

THE DAYS OF WRATH

THE man who has lived through the first fifty years of the twentieth century has lived through the days of wrath, and may live to see their ending. Today, the angry certainties are waning, the cocksure advocates of scientific progress seldom met with any more. A generation ago it was possible to find a meeting in any big city where the righteous materialists with programs would assemble to listen to each other curse the stupidity of those who could not see the sharply defined truth. The ignorance of the world vastly irritated them; and when you asked the extremists among them what they would do about it all, they answered darkly, "Men, with guns."

The mid-years of the twentieth century have been a time of various climaxes. We have seen what has been accomplished by men with guns. They have made a world armed to the teeth, yet shaking with fear. Only the fools and the demagogues believe or pretend to believe that anything can be accomplished with guns, any more. The guns, even the atom and H bombs of our time, are more a matter of bad habit than conviction that they can lead to something good. We keep on making guns and bombs because that is all we know how to do. Nobody really believes in them, but we keep on making them because there is a tendency to submissive obedience when no one thinks he has the answers. The obedience is to those who pretend as a matter of "public duty" to have the answers, lest a vast hysteria sweep the nation into a saturnalia of mindless fright.

Yes, the days of wrath are over. Only their ugly consequences remain. After the anger of righteousness spends itself in revolution, building a great State Apparatus to execute the decrees of yesterday's revolutionary ardor, the wrath becomes merely mechanical. It has no real spirit' but turns into something mean, almost

contemptible. If you want a great and righteous indignation to die out, let it become "official." For when it is official, it soon becomes corrupt, and when it is corrupt it loses its command. It becomes as dull and uninspiring as a "party line."

A certain encouragement is to be found in the fact that the dogmas of materialism have become a ritual of State for a number of modern nations. Creative people will never embrace rituals, so that the new generations that will be coming along are bound to work out something new. It is simply impossible for creative people to move smoothly and efficiently along the grooves of behavior, loyalty, and belief which have been established for them by others. Even if they were the best possible grooves—which is never the case—they would have to be filled up and new beginnings made. The nature of authentic human conviction makes such new beginnings necessary.

There is a fundamental difference between faith in credos and faith in man. Faith in credos is faith in the past—the past that formulated the credos—while faith in man is faith in the future. Faith in man declares that there will always be those who will break out of the confinements of oppressive tradition—who will insist upon being free. Faith in credos—credos which have been crystallized into rituals, customs, and conventions—fears the future and its unpredictability. It seeks to purchase security by closing off the areas of originality, by placing a premium on conformity.

The methods of the lovers of conformity, the relies on ritual, never change very much. A writer in the *Christian Century* for Jan. 5, discussing the relationship between "Science and Faith," cites the classical instance of theological oppression—the resistance to the Copernican Revolution and the persecution of Galileo:

The moment he [Galileo] published this treatise it was banned by the church, and eventually he gave in completely to the papal authority and recanted in a famous statement which concluded: "I abjure, curse and detest the said heresies and errors, and generally every other error and sect contrary to the Holy Church, and I swear that I will never more in the future say or assert anything verbally or in writing which may give rise to a similar suspicion of me." This recantation was read from every Catholic pulpit in Europe. It sounds precisely like the confessions wrung by the Communists from the victims of their "brain-washing" trials.

The thing to remember is that only the time-servers, the men without imagination, can be held in the service of institutions which use such methods to obtain agreement. The future never belongs to such systems and such men.

But what, it will be asked, if men without imagination control the instruments of power and direct the police forces and armies of the world?

The only thing that can perpetuate their power is to oppose them by the same methods—without imagination—for then they are able to fight on their own ground. The political power of the Medieval Church was not broken by war, despite a long series of religious conflicts—but by the emergence of creative individuals who left the Church and established new centers of gravity for religious thought. War, on the contrary, is the best of all possible means of holding together the authoritarian systems, for war and the threat of war nourish the root principle of authoritarian life, which is fear.

The issue between ideological conformity and original thinking appears also on a number of lesser fronts—"lesser," that is, in the sense that no political passions are involved, but only philosophical or academic conformity. The first great blow sustained by the conventional nineteenth-century theories of matter came as the result of the discovery of radioactivity, between 1895 and 1897. After physical theory had absorbed the impact of this discovery, it was declared that matter and energy are interchangeable—each being a form of the other.

This amounted to practical dissolution of the old idea of matter as hard, impenetrable "stuff," and gave to the universe a fundamentally *energetic* character. "Materialism," however, continued to govern the philosophical speculations of scientists, since energy is without rational attributes in scientific definition.

At present, however, the progress of parapsychological research is beginning to suggest that while the world may be a continuum of energy, it may also exist in a continuum of *mind*. This, in brief, is the direct implication of psychokinesis, the field of investigation concerned with showing that mental activity may cause or affect physical motion.

Such ideas, of course, represent the science of tomorrow rather than of today. What may be said, now, is simply that the scientific idea of "reality" is in unstable flux. The Newtonian World Machine and the deterministic scheme of cause and effect can no longer be made to underwrite materialistic theories of political salvation.

Developments of this sort may seem to be far removed from the political animosities which confuse and terrorize the present scene, but they are nevertheless important in any attempt to anticipate the forces of belief which may be brought to bear on mass human behavior in the future. With the further break-down of old systems of belief and theories of progress, it is even possible that philosophers may be able to obtain a hearing from the masses.

Letter from **INDIA**

NEW DELHI.—India is passing through a period of transition, building huge power and irrigation projects and new industrial units, based, by and large, on economic and technological patterns evolved by the West. But this development of an under-developed economy has brought social and moral problems to which very little attention is given. A greater understanding of the "qualitative," the human, side of the problem is required to assess the social effects of this technological advance.

India has to meet three important social problems which, though not new, have assumed enormous proportions in recent years—problems of (a) student indiscipline, (b) increase in crime, and (c) mounting unemployment, particularly amongst the educated middle classes.

The present generation of students lacks restraint and respect for the teachers. With the breakdown of family life, the head of the family is not able to exercise a healthy influence, and with the classes swelling to unwieldy sizes, teachers cannot give personal attention to children. But more than these is the intangible atmosphere prevailing in society, which has upset old values. A sort of "trade union" spirit prevails among the students, who go on strike if the college or university authorities do not listen to them. Not only their respect for law and order but also their intellectual attainments have declined.

No less serious is the problem of crime, not only in respect to its incidence, but also in respect to its virulence. Crimes of violence and particularly dacoities [robbery by murderous gangs] have become more frequent.

Reliable figures of unemployment are not available, but unemployment, both rural and urban, is very widespread. Middle-class educated unemployment is the chief cause of concern. While there are some relief measures for unemployment, the individual has to manage the best way he can.

The old sources of charity have dried up, and no state aid is given to the unemployed.

These three symptoms—amongst many—of social malaise are mentioned, not with a view to criticise, but to indicate that India cannot solve her problems by following orthodox Western remedies. Much of our social disorganisation is due to the impact of Western technology on Indian society, which for the most part we copy blindly. The result is that old patterns break down. There is no studied effort to harmonise Western technology with traditional social patterns. Before Western technology is applied, its effects should be gauged on the social life of different communities, in all its ramifications. This is not being done adequately as yet; hence, India is passing through a phase of social disorganisation. It is here suggested that technology should not be applied to improve *the condition of man*, but that man should not be remodelled to suit technology; technology should be made to serve Man.

When one looks around these days, one is not quite sure what is happening to us. One hears so much of "progress" and of raising the standard of living, of mighty river valley projects, of a great deal of nation-building work being done. But when one inspects the tangible results, he finds disunity and a lot of grumbling. In family life and in the sphere of community life, there is not the same cohesion and unity of purpose, and our manners, whatever they were, have deteriorated. Life has become less secure, with mounting unemployment and increasing crime. In a sense we have destroyed many of the internal controls that a cultured and civilized life needs, and our main check is the Government. Although it is our own democratically chosen Government, the attitude of a large number of us is as if it were an alien Government.

Now why is this all happening? It is possible to explain it in terms of history, social psychology, and on various other grounds. The Government would probably say that we have inherited the situation from the previous administration, and have not had enough time to put it right. Others, who are adversely affected by the changes planned by the Government, blame misguided zeal for reform.

Others blame partition, Pakistan, communism, and Hindu Mahasabha—according to their bent. There may be some truth in all these points of view, but it is like half-truth which misleads more than it enlightens.

It is not possible to make a historical survey of our present position, but it can be safely said that the impact of Western culture and civilization on Indian society has been rather shattering. In the early stages, the Indian society resisted the impact and the impetus to change, unless it affected only the superficial periphery, but the cumulative influence of two centuries of Western contact has not been slight. Mainly during the present century vast changes took place in industry, gradually undermining our economic, social and ethical structure, until our whole ethos has become impregnated with Western values.

The values of Hindu life—and most Indians are Hindus—are in direct opposition to the values of modern scientific technology and statecraft. The highest values of traditional life—deeply entrenched in its social structure and life—are *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha*. The supreme value is Dharma (duty), which the other values support, though the final and transcendental value is Moksha (Liberation). However much the ancient Hindu social order may have decayed or been disrupted, even until some forty years ago, Dharma—as Indians understood it—was supreme, and not Artha, and the majority still aspired to Moksha. The Hindu way of life—Dharma—was one whole and indivisible, each part interdependent. But when the West introduced its money-based economy and power-based culture, it gradually undermined and upset the Dharma-based stability of social structure. In the old system a set of inner virtues was important; in the modern, external appurtenances and appearances—clothes, money, cars, houses, etc. In the old system, virtue consisted in being free from *Kam* (lust), *Krodha* (anger), *Lobh* (greed), and *Moh* (attachment), and to conquer one's appetites and ego (*Ahankar*), while the modern way gave full rein to appetites and ego, and success became the object of worship, howsoever attained. "Progress" is another deity of the modern world, though many of us do not understand what exactly

that word means. The four "Rages" (*Kam*, *Krodh*, *Lobh* and *Moh*), which were considered undesirable and steps to degeneration, have assumed the form of desirable qualities. *Kama* or lust and attachment has become desirable—almost a virtue—and its attraction boldly flaunted in the pages of newspapers and in the films, so that practically no one is immune from its influence. In much the same way, other undesirable qualities like *Lobh* and *Moh* have assumed the status of goals. *Lobh* has become a virtue in the Capitalist Economy. Without it one cannot have money, and success is another name for having money. *Dharma* has become old-fashioned, if not actually undesirable. "Progress" has taken its place.

It would be difficult to convince many people that this is not a healthy state of affairs. There are many who do not believe in a life beyond the present, and who also do not believe in a social or moral law. To them, their immediate needs (or more properly appetites) are paramount, with ever-increasing doses of satisfaction required to keep them happy. These people are mostly self-centered. But to a keen observer of society, the ill-effects of such a social philosophy—if it can be called by that name (nihilism would be more appropriate)—are apparent.

No doubt there are other sociological and psychological factors responsible for the spectacular increase in crime. It is partly the last war, when thousands learnt the use of fire-arms, the partition and its aftermath, the uprooting of millions, the worship of success, money, ostentation, cinema films, and to a small degree poverty. But the main cause is the disappearance of traditional religion and moral values, while nothing has taken their place.

INDIAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW

SCANNING SOME PERIODICALS

WE wonder if many of our readers attempt regular visits to the local library to content-sample various journals of opinion? Certainly, this is one way of keeping aware of current philosophical and social issues.

The following excerpts—more typical than remarkable—are offered as possible inducements to reading-room browsing.

The *Christian Century* for March 2 contains an interesting article by William Ernest Hocking, "Reconception Reconsidered." Dr. Hocking has recently returned from a trip to India with a number of fellow Christians, and in "Reconception Reconsidered" he summarizes the numerous benefits of absorbing an Eastern point of view to Western theologians and divines. Not only this, but the *content* of a "foreign" religion, seemingly without value or meaning at first, will always be found to yield something worth consideration, in Hocking's opinion. He writes:

When mystic recognizes mystic across the party boundary, he regards that other's experience as potentially his own, it has already ceased to be "outside." Reconception is, in truth, the simple and normal process of growth which attends all our beliefs through that "sympathetic intelligence" to which Bergson gave the name of intuition. It is always taking place when developed religions coexist, and always mutually. Assimilations conscious and unconscious were taking place in prewar days between certain Buddhist sects and Christianity. There were external borrowings, such as Buddhist adaptations of Christian services, hymns, membership-rosters; but also far more genuine and inconspicuous inner growths, such as Christian uses of meditation or Buddhist tentatives toward programs of social service.

Through such peaceful and usually propitious appropriations a certain tendency to converge can be discerned, far indeed from accord, yet a tendency which, if it could complete itself, would bring about a "meeting of East and West" on the only ground on which such a meeting would be significant; namely, on the ground of religion. . . .

Reconception is a process of unlimited possibility. Its spur is simply the mystic's

recognition, "Here is something real in the other religion, something which we cannot exclude; something, therefore, which belongs to our own faith—but not as an annex—in its unity and integrity; we must renew our hold on its central meaning." It is not an easy process; growth is never easy. But its fruit is a deepened simplicity, an added power, a widened pertinence because of a greater justice to existing religious realities, a justice and naturalness which will be felt at once by the common man, who will be, after all, the ultimate arbiter among the religions. He will understand our language better, because our formulas will no longer condemn what he intuitively feels to be good.

A subsequent issue of the *Century* (March 9) contains an article by Harold Fey on "The Indian and the Law," which provides facts on how our legislators continue to threaten Indian welfare due, largely, to inflexible economic notions. Those who are familiar with the efforts of Oliver Lafarge on behalf of the Indians, with the work of John Collier as Indian Commissioner, and with the struggles of Felix F. Cohen as an advisor to the tribes on legal affairs, will particularly wish to note this piece.

Turning now to the *Reporter*, we note some paragraphs which we hope will indicate, as we approvingly quote them, that MANAS editors are not above occasionally praising the intent of some of our statesmen or appreciating the difficulties they face. *Reporter* editor Max Ascoli writes in the issue of March 10:

We need to proceed with the greatest possible deliberation and effectiveness. Yet there is not a moment to waste in Formosa, at the disarmament conference, wherever we are facing Communist power. The more time goes by, the more we rely on nuclear weapons, the more difficult it becomes even to conceive of a disarmament plan implying the outlawing of these weapons, for the Communists, different from us, still keep millions of men in military formations designed to fight conventional wars.

To redress the balance and to protect the country against all the hazards both of armament and disarmament, it is the duty of our government to take the initiative wherever the danger is greatest and to be the first to denounce to the world the irreparable harm that would result from nuclear weapons in warfare. It is also the duty of our government to

prove what blessings mankind can derive from the peaceful use of atomic power.

The extraordinary thing is that our government in its lumbering way is moving and has moved in all these directions. . . . [notwithstanding, in Mr. Ascoli's opinion, the independent belligerence of certain politicians and the press, plus the ominous flashes of experimental nuclear explosions in Nevada].

However, while over-all policy may show conscientious preference of peace over war, government attitudes sometimes fall over on the other side of the wall in respect to issues less spectacular, but nonetheless crucial. Milton Mayer, in the *Progressive* for March, tells the story of Dr. Chang-Pen Hsu, a Chinese national of high professional standing. Dr. Chang, who had won two scholarships in American universities, and taught at Cal Tech, wished finally to go home to teach there. The Immigration authorities said no—he could not leave. There are two thousand like Chang, men who came to this country to learn in order to eventually help China; they are chiefly medical students, engineers, and agriculturalists. On being denied permission to return to their native lands, their spokesmen addressed a letter to the President of the United States, which read, in part:

In the seeking of knowledge and wisdom, some of the undersigned have had to leave behind their beloved wives and children. In most of the cases the painful separation has already lasted seven years, and their return is still being denied. The plight of others, although not married, is by no means less tragic. Distressed and unsettled, we are forced to let slip through our fingers the best years of our lives. . . .

We would respectfully point out that the technical training we have received here involves no code of secrecy; indeed, the spreading of scientific knowledge and technical know-how has been the very spirit of a great tradition of this country ever since its establishment. Unfortunately, the policy of preventing the departure of Chinese students has merely created hardship and misery for the innocent.

Recently we have learned from the newspapers that 15 Chinese students are to be released. We sincerely appeal to you, Mr. President, to make it possible for any Chinese student to leave the United States whenever he so chooses, and we petition you to revoke this restraining order. In doing so we do not believe that the security of this great nation would be in any way endangered. On the contrary, we are of

the opinion that by doing so a firmer bond of friendship and understanding will be established between our two peoples.

From the winter edition of the quarterly *American Scholar* we select for attention portions of two concluding paragraphs in an article entitled, "The Birth of the Free University," by Carl Anthon. These passages have to do with help given to Berlin's Free University by the Ford Foundation, and this seems a fitting time to give particular attention to such a tangible accomplishment, since the Ford Foundation is currently under fire from reactionary groups. Mr. Anthon discusses the struggles which preceded the actual birth of the Free University, and then speaks of a trip undertaken by Henry Ford II, and Paul Hoffman, head of the Foundation, who were invited to look over the university and its problems. Mr. Anthon writes:

The question of permanence was uppermost in the minds of Henry Ford II and Paul Hoffman when they visited the Free University in 1951 in order to examine the possibilities for a Ford Foundation grant. They were deeply moved at the sight of the improvised buildings and the manifestation of so much ingenuity and enthusiasm. They quizzed students and professors about conditions at the University and about their experiences behind the Iron Curtain. They obtained the assurance (as far as that is possible) from the city fathers that the Free University would enjoy the permanent support of the city as *the* future university of Berlin. Convinced that a grant to this institution would constitute an excellent "investment in democracy," the Ford Foundation voted \$1,309,000 for a library and lecture-hall building as well as for a student dining hall. A small sum was earmarked for certain academic programs such as general education courses, extension courses and tutorial groups. Last June, the library and lecture hall, a gleaming white, modern structure, was officially dedicated in the presence of many distinguished visitors from all parts of the world.

In less than six years, the Free University has become a full-fledged university with six faculties. It will doubtless remain as long as Berlin is the outpost of the free world.

COMMENTARY SECRET WEAPON

A SUBSCRIBER who writes from Italy (Taormina) brings another light to bear on some of the less attractive fruits of Western (American) culture:

We finally captured the sun in this golden land of the past—where shepherds still pipe on reeds while watching their sheep and goats, and the menacing beauty of Mt. Etna, crowned in snow, emits continuous billows of sulphurous smoke. Here, the women still sit and embroider, but their designs are all alike and dictated by the tourist shops. The latest movies are to be seen, and noisy motorcycles dash by in a gust of noise and smoke up and down the serpentine roads—ancient roads so skillfully built, they make short work of ascent by foot. All that is pastoral and idyllic is being rapidly obliterated by the impact of the movie, undoubtedly the greatest leveller of national characteristics ever known—a more devastating invader than armies—because the victims are unaware of the dangers!

The really troubling part of this "invasion" is the defenselessness of the victims! Wherever technology moves in, ancient handcrafts are first corrupted and then eliminated. Marco Pallis tells in *Peaks and Lamas* how the textiles made in the region of Tibet along the Indian border are no longer colored with soft, vegetable dyes, but with violent aniline hues. And in the cabinets displaying the work of Tibetan silversmiths, one may come across a Coca-Cola bottle in the place of honor!

What can be done? The only resistance movement against tasteless industrialism that we know of is *Sarvodaya*, started by Gandhi, but while *Sarvodaya* may qualify India's rush to industrialize, it cannot, as our Indian correspondent makes clear, reverse the tide of "progress."

It remains for the West to "rationalize" its technological and industrial genius in terms of human values. Off hand, we can think of four writers who have devoted attention to this problem. Ralph Borsodi (*Flight from the City*,

This Ugly Civilization) has mapped a program for the individual, Arthur Morgan (*The Long Road, The Small Community*) has examined the prospects for intelligent community life, and Lyman Bryson and Lewis Mumford have attacked the question from the viewpoint of total culture.

We can't stop the exporters of films and other things from having their way, but we can try to make a more civilized use, ourselves, of their products.

Meanwhile, men like Bryson may help us to regard more hopefully transforming effects of mass production. While efforts of this sort won't help the Italian peasants of today very much, it might do some good for their children, and for ours.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

The following communication from a Los Angeles County Curriculum Supervisor, we feel, does a creditable job of pointing up two educational issues of central importance—by focussing them at a level of current controversy. Certainly, the pro and con debates on competitive grade cards cannot be intelligently conducted without analysis of the factors here enumerated.

We plan to examine next week—or in the next two weeks—(a) various constructive ways of regarding mental incapacity, and (b) the pros and cons of competition, both in the schoolroom and in society at large. There is no doubt that the common denominator for both topics is psychology, particularly "attitudinal psychology," since it is the state of mind of the parent in regard to the child's mental limitations, and the state of mind often engendered in the child by competition, which constitute the chief difficulty.

Editor, "Children . . . and Ourselves":

Recently I noted a news report of the opinion of the Senate Investigating Committee on Education (California) concerning report cards. The committee referred to four types of reporting to parents: (1) The parent-teacher conference, (2) the individual ability report card, (3) the competitive grade card—comparing the child to others in his class, and (4) the fixed standard grade report card. The committee, according to the report, decided that "the first two methods should be discarded, mainly because they shield Little Willie from competition. . . . The problem is, they said, that the conference or individual grading system tends to act as a leveling and non-competitive process which offers 'little or no recognition for individual ability' . . .! Thus this method becomes 'a process for promoting socialistic theories, rather than one which promotes free competition,' the Senators said."

I am deeply concerned over this report, and have some questions to ask: (1) Does a competitive situation necessarily allow recognition for individual ability? And the converse: Does a

non-competitive situation nullify individual ability? (2) In what sense does a parent-teacher conference or an individual ability report card promote socialistic theories? (3) Can the problem of mental ability or disability ever be handled in reporting to parents?

Perhaps the editor would care to comment on these questions. I myself should like to elaborate on the last of the three. Several years ago I was working in a school district as teacher when a change was made from "individual ability" report cards to parent-teacher conferences. The trend in this district was from the "number four" type of report card, through "three," "two," to "one," over a considerable period of time. The educational philosophy accepted by the state of California itself, and by individual counties throughout the state, stands strongly behind this trend. This philosophy begins with an admission of individual differences, and recognizes that, since children differ in mental ability, just plain competition can be extremely harmful. This philosophy also proposes that it is the contribution of the individual in a situation where his efforts are valued and needed that should be important in the ideal society (Socialism?); that, since each one is different, each one's contribution will be unique, therefore indispensable. The same philosophy expects the ideal teacher to provide opportunities, and to recognize variances of ability so that, in the classroom, this ideal situation can gradually be approximated, in order to facilitate the best kind of learning for each child.

Unfortunately, though, we have conflicting practices in our schools. *All* children are required by law to attend school until the age of sixteen, yet schools are primarily academic, with emphasis on book-learning. The teacher is commonly faced, therefore, with this dilemma: She has a child in her class with obviously low mental ability. He is unable to read or spell, or to appreciate the subtleties of literature. But he must remain in a classroom where no equipment is provided for a development of his skill in

mechanics, electrical, and other occupational skills. So the teacher gives this child as much experience as possible (if she is a sincere teacher, and if the school district provides the materials) in handcrafts, construction in wood, painting, working with clay, and the like. She helps him to learn how to work with others, contributing his ideas and opinions. She helps the other children to appreciate him for what he can do. He is contented. There is no pressure. He reads with other children whose ability is low. He works at his arithmetic at a rate that fits his understanding.

Then comes the time for report cards. What would type four report card say about this child? It would say that he is a failure in reading, writing, and arithmetic, that he will need to remain in the third grade another year or two or three. Type three? It would say that he is the worst student in his class, that if he would try harder he could do the work. He cannot pass. Type two? He is doing satisfactory work as far as his ability permits. He is skilled in handling tools, and is a good sport, well liked by his classmates. Type one? The teacher discusses with the parent the child's abilities. She points out to the parent where she thinks the child could improve, and where he is working up to his ability. She asks the parent for suggestions about his interests at home, herself suggests ways the parent might guide those abilities for greater achievement. The parent explains that the child is just like his grampaw, no good at all at book learnin' but a crackerjack horse-trader.

Considering that there are various reasons for limited ability—physical handicaps, emotional disturbances, lack of mental capacity—this problem of how to report to parents on the progress of children in school is certainly not simple. But the most difficult of all for teachers to convey is the fact of mental inability. Though all educators are aware that the I.Q. as a specific numerical rating is certainly unreliable, nevertheless any of us is able to recognize in others a greater mental ability than our own—or a

lesser. We see many children and adults who obviously have low "I.Q.'s." Yet it just does not seem possible for a teacher to say frankly to a parent, "Your child is very low in mental ability. He is doing the best he can in spite of that." And sometimes simply because the teacher cannot say this, the schools are blamed by parents of such youngsters for not teaching their children to read, for graduating young people from high school who cannot write or spell, for not teaching the three R's, and many other "failures."

A parent will accept the fact that his child is a spastic, or a post-polio; he will recognize and cope with emotional disturbances (even though he may himself have caused them); but few parents are able to admit that their child is a moron. I have a couple of notions as to why this may be so; but, since this letter was started as a question, will let it remain that way. However, until the problem of facing mental disability frankly is met, the schools will be greatly impeded in their progress in proper reporting to parents, in curriculum planning, in methods of teaching, and in providing proper instructional disturbances (even though he may himself have caused them); but few parents are able to admit that their child is a moron. I have a couple of notions as to why this may be so; but, since this letter was started as a question, will let it remain that way. However, until the problem of facing mental disability frankly is met, the schools will be greatly impeded in their progress in proper reporting to parents, in curriculum planning, in methods of teaching and in providing proper instructional supplies—as well as in general teaching facilities—and both moral and financial support from the public are so badly needed.

FRONTIERS A Brave Proposal

ALTHOUGH we have been readers of Brave Proposals for lo these twenty years and more, we have not lost our taste for this sort of literature—we welcome it, rather, as evidence that there are still brave men alive in the world—but we wonder, sometimes, about the hopes that are placed in such efforts. Of course, we place some of our hopes in them, too; and if you look back over past centuries, it can be seen that yesterday's brave proposals have often become today's commonplace moralities and customs, although you may feel, as we do, since there is nothing brave about the commonplace, that the progress is of a questionable sort.

But let us look at a recent and one of the best of the Brave Proposals. It is a pamphlet called *Waging Peace* by Richard Acland, Fenner Brockway, and Leslie Hale, all British MP's, and signed approvingly by more than thirty more Members of Parliament and a number of others, including persons like Ritchie Calder, perhaps Britain's most eminent science writer, Victor Gollancz, a leading London publisher, Donald Soper, a distinguished Methodist minister, and Lord Boyd Orr, world food authority.

Waging Peace is a critical analysis of British foreign policy since 1950, embodying suggestions for an entirely different program of action by the British Government. It starts out by declaring:

. . . the greatest event in the world today is the world-wide social revolution caused by the awakening of about one and a half billion people—some two thirds of the human race—who still live in centuries-old poverty but have learned from what they see in the West that their poverty is not inevitable.

The proposal of the authors is a simple one: Start right now to do everything possible to release colonial peoples from bondage, to help hungry and depressed peoples to become self-sufficient. Proclaim to the world that "the economic and social dangers are today greater, and in the long run enormously greater, than the

military." The plan calls for immediate reduction of arms expenditures in order to "wage peace" with funds so released. And if the mood of America is against this program, Britain, the authors say, must undertake it by herself, designing her own policy and speaking her mind with an independent voice.

The issue, and the price?

Little though we may appreciate it in our day-to-day lives, we are in fact living through the greatest moral crisis in the history of the human race. It is a struggle for the minds of men on an unprecedented scale. In this struggle, consider one point only: We need to win to our side the minds of many millions of Americans. What we propose will inevitably be misunderstood and resented by many of them; it would earn the undying contempt of almost all of them if it could be presented to them in terms of our shuffling out of our fair share in the cost of arms for the sake of immediately making ourselves more comfortable.

One thing should be made clear. This is not a pamphlet by a trio of naive do-gooders. Its argument is formed from a practical experience of human behavior and a knowledge of history and politics. The point of the authors is this: The present position of the Western, democratic nations and that of the United States in particular, is that they are *for* disarmament and world peace, but only after the Soviets have agreed to a readjustment of their world position that could hardly be expected of any nation except as the result of crushing defeat in war. Accordingly, *Waging Peace* contests the "realism" of speeches which say that the United States will be glad to work for disarmament, peace, and plenty *after* the Soviets commit diplomatic and political suicide. The writers say:

We are not here concerned to argue whether these American demands are morally right or wrong; or whether they are reasonably asked as a condition for a diminution of tension. We are certainly not concerned to argue that the counter proposals which the Soviet leaders have put forward expressly or by implication in recent notes are more reasonable or morally better. Our only point is that if the terms which the Americans are bound to press upon the

Russians include the deliberate liquidation of Communist governments in Eastern Europe (with nothing apparently offered in return), then there is not any prospect of an early negotiation of a general *modus vivendi*.

It is this policy, the writers of *Waging Peace* contend, that the British have been pursuing since 1950, following the lead of the United States, and it is a policy in which they see no hope of peace. On the contrary, they feel that so long as the resources of the Western nations are strained to meet the requirements of full-scale military preparedness in the atomic age, little or nothing can be left to give a helping hand to the millions who are attempting to throw off the yoke of poverty. This means, they think, that *time* is on the side of the Kremlin: "We are convinced that the leaders of the Kremlin are right in believing that if the present direction of world events is broadly sustained for another couple of decades, all will indeed fall into their hands through the disintegration of what we now call the free world." Some of the expedients of the Cold War, meanwhile, offer little encouragement to the people in under-developed countries:

. . . it has been a very serious thing in several sharp conflicts in these last years to find ourselves ranged on the same side as governments and groups and individuals who are dearly opposing the worldwide social revolution of the poor. Up to now it has always been possible to say that this was but a temporary necessity until we could negotiate from our strength; and that thereafter we should be really free to come out on the side of the common man. But if the militarily cooperating West must by its nature hold out for total surrender or nothing, then we are objectively on the wrong side "for ever."

Again, on any broad view of world prospects in the next half century, it has always been apparent that there could be no hopeful future unless mankind could soon begin to make a cooperative world-scale attack on world poverty. It was a terrible thing in 1950-51 to see this hope postponed. But at the time we told ourselves it was postponed only for a few years until we should have strength enough to negotiate the fair *modus vivendi*; as things are going now, we see the hope postponed indefinitely.

Let us appreciate the significance of this fact. It means that we spend one billion, six hundred and fifty million pounds per year to meet the risk, such as it is, of all-out military aggression. To meet the certainty of economic social and moral disintegration in "our" world, we are expending on balance almost nothing. . . . And this is hardly now a temporary expedient. Unless we make a marked change in direction, it will soon be apparent that it has become permanent long-term policy.

What explains such folly? Nothing, we believe, save the traditional belief that it is normal for a frightened or threatened people to pour out its wealth on arms, but that it is quite unnecessarily quixotic to spend anything substantial on helping some of our fellow men to free themselves from poverty.

That, then, is the balance between waging war and waging peace—which the writers would see reversed. They now proceed to list specifics—things which ought to be done right now. They speak of obligations which are especially British, such as reforms in Kenya, and land development for the Kikuyu people by means of the Tana River scheme. Broader undertakings would involve expansion of the UN Technical Assistance Program and the Colombo Plan. *Waging Peace* advocates the employment of UN agencies for giving help to colonial territories on the way to independence:

It may be difficult for a Conservative to believe it, but the fact is that one big country which acts alone is not trusted. In detail, when a competent and sincere British administrator points out (say) to a Nigerian the practical difficulties which stand in the way of some project on which the African has set his heart, he is suspected of sabotaging the project for the sake of keeping Nigeria subordinate to British business, and the Nigerian honestly does not know whether he is being prudent in accepting the advice or cowardly in not over-ruling it.

Already we have seen in the independent country of Bolivia, that the United Nations can send a team of expert administrators drawn from several different countries and sent in to occupy key posts in the Bolivian civil service; these international civil servants have won confidence and have survived changes of government. There would be great advantage in introducing the same kind of

internationalised service into our own colonial territories as rapidly as possible.

To those who experience undefinable uncomfortable feelings in reading these proposals, we should perhaps allow a confirmation of their suspicions by saying that *Waging Peace* is written by British Socialists who believe that "the application of socialist principles [is] more urgent than ever before." But what ought also to be noted is the fact that such realistic examination of the present situation of the world is seldom to be obtained from anyone but the radicals. The ominous facts are commonly suppressed by the commercial press, so that well-intentioned people not given to reading socialist or pacifist pamphlets have had practically no opportunity to become aware of the turbulence and questioning throughout the world. Such people are prone to suspect that the claim of a "world-wide social revolution now going on is no more than the propaganda

Actually, the existence of a pamphlet like *Waging Peace* should be an occasion for gratitude on the part of those who particularly fear the inroads of communist propaganda—gratitude that there are still articulate democratic socialists who refuse to give up hope that the West may be brought to a position of genuine responsibility toward the rest of the world by the persuasions of reason. Terrorism and violence are the methods adopted by those who find the apathy of the well-to-do and the economically secure an intolerable barrier to projects of social and economic reform.

The socialists are still conscious moralists as well as socio-economic reformers. They write with universal sympathies instead of the angry partisanship of the class struggle. Speaking of the comradeship and commitment produced in Britons by defending their country against invasion during the war years, the authors of *Waging Peace* say:

If we could recapture this sense of common purpose for the far nobler cause of helping to raise mankind from poverty, we might also rediscover the greater comradeship we might cooperate and take more pleasure in daily work. Indeed, if the proposals

which we are putting forward were really to capture the imagination of our people, they might give to thousands who work in factories and in other places, something which is often lacking in our lives today, namely a sense of significance and an answer to the question: "What am I working *for*?"

We do not seem to have a very convincing or inspiring answer to that question today. Could it begin to be true of us, and could we begin to feel that we were working for the purpose of sending goods and materials and machinery to the places of their greatest need on earth—working that there might be food where there is now hunger, health and active productive strength where there is now inertia and debilitating disease, hope and friendship towards us where there is now apathy, envy or suspicion, and, on the more material side, in due time, customers with money to spend where now people can afford no more than the rags they stand up in? If all this could begin to be true of us, we might find more meaning in life; and we might be happier and find a better way of living, even if in the early stages of the struggle the total "cake" available for our own consumption turned out to be smaller than it might otherwise have been.

It would be a moral and spiritual revolution. But why not? We shall not survive the challenge of this century without one.

Waging Peace takes full account of the obstacles to such a program. Its authors realize that the present is a period "in which brutality has been exalted into a faith and indifference has been defended as a national necessity." They note that the high professions of the victors of the second world war include expression of great, humanitarian principles, but that "those who put forward principles which they do not intend to practice or enforce are driven back on to unstated assumptions and pragmatic self-interest as the basis of their day-to-day practice." They acknowledge, also, the impossibility of putting an end "to all the subtle tyrannies which man imposes upon man," and of uprooting "all the ramifications of race prejudice and colour bar merely by legislation and administration."

They say, simply, that what *can* be done is *not* being done; that there is not even understanding of the tremendous scope of the changes in attitude throughout the world:

Unless we understand the world revolution and put ourselves as a people whole-heartedly on the side of the world's poor, we shall find that we are in effect standing in the path of the revolution and opposing it . . . and making it certain that the revolution will in the end destroy us.

The principal reason for the failure of many people to grasp the force of the reasoning in such appeals—quite apart from the socialist coloring, which in this pamphlet is really insignificant, since the British socialists are undoctinaire—is *fear*. Fear freezes the humanitarian impulse and deafens the ear to cries of anguish. The chief stock in trade of those who would prevent any manifestation of outgoing sympathy in the policies of the Western nations is the fear which so quickly rushes beyond the outposts of intelligent caution and becomes a blindly emotional bar to every proposal containing elements of sanity.

We may be wrong, but it seems quite clear to us that you cannot overcome fear with plain reason. The fearful are unable to listen to reason. So, while we welcome Brave Proposals, and will continue to admire them, we shall not often try to write them, but will devote our attention to what seems the more fundamental issue—the susceptibilities of human beings to fear, and how they may be reduced. Who are the fearless men, what are they like, what do they believe of themselves and others, and how are such views justified?

These, we think, are the great questions. The answers to such questions may give us leads to a source of strength without which Brave Proposals will continue to fall on deaf or suspicious ears.