

BOOKS FOR STUDY

FROM time to time you come across a book containing so clear a record of the processes of disciplined and impartial thinking that you are drawn to read it with particular care, whatever you may decide, finally, about the author's conclusions. The essential characteristic of such a book (taking the skill with which it is written for granted) is its luminously honest intention to get at the truth. The old and hackneyed comment that everyone has his "bias" may be accurate enough; it is accurate in the same sense that Archimedes needed a place whereon to stand in order to demonstrate the principle of the lever; or accurate in making the same point as the semanticist's principle—"symbols have meanings only in contexts"; but when a book is "manifestly put together with the motive of *finding out*, the writer becomes the friend and companion of the reader, and not someone to be suspected of distorting prejudice. If he is ignorant of facts known to the reader, this sort of defect is immediately apparent and often of small importance. Meanwhile, the by-products of value found throughout the volume make its reading a continual stimulation and even delight.

The book we want to discuss here is *Philosophy in the Mass Age* by George P. Grant (Hill & Wang, New York, \$3). Thinking about this book stirred the above comment and brought to mind two others, both concerned with the general problems of the modern world, although from very different points of view. The three books, however, are united by the intensity of their thought and by the intellectual ardor of their development. In *The Principles of Power* (Putnam, 1942), Guglielmo Ferrero studies the relationship between peoples and their governments, applying certain principles to a number of modern historical situations to illustrate their operation. The reader is inescapably affected

by Ferrero's insight, developed throughout a lifetime of observation of the European scene. *The Principles of Power* is an unforgettable book.

The other book we have in mind (now available as a paperback) is Roderick Seidenberg's *Posthistoric Man*. Mr. Seidenberg seems to have taken to heart Thomas Huxley's prayer, "O Lord, give me the courage to face a fact, even though it slay me!" His book is a driving attempt to prove a thesis he personally dislikes—the proposition that the totally rationalized society (rationalized by scientific techniques) is the totally dehumanized society, in which human beings will make no more decisions as "free" individuals, thus putting an end to "history" as we know it. Mr. Seidenberg brings to a difficult subject a lucid and tightly written prose, affording an object-lesson in composition as well as a new plateau of clarity concerning the tendencies of modern technological society.

Ferrero is concerned with politics, Seidenberg with technology. Dr. Grant writes about philosophy as a philosopher. His book is not large (128 pages), but it is packed with meaning. Fundamentally, it presents the contrast between the ancient view of man as a being who is working out his salvation, and the modern, historical view of man as a being who achieves "progress" by changing the world into what is, presumably, a better place. These are two contradictory conceptions of the meaning of human life. In the one, the world is only a theater, a scene, of no great importance in itself, where man undergoes a kind of probation preliminary to immortal life. In the other, the world *is* man's life, or the best part of it, since what man does in and with the world about him is the measure of his life. Dr. Grant seeks a reconciliation of these views. He sets the problem in these words:

In the last hundred years we have so served the idea of man the maker of progress that today we live

in a society which is the very incarnation of that idea. The question thoughtful people must ask themselves is whether the progressive spirit is going to hold within itself any conception of spiritual law and freedom; or whether our history-making spirit will degenerate into a rudderless desire for domination on the part of our elites, and aimless pleasure seeking among the masses. Can the achievements of the age of progress be placed at the service of a human freedom which finds itself completed and not denied by a spiritual order?

Dr. Grant is a moralist in the classical tradition. He announces his belief that morality arises from the human capacity to choose. "Man," he says, "has a rational soul, as distinct from an animal soul." It follows that: "The ends which we pursue are not given us directly in the way they are given an animal through instinct. We must discover our proper ends through reflection." This is Platonic and Renaissance Humanism. The unexamined life, Socrates declared, is not worth living. What Dr. Grant says here could be taken as a faithful paraphrase of the key passage in Pico della Mirandola's *Oration on the Dignity of Man*. The mood of this author's personal conviction appears clearly in his Preface, where he objects to the belief, "widely prevalent in North America, that moral issues do not require much reflection (let alone systematic reflection) and that therefore the good life is in no way dependent upon sustained philosophical thought." He adds:

Moral truth is considered to be a few loosely defined platitudes which any man of common sense can grasp easily without the discipline of reflection. The result is that moral philosophy has come to be identified with vague uplift. I would not wish that the popular form of these essays should do anything to encourage such nonsense.

Toward the end of his book Dr. Grant makes a more specific defense of the discipline of reflection:

. . . the philosopher must find himself as much at variance intellectually with a religion which relies solely on faith, as with a nihilistic scepticism. Religious people may say of the foregoing, "What's all the fuss about, of course there's a moral law, now let's get on with it. After all these words, is this what

philosophy leads to? There is a moral law. We knew this all the time and did not need these arguments to affirm it. We knew it on faith." It is on these grounds that a certain kind of Protestant church-goer is always attacking philosophy. In answer, it must be emphasized that a moral code, the authority for which is based solely on faith and which makes no attempt to define itself rigorously, is a dying code, a closed morality, a morality which does not care about its own communication. It is founded on a ghetto mentality. This indeed is what certain of our Protestant churches are more and more becoming—intellectual ghettos. In Christian terms, a morality which does not care about its own communication is condemned at its heart, because it contradicts its own first principle, charity. It is its failure in charity, just as much as its intellectual sloth, which condemns fundamentalism in all its guises. Indeed charity and thought are here one. Those who care about charity must care about communication, and to communicate requires systematic thought. Any adequate moral language must claim to be universal.

While Dr. Grant is no doubt too sketchy in his outline of ancient morality, the clarity he achieves makes it worth while. He shows that in antiquity, the ideal man was one who fulfilled in his life the high intentions of the moral law, and the ideal community was one which in all its social and religious functions served to illuminate the meaning of the moral law to the members of the community, so that they could follow it.

Thus, for the ancients, achievement in life was a transcendental achievement, not a *historical* achievement. The modern world takes an opposite view. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Dr. Grant shows, "the idea of progress crushed the idea of providence." Dozens of distinguished thinkers contributed to the doctrine of righteous rebellion against the idea of moral law, on the ground that "the theologians by deifying the spirit put it outside the world, and in so doing assumed that the spirit cannot be actualized in the world." Further:

Men no longer believed that they lived under a natural law which they did not make and which they had been created to obey. They came to see themselves as the makers of their own laws and values. Jeremy Bentham, the famous English

reformer, ridiculed the idea of a divine law behind our human laws, because it placed events outside human control. There is no other law but that which man makes. By his conscious and voluntary acts he shapes the world, shaping it ever towards the goals of his own choice. It is this belief which in the last centuries has dominated the elites of western nations, so that today we live in a society which is the very incarnation of that spirit.

Much of Dr. Grant's book is devoted to showing the consequences of the rejection of the idea of moral law. If the idea of order is utilitarian and man-made, what will set a limit to the actions undertaken by partisans of the good? Is there *anything* that we will not do, provided we can manufacture some sort of "humanitarian" excuse for it? Drop atom bombs on cities? Liquidate irreclaimable members of an outmoded "exploiting" class? Do away in gas ovens with persons whose genes are subject to suspicion? What independent principle is there to control the excesses of the upward-and-onward drive of "Progressive" determination?

One interesting thing about Dr. Grant is his conscientious and fruitful study of Karl Marx and his contempt for those who refuse to read Marx on the ideological grounds that they "do not agree with him." It is impossible, Dr. Grant maintains, to comprehend the progressive philosophy without grasping at least the chief Marxian contentions. "No thinker," says Grant, "ever had a more passionate hatred of the evils men inflict on each other, nor a greater yearning that such evils should cease." It was Marx, he suggests, who saw the need to translate religious emotion into a program of action in behalf of human welfare. For the German socialist thinker, the moral power of the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation became the appeal of the Revolution—now it is Man, not God, who enters history and changes the world.

Dr. Grant finds a parallel between Marx and the Judæo-Christian idea of history. He regards the entry into history of God, through his Son, Jesus Christ, as an extraordinary and historically

unique conception, the logic of which Marx fulfilled, although he substituted Dialectical Materialism and Science for Jesus Christ, as the redemptive forces. In its origin, Dr. Grant proposes, Marxism was "an affirmation of freedom," but later Communist theoreticians have turned it into "a kind of simple scientism, concentrating solely on the improvement of techniques." The judgment offered of Marxism is this:

a brilliant account of history which does not sufficiently recognize the truth of the spirit; a philosophy which, although aware of the sins against human freedom, finally subordinates our freedom to the objective conditions of the world.

The dilemma reached by Dr. Grant's analysis is finally stated:

. . . the truth of natural law is that man lives within an order which he did not make and to which he must subordinate his actions; the truth of the history-making spirit is that man is free to build a society which eliminates the evils of the world. Both these assertions seem true. The difficulty is to understand how they both can be thought together. Yet the necessity of thinking them together is shown by the fact that when the conclusions of either are worked out in detail, they appear wholly unacceptable.

The assumption of a natural or moral law which is the reflection of a divine order, tends to passive acceptance of conditions of scarcity and human suffering, as "God's Will," while, on the other hand, a purely pragmatic account of the good leads to unmeasured conduct which ends in purges, liquidations, or subtler forms of abuse of the weak by the powerful, in the name of some supposedly "good principle."

Dr. Grant is unwilling to cut the Gordian knot by becoming a partisan and apologist of one of these sides. The power with which he develops his argument cannot be reproduced here; in fact, to tell about this book in a few hundred words risks caricature of its contents. It should be read in full.

We cannot, however, forbear a few suggestions. First, concerning the Moral Law, Dr. Grant says that "the idea of limit is unavoidably the idea of God." If this is so, why not a pantheistic idea of God? When devotion to God and God's law leads to alienation from man, this usually results from the failure to see the presence of deity *everywhere*. Then, in respect to modern Progressive thought being the offspring of the Judæo-Christian teaching of the Incarnation—God entering and affecting history—why not make the incarnation a more orderly—even something of a rational—process, by acknowledging it to be *cyclic*?. The Jews, after all, have their doctrine of Messiahs, not one, but many Messiahs, and the Oriental religions teach a great succession of incarnations in the doctrine of Avatars. And if we can assume that every man has something of Prometheus in him—a man-God whom we must not "manipulate"—then the horns of the dilemma are blunted, if not entirely removed. Surely, if our dilemma consists in the need for a philosophy which combines understanding of both the timeless and the progressive, then man must be a being in whom the principles of both reside.

REVIEW

BLESSED INFALLIBILITY

ARTHUR SCHLESINGER, JR.'S "The Many Faces of Communism" (*Harper's* for January), repeats various points scored by Soviet critics who insist that Russia is actually a theocratic society, however distorted the principles of its theology. "The heart of Soviet dogmatism," writes Mr. Schlesinger, "is the principle of infallibility, applied to leader, to party, and to theory of history." Further characteristics are a "stupefying mixture of confidence, ignorance, imperviousness, and incuriosity." At the apex of the theological trinity, from the standpoint of social structure, is an elite which is "absolutely confident."

Well, yes, we guess so. But what is more interesting to us is the dawning realization in non-Soviet countries that every military organization is structured in precisely the same manner and exhibits, for all to see, the same characteristics. A useful piece of writing on this subject is Bentz Plagemann's novel, *The Steel Cocoon* (Crest, 1958). Plagemann has a noticeable sympathy, a kind of wry rapport, with the Navy, yet is driven to ask certain basic questions about its influence and why the human psyche so often fits neatly into the military pattern. Williams, the protagonist of the story, is determined to serve his country well, and to become a worthy officer, but he recognizes a sharp distinction between his own personal characteristics and those of men who naturally make the Navy or the Army their career. The natural soldier or sailor, he discovers, is one who welcomes a berth in a world of arbitrary limitations. To protect a democracy, a navy and an army seem necessary, yet what paradoxes they produce! Williams reflects as he gazes at his ship:

This was a fiercely private world, an outpost of that special world in which career military men live out their service to their country. Here the outside world was kept firmly at arm's length, with the brasswork impossibly bright, the white paint whiter than paint could be, the dark wood paneling smooth

and velvety, and the officers' cabins curtained so that the portholes appeared blind or myopic, with a sort of inward or withdrawn remoteness—the same aloofness, offensive because there was deliberate offense in the intention of withdrawal, that Williams had noticed in the quarters of Navy officers ashore.

He would never have known about this world were it not for the war, and he saw it not with surprise but with astonishment, such as Alice felt when she dropped into the rabbit hole. There was a compelling fascination, which he did not understand, about the officers' quarters on the grounds of the training station, and of the hospitals where he had served, with their "Out of Bounds" signs, and the sentries pacing. Was there something implicit in the nature of democracy which demanded that it be guarded and maintained by men who did not live in democratic circumstances? Or was this whole system an atavism, jealously kept hidden from public attention, placed in jeopardy only when exposed, during national emergency, to the critical eyes of the citizen-soldiery?

With actual threat of war, when the cry for enlistment and the need for drafting join hands, many men who have never thought of a career in the armed forces welcome its invitation. Williams wonders if the recurrence of major wars may not in some mystic fashion be due to an impatience for change in the lives of such men—if cumulative psychic pressure does not work its way towards policies and actions which make war inevitable. It is, he says to himself, "as if, every now and again, in rebellion against their inability to govern their own lives, men found it easier to live with a larger burden than with many small ones, as a householder might, in desperation, borrow from a bank to pay his creditors, so that all his small debts might be submerged in a single debt of greater magnitude."

The Steel Cocoon also involves a personality very much like that of Captain Queeg in Herman Wouk's *The Caine Mutiny*, but Plagemann adds up the equation in an entirely different fashion. Bullitt, Williams' immediate superior, does not appear as a necessary consequence of the organized defense of democracy, but as a casualty of the military system. Bullitt sought a peculiar

kind of anonymity, yet something within his arrogant, tortured soul kept him thrusting forward the worst aspects of a personality which would not acquiesce to obscurity. His self-assertion was cantankerous, neurotic, and finally psychotic. Was it that a personality which had willed itself to die refused to accept its own end. Some of Plagemann's concluding paragraphs are memorable:

It was true, as Thucydides said, that war is a rough teacher, and fits men's characters to their condition. But the condition of war itself, as Williams so often reflected in later years, on those wakeful nights when he paced the college campus, was agreeable to most men. It was a sorrowful conclusion, which he dared not let himself accept beyond that private part of a man's mind where the truth burns like a small flame which nothing can extinguish. War was evil; it destroyed not only the innocent, it also, in time, destroyed the men who gave themselves to it, if they had chosen the condition of war as a way of life. Bullitt, in his own way, was a casualty of war; not of any war, but of war itself; Williams had seen that for an instant; the abyss, the dark void behind his eyes as he lay, bound, on the deck of the Ajax.

But he had seen it in himself, too, that capacity, that involuntary willingness, it might almost be called, which must exist in some degree in all men, to surrender his own identity, in a fatal moment of indecision, in order to save himself from the more difficult consequences of a free and independent life. The memory of Bullitt on the deck would take him beyond, to earlier in the same evening, when he had sat on the sea wall in the Navy Yard at Norfolk, unable to bring himself to go beyond its gates, as if, inside the frame of that private world, the tragedy in which he was involved might resolve itself in its own terms. He had felt anonymous sitting there, and that feeling had comforted him. He had not wished to reclaim the identity that waited for him beyond the Navy gates. And perhaps that was the answer to the mystery of that world to which he had come as an alien. It attracted certain men because the reward of wearing a uniform for a lifetime was not only a suspension of the obligation of living in the world on the same terms as other men; it was also a release from the troubling responsibility of being an individual. Only the role mattered, not the mind of the man inside. Only duty mattered, not responsibility for the unrelated deed. In uniform men

were faceless; they were nothing but lead soldiers to be arranged on battlefields, fleeting images in cut-outs of cardboard, in the changeless diorama of war. Personalities and passions, tastes and dislikes, dreams and the hopes of dreams, all alike were unimportant; on the pages of history they were contemporary with the marching ranks of Xerxes, the legionaries of Rome, the foot soldiers of Napoleon. And what was comforting about this anonymity, this obliteration of personality? Suddenly, that night, the thought had been frightening to him; he felt his existence threatened, for what waited inside the walls of the military life was an incubus, to suck men out and destroy their souls.

This book is by no means a propaganda piece. It is rather a prime example of the importance of a thoughtful writer to a bewildered society which has all too little of this sort of reflective, impartial observation.

COMMENTARY

THE ORDEAL OF THE PRESENT

MANY writers—ourselves included—express the view that the world is in dire straits, and spend much time, perhaps too much, in assembling evidence of the world-wide moral decay. It is already a commonplace that we have enough of an indictment of the times, that no more "facts" are needed, that the real issue is the discovery of the *causes of this trend*.

There are books, also, which attempt such diagnosis. Mr. Grant's comparison of classical with modern "progressive" civilization is one such—rather successful—attempt.

But there is a subjective element in our thinking about the state of the world which ought to be taken into consideration. *Our values have improved*. No one heard very much a century ago about the brotherhood of man. The social and political arrangements of the nations were then as filled, more filled, with conventions of injustice than they are today; only then it was not thought so necessary to conceal injustice or pretend that it did not exist.

Human history seems to operate in a dual process. It brings the most dramatic excesses of man's inhumanity to man at a time when we are morally least able to tolerate them. The crimes of the Nazis and of less brazen but probably as effective oppressors of their fellows were not really something new. What was new was the *scale* of these operations and the horrifying rationalizations offered to justify them. It was the association of hideous cruelty, genocide, and political extermination with doctrines and theories pretending to serve the good of man which made us blink in painful wonder and to ask *what had happened* to the twentieth century.

For the twentieth century is *ours*. Our pretensions to morality and to progress are at stake. Are we able to say that, with all the guilt in the world, our lives are innocent? And if we cannot say we are innocent, what shall we do?

It is doubtful that we have become any worse than before. It is certain that we *thought* we had become better. The fact is that, whether we are a little better, or only a little worse, we are now being

tested. The rise of idealism and the spread of rapid world communications are making it increasingly difficult to fool ourselves about ourselves. All over the world, men lone voiceless are speaking. Long oppressed peoples are making obvious applications of *our* principles and we are finding it hard to shut our ears to what they say.

It is a time of revolt, yet no one knows exactly what should be the instruments of revolt. It is a time, therefore, of incredible confusion. In one breath we are obliged to honor power, because it stands for security; but in the next breath we must acknowledge the dishonor of power, not only because of what it is doing, say, in South Africa, but because of what it is preparing to do, for and against much larger countries.

Such dilemmas are making men in positions of authority wear intellectual and moral blinders—they insist they must remain blind because of their *duty*.

We say that this is a time of great danger. But where does the danger lie? Is the danger that we may destroy half the world with our nuclear weapons? Or is it a danger that we may lie to ourselves in order to feel justified in preparing to destroy half the world—the other half?

What is the first decision before us—to decide to make peace, or to decide that we are the sort of beings who value and are capable of making peace?

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

WHAT'S WRONG WITH AUTHORITY?

A REMARK by Robert Paul Smith always comes to mind when this question is posed in an educational context. For with the wry and ribald humor at his disposal, Mr. Smith (in *Where Did You Go? Out. What Did You Do? Nothing*) clearly shows the young child's need for confidence that some decisions will be taken out of his hands. A fretful child often longs for the firm, completely assured control which puts him in his place, because he is not yet able to determine his place for himself in every situation. Properly implemented, this kind of authority is hardly open to question.

But when authority is motivated by something beyond an intimate feeling for the child's best interest, it can become extremely dangerous. Parents who wish to mold the personalities of their children—usually according to an image they were never able themselves to attain—endanger the freedom for growth to which "natural" authority allows room and development. And it is at this point that we can understand the vast amount of literature on the subject of child psychology which stresses the need for "freedom" and counsels against too many "arbitrary restraints." In *Education through Art*, Sir Herbert Read makes explicit recommendation of education based upon the spontaneous *feeling* responses of a child. John S. Keel (Ohio State University), in the 1959 *Year Book* of the National Art Education Society, paraphrases and quotes Read to this effect:

If morality can be defined as "the will to be good and to do good," then Herbert Read can "accept the view that morality is the whole and only aim of education." He does however object to a morality of precept and abstract convention, arguing that the moral sense is the aesthetic sensibility applied to the conduct of life and, like the creation of a work of art, is varied in manifestation. Such a morality, based on a sense of felt relations, is infallible in its action and

spontaneous in its application. "True discipline is a spontaneously evolved pattern of behavior. Any other form . . . that goes by this name is merely arbitrary constraint, imposed by fear of punishment, unstable in its equilibrium, and productive of individual and social tensions."

Justification for this apparently "extreme" view is well put by a psychiatrist, C. J. Mumby, who serves as counselor to the Pontiac, Mich., Juvenile Court and the Child Guidance Clinic. Writing in *Balanced Living* for January, "Psychiatry and Human Desires," Dr. Mumby examines the effects of an enforced authority deriving from non-educational motivations:

I have had a considerable amount of experience with a type of mother who alienates the *child by gradually convincing it that authority is more accurate and more to be trusted than personal experience*. I wish to present a few examples of how this is accomplished. Let me first say, that these mothers do not usually consciously wish to destroy their children. They regard them as chattels and wish to keep them helpless so that the mothers themselves may avoid anxiety by continuing to feel necessary, and continuing to feel that they have some power over something. Naturally enough these dynamics are not perceived consciously by the mothers. These women have rather poor ego boundaries, and are often unwilling or unable to admit that the child might have rhythms of its own. Any autonomy is regarded by them as a threat to their own magic cloak, and they react to the child's attempts to establish independent rhythms by ignoring them or by misinterpreting them. . . .

Children who have been sufficiently pre-trained that mother knows best about everything will knuckle under and begin to pay less and less attention to their own immediate perception and more and more to the dictates of authority. Confusion is piled upon confusion. I have felt sometimes that patients of mine have been lied to about almost everything.

Children so alienated from their own experience become other-centered. They must always, all their lives, before they begin anything, look over their shoulders to see if mother, or God, or fate, or some authority approves of their intended activity. They behave like satellites who appear well when the other approves of them, but feel the most intense anxiety if the other cannot or will not give them approval. . . . This internalized authority does not learn, does not

alter its values to fit changing circumstances, does not pay attention to reality.

Turning from the problems created for the very young by an externalized authority, we can find abundant illustrations of "authority-dependence" in adult lives. Recently there has been considerable publicity concerning a protest at Columbia University against germ warfare research projects. In February, sixty-five faculty members and graduate students at Columbia, and researchers at the Rockefeller Institute, pledged their refusal to take part in any such activity. But when reporters invited comment from sociologists and biologists in other research centers it became evident that few "respectable" teachers in these fields felt able to approve the dramatic Columbia announcement. Following is a summary from the New York *Post* (March 1):

"I don't think the pledge is valid," said Dr. Edward Eckert, associate professor of microbiology at Downstate Medical Center, Brooklyn. "I don't really think it's any of their business what the government does."

Dr. Werner Mahs, associate professor of bacteriology at NYU-Bellevue Medical Center, said he would not work on germ-warfare projects in time of peace, but in wartime: "It would be like serving in the Army, or something like it." He said he would refuse to sign the pledge because "these problems are always quite complex."

Dr. Jack Battisto, assistant professor of bacteriology at the Albert Einstein Medical College of Yeshiva University, said he'd want this question answered before he'd sign: "What sort of individuals are behind this?" As to germ-warfare projects, he said bacteriological research would proceed "whether we were involved in a war or not." Therefore he saw no sense in halting it.

Prof. Daniel M. Lilly, chairman of the biology department at St. John's University, Jamaica-Hillcrest, said he was in the Army Reserve and the pledge would violate his oath. "The oath requires me to do whatever is necessary in defense of our country, germ warfare or not. Even speaking as a civilian, if any one were to approach me to work on it, and I felt it in the interests of the country, I would do it. I have no compunction against it."

We can hardly blame such reactions upon the mothers of the eminent doctors and teachers quoted by the *Post*. What we can do is pursue further study of a society in which "the dictates of authority" are allowed to become a source of security for those beyond the range of childhood innocence and inexperience.

FRONTIERS Toward Freedom

FROM MANAS exchanges and other periodicals we have put together a summary of some recent reading, in the form of quotations. The only important link between these extracts is the fact of change—change in social forms and in human attitudes. We begin with an extract from the London *Observer* for Jan. 31:

The two most difficult facts for old African hands to understand are the pace at which the tide of nationalism is running and its universality on the continent.

Two years ago white inhabitants of the Rhodesias regarded the Belgian Congo as a Himalayan obstacle to the spread of African nationalism, which had already captured British West Africa. Last week it was announced that the Congo was to attain independence on June 30. . . . For Europeans it was a shock, bringing black African self-government to their borders: to the Africans it was another sign of the inevitability of their political triumph.

From *Toward Freedom* for February, a monthly devoted to political independence for all colonial peoples, we take the following:

Heartened by news of the forthcoming independence of the Belgian Congo, nearly 200 delegates from 30 African countries, gathered in the Second All-African Peoples' Conference in Tunis, Tunisia, Jan. 25-31, insisted that political independence—especially the prefabricated variety—is not enough, and that the continent must aim at economic and cultural independence as well. . . . President Bouguiba . . . gave his address of welcome, in which he called upon the delegates to be realists, and urged that "it is useful to proceed by stages." . . . In conclusion he said: "All over the continent we are witnessing the last moments of colonialism, which may be the most dangerous and ferocious. It is not an exaggeration to say that the future of civilization and of peace in the world is being decided at this time on the African continent."

Peace News for Feb. 26 reprints an article from the December issue of the South African monthly, *Drum*, titled, "They Are Banished in South Africa." It tells the story of eighty-two

Africans who have been "sent away from their homes—sometimes with hardly time to grab a toothbrush—to fend for themselves in strange, desolate areas for an indefinite period. No trial. No explanation. Many are near starvation, as are their wives and children."

The photographs of these people—a number of portraits, and several scenes of conditions under which they now live—are moving testimony of the injustice committed against them. Under the Native Administration Act and the Suppression of Communism Act the South African Government exercises its arbitrary power to remove "any Native from any place to any other place . . . within the Union," or to restrict him to his home area. The *Drum* article says:

South Africa is one of the few countries in the world today where such arbitrary and damaging action can be taken against the individual without trial and without the right of appeal. . . . What is the exile's crime? In some cases he honestly doesn't know. Others connect their sudden arrest and banishment with a remark criticising the Government's African policy, or the support of a leader who has criticised the Government. The exile is rarely told why he has been banished.

In June of last year a boycott of South African goods was begun by the African National Congress. This has been taken up by British and other sympathizers. The boycott was adopted by the Africans because "it is virtually the only non-violent means of political representation left to the non-white people." A *Peace News* article continues:

They [Africans] have no political representation in any legislative or executive body in the Union, and striking is illegal for Africans. Petitions and peaceful demonstrations have been ignored or broken up by police violence.

The international boycott is an attempt by sympathizers overseas to reinforce the very limited economic power of the non-whites of South Africa; to demonstrate their support for the struggle of the South African masses, *in action*; and to show the South African government and the South African businessmen the repugnance the rest of the world feels for *apartheid*.

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In the spring of 1959, Kingsley Amis, British author of *Lucky Jim*, was a visiting professor at Princeton, and in one series of lectures he talked about science fiction. These lectures have now become a book—*New Maps of Hell* (Harcourt, \$3.95). We take from Robert Hatch's *Nation* (March 19) review the following paragraph:

Odd-looking monsters are losing their positions as villains in science fiction, though they often show up as object lessons in the live-and-let-live philosophy that has become almost the religion of these writers. Their place as the motivating menace has been taken in large part by the omnipotent administrators of the *status quo*. Hell is implied in a society where "the economic system has swallowed the political"; the devil as manager aims to reduce humanity to its function as consumer and he operates by offering a "pleasure so overmastering that it can break down the sense of reality." . . . Mr. Amis makes the point that, whereas the so-called business novels deplore advertising and the attendant commercial excesses as degrading the people who engage in them, science fiction denounces them as potentially destructive of humanity at large.

The advertising business has been under a cloud, lately, due to the quiz show scandals and the disk jockey "payola" exposé, with the result that the Federal Trade Commission has publicly condemned "deceptive advertising." Advertising people have of course risen to defend themselves, complaining that their "creative" work and "dramatic" treatments of sales appeal ought not to be called "deceptive." One such aggrieved copywriter, Rosser Reeves of the Ted Bates Company, published a full-page letter in Washington newspapers, justifying his profession.

We learned about all this from a monthly called *The Minority of One* (P.O. Box 6594, Richmond 30, Va., \$5 a year), in which the editor, M. S. Arnoni, addresses a reply to Mr. Reeves. In one place Mr. Arnoni says to the advertising man:

A specific passage in your newspaper appeal is conspicuous for its lack of well warranted inhibition. You state: "In the next 7 days, American companies will venture \$30,000,000 on television. This sum spent on imaginative advertising, makes possible all

the broadcasts which appear each week on television screens—news, public broadcasts, politics, drama, comedy shows, even broadcasts from the House and the Senate of the United States." This, Mr. Reeves, prompts me to ask by what act did the American public entrust you and your professional colleagues with the administration of all these aspects of life? Who gave you the mandate to provide the American public with news, politics, drama, etc.? Or am I mistaken in the belief that you are just in the advertising business?

It is not the business of advertising which provides the American public with all those vital services; and the \$30,000,000 weekly is simply the sweat of the American people, the more objectionable because it is not collected from them candidly. It is the art of mislabeling which gets your industry those \$30,000,000.

The American consumer shops for bread and beverages cars and homes—but never for your product, advertising, certainly not for the kind of advertising which claims the right to manipulate his mind. If, nevertheless, he is made to pay for it, it is because your industry has usurped the power to impose a hidden, indirect tax on consumer goods. . . . Your industry, Mr. Reeves, was even successful in appropriating the American family's budget for culture and entertainment. Now you boast of providing those blessings, even while your industry is actively degrading and degenerating them. . . .

This "Minority of One" is a powerful one.

* * *

A young Spaniard has a thoughtful letter in *Ibérica* for Feb. 15, from which we quote a brief extract:

It is frequently to be observed in the writings of the refugees [Spanish patriots exiled from Spain] that the authors place themselves on an immaculate "podium" of incorrupt loyalty to the ideal of a Just and Free Spain for which we all long, speaking in a tone of absolute superiority and unconcealed contempt for the Spaniards who, although in furious disconformity, live in our unhappy Spain today, some because their youth made flight impossible, others because they felt that they could be useful inside their country, also, without losing their worthiness. . . .

We sense to the greatest degree the lack of a superior influence to guide our nascent capacities. We deplore the absence of these refugees, I repeat,

because they would serve us as guides and we would see in them the symbol of resistance and tenacity.

But now we have come to a time when, just as all the opposition parties and organizations should join forces to give battle in the name of Liberty and Justice, so should we also forget past mistakes and the Spaniards of the "outside" and the "inside," because the disunity of the good Spaniards was what facilitated the implantation of the rule of injustice and totalitarianism which oppresses us today.

This letter is by a Spanish youth twenty years old.

* * *

From Germany comes a message signed by Willy Brandt, mayor of Berlin, describing what the Berliners call "the Soviet sea around us." Much space is devoted to the June 1953 uprising of Germans in the Eastern zone against their Communist rulers. The account seems factual, while the photographs dramatize the ordeal of a people divided against itself. Of special interest, however, is a poem privately circulated by the German poet and dramatist, Bertolt Brecht, who died in 1956. Brecht's most recent major work was the opera, *The Trial of Lucullus*, reviewed in MANAS for Aug. 13, 1958. Generally sympathetic to the Communist cause, Brecht wrote feelingly of the dilemma created by revolutionary brutality. In a poem, he said—

Alas, we
Who wished to lay the foundations of kindness
Could not ourselves be kind.

But you, when at last it comes to pass
That man can help his fellow man,
Do not judge us
Too harshly.

This poem has the title, "To Posterity." But after the East German revolt in 1953, Brecht protested privately by means of another poem, "The Solution," which said:

After the rising of the 17th June
The Secretary of the Writers' Association
Had leaflets distributed in the Stalinallee
In which you could read that the people
Had lost the Government's confidence
And could only win it back

By redoubled efforts. If so, would it not
Be simpler for the Government
To dissolve the people
And elect another?

* * *

In the *Listener* for Feb. 18, Czeslaw Milosz speaks of the longing for regeneration and moral awakening apparent throughout the world. Underneath the malaise popularly diagnosed as "decadence" he sees a ferment, and even, occasionally, the demand for "rethinking of basic principles," as found, for example, in the writings of Simone Weil. His concern and hopes for the immediate future are expressed in the following paragraphs:

In a sense, we entered a post-apocalyptic period after the most acute variety of the belief in the millennium, the Stalinist doctrine, had toppled down in the fifties. What remained of it is an empty shell. My friends from Poland compare Mr. Khrushchev to a priest who does not believe in God. Mysterious forces toss mankind, and as yet our knowledge does not suffice to define them. The processes ascribed to "the decadence of the West" seem to be more or less universal, and a sample of blackness taken in Paris or London has quite a broad meaning—if we are ready to go deeper than appearances.

Will the sixties be really different from the apocalyptic years we left behind?

I promised to speak about resources which help some of us to live. First, comes a feeling of wonder at the extraordinary achievements of our contemporaries, accomplished in the midst of such chaos and cruelty that Gibbon's chronicles of Rome seem to us pale. By achievements I mean less science and theology than certain peculiar applications of them which enlarge our humanistic possibilities. There has never been such curiosity about the whole past of Man on the Earth, nor so many signs of exploring civilizations in their sinuous growth. We enter a sesame of our heritage, not limited to one continent. And this is accessible to the many, not only to some specialists. For instance, there has never been so great an interest in the art and music of the past. A price has to be paid, and recorded music or reproductions of paintings have their reverse side in cheap "mass culture." There is also a danger of syncretism. Yet a new dimension of history, understood as a whole, appears in all its

interdependences. We deplore the dying out of local customs and local traditions, but perhaps the rootlessness of modern man is not so great, if through individual effort he can, so to say, return home and be in contact with all the people of various races and religions who suffered, thought, and created before him.

By fortunate coincidence, we have at hand a copy of *History Today* (February), a British monthly, with an article by Jacquetta Hawkes on the idea of "progress" in relation to archaeology, in which the generally optimistic feeling expressed by Milosz is given particular direction. Miss Hawkes is concerned with the liberation of the study of man's past and history from the limitations of scholarly practice. Her critical view is given in a brief comment on Carleton Coon's *History of Man*. In this book, she says—

Man appears as "a unique bipedal organism," struggling for his dominion over nature, and seen "in terms of the conversion of energy into social structure." Here, again, there is no recognition of the importance of the creative imagination and intellect for all the shape and savour of human life. The rise and fall of culture is hardly mentioned; there is no indication that some peoples, cities, institutions have made extraordinary contributions to our cultural inheritance. Nothing is said of Italian art, of English poetry or German music; Will Adams, Arkright, Coster, Goodyear, Morse, Newcomen and Watt receive honorable mention; but there is no room for Beethoven, Copernicus, Dante, Darwin, Newton, Shakespeare, da Vinci or Voltaire. The last sentence expresses a faith that man "will go forward according to schedule." This book is called *The History of Man*. Yet it seems to have little of history's richness and turbulence, achievement and failure, glory and beastliness! It is the small back-room view of our destiny, the history not of Man, but of the progress of social technology.

Toward the end Miss Hawkes strikes a note that comes out strongly, also, in Milosz. "A violent 'Yes' and a violent 'No,'" said Milosz, "pronounced with a faith that we are not condemned to pure subjectivity when we judge modern works, is salutary." And he added: "This pre-supposes certain views on order and disorder, or (let us use an unpleasant word) on human

nature. But why, after all, should we be afraid to have such views?" The demand for judgment is the concluding theme of Jacquetta Hawkes, who writes:

. . . this is not a time when we can afford to be detached from value judgments. We must be ready to find one view of history more true, more *right*, than the other. Surely, in fact, we can dare to say that it is both dangerous and wrong to force history into the mould of a social science? Surely it is mere falsification to select technology out of the whole range of human creativity, in order to shape the evidence to fit the materialist idea of progress? Archaeology, however many scientific aids it may employ, is only a means for illuminating and extending human history. And human history is a matter of unique individuals involved in unique events—this we must believe unless we are to go the way of the ants. . . .

What has mattered most over the last fifty thousand years is the individual man's and woman's inner experience of life. A woman may be living more fully, dancing to make the corn grow than in dancing in the Café de Paris; a man may have more primitive thoughts driving to Wall Street in a Cadillac than trotting to Ur on a donkey. Yes, it is the experience of the individual that counts, of the man and woman living eternally in the present instant of time.

It is this vision of human meaning—so lucidly expressed by Miss Hawkes—that permits optimism and encouragement in these dark days. There *is* this hope that men will find new and more universal roots, as the old civilization dies around us, or even explodes into crashing ruin.