

OVER THE OLD BRIDGE

A COMMUNICATION from a reader in Germany is not long enough to appear as a separate article, yet is important to print. We take the liberty of dividing it into its three numbered sections, and adding some comment, since the points offered deal with an earlier MANAS discussion.

This contributor writes:

The lead article in the Feb. 16 MANAS, "The Language of the Inner Life," is rich in valuable ideas and quotations. Yet in three ways it is perhaps incomplete.

(1) To begin with the end, the last sentence—"The lost truths of both Humanism and the Enlightenment must be restored"—is anachronistic. As with the terms cited in the quotation from Carl Becker, truth is a changing thing, a function of historical time. Consequently, our time must find its own truth, as it is finding its own art and even its own science. Truth, art, science, and even a religious belief must be at the height of its own time and cannot be borrowed from a previous epoch. (Of course, it is very helpful to know and to experience the previous truths and thus build upon them. This is the meaning of a humanistic education.)

Yes, even science is a changing thing. There is not *the* exact knowledge; most leading scientists, especially the physicists, as for example Pauli, Einstein, Born, and others, have known for quite some time that their patterns of thought are a function of the time in which they live.

Our reader is undoubtedly right in saying that there is anachronism in calling for the revival of the truths of Humanism and the Enlightenment. However, as he says at the end of his first paragraph, there is a sense in which the existing structure of knowledge is always raised upon an assimilation of earlier views. The MANAS writer doubtless meant the *neglected* truths of Humanism, for it is quite plain that the most crucial aspect of the humanistic philosophy which came into being during the Italian Renaissance has

either been forgotten or has lost most of its original force.

This is the doctrine that man creates his own destiny, a view of the human being which has become practically an empty slogan. We no longer really believe that we create our own destiny. What is the evidence for this? The content of the most influential social and cultural studies of our time is the evidence. If we as a culture really believed that men create their own destiny, we should have a large body of vital literature concerned with how this is done. Such literature does not exist. Instead, we have a mass of research which recites the reasons why we are helpless, impotent in the clutch of forces beyond our control. For example: Whyte's *Organization Man*, Ellul's *Technological Society*, Herbert Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man*. Our techniques of analysis and criticism remain "scientific." We objectify our imprisonment by systems and then declare the hopelessness of it all. The passage quoted last week from Harold Rosenberg's *The Tradition of the New* is an apt summary of this major defect in our critical thinking.

A very different sort of book would be written by scholars who are themselves deeply involved in emancipating activities. They would sound like Blake, Emerson, and Thoreau, instead of doom-sayers who describe the effects of dehumanizing social compulsion.

There are reasons, of course, for the prevalence of this kind of analysis. Communication about freedom is addressed to individuals, while social criticism is addressed to societies. Books that are addressed to societies say to the reader, between the lines, that there is no help for the situation under analysis save by some miraculous institutional change. Books

addressed to individuals are concerned with what the individual can do regardless of institutional change. They are about the use of the freedom he already has and how to increase it. But books addressed to individuals are not scientific, unless in terms of the special and rather new kind of science involved in individual psychology. And very few books concerned with individual psychology have much to do with "society," except in a broad, rhetorical way. Erich Fromm's *The Sane Society* is an exception, and was a courageous book for a psychoanalyst to write. The professional who dares to interest himself in the problems of society in a compassionate way is usually castigated by his contemporaries and colleagues for abandoning his "objectivity." A. H. Maslow's *Eupsychian Management* is perhaps a more "organic" approach to social problems, since the author reveals what seem to him actual steps that may be taken by businessmen in the service of the common good. But we should also recall that Erich Fromm found his most inspiring example in the French Communities of Work.

The difficulty in writing books addressed to individuals about their potentialities as free men is that, as a rule, neither writers nor readers seem deeply persuaded that they are or can actually be *free*. So what's to write about? If they try to write about freedom, anyhow, they are often overtaken by the feeling of working in a vacuum. They fear that what they do will turn out to be some kind of self-help jingle. (Maybe it will.) They tend to think of freedom only politically, forgetting that freedom is also a style of life pursued in a context of various practical limitations and necessities. Then there is the claim that books which attempt this task are neglecting "the masses"—the *helpless* masses. But it does not help the helpless masses for people who are not yet helpless to lie down and give up because of the graphs of defeat in contemporary social studies. That isn't the way the Poor Peoples' Corporation got started. Models of defeat are not an argument for ignoring models, however modest, constructed by people who have begun to

make themselves free. This all-or-nothing psychology of social improvement has us by the throat. It is in flat and fatal contradiction of the primary assumption of the original Humanist philosophy.

It is true enough that we can't *just* read Pico's *Oration on the Dignity of Man* and get ourselves a quick humanist salvation. We must, as our contributor says, make our own truth, but at its core it will not be something new; it will be a very old truth seen in new ways by new eyes, and for this reason may be reborn as a new understanding. The Reality Therapy of Dr. Glasser is such an old truth seen through new eyes. It says a man has to bear the burden of his own salvation—*no matter what*. It says, don't emasculate genuine change by self-righteous devotion to compiling lists of scapegoats and their crimes. The scapegoats exist and their crimes may be real, but doing nothing but compiling lists makes them seem an omnipresent reality, and they are not an omnipresent reality. It is self-defeating to say that they are, and it is a betrayal of humanist learning to say it learnedly.

Our reader continues:

(2) The second point which is misleading [in the MANAS article] is the pattern of presenting things in opposites—as if there were opposites between an inner and an external life. The author succumbs here to a rhetorical tendency which is detrimental to a great portion of Western thinking.

In the first place, there is no sharp boundary between "endo" and "exo." The vague boundary is drawn by each one of us and I venture to say that a man's happiness and maturity grow with his ability to move this boundary *into* things, people and events around him—*i.e.*, the more he interiorizes these things; and this he does by discovering that the basic patterns of thought and action—their governing archetypes—are the same or similar to his own. Through these archetypes, he begins to understand the behavior of other people—and, as the French proverb says, *Comprendre, c'est pardonner*. That is, he begins to love them (as he loves himself). In the words of Polanyi, he learns about the outside world by a process of "indwelling." This is a sort of

meditation, of discovery of symmetry relations, of isomorphism with the outside world.

Well, we *think* we know what our correspondent is saying here. And it seems very important.

It also seems that he is right in charging us with the flaw of dealing in "opposites." Very nearly all intellectual communications exploit polarity in order to obtain clarity—or perhaps it is sometimes pseudo-clarity. The point, here, may be that human life is a confusing blend of right and wrong, good and evil, and that in order to articulate judgments we make abstractions about moral values. These abstractions are entitled to remain absolute as abstractions, but they must be made relative in application; either that, or the application may become a paranoid distortion.

Good and evil, right and wrong, are *real*, but our judgments of others in terms of these values are afflicted by a deep and inevitable ignorance about the motives of human beings. Unless we acknowledge this basic limitation, we absolutize our judgments of men and set ourselves up as amateur Jehovahs with sins to punish and evil-doers to hunt down and condemn.

But how shall we prevent the French proverb—in another reading, *To understand all is to forgive all*—from letting us take a mushy attitude toward manifest injustice? Or a Pollyanna view of crime? The fact of the matter is that we don't understand *all*, and of modern thinkers about social good and evil, only Gandhi proposed a form of action which takes omnipresent human ignorance into account, insisting upon at least the potentiality of omnipresent human good.

Only very great writers are able to interiorize the problem of good and evil in a way that deals realistically with pain, suffering, right and wrong, yet never encourages the reader to hate or condemn. Dostoevsky accomplishes this, and Emerson in a very different way. No doubt there are others.

Following is the final portion of our contributor's letter:

(3) Certain of the words called "key-words" of the past by Carl Becker, such as "God," "Nature," etc., still have an inner-life meaning if we have been able to interiorize them; but their meaning has changed and will always change in historical time and space. Also, the degree of interiorization is changing, not only in time and space but from person to person as well.

Finally, I venture to suggest that through this sort of indwelling, of interiorization, of meditation, we can overcome the dangerous thinking in opposites, our projections of inner, primitive fears, into those whom we think of as our enemies or against us. No doubt they make a similar subconscious projection of bad things into us. We overcome the resulting danger—which today threatens the total destruction of mankind—by learning how to "indwell" in our supposed enemy, by practicing what Robert M. Hutchins calls the Civilization of the Dialogue (see *Saturday Review*, Dec. 4, 1965).

Actually, the MANAS article under discussion provides a number of examples of just this—the interiorization or indwelling in the problem or nature of those who are seemingly opposed to us. The quotations from Joseph Wood Krutch about Russian life, and even the words of Waugh's "Ambition Bevan," are to a great extent results of interiorization, of discovering isomorphisms or symmetry relations in others who had been regarded as enemies.

However, in order to arrive at a fruitful degree of understanding through indwelling, we need, of course, as hinted by Hiram Haydn (quoted in the same article), quiet periods for reflection in our days and weeks; or as some colleagues of mine at the University of Heidelberg put it—they cannot give full meaning to their lectures in philosophy, history, or language without first walking over the old bridge.

This is what we need most today: *bridged*, inner and outer dialogues, until we reach, by a civilization of dialogues, more universal truths and a new culture which speaks a more universal language of the inner life.

G.C.A.

Heidelberg

It should be obvious that what our correspondent is talking about is the generation of an all-pervasive moral atmosphere, producing a

spirit of mutual respect and forbearance among human beings that will help people to live a little above themselves, or above what they now are, instead of always pushing them toward a level which is actually a descent. Consider that we are continually being fed a diet of dark forebodings about the future, and about the incapacity of man to deal with many ominous trends—this, or a fare of infantile self-righteousness and self-gratulation at the mass media level.

What sort of an atmosphere will this produce? What sort of strength and dignity will it transmit to future generations? According to an "objective" evaluation of the current fare of reading material, including serious analysis as well as frivolous optimism, we are either failures or fools.

The mechanistic, analytical, statistical approach of contemporary social criticism has in it no great myth of human possibility. It persists in total neglect of the vision that has animated all distinguished human beings since the beginning of time. No wonder that, through its endless analysis of problems, it describes and even helps to produce a humanity that is continually obsessed by problems, like a sinner who can think of nothing but his awful sins.

Consider the difference in the responses to a new experience of (a) a man in flight, (b) a man standing still, and (c) a man busy with constructive projects he is determined to carry through. Their reactions and thinking cannot help but be very different.

Statistical and other objectifying ways of describing experience or events tend to destroy the uniqueness of individual response to what happens to us. The event, by general consensus, becomes only what it is said to be in these objectifying terms. This way of looking at historical developments tends to have a sterilizing effect on originality and individual resourcefulness in dealing with whatever happens. It also has a tendency to restrict all solutions to some form of political action, which means that when no

political solution is feasible or forthcoming, those directly affected think that they have no option except to suffer as victims, in apathy and defenseless impotence.

Meanwhile, people who somehow avoid thinking of themselves as "victims" may astonish the world with their inventive solutions. Observers of such do-it-yourself responses to the problems of extreme want have been deeply impressed by the manifest importance of the *morale* that is generated in this way, in contrast to the discouragement brought by the slow and often ineffectual activities of the War on Poverty bureaucracy. (This need not be taken as an argument against or a condemnation of government action in behalf of the economically depressed, but simply as notice of a fact of social psychology which seldom enters into the calculations of reformers or planners, who are frequently more at home with statistics than with people.)

Let us devote what space remains to examining various meanings of the expression, "interiorization," used by our correspondent.

Simply on the face of it, this term suggests a process of seeking understanding of something by finding its counterpart within oneself. This could mean the attempt to comprehend the motives of an antagonist by searching oneself for the motives that seem to animate him, or by trying to see through his eyes. In respect to undertakings such as scientific investigation, something corresponding to "interiorization" was probably what Thoreau had in mind when he wrote:

The true man of science will know better by his finer organization; he will smell, taste, see, hear, feel, better than other men. His will be a deeper and finer experience. We do not learn by inference and deduction, and the application of mathematics to philosophy, but by direct intercourse and sympathy. It is with science as with ethics,—we cannot know truth by contrivance and method; the Baconian is as false as any other, and with all the helps of machinery and the arts, the most scientific will still be the

healthiest and friendliest man, and possess a more perfect Indian wisdom.

Our contributor gives this account of interiorization when he suggests it as a corrective to "presenting things in opposites." The trouble with presenting things in opposites is, no doubt, the fact that opposites, being logical concepts, tend to absolutize whatever is rendered in their terms. "Good" and "bad" in political controversy tend to become absolutely good or absolutely bad, since the most determined partisan emotion can be generated by this means. We know that the anger necessary to arousing a population to war inevitably becomes feeling grounded in absolute moral judgment of the "enemy." This kind of absolutizing of the judgment of others could not take place among people who had the habit of looking for understanding of others in themselves.

So, to interiorize is to relativize and thus to maintain sympathy for all who come within the range of our experience. This kind of thinking would not, on the other hand, sentimentalize, since sentimentality usually represents some kind of willful blindness or repression.

A paper by A. H. Maslow, "Isomorphic Relationships between Knower and Known," has in it a passage that relates directly to the closing words of our correspondent's letter—words which speak of the individual's finding in himself symmetrical relations, or "isomorphism with the outside world." In this paper, Dr. Maslow wrote:

As Emerson said: "What we are, that only can we see." Only we must now add that what we see tends in turn to make us what it is and what we are. The communication relationship between the person and the world is a dynamic one of mutual forming and lifting-lowering of each other, a process that we may call "reciprocal isomorphism." A higher order of persons can understand a higher order of knowledge, but also a higher order of environment tends to lift the level of the person, just as a lower order of environment tends to lower it.

If these are the realities of perception, of understanding the nature of the outside world, and of self-knowledge, it soon becomes evident that

any statement about the world, about other human beings, or about events, unless it has been filtered of abstraction, static mechanism, and unqualified absolutes—subjected that is, to a transformation into personal knowledge by the process of interiorization—will remain a statement that cannot be humanly understood. Or, as the quaint expression of the Heidelberg professors has it, our judgments of experience and our opinions of men need to be refined and humanized by a walk over the old bridge—before we declare them to the world.

REVIEW

MORE CANADIAN PAPERBACKS

AMONG the many tasks of reconstruction which lie before the present generation, one that must be undertaken is the vigorous revival of the language of individual communication. This is a speech which, when heard, is identified as coming directly from one man to another. We are fairly surfeited with social indictments and exhortations which pass us by, to reach, somewhere in the Greek Kalends, an audience embodying the Collective Will, which is then supposed to rise up and make all things new. This audience does not exist except as the social philosopher's or critic's abstraction, and rise up it never will.

For reviving the language of the individual, we can have no better example than Henry David Thoreau. The volume named here recently, but hardly noticed, *Anti-Slavery and Reform Papers*, a paperback published in 1963 by Harvest House (1364 Green Ave., Montreal 6, Quebec, Canada), contains Thoreau's "only extended literary critique." This discussion, "Thomas Carlyle and His Works," first appeared in *Graham's Magazine* in 1847. There is hardly ever anything fragmentary or humanly partial in Thoreau, and we would have to go far for a juster estimate of Carlyle. Thoreau says in one place:

Carlyle's works, it is true, have not the stereotyped success which we call classic. They are rich but inexpensive entertainment, at which we are not concerned lest the host has strained or impoverished himself to feed his guests. It is not the most lasting word, nor the loftiest wisdom, but rather the word which comes last. For his genius it was reserved to give expression to the thoughts which were throbbing in a million breasts. He has plucked the ripe fruit in the public garden; . . . But he is wilfully and pertinaciously unjust, even scurrilous, impolite, ungentlemanly; calls us "Imbeciles," "Dilettants," "Philistines," implying sometimes what would not sound well expressed. If he would adopt the newspaper style and take back those hard names—But where is the reader who does not derive some benefit from these epithets, applying them to himself?

He is in fact, the best tempered, and not the least impartial of reviewers. He goes out of his way to do justice to profligates and quacks. There is somewhat even Christian, in the rarest and most peculiar sense, in his universal brotherliness, his simple, child-like endurance, and earnest, honest endeavor with sympathy for the like. Carlyle, to adopt his own classification, is himself the hero as literary man. There is no more notable workingman in England, in Manchester or Birmingham, or the mines round about. We know not how many hours a day he toils, nor for what wages, exactly; we only know the results for us.

Thoreau sees Carlyle not as a great philosopher but as a practical man's spur:

These volumes contain not the highest, but a very practicable wisdom, which startles and provokes, rather than informs us. Carlyle does not oblige us to think; we have thought enough for him already, but he compels us to act. . . . "Have you not had Moses and the prophets? Neither will ye be persuaded if one should rise from the dead." There is no calm philosophy of life here, such as you might put at the end of the Almanac, to hang over the farmer's hearth, how men shall live in these winter, in these summer days. . . .

This lack of a larger vision Thoreau sees as Carlyle's only important shortcoming:

To sum up our most serious objections in a few words, we should say that Carlyle indicates a depth—and we mean not impliedly, but distinctly—which he neglects to fathom. We want to know more about that which he wants to know as well. . . . The universe expects every man to do his duty in his parallel of latitude. We want to hear more of his inmost life; his hymn and prayer more; his elegy and eulogy less; that he should speak more from his character and less from his talent communicate centrally with his readers, and not by a side, that he should say what he believes, without suspecting that men disbelieve it, out of his never-misunderstood nature. His genius can cover all the land with gorgeous palaces, but the reader does not abide in them, but pitches his tent rather in the desert and on the mountain-peak.

As for Carlyle's hero-worship, Thoreau finds it useful and good. He defends Carlyle against the charge of "exaggeration":

Do we not exaggerate ourselves to ourselves, or do we recognize ourselves for the actual men we are?

Are we not all great men? Yet what are we actually to speak of? We live by exaggeration. . . . To a small man every greater is an exaggeration. He who cannot exaggerate is not qualified to utter truth. . . . As the sort of justice which concerns us in our daily intercourse is not that administered by the judge, so the historical justice that we prize is not arrived at by nicely balancing the evidence. In order to appreciate any, even the humblest man, you must first, by some good fortune, have acquired a sentiment of admiration, even of reverence, for him, and there never were such exaggerators as these.

There is a habit in modern criticism which needs to be erased, or at least largely reformed. It is the almost automatic response to a feeling of obligation to "explain" or trace to its origins the wisdom or sagacity of what a thoughtful man has to say. This classifying impulse—for it is little more than that—doubtless has a use in literary bookkeeping, but when rudely applied to the works of the mind it has a dissolving effect on excellence. When a good idea has been "explained" or accounted for, we fail to notice that it has also been *consumed*. It is but the sum of its parts and we can go on to other things.

Truly distinguished thinkers resist such classification. Not long ago, reading in Martin Buber's *Pathways to Utopia*, we came across a passage of both appreciation and criticism of Max Stirner. Buber saw what was wrong with Stirner, but thereby made more useful the *truth* in Stirner, as by a kind of transmutation. How did Buber learn to do this? What made him able to *see*?

Fortunately, no serious reader of Buber will presume to answer this question. Alchemy is for alchemists, not for critics and explainers.

We might take Thoreau as a model literary critic. His canon, never tiresomely used, is whether and how a writer enriches the human spirit, draws us to be better, wiser men. And we might ask: By what peculiar genius does Thoreau escape being a moralist? We can no more answer this question than we can explain away the insight of Buber. Possibly such human beings intimate the presence, unseen yet in our midst, of a plateau

of the human spirit attained by men who learn to sharpen their individuality while reaching perceptions of ever greater generality. This may seem a contradiction in terms, yet it accounts for the undying element in great human thought. And men like Thoreau, when they turn to criticism, seem to know by an unfailing instinct that writers like Carlyle, if they are to be understood, will not be grasped by analysis, but by a second evocation, never the same as, but something like, their own.

Another book from Canada's Harvest House—one especially good for people who are sick of politics and hackneyed political controversy—is *The Louise Lucas Story* (1965) by J. F. C. Wright, a journalist and historian. This book is a vivid account of the life of the woman who became the "Mother of the CCF"—Cooperative Commonwealth Federation—Canada's indigenous socialist movement, the party which was elected as the Government of Saskatchewan in 1944. The book is well characterized by James N. McCrorie, sociologist of the University of Saskatchewan, who writes the Introduction:

Here is the story of a remarkable woman who became part of a social and economic agrarian revolt in Saskatchewan during the 1920's and 1930's. I do not refer to her as a "farm woman because her girlhood and early married life, spent in urban Chicago, showed unmistakable signs of business potential. But on the Canadian prairies uncertainties of climate, the hazards of the natural environment, left their mark on the people who came from many lands to farm the "new land" of the prairie west. And Louise Lucas, who came with Henry, her husband, to farm in Saskatchewan, found the development of home and community life threatened continually by unpredictable twists of nature. . . . Saskatchewan became, for them, a "next year country."

Added, however, to the hazards of the climate were the policies of industrial interests in Canada that tended to push the farmers to the wall. Mrs. Lucas was aroused:

Neither a doctrinaire socialist, nor an aspiring politician, she was, first and last, a woman with an abiding and burning sense of justice, and a

compassion for others. She saw about her a system in which the value and worth of the human being was submerged in a scramble for profits; the quest for privilege and advantage on the part of the few resulting in deprivation and suffering for the many. And when the farm organization in which she had become an ardent member voted to take political action, she, reluctantly at first, but with gathering momentum, joined in a crusade to elect a government which would, in her words, put "Humanity First."

Even if this book doesn't make the reader fond of socialism, it is almost certain to make him fond of Canadians. At the same time, it throws a clear light on rational, non-ideological, political action and economic reform.

COMMENTARY

BLOCKED COMMUNICATION

DR. HENRY WINTHROP, of the University of South Florida, wrote for the Spring 1963 issue of the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* a paper called "Blocked Communication and Modern Alienation." After noting the familiar claim that failure in mutual understanding is due almost entirely to inadequate *mechanisms* of communication, he said:

Of greater interest to a humanistic psychology, I believe, is the impoverished relationship between man and man which springs, not from failures in and breakdowns of communication, but rather from *the deliberate attempt to avoid communication*.

This is not a popular view, mainly because it takes the problem out of the hands of the technicians and returns it to individuals. Yet this is exactly where it ought to be placed, in order to stir up some "creative disorder" and provocative moral unrest. For example, it is plain from this week's "Children" article that a major obstacle to the success of "rehabilitation" institutions is the suppression by "control" techniques of all but ritual communication between the administrators and the inmates. This communication is limited to the tacitly agreed-upon cold-war terms of a "co-existence" which involves prevention of any significant interchange. As the authors of *The Silverlake Experiment* put it:

What really develops . . . is a normative *rapprochement* in which officials share power with offenders. In the main, this *rapprochement* permits the operation of an inmate system so long as that system does not precipitate overt conflict. Officials are aided in their desire to maintain effective control and inmates are spared, not only their necessity of having to change, but the threat of losing considerable power over their destinies within the inmate system.

The "morality" of the *rapprochement*—its justification—lies in the "smooth operation" which results. As the report puts it: "Inmates and staff are exposed to activities which emphasize the correct manipulation of language and behavior

rather than a shared involvement in precipitating, and then reality-testing, the social and psychological implications of the forces which divide them."

There are interesting parallels between this situation and the experience of a Protestant minister who is threatened with loss of his church. The minister hasn't been able to get anybody to tell him what he's been doing wrong, although the race issue is obviously at stake. He reports what happened in one of the chapters of *Who's Killing the Church?* (see Frontiers):

A few weeks before [before he was requested to resign] . . . I had preached a sermon on the subject of race relations, my first in over a year. Well, I certainly wasn't the first minister to be asked to leave because of that interpretation of the Gospel. My lot is much easier than that of the ousted ministers in the South who are threatened with anonymous phone calls, whose parishioners cut off their credit and turn the whole community against them.

In one small way, however, my situation was more difficult. No one will admit that the race issue has anything to do with the problem. The reasons given by those who are whispering about the parish that I am "looking for another job" are that I don't remember names (of the whole thousand members and their families), that I don't dress neatly enough, that I don't call enough, that I spend too much time in Presbytery work, that the children's sermons I used to have in the services (up until two years ago) weren't dignified, that my wife shouldn't be employed (with three children in college at once, and aging parents to help support).

There was, however, a single moment of truth when the minister pressed a garrulous Elder to explain why he and other parishioners thought that "*this* pastor and *this* parish didn't seem to fit each other."

"Well," said the more talkative Elder, "if it's one thing more than anything else, it's that we get the idea that you're trying to *change* us." . . .

That was the point at which the talk really broke down. The Elder had said what he hadn't intended to say . . . that he wanted a gospel that didn't try to change him. There wasn't much to be said after that, except that "for your own good" they hoped I'd give

consideration to seeking quietly another pastorage. It was understood that if I didn't see it that way, they would have to bring it up in session meeting.

This minister is trying to make up his mind what to do: Stay and fight, or leave, letting the church become "an island of bland serenity for people who agree in all things." Meanwhile, there is evidence, he says, that about half the churches in his presbytery are having "trouble with the minister."

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

THE NEEDS OF DELINQUENT CHILDREN

No one can say to what extent the problems of delinquent children grow out of the delinquency of the larger society. However, the fact that conventional ideas of "morality" contribute to the weaknesses of juvenile delinquents at two decisive levels of influence becomes evident to anyone who looks closely at serious efforts to help young offenders. One learns, in the first place, that the objectives of delinquent children show little difference from the objectives of the law-abiding young; this is a way of taking note of the fact that the acquisitive habits and status-honoring tendencies of the adult society hardly discourage delinquent modes of achieving conventional goals. Socially acceptable behavior appears desirable mainly as an expedient means of staying out of trouble. In short, there is little call to human dignity and high purpose in the example set by the "respectable" social community.

The second level of prejudicial influence is found in the stereotyped attitudes of many people toward children who have a "record." Once a child has run afoul of the law, he tends to be marked as a "bad" child liable to infect other children. This leads to segregating the child from participation in a normal social life, which may oblige him to accept the identification of "bad"—so that he is forced in self-defense to develop an anti-social code of his own. This, in turn, becomes the basis of the sub-culture of rebellious delinquency. Research makes it plain that delinquency is largely a phenomenon of social conformity, just as our "morality" is conformity of another kind.

This general situation heaps enormous burdens on the shoulders of those who attempt to help delinquent children to grow into law-abiding citizens. A recent "progress report" on an experiment now being carried on in Los Angeles County is in part a revealing account of the

frustrations of the staff by conventional attitudes toward juvenile delinquency. *The Silverlake Experiment: A Community Study in Delinquency Rehabilitation* is by LaMar T. Empey, George E. Newland, and Steven G. Lubeck, and the report is published by the Youth Studies Center of the University of Southern California (1965). Supported by funds provided by the Rosenberg and Ford Foundations, the experiment was begun early in 1964 to study the effectiveness and experience of a residence, within the larger social community, for delinquent boys. The boys, aged 15, 16, and 17, come from the Boys Republic at Chino, California.

The purpose is to test the value of non-authoritarian administration of the life of these boys in an environment which allows them to make as many personal decisions as possible. The idea is to give them opportunity to recognize the values and rewards of non-delinquent behavior, since it has been found that such children are by no means hardened in their delinquent tendencies. In the words of the study:

It is being argued that delinquents are aware of basic values, conventional structure and its expectations, but having failed through a long series of experiences to acquire conventional means for status and acceptance, they turn to illegitimate means and associates. Once having done so, they become motivated by the normative expectations, the status system and the rewards of a delinquent group.

This means . . . that most delinquency is a conformist, not a private deviation. To its perpetrators it is not entirely senseless and negativistic, but a collective attempt to achieve some of the objectives—money, excitement, friends and status—which society defines as important.

The experiment, then, seeks to provide alternatives and opportunities for reevaluation of the means to these goals. It is an attempt, within the general framework of public corrective institutions, to give play to personal decision by these youngsters:

Even though a treatment program were entirely successful in dredging up and exploring all of the repressed and unhappy experiences that might have

been associated with a delinquent's early life, it is hard to see how that would be enough. He may need some understanding of the way early tendencies are now alive and demonstrable in his present behavior but, in the main, they concern issues which, if not dead have faded away. What he needs now is to explore his current adjustment and to find adequate alternatives, ones which he can accept as dealing with his problems. . . . Most change is likely to be an interpersonal, not a private phenomenon. . . . acceptability of conventional behavior to a delinquent will likely depend upon its acceptability to other delinquents. One does not first convert one delinquent and then others. It is a mutual conversion. If an individual can see others changing he is more likely to change himself. The objective, therefore, is to create a process by which a group can examine and hopefully, find some non-delinquent alternatives to its present delinquent standards, reactions, and points of view.

An attempt was made to remove as many as possible of the familiar characteristics of a penal institution. Except for a few basic rules, the boys are encouraged in self-government and self-administration. An effort is made to close the abyss between administrators and the children. As the report puts it: "Offenders as well as staff should become a primary source of help and support in running the system and solving problems." The report also points out how rehabilitation is defeated by conventional approaches:

This need for involvement [by the inmates or offenders] is in conflict with the contradictory mandates which have been imposed on correctional systems in the past, namely, (a) that they totally control offenders and (b) that, at the same time they rehabilitate them. Obviously, these two mandates pose conflicting aspirations. If control tends to become an end in itself, then the precipitation of alternatives by which rehabilitation can be achieved seldom occurs. Conflict is to be kept covert rather than precipitated and examined. Separate inmate and official systems, therefore, are encouraged.

On one hand, the official system is vested with complete authority and ostensibly retains power over all important decisions. But this is a myth. Officials can never retain all power in a correctional system especially, where inmates do not share with them the same objectives, norms and rewards. What really

develops, therefore, is a normative *rapprochement* in which officials share power with offenders. In the main, this *rapprochement* permits the operation of an inmate system so long as that system does not precipitate overt conflict. Officials are aided in their desire to maintain effective control and inmates are spared, not only their necessity of having to change, but the threat of losing considerable power over their own destinies within the inmate system.

Measures which are designed to maintain this *rapprochement* are often subtle and difficult to detect. In the main they stress routine. Inmates and staff are exposed to activities which emphasize the correct manipulation of language and behavior rather than a shared involvement in precipitating, and then reality-testing, the social and psychological implications of the forces which divide them.

Here, in the comparatively neutral language of sociology, is an explanation of the failure of penology and of the fact that prisons and corrective institutions tend to be schools of crime. It is in the context of this failure and in the face of public ignorance and social prejudice that the Silverlake Experiment is attempting to change the basic relationships between boys who have been delinquent and the people who are trying to help them. From the unwritten lines of this report one reads the story of bitter frustration and heroic effort—attended by what is apparently some modest success, which no one in his right mind would try to "measure" at this point in the undertaking.

But most of all the progress report on the Silverlake Experiment is a suppressed cry for help to the larger social community. It is becoming obvious that such efforts can never be much more than "holding actions," until people at large begin to see their obligation to develop better ideals of *their own* and exhibit genuine compassion for the casualties of the anti-human temper of our society.

FRONTIERS The Anti-Clerical Clerics

SECURE, perhaps, in the belief that all really important human needs can be adequately cared for by the offerings in its advertising pages, *Time* (April 8) has decided to take the "death of God" theologians seriously—as seriously, that is, as *Time's* light-hearted, never-a-dull-moment version of reportorial objectivity will permit. Whatever the verbal accuracy of the quotations from the leaders of this movement—and it seems at root more a mood than a movement—the feelings of the agonizingly serious men whose words are repeated will probably be wrenched by *Time's* laconic "treatment," despite its pretensions to being a small encyclopedic coverage. (Billy Graham might be an exception.) Intellectual facility is manifest, and a degree of theological sophistication, but *Time* here, as everywhere in its pages, is still committed to letting its readers know that "everything is under control," even though this is very nearly the opposite of what the death-of-God theologians intend. In some concluding paragraphs, *Time* summarizes:

The new quest for God, which respects no church boundaries, should also contribute to ecumenism. . . . The churches, moreover, will have to accept the empiricism of the modern outlook and become more secular themselves, recognizing that God is not the property of the church, and is acting in history as he wills, in encounters for which man is forever unprepared. . . . Perhaps today, the Christian can do no better than echo the prayer of the worried father who pleaded with Christ to heal his spirit-possessed son: "I believe; help my unbelief."

No problem. It's always been like that.

Better than studying the *Time* article carefully—although it does give the names of writers to look up—would be to read a modest paperback, *Who's Killing the Church?* edited by Stephen C. Rose, a graduate of Union Theological Seminary. Mr. Rose also edits *Renewal*, an exceptional magazine of social concern (sponsored by the Chicago City Mission Society and the New York City Mission Society).

The chapters of *Who's Killing the Church?* are almost entirely made up of contributions to *Renewal*.

Readers interested in the background of aroused Christian thinking behind various declarations that "God is dead!" will find a measure of its seriousness in this book. Actually, the claim that God is "dead," much as it may be welcomed by agnostic humanists, must be recognized as a desperate bit of reformist campaign oratory for many who use the phrase. They mean mostly that the God misrepresented to believers by various forms of Christian orthodoxy is "dead" because "He" never existed and was not real. But that a vast shake-up in organizational Christianity is now going on, led by a younger generation of determined Christian ministers, is an unmistakable fact. The quality and much of the content of this book are indicated by the first two paragraphs of its Introduction:

Who's killing the church? An explanation of our title is in order. In recent years, observers in and out of the churches have spoken of a general decline in religious interest. Man, they say, has become secularized. He no longer needs the props of faith and he is losing interest in the institutional expression of religion, the Church. In Europe the churches are practically empty and in the United States there is a gradual decline in membership, particularly in large metropolitan areas. From this perspective, the Church is dying because modern man is either too apathetic or too self-sufficient to involve himself in the life of the religious establishment. Who's killing the church? Modern man who, contrary to the late Professor Jung, is no longer in search of a soul. His accomplices are the depersonalized metropolis, the sweep of contemporary technology, and the general lack of concern for one's fellow man that these forces seem to produce.

There are some, however, who feel this analysis is too simple. It does not take sufficient notice of the Church's own shortcomings. Who's killing the Church? Don't blame the world, says this second group, because the real crime against the church is being committed from within. The Church is being killed by her own failure to take the shape that the world needs. If the Church were being murdered by villains from the outside, if it were facing persecution

for its witness in the world, there might be hope. But the world doesn't persecute a Church that seems to stand for nothing. So the verdict is more serious: suicide, a slow death resulting from what Toynbee has called a "failure of nerve."

More charitable or hopeful views of the church appear in this book, but the foregoing is not made unrepresentative by them. Here we report, not the brave outlines of proposed change for the better, but revolutionary utterances. Robert C. Strom, an ordained Presbyterian minister, has this to say:

There is no justification for the ordination of a class of priests separated from the world. Preaching of the Word and breaking of bread are necessary in the Christian life. But preaching need not take place behind church walls, and bread can be broken by other than professionals. The gospel is not for the holy enclave but for the crossroads of culture. The sickness of the clergy is that the entire milieu—the authentic context—of the professional ministry has been lost. Ministers have no professional identity because they exist in a world of unreality.

Gordon Cosby, widely respected as a founder and the minister of the Church of the Saviour, Washington, D.C., addresses his fellow clergymen:

I think we ought to be open to the giving up of all professional ministries. It may be that I ought to earn my livelihood in another way. Perhaps all of the ministers of a congregation should be engaged in a tent-making ministry and do their job in the life of the world.

Another possibility is that of giving up all real estate. I think our present real estate serves us, but I think that a pilgrim people ought always to be open to the possibility of giving up all its real estate. If a bomb were to fall on this area we would have to be the Church without any real estate. The Church was the Church during the most vibrant period of its life, several hundred years, without any real estate.

The earnestness of the contributors to this volume is at least evidence of the presence in modern Christianity of rare individuals who have no interest in institutional security, who care only for the spirit of their deepest convictions. If there are enough of these people, Christianity will surely

be reborn, possibly in a form so radically changed that we shall have to call it something else. (Copies of *Who's Killing the Church?* may be ordered by sending \$1.50 to *Renewal*, 19 South La Salle Street, Chicago, Illinois 60603.)