least for a time. But most utopian longings commonly leave out certain transcendent hopes which are seldom thought of seriously in days of great insecurity. This is the justification for the practice of self-restraint even in hard times, since restraint leaves room for the play of the imagination. In the chapter, "Beyond Utopia," Morgan writes:

> There are some universal cravings which, being seldom fully satisfied, accumulate in the general social consciousness until their satisfaction seems to be *the* great human need. Men think that if these wants should be filled, the remaining way would be clear. Whoever concentrates his attention on them is thought to be a "practical" person; whoever shows keen interest in more distant ends is frequently classed as idealist or dreamer.
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> Utopias for the most part have dealt with elemental needs of men, such as abundance of food, shelter, and clothing; freedom from oppression, freedom from excessive toil; peace and leisure, and opportunity for self-expression free from frustration. . . . So rarely is it the lot of men to fulfill all their obvious needs and desires that seldom are they without immediate pressing wants, and seldom does the question arise as to what would be the value of living if all these needs should be securely filled. . . . Even to raise the question implies an impractical vein in the questioner. Yet a discussion of utopia which does not look beyond utopia is sadly incomplete. It may even be true that until one has looked beyond utopia, and thereby has seen it in its larger setting, his view of utopia will be so out of perspective as to be misleading.

The same should be said of "peace studies" which fail to look beyond what are imagined to be the conditions of peace to "its larger setting." Gandhi looked beyond those conditions, so did Tolstoy, but this makes them irrelevant—"non-academic," you could say—to present-day peace studies in the universities. And this is why, one could add, that the unnamed scholar quoted at the beginning—who said, "What we know about peace is either wrong or insignificant"—is right. A teacher who begins by telling his students this may save them years of pointless research. He may, of course, find it hard to get a teaching job, but there are still a few of them around.

FRONTIERS

Some Recent Reports

AMONG the papers and magazines received by MANAS as exchanges is a quarterly newsletter directory called *Tranet*, shots for *Transitional Network for Appropriate/Alternative Technologies;* which gives brief summaries of the contents of current periodicals and books of interest to "people who are changing the world by changing their own lives." The Winter 1985-86 issue quotes Peter Kapitza's address at the Club of Rome's meeting last year. "The ultimate task of government," he said, "is to evade the catastrophe that is threatened by its own actions." Several books recently noticed in MANAS are given brief reviews—Jeremy Rifkin's *Declaration of a Heretic,* the Popenoes' *Seeds of Tomorrow,* Fran Peavey's *Heart Politics,* and *In the Name of Progress* by Patricia Adams and Lawrence Solomon are among them. *Tranet* devotes its sixteen pages to publications and activities in all parts of the world. Subscription is $30, the address: P.O. Box 567, Rangely, Maine 04970.

Sometimes the catalogs we receive have as much or more interest than many other publications—for example, Or*ganic Gardening with Bountiful Gardens,* offering a full variety of seeds and instruction on their use, issued by Ecology Action, 5798 Ridgewood Road, Willits, Calif. 95490. This catalog includes a report by John Jeavons on the work going on in Ecology Action's new home. They now have more than a hundred growing beds in the mini-farm and the quality of the soil is improving. Meanwhile, reading the catalog is an education in organic gardening. Its 8 pages are filled with concise directions and suggestions. Price $1.

Another catalog so well produced and handsome that it tempts one to slow reading is the Smith & Hawken *Catalog for Gardeners.* The current one illustrates in full color a variety of forks, spades, pruners, sprayers, shears, saws, hoes, axes, and watering equipment, and some good books. The pictures also show customers and friends working in their gardens. "By gathering these," the editors say, "we want to share what we have come to know here, which is that our customers represent the entire cross-section of American society." We didn't find any price listed, so maybe the catalog is free. The Smith & Hawken store is at 25 Corte Madera, Mill Valley, Calif. 94941. Incidentally, Paul Hawken is author of *The Next Economy,* a much admired study of what is happening in American business. The price in paperback is $3.00—200 pages.

According to the *Strider Commentary* for January, a 22-page booklet titled *Jury Duty,* which has been supplied to the jury rooms in Marin County, California, for the past ten years has been removed from the rooms. Donated by the Independent Insurance Agents of Marin, it was written by Godfrey Lehman, who is in business in San Francisco. Why was his booklet removed? Because, it seems, someone read it and discovered that it told the jurors that while judges may inform the jurors that the law must be obeyed, no matter how people feel about it, the fact is that juries have throughout the centuries "disregarded this instruction." Lehman points out that by following their consciences juries have "brought about freedom of the press and ended the death penalty for forgery in England." In one case recited by Lehman, tried in 1670 in England, the foreman of the jury was a merchant named Bushnell, the accused a young preacher and an older colleague who defied the English prohibition against all but the state-approved religion. On the occasion of their "crime," several hundred of their congregation, people who differed in belief from the Anglican interpretation of religion, gathered for worship in the street in front of their church, since soldiers barred their entry. The twelve jurors decided that the government had no authority to lock out the congregation from their church because "every man has a right to worship God according to his own conscience." The jurors were confined to their jury room for two

days without food or access to toilets. Since they did not deliver their verdict in court, the government was blocked and the preacher and his colleague were finally released against the intentions of Parliament, court, and King. As a result, the hated Contenticle Act was invalidated and freedom of religion established; and wholly recognized nineteen years later by passage of the English Bill of Rights—a principle repeated a century later in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States.

Lehman gives other persuasive illustrations:

> In the 19th Century the odious Fugitive Slave Act was rendered inoperable by juries refusing to convict; in England capital punishment for minor crimes (forgery, petty theft, etc.) fell before the verdicts of juries acquitting defendants, in spite of overwhelming evidence against them. It was the people's way of setting public policy.

But all this is ancient history. What was it about Lehman's booklet that troubled the Marin County authorities? In the section "Trial Procedures," he says:

> The perennially unresolved issue about the jury is the question of right to disregard evidence and violate the law in the verdict—we might say to give weight to sentiment, and to judge the rightness of the law itself.
>
> While attorneys are permitted to try to sway you on such extra-evidentiary grounds as sentiment, you are criticized if you are so swayed.
>
> The court will instruct you that no matter how you feel about the law you must obey it as written. Officially the judge interprets the law to you, and the jury passes on only the facts. This is what judges have been doing for centuries, but for as many centuries the jury has stepped beyond its official boundaries. Jurors have understood the evidence, but bring in verdicts contrary to the evidence, and they have been told what the law is and they have defied the law.

Lehman noted that editors and others who aided runaway slaves before the Civil War would have been imprisoned, and William Penn executed, were it not for the latitude exercised by juries. He found in our own history the precedent for nullification:

> The Supreme Court of the United States was twice confronted with this issue. In 1794 the court ruled that the jury had the right to disregard law and evidence; in 1894 the court decided six to three that the jury did not have the right to, but had the power to do so, and having the power meant that the question of right was moot and ineffectual.

This, you could say, was bad enough to tell the jurors, but Lehman also said that "The juror's obligation is only to his conscience. The bulwark of all liberty is the power of the jury to disregard the evidence and vote their own conscience." And he added that "The jury decides whether the law is constitutional." This was apparently too much, so when someone who believed in the law more than the judgment of jurors finally read the booklet and brought it to the attention of officials, condemnation in varying intensity was the result. These objecting judges and lawyers who had the booklet removed would probably not deny the historical facts nor the judgment of the juries involved, but one could say they thought it was *tactless* to inform the jurors of their powers. Other attorneys say that "nullification is always possible in any jury trial, but is never raised directly as an issue of defense strategy." (*Strider Commentary* is published monthly at $12.00 a year—address: P.O. Box 554, Laytonville, California 95454.)