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THEY BUILT A RAILROAD

THE young Bosnian asked, Do Americans "do any voluntary work for the government without pay?"

It was an awkward question. We don't know what Mr. Robert St. John said in reply, and we don't know what we might have said ourselves, beyond mumbling something about "dollar-a-year" men. It was also an aggressive question, asked by an ardent youth of the "new" Yugoslavia. In fact, many of the questions asked of Mr. St. John during his recent trip through the Balkans were aggressive questions, reflecting the animus of communist anti-American and anti-British propaganda.

The story of this wandering American journalist's experiences behind the "Iron Curtain," published by Doubleday as *The Silent People Speak*, appears to be an impartial report of what is in the minds and hearts of these people, adding copious chapters to Louis Adamic's *The Native's Return.* They have found a faith to live by, and it is a faith which seems to come from the East.

The Bosnians have always been people of great faith—first religious, then national, and now, a kind of sociopolitical faith. For at least a thousand years, conquest, oppression and religious persecution harassed and impoverished the peoples living in this region. During the Middle Ages, the minions of Christian orthodoxy, both Eastern and Roman, sought out, betrayed and cruelly punished the numerous gnostic heretics who had found refuge in the mountainous country of Bosnia and the surrounding regions. After the fall, in the ninth century, of Tephricé, ending its short existence as the capital of a free-state of Gnostic Christianity in Asia Minor, and after a colony of heretical Armenians had been settled in Bulgaria by the Byzantine Emperor, John Zimisces, Bosnia became a haven and stronghold of the Bogornile heresy—a gnostic Christian faith, in some respects very like the "Quaker" heresy which developed in England in the seventeenth century—that brought endless suffering to these devotedly religious people. The story of their persecutions is well told in *Bosnia and Herzegovina* by Arthur J. Evans (London, 1877). In summary of "the really important part played by Bosnia in European history," he wrote:

> We have seen her [Bosnia] aid in interpreting to the West the sublime puritanism which the more Eastern Sclaves of Bulgaria had first received from the Armenian missionaries. We have seen her take the lead in the first religious revolt against Rome. We have seen a Bosnian religious teacher directing the movement in Provence [The Albigensian Heresy]. We have seen the Protestants of Bosnia successfully resisting all the efforts of Rome, supported by the arms of Hungary, to put them down. We have seen them offering an asylum to their persecuted brothers of the West,—the Albigensians, Patarenes, and Waldenses. We have seen them connected with the Reformation in Bohemia, and affording a shelter to the followers of Huss. From the twelfth century to the final conquest of the Turks in the sixteenth, when the fight of religious freedom had been won in Northern Europe, Bosnia presents the unique phenomenon of a Protestant State existing within the limits of the Holy Roman Empire, and in a province claimed by the Roman Church. Bosnia was the religious Switzerland of Mediaeval Europe, and the signal service which she has rendered to the freedom of intellect by her successful stand against authority can hardly be exaggerated.

As though the crimes committed against the Bosnians by their "Christian" persecutors were not enough, the Turks, in turn, had special methods of enslavement (recalling, incidentally, the report that the rebel forces in Greece are abducting Greek children by the thousand, to raise them as communists). During their five-hundred year rule of Bosnia, the Turkish sultans used every conceivable device to pervert the Bosnians from their native culture and religion. Most outrageous

of their stratagems was the practice of seizing a fifth of the population every four years—they liked in particular bright boys from six to ten, whom they taught Turkish customs, including the religion of Islam. The boys were given military training, required to take vows of celibacy and obedience, and educated, according to their capacity, to serve the Turks. Some became architects, engineers, statesmen, while the rest are known to history as the famous Turkish *janissaries.* These Bosnians, having been made Moslems and Turks, were returned to the country of their birth after ten or fifteen years as rulers over their kinsmen. As a result, there are a million Moslems in Bosnia today, although Turkish power was broken in 1875. It is worth noting that the heretical Bogomiles among the Bosnians, attracted, perhaps, by certain of the Islamic austerities, quickly adopted the Moslem religion. They had, in fact, invited Mahomet II, the ruling sultan in 1463, to deliver them from the Catholic power and the "persuasions" of the Inquisition. But while the Bogorniles went over to Islam in a body, they continued to speak the Serbian language and never practiced the polygamy of Turkish custom.

The Bosnians liked the rule of Austria-Hungary little better than that of the Turks, and it was the assassination by a student of the Austrian Crown Prince at Sarajevo, a Bosnian city, in June, 1914, which set going the first world war. Yugoslavia was the composite Balkan state, formed after the war, of Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Slovenia, Dalmatia, Montenegro, and Macedonia.

Louis Adamic, a native of Carniola, a region north of Bosnia, describes the intense nationalism of the Balkan peoples, their songs of endless struggle for freedom, celebrating the heroes of wars against the Turks. During the period of Turkish domination the Bosnians kept alive their hope for freedom in their songs. Today, mingled with these songs hundreds of years old are the songs of Tito's Partisans, who for four or five years fought the Germans, Italians, Hungarians, Bulgarians, Rumanians, and finally Serbian Chetniks.

It is against the background of this history that the "new " Yugoslavia is attempting to rebuild its country. Robert St. John found relatively little opposition to the communist regime. More than anything else, he was peppered with questions reflecting the usual communist criticisms of America—Why are not Americans solidly behind Henry Wallace? Why do American newspapers say Yugoslavia is ruled by a dictatorship, when it is "not true"? Why do they say Yugoslavia has no free press ?

The press in Yugoslavia is certainly not "free" according to American standards, and yet the political control of the country cannot be painted all black or all white, according to the familiar methods of propaganda. For an adequate impression of the situation, Mr. St. John's book must be carefully read and compared with the accounts of other observers. He found tension in the cities, but enthusiasm, a sense of sheer relief at the dying out of traditional hatreds, among the peasants. And Yugoslavia is 83 per cent peasant.

Some facts, however, are beyond dispute. During the summer of 1946—in just 164 days about 64,000 young people built a mountain railroad. This project experts had said would take two years. And so a Bosnian boy of twenty-three, bursting with excitement over such achievements, asked Mr. St. John his burning questions:

> Do the people of America really want war? If not, why do we let our leaders foment a war? Isn't America a democracy? Do young people in America sing on trains . . . ? Do they have dances like the *kolo?* Do they have youth projects like the Youth Railroad? How do they spend their leisure time? Do they do any voluntary work for the government without pay?

Government—the Yugoslav government—in the mind of this young man, is simply a mechanism for organizing the cooperative efforts of human beings. There would be no point in

arguing with him about the political philosophy of Karl Marx. A careful account of the decline of Bolshevist idealism since the days of Lenin would have no meaning for him. He, or young men like him, have built a railroad for their country—a thing made possible by the Communist regime. What are the young men in America doing that is like that?

The real problem, in such a question, is to find some common ground. The idealistic youth of Yugoslavia are full of zeal and a sense of freedom. The great, new cycle of building for their country seems to have come to them at the hands of the great Slavic power in the East. They know nothing of the tyranny described by intellectuals and social historians. They believe what their liberators tell them. Under the same circumstances, who wouldn't?

Probably, in the areas dominated by Chinese communists, a similar situation prevails. The Chinese communists *have* instituted land reforms. There *is* more self-government in the villages behind their lines.

And American negroes—whom are they to believe? Paul Robeson, a great negro, who says that there is no color discrimination in the USSR, or a government that is getting ready to draft negroes into a Jim Crow army to fight for the "democratic" way of life?

It is doubtless true that the wiping out of animosities between Moslem and Christian in Bosnia, the uniting of Croat and Serb, after centuries of jealousy and recrimination, will be used as propaganda for the Soviet cause. It is true, and it is tragic, that the spirit of brotherhood, helped to renew itself in Yugoslavia by accidents of history and fortunes of war, is already being turned to political exploitation. But it is no more tragic than the political motivation behind ERP economic aid to certain countries of western Europe.

Actually, the enthusiasm of the Yugoslavians for their, new social order proves little or nothing about Soviet communism or Marxist ideology. It does prove that the ideal of human solidarity is the only power on which both men and governments ought to rely, if they are serious in their claim of wanting world peace., 'The Moslem president of the People's Council of Robatica, a Bosnian "county seat," explained that in the old days, no Moslem could hold office, that the town was run by an official from Belgrade. "In the old days," he said, "it was hatred."—

> They always tried to stir up hatred among us. Always hatred. But today there is no hatred. Look at us in this room. We didn't know you were coming. This is the way we are all the time. Look at us. Turks and Christians. We work together. We eat together. We fought together, so we understand now that we are all human beings. It doesn't make any difference about the color of our skins or our religions of our nationality or anything else. There is no hatred in Yugoslavia today. That alone is worth all the suffering we have had.

Psychologically, the people of Yugoslavia seem to be at a stage of their history which might be compared to the United States after the war for independence. They have a world to build. Their common sufferings have made them want to build it together. Maurice Hindus found the same spirit in Russia in the early years after the Revolution. Then the revolutionary ideal was still bright, and vast energies had been released by the fall of the Czarist regime. What the future holds for Yugoslavia can hardly be foretold, now. What can be said is that no centralized bureaucracy rules by terror as vet, and there is no reason to prophesy that these people will fail to maintain their hard-won freedom.

If we in the United States had kept better faith with our own revolutionary ideals, we would be in a better position to be understood by the peoples of other countries. Instead of the utopia that Americans might have made of the North American continent, we have a power-mad nation, sick with psychological confusion and moral weakness, haunted by fear. It is still materially possible for Americans to practice the sort of cooperation the young Bosnian could recognize

and admire, but great psychological barriers stand in the way. The youth of America are *trained* to ignore the need for cooperation, are indoctrinated with the competitive spirit and the ideal of personal material "success."

This is not an argument for "socialism." It is an appeal for re-examination of the basic motivations of daily life in the United States. It is an inquiry into what we are doing with the freedom we have, the surplus time, money and energy we already possess. It would be quite possible for Americans to earn the respect of the millions in other parts of the world without passing a single law or repudiating any basic principle of their traditional political system. There are numberless opportunities for voluntary cooperation in the United States. If, in Yugoslavia, 64,000 young people could build a railroad in a single summer, what could the undergraduates of the colleges of the United States accomplish, voluntarily, during their summer vacations, if they had the habit of thinking in terms of human welfare? Suppose, for example, that the students of California colleges and universities set themselves the problem of making the youth of other races—negroes, Mexicans, and American Indians, for example—feel "at home" in California? Suppose education students decided to establish night schools for the migrant agricultural workers, and ran the schools themselves, on the Antioch Plan, alternating teaching with their studies? Suppose students in engineering schools throughout the country determined to attack the housing problem, and were able to finance and complete only one substantial development of low-cost homes? Can anyone suppose that these activities would not generate extraordinary sympathy and voluntary support from thousands and millions of other Americans? Obviously, there would be opposition, too, but care in keeping such programs non-political would give them enormous moral strength. As a matter of fact, steps in this direction have already been taken by religious groups such as the Quakers, who have proved beyond doubt that genuine good will and lack of self-interest can accomplish near-miracles in removing obstacles to cooperation.

Men who practice cooperation, mutual trust and service for the general good at home can win trust and confidence abroad. A country with a record for these things at home is a country that will be able to make peace with the rest of the world. There is no other way to get it.

Letter from **ENGLAND**

LONDON.—The gravity of the times was succinctly phrased by General Smuts when he said (March 27, 1948): "We have emerged into an era of crises. More than we ever expected, we are continuing in this crisis, and no eye can see the end." The Economic Survey for 1948, published by the Government here, emphasizes the truth of these words in its special field. Apart from the rude realities of their virtual bankruptcy and defencelessness thus brought home to the British people, two things are made clear by the Survey: the complete dependence of the Old World upon the New, and the decisive necessity for the European recovery programme, now signed by the President of the United States—"the greatest venture in constructive statesmanship that any nation has ever undertaken."

With American aid, the standard of life in Britain will be appreciably but not disastrously lower (in the official estimates) than it was in 1947. If American help had not come wholesale unemployment, distress, and dislocation were foreseen. There is more in all this than the aftermath of war. "The balance of power in the world is taking new shape, and ideas are again in open combat" *(The Times,* March 10, 1948). What the economists have called "an aura of affluence" still deceives the majority of British people. In 1946 we consumed perhaps 2 per cent less food than in 1938, less household goods and clothing, and there was less motoring. But there were increases, for example, of more than a half in entertainment of various kinds, and of nearly a third in beer and tobacco. The ancient Roman view held that two things only the people anxiously desire, bread and the circus. The modern proletariat certainly have the figurative circus; but not so clearly seen is the dire threat that still hangs over the heads of 47 million people living on a small island and shipping abroad goods that are getting more plentiful in the world, in exchange for essential foods that continue scarce in relation to the intense world need.

The real religion of today is trade and commerce, traffic in material things. Buying cheap and selling dear have become the systole and diastole of the human heart, and our economists are the high priests in this worship of a Business Jehovah! They are in the main (as are the devotees of this cult) antipathetic to Plato's teaching in the *Laws:*

> There is a consolation, therefore, in the State producing all things at home, and nothing in great abundance. Otherwise there might have been a great export trade, and a great return of gold and silver, which has the most fatal results on a State whose aim is the attainment of just and noble sentiments.

Unfortunately, "just and noble sentiments" are not statistically malleable, although they are items in a moral book-keeping foreign to commercial practice. One is reminded of Burke's words in 1790: "But the age of chivalry is gone. That of sophisters, economists, and calculators has succeeded, and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever." In this observation he was but echoing an ancient Indian prophecy: "Dishonesty will be the universal means of subsistence," wrote the commentator in the *Vishnu Purana* some 7,000 years ago, 44 weakness the cause of dependence, menace and presumption will be substituted for learning."

The fact remains (as one critic has pointed out) that the patient work of a century in these islands has been half undone. The huge and intricate fabric of production and trade has been wrenched and distorted. Another fact, not so clearly discerned, has to be faced. Reconstruction, national and international, to be effective will have to await the identification of subsistent moral principles in our thinking and our lives. Where is the economist today who will subscribe to the opinion of John Ruskin that "The essential work of the political economist is to determine what are in reality useful or lifegiving things, and by what degrees and kinds of labour

they are attainable and distributable" *(Munera Pulveris, xi)*? Too often, economic theories are seen to be merely rationalizations of the human emotions of envy, greed and ambition. To believe that "increased productivity" is the sole solution of our economic ills, is to be guilty of the sin of substituting an ephemeral quantitative economy (subject to trade cycles that are the counterpart of changeable human desires) for a qualitative economy based upon a vital standard of value. Certainly, increased production is important. But even that depends upon co-operative effort, and, as Professor R. H. Tawney remarked in *The Acquisitive Society* (1922), co-operation in its turn depends upon moral principles. "And moral principles" he added, "are what the prophets of this dispensation despise." In these matters, as in so much else, time will show who is right and who faithless to the deepest needs of our common humanity.

ENGLISH CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
THE FOLLIES OF NATIONS

IN 1944, the P.E.N. published in England a small book by B. H. Liddell Hart which contains much practical sagacity on the subject of national policy and war. For some obscure reason having to do, perhaps, with the greater cultural maturity of European civilization, the English have nurtured a brand of self-criticism that is largely lacking in the United States.

Mr. Hart's book is called *Why Don't We Learn from History?* In it he explores the major and minor delusions which have brought Europe—and America as well—to the brink of international self-destruction. Discussing history, and military and political history in particular, Mr. Hart devotes a good third of his small book to what he calls "The Fallacy of Compulsion." He begins with a general statement:

> We learn from history that the compulsory principle always breaks down in practice. It is practicable to *prevent* men doing something; moreover, that principle of restraint, or regulation, is essentially justifiable in so far as its application is needed to check interference with others' freedom. But it is not, in reality, possible to *make* men do something without risking more than is gained from the compelled effort. The method may appear practicable, because it often works when applied to those who are merely hesitant. When applied to those who are definitely unwilling it fails, however, because it generates friction and fosters subtle forms of evasion that spoil the effect which is sought. The test of whether a principle works is to be found in the product.

This is followed by a review of European history with respect to Conscription—compulsory military service—the conclusion being that a State which must compel its citizens to accept military service is a State "not likely or worthy to survive under test—and compulsion will make no serious difference."

For those who assert that a draft is the "democratic" way to raise an army, and who, pursuing this argument with enthusiasm, urge that "wealth" as well as manpower be drafted in the service of the nation, Mr. Hart's conclusion is horrifying and intolerable. A conscript army, he says, is a totalitarian measure, and "it is a practical folly as well as a spiritual surrender to go totalitarian as a result of fighting for existence against the totalitarian States. Cut off the incentive to freely given service, and you dry up the life-source of a free community."

Now if Mr. Hart is right, and we think he is, then a free community can hardly afford to compromise on this principle. But the fact is that today, in the United States, the national government seems about to ignore that principle entirely and to enact, for the second time during peace, in the history of this country, a draft of men for service in the Army. This can mean only one of two things: either that our legislators do not understand what a "free community" is, and what makes it free, or that a free community can no longer exist in the modern world.

Mr. Hart bases his conclusion on two sorts of observation, historical and psychological. Historically, the countries which relied on conscription for armies of national defence have fallen into the morass of bureaucracy and a lethargy of spirit. Inevitably, the conscript soldier adopts a "they" psychology with respect to his own commanders. Increasingly, *he* is the pawn, *they* the players. *He* is "moved"—is "fought"—by *them.* Conscription substitutes the mechanics of outward compulsion for the dynamics of inward coordination. The free community is thus transformed into the Garrison State—which, as Randolph Bourne aptly said, gains its health from War.

In time, conscription reduces the individual citizen to the level of what Spengler, in his *Decline of the West,* called the "fellaheen" culture. The fellah is a man who has lost all power of historical causation. He is the object of history. Things are done *to* him. He is the human end-product of a cycle of despotism, completely unfree. His rulers define power as the capacity to

require obedience of the fellaheen. They can conceive of no other terms in which to define it.

Another conclusion reached by Mr. Hart deals with the folly of entrusting the problem of national security to military men. This question is peculiarly appropriate to raise at the present time, for the reason that the military, as a national institution, has never before exercised in the United States as much influence as it now wields. This power grows not only from the fact that Army and Navy personnel are widely placed throughout the various branches of civilian government, but also from the special prestige and authority which spokesmen for the military seem to enjoy in the eyes of members of Congress. The penetration of the military is equally great in the areas of education, science and industry. Hanson Baldwin, writing in *Harper's* for last December on "The Military Move In," speaks of the semi-military organizations forming the "integrating link between big industry and the military," which "increases greatly the influence of the military in industry, especially through service-sponsored off-the-record meetings, demonstrations, cruises, etc." With respect to education, the same military expert observes that passage of military training legislation, with its various options for college students, "would enormously increase the number of federally-subsidized students in the nation, and the dependence of our whole educational system upon military financing and military policy." At present, according to the New York *Times* of Sept. 6, 1947, "Virtually every important college or university has one or more contracts with the Navy for scientific research," which colleges "are now receiving an average of $170,000 each for this work annually." *Army Talk* for Jan. 18, 1948, reported: "The Army plan of R.O.T.C. directly or indirectly affects 47.7% of all male undergraduates now in all colleges of the U.S."

All this may seem extremely "efficient," from the viewpoint of preparedness and mastery of the techniques of war. It represents a policy of being ready *when the* next war comes. And, as Hanson Baldwin justly observes, the military men involved in positions of civilian authority are most of them "good public servants," and many of them "exceptional." The important observation is that, collectively—

> they represent a pattern; they have in common the habit of command and discipline and mental outlook of military training—a tendency to apply in their thinking the yardstick of physical power. It is a pattern to be watched.

This pattern, these preparations, in other words, are *for* war. They have nothing to do with peace, nor with liberty, in any fundamental sense. Military men, by training and habit of mind, are executives, technologists of war. They are for the most part not only disinclined but actually incompetent to plan for peace. It is, therefore, peculiarly shortsighted, at this crucial juncture of history, for the United States to rely so heavily upon the opinions of military men and to accept the military version of the requirements of national security as though no real alternative analysis could be supplied. Mr. Hart sums up his conclusion thus:

> To take the opinions of generals, admirals or air marshals on the deeper problems of war, as distinct from its executive technique, is like consulting your local chemist about the treatment of a deep-seated disease. However skilled in compounding drugs it is not their concern to study the causes and consequences of the disease, not the psychology of the sufferer.

Mr. Hart, of course, is a philosopher. His book is a study of war and peace from the viewpoint of principles deduced from human experience. Although brief, his discussion of the futility of compulsion seems as luminous a demonstration of scientific law as any Euclidian proof. Unfortunately, however, he nowhere explores the question posed by his title, *Why Don't We Learn from History?* but only shows that he and a few others—in all a tiny minority—have been able to read the scroll of past experience with intelligence and profit.

The answer to the question seems to be that although all men talk about freedom as a desirable condition, the means to freedom remains a secret hidden alike from the man in the street and the diplomats and statesmen in positions of power. Which means that both peace and freedom are essentially problems in philosophy, and that Plato, in the last analysis, was right again. On this, Mr. Hart seems in agreement:

> Is there any way out of the dilemma? There is at least one solution that has yet to be tried—that the masters of force should be those who have mastered all desire to employ it. That solution is an extension of what Bernard Shaw expressed in *Major Barbara* thirty-three years ago: that wars would continue until the makers of gunpowder became professors of Greek—and he here had Gilbert Murray in mind—or the professors of Greek became makers of gunpowder. And this, in turn, was derived from Plato's conclusion that the affairs of mankind would never go right until either the rulers became philosophers or the philosophers became rulers.

COMMENTARY
A LIFE'S DIRECTION

MANAS has received two communications which, taken together, illustrate the poles of the central social dilemma of the time. One contains a series of observations issuing in the conclusion that people with ideals ought to gain their livelihoods by acts consistent with their principles. Obviously, this may involve departure from conventional ways of making a living—a withdrawal in varying degree, depending upon what is understood by "principles" and "consistency," by the people with ideals. The other letter explores the "alienation" which results from such withdrawal, asserting, "The more we isolate ourselves from others, the more we find satisfaction in ourselves apart from others, the less effective will our creativity be in the stream of civilization."

We don't expect to solve this problem, here, or any other place, with words, but illustrations of what some men have said and done about it may help. Clarence Darrow wrote:

> I determined to get what I could out of the system and use it to *destroy* the system. I have since sold my professional services to every corporation or individual who cared to buy; the only exception I have made is that I have never given them aid to oppress the weak or convict the innocent. I have taken their ill-gotten gains and tried to use it to prevent suffering. My preaching and practicing have ever been the same: I have always tried to show a state and a way to reach it where men and women can be honest and tender. I care nothing whatever for money except to use it in this work. I have defended the weak and the poor, have done it without pay, will do it again. I cannot defend them without bread; I cannot get this except from those who give it and by giving some measure of conformity to what is.

Somewhere—we can't locate the passage—Arthur Morgan has spoken of his early resolve never to take money unless he had produced something worthy and tangible for it. And in 1902 he wrote in his diary:

> It is cowardly for people to shirk or deny the responsibilities of life. Every man but the anarchist admits the necessity of some sort of politics; and I have as much respect for the ward-heeler as I have for the man who will call the policeman when his house is broken into, but who abhors politics and advises all decent people to keep out of it.
>
> Every man except the savage buys food and clothes from the storekeeper. I have small admiration for any "godly" man who becomes a preacher because a man cannot be honest in business. So much for the practical life. But I do not want anything to be "practical" to me which does not conform to these other standards—which would not be practical to Christ.

Morgan once suggested that a measure of the democratic spirit of a community is provided by the proportion of the people who do their own "dirty work"—the unpleasant, menial tasks—and the proportion who hire it done.

Another practical instance of attitude, related to the same question, is Einstein's refusal, while visiting in Japan, to ride in a rickshaw. He would not, he said, use any other human being as a beast of burden. The practical Mrs. Einstein remarked that he was denying the man who pulled the rickshaw his way of making a living, but Einstein stood his ground.

We think it impossible to define the "right" ground on which to stand, in connection with this problem, except in the most general terms. So much depends upon the individual, his motives, his vision, and his capacities. A life's direction always counts for more than a code of behavior, the difficulty being, of course, that without a code it becomes easy to overlook the problem entirely. So there is the dilemma again, although somewhat higher, we hope, on the spiral than where we began.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

STUART CHASE has for some years been popularizing the theory that our culture suffers from a "tyranny of words." Intellectuals have taken up what they call the "science of semantics"—a revaluation of words in common usage, with the objective of eliminating from the mechanics of intelligent discussion those verbal symbols which do not convey a clear and specific meaning.

Whether or not a person regards himself as a qualified "semanticist," it is possible to be acutely aware of the fact that most of the words used in our political harangues do nothing for us except stir up cloudy emotions. The two prime examples are, of course, "Democrat" and "Republican." By the time people were getting used to the fact that these labels, of themselves, meant little or nothing, suddenly, the word "liberal" became popular. And the liberals soon taught us the name for their choice of the devil—the "reactionary," with the "conservative" as a sort of sub-demon. Then came the war and "democracy" versus Nazism. Now, after the war, it is "free-enterprise" versus Communism. These words have often, indeed, established a tyranny over our logical mental processes because when applied to groups and societies, they deter us from viewing man as Man. When a certain label is attached, the person is simply Bad, whether or not we can explain precisely why.

The tendency to react and judge emotionally the moment we hear a certain verbal symbol is usually developed in our childhood years. Children are not belabored by the terms "liberal" and "reactionary," but they are admonished and punished through use of a great many other terms which they do not understand—and which they have no chance of understanding if their parents have never stopped to undertake clear definitions for themselves. It might be argued that the beginning of all word—tyrannies characteristically comes from a parent's use of the words "good" and "bad," "should" and "ought." Children are told: "Instead of this, you *should* do that." Certain courses of action are often given forceful, irrational disapproval or sanction by parents. It is true that a mother or father may attempt to explain the reason why a child "should" be willing to do this or that particular thing, or why he "should not" do something else, but these explanations are typically elaborations of the initial dogmatic judgment. The child realizes that the case is hopeless—the powers who control him have decided what he is to do or not to do as soon as the word "bad" is uttered, and subsequent explanations are so much persiflage. This is like saying that the Democrats are absolutely no good and then reasoning after the judgment as to why they are no good. People who at the moment are "Democrats" will have no difficulty in recognizing this as poor educational procedure.

Just as in the case of popular political labels, the words of arbitrary personal usage are heritages of medieval mind-patterns. When a parent feels that he knows without question what a child "should" do, he is reproducing the psychology of an authoritarian church. His child may grow up to be a fine human being despite this subjection to authoritarian psychology, but if he is to become truly tolerant and understanding, he will somewhere and sometime have to fight the tendency to substitute moralistic labels for thinking. If we profess to believe in the philosophy and psychology which shaped the foundation for our conception of democracy, we might admit at the outset that no parent can possibly know what a child "should" do. A parent *can* say: "I think this is what I would do in your situation, because I would reason that the results would lead to more happiness in the long run. I would refrain from making the other choice which is now before you because I would feel that the results that would flow from it would be inferior. What do you think of what I have said? If you can see no reason for following my suggestion, it would be foolish for you to do so."

Once again, of course, readers will ask the age of the children we are talking about. The age doesn't matter. While a very young child cannot be impressed with the formal logic of a parent's argument, he will in any case be impressed by the parent's attitude. If the attitude is arbitrary, the child will either accept arbitrariness as a natural condition of human living, which makes him a potential totalitarian, or he will reject arbitrariness through vigilant opposition, which also means rejecting his parents as friends and counselors.

What is more valuable than anything else is the encouragement of the development of the child's mind, and when a child wants to know *why* a certain course of action is considered to be inferior, and another superior, he merits all the attention and concentration of which the parent is capable. The important thing is not, as some parents would have it, for them to understand what is best. The important thing is for the child to understand why the parent thinks as he does about what is best.

It is natural enough to make the assumption that the experiences of elders enable them to tell what is good and bad for the child. Natural, because it is true that a parent's perspective on practical matters is usually more reliable than the child's. Yet the child cannot learn from prohibitions. He must come to desire the wisdom of his parents, and in order to desire it there must always be the unspoken assumption that he has a certain freedom to accept or reject parental counsel. Further, there is a considerable difference between those things which are suitable standards of judgment for one person and those suitable for another. To feel that one "knows" what is best for a child is to assume that the child's problems are exactly the same as our own once were, and that *we* learned exactly what we ought to have learned from our own experiences. We may be wrong on both counts. The fact that we have decided that certain things are good and others bad merely means that we have made some things good and others bad in our own lives. The child may have different capacities.

FRONTIERS
Greatness

JUST why a modest book about Professor Albert Einstein should have the effect of making this Department go off the deep end into the uncharted sea of supernormal psychology will have to remain unexplained to all readers who neglect to read the book. It is *Einstein, an Intimate Study of a Great Man*, by Dimitri Marianoff, a Russian journalist who married the physicist's stepdaughter and lived with the Einstein family for eight years.

There are many mysteries connected with Einstein, and among the least of them is the mathematics of the Special Theory of Relativity. That, at least, is the impression we have from reading Marianoff's book. Here is a man completely defiant of all conventional classifications of human beings. His honesty is so basic, affecting every phase of his life, that one wonders how any human being can have remained so untouched by the commonplace and mostly unnoticed debasements of the present-day world.

To understand the sort of man that Einstein is, it is necessary to call on mythology. No ordinary comparison will do. First of all, it is certain that whenever or however the Fall of Man occurred, the spirit of Albert Einstein was not among those present. Everyone is acquainted with people who have no sense of personal guilt or "sin" because they live an animal-like existence—below the level of good and evil perceptions. Einstein is without a human sense of guilt because he is a wholly impersonal man. It seems unbelievable, but there it is read the book.

Emerson, if we can believe Henry James senior, was a man like that. James, when he was with Emerson, felt the radiance of a Christ-like presence. Yet he could not understand Emerson's "sinless" spirit. He felt that Emerson was like an untried angel—one who never wrestled with his conscience, and he suspected, therefore, that Emerson had no conscience at all. But we surmise, rather, that Emerson's "conscience," despite a certain placidity of spirit, was so unusually lacking in the focus of egotism that James could not find in him anything much resembling his own austere personal guide. In both Emerson and Einstein, it seems, the moral sense is wholly impersonal.

Other aspects of Einstein's character recall a Hindu legend about a low-caste devotee who determined that he would become a Brahmin. Now this, according to the rules of Hinduism, was quite impossible. Nevertheless, the base-born aspirant continued his meditations until the vibrations of his thought reached into the core of the earth and expanded to encompass the four regions of the universe. Finally he became like Atlas—but an Atlas in whose mind the earth floated as a cockle-shell upon a sea of thought. The Gods conferred and lest, from the power of this almighty brooding, the world be sundered and destroyed, the thinker was admitted to the Brahmin caste.

Einstein is such a thinker. He lives in two worlds, the world of thought, endless in extent, and the world of daily life. As Marianoff writes:

> While Albert Einstein is encased in a human body, and it is true that he eats and drinks and laughs and talks just as other humans, in certain ways he does not think as a human; he thinks in terms of the universe. And because he does this the man and his thought are a dosed preserve to a matter world. He tells you himself. He once wrote:
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> "For the most part I do the thing which my own nature drives me to do. Arrows of hate have been shot at me, but they never hit me, because somehow they belonged to another world with which I have no connection whatever.

A man like Einstein helps to take a book like R. M. Bucke's *Cosmic Consciousness* out of the class of longhair treatises on mysticism, and give it the appearance of a serious psychological study of human greatness. Of course, the book that had a lot to do with getting William James started on his *Varieties of Religious Experience* needs no

apology from this Department, but Bucke's title, since the New Thought days, has acquired an undesirable brand of second-hand "glamor" that tends to discourage serious attention. Einstein, it seems to us, is a living example of what Dr. Bucke was talking about, and there is no harm in pointing it out.

One thing more: Einstein has the intuitive admiration of millions of people who are without any notion of the meaning of his contribution to modern physics. We are not going to try to explain this phenomenon. Perhaps, in some weird way, all these people feel his greatness as a kind of intellectual radiation. Perhaps they know, the way children know, that he is a completely unpretentious man, not set apart by any barrier in *his* mind from themselves.

When Einstein returned to Germany after his first visit to the United States, he was asked by a New York newspaper to write his impressions of America. He agreed at once, but was angered by the suggestion that he should accept money for the article. He refused any money—thousands were offered—and wrote:

> I must fulfill my promise to say something of this country. This is not entirely easy for me, for it is difficult to assume the viewpoint of an objective observer in a country in which one is received with as much love and exaggerated respect as I was. Individual worship is, as I look at it, always something unjustified. To be sure, Nature does distribute her gifts in great variety among her children, but of those richly gifted ones, there are, thank God, many, and I am firmly convinced that most of them lead a quiet and unobstrusive existence. It does not seem right to me, indeed, not even in good taste, when a few of these are admired beyond all bounds just because people attribute to them superhuman abilities of spirit and character.
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> This very thing became my fate and there actually exists a grotesque contrast between the capability and accomplishment people accredit me, and what I really am. The consciousness of this fact would be unbearable to me, if there were not *one* beautiful consolation therein it is a gratifying sign of our age—so often criticized for being materialistic, that it makes heroes of men whose goals rest upon purely spiritual and moral bases. This proves that knowledge a righteousness are rated, by a large part of humanity, higher than possessions or power. In an especially high degree, according to my experience, does this idealistic attitude prevail in America, so often described as a particularly materialistic nation. . . .