

THE MEANING OF PEACE

ABRAHAM LINCOLN once said that the only way he knew to get permanently rid of an enemy was to make him a friend. This is at the core of non-violence. The user of non-violence wants to rid himself of enemies by winning them to friendship, not by destroying them, their women and their children. I understand that men from Western societies are not entirely unfamiliar with the admonition that we should love our enemies. It isn't that we are unfamiliar with the admonition, it's just that we usually ignore it or have never tried it.

But love is not enough. It is an important and indispensable ingredient, but it is not enough. Simple good will will not see us through. We need also to learn to resist, and to resist actively, that which we believe to be wrong. If we cannot do that, then we are less than men. Not to resist, but to acquiesce to tyranny, would not be non-violence; it would be abject servility and cowardice. The basic rule in organized non-violent resistance is to refuse to obey the official orders of the tyrant or of wrongful exertion of authority, but at the same time to seek to befriend individual human beings representing the authority, to help, if possible, win them away from it.

The only genuine and mature resistance to tyranny is that resistance which does not imitate it, become like it. Violence, murder, torture, lies, fear: these are the instruments of tyranny. If you would have a totalitarian society—if that is your goal—then we all know the methods to use to achieve it: these means are themselves the end: "a boot stamping on a human face—forever."

On the other hand, non-violence, non-violent method, is the refusal to become the tyrant, even in the name of eliminating the tyrant. Non-violence recognizes the relationships between means and ends: that the ends and means are inseparable, one and the same. A man may live a lifetime striving toward some ideal end, and never achieve it. Yet each day of his life he is making use of means which affect him and all those around him. A nation or a

society may cherish the hope of the Good Society for millennia without ever achieving that goal. The Western World has held such an end for at least 2,000 years; yet we seem today nearer to accomplishing the obliteration of society than attainment of the Good Society. Throughout these two thousand years, men and nations have made use of means—too often the means of murder, torture, and fear—which have helped us to our present situation.

What, then, gives us hope, even today? Why do we still recognize the goodness and yearn for the grace of love and kindness and understanding? Because throughout these millennia men of all classes and conditions have engaged in acts of charity and goodness, and have brought happiness where before there was despair. We know the power of Love, even when we won't rely on it.

But even love and resistance together are not enough. There have also to be intelligent insight, understanding, and a carefully organized program. Non-violence has to be socially organized if we are to achieve its full power.

Most of us have a concern for "peace." We are for peace as we are all for motherhood, and we are "against" war just as we are opposed to sin. But do these words have any content? Can we act them out?

In 1946, the National Opinion Research Center polled a cross-section of Americans, asking what they thought they could do to help build peace. The overwhelming majority of people said they didn't know of anything they could do. They were "for" peace, but they didn't know what to do about it. On the other hand, the same people were asked what they could do if there should be another war. Almost to a man—and to a woman—they knew the answers; they named specific and concrete things they could do for war. In short, our problem is that, while we have a usable and concrete idea about war, our

concept of peace is static and almost completely non-functional. Either we need a new definition of peace, or we need to throw out the concept entirely.

To save time, let me be dogmatic. We cannot achieve peace, because there is no such *thing* as peace. . . . Peace is not a thing. There is no *way* to peace, because peace is the way. Have you ever noticed how politicians *and* churchmen, diplomats *and* educators talk always of peace as a goal, and an ideal end to be achieved, something that is away from us down a road, and toward which we are always working or fighting? It is this static, end-of-the-road view of peace that is doing us in.

What is peace, then? Let me propose a new working hypothesis: peace is a dynamic process, a way to approach and tackle problems and conflicts; it is non-violent problem-solving or problem-grappling (for we don't always finally solve problems; we just learn to live with them). Peace is not necessarily reconciling irreconcilable philosophies; it is reconciling the men who hold the irreconcilable philosophies. The Moslems and the Christians still have irreconcilable philosophies, but they fight fewer religious wars than they once did, having accepted the view that the irreconcilables can coexist.

Peace is not the opposite of war, if war is in part an active grappling with great political and social issues and a time of great social cohesion. In wartime, individuals may for the first time in their lives experience something vital and demanding; they will be part of a team, a tribe, working together for a great end against a common danger. There is an unflattering way of putting this. Randolph Bourne wrote:

The State is the organization of the herd to act offensively or defensively against another herd similarly organized. The more terrifying the occasion for defense, the closer will become the organization and the more coercive the influence upon each member of the herd. War sends the current of purpose and activity flowing down to the lowest level of the herd, and to its most remote branches . . . the classes which are able to play an active and not merely passive role in the organization for war get a tremendous liberation of activity and energy . . . a vast sense of rejuvenescence pervades the significant classes, a sense of new importance in the world. Old

national ideals are taken out, re-adapted to the purpose and used as the universal touchstones, or molds into which all thought is poured. . . . Public opinion, as expressed in the newspapers, and the pulpits and the schools, becomes one solid block.

Peace, if it is to have any sort of workable meaning, is going to have to provide some alternatives—some "moral equivalents," in William James' phrase, to the exhilarating and demanding personal and social motivations and energies loosed by war. Peace is going to have to be what the Indian writer, Shridharani, called "war without violence."

There is no doubt but that organizing a society to be able to behave and act non-violently is more difficult than organizing one for violence. It demands a greater application of intelligence and reason; it necessitates a higher degree of mental health. One can be completely platitudinous about this: a peaceful society requires of us steadier application of our intelligence and values than ever before. In short, we're going to have to grow up!

Obviously, non-violent social organization is more difficult to achieve—just as it is sounder when achieved—precisely because men are not organized in terms of their most primitive responses: hate, fear, and suspicion. Their opponents have to be redefined, and this requires greater maturity throughout the society. Thus, the external "opponent" against which the group is organized (and groups are always organized "against" something, and only to a lesser extent for something) must be identified as, say, "poverty, ignorance, tyranny, disease." All this requires a higher level of thinking and acting. It requires organization which can help weak individuals to adhere to a course which alone they could not always do.

If peace is non-violent problem-tackling, then one of the first problems to be tackled concerns what we are to do with the national state in order to domesticate it and bring it under human control. Obviously nothing would emasculate the national state more effectively than to take from it its claim to a monopoly on violence. The advocates of democratic world government are pacifists insofar as they work to effect this transformation. In this case, they work to get present national states to "hand

over" to a world state the monopoly on violence. You may ask why I, as an advocate of non-violence, would countenance any repository, even a new one, for the monopoly of violence? But I would, for two reasons. First of all, the gun would be out of the hand of the present, most dangerous, culprits: the trigger-happy national states. Second, if a new world government emerged with a monopoly on the resources of violence, it would never have to use them—especially if effective groups trained in non-violence were already at work in the world and setting some good examples. Why do I think the world state would never have to use violence? Because to have a monopoly on violence at the world level would mean that all significant national forces would be eliminated: there would be no force large enough to challenge the world state. But, more, there would be called into existence a world police force, which could act against individuals. Now a well-trained police force is not an instrument of violence, but exists to prevent or minimize violence. The London police force is generally conceded to be the best, the most effective police force in the world. Yet the London bobbies do not carry firearms. They *have* to minimize violence; not relying on arms, they have to find other, more creative solutions to their police problems. (I am, of course, aware, that on occasion the London police are issued firearms. This is one of the evidences that they, in that situation, control the monopoly of violence. But, in practice, they avoid it like the plague, and look upon its use as a breakdown of their system.)

In short, I do not take the utopian view that all violence can be eliminated from the world. What endangers all of us is not individual acts of violence, but the social organization, on a grand scale, of violence. Society can devise and has methods—essentially non-violent methods—to cope with individual acts of violence; what it needs now is to devise the means of coping with the over-riding problem. All the world does not have to become personally pacifist for there to be an essentially non-violent society. One of the significant aspects of the non-violent resistance movement in India was that it illustrated that large masses of ordinary people can be organized so as to behave non-violently in

extreme situations in order to accomplish a social purpose.

In sum, then, I am saying that a movement toward world government—a true world government with a police force—is an indispensable aspect of the dynamic problem-solving necessary to our time. But the world government movement has greatly declined during the past five years. Why? For many reasons, undoubtedly, one being the overwhelming persistence of the national states: they *seem* to make world government irrelevant. But appearances may be deceiving. There is another important reason, in my opinion, for the decline of the movement, and it can be seen clearly in our own country. The demand for a world government is nothing if not revolutionary. It means the veritable overturning of the innermost fortresses of national states, today by all odds the most powerful institutions in the world.

Another of the great problems that needs tackling is the question of whether the American economy can go it alone without the expenditures necessary to a permanent war machine. We have all become increasingly aware of the peculiar dependence of vast segments of industry and millions of American workers upon armaments. You know the old saying, "There is no business like the missile business." More and more, our lives and work have become entangled in this war economy. To many ordinary people, it is the way they live—enabling them to buy a new car with higher tail fins, a color TV, and send their children to college. How would they get along without the armament business? How would, say, Stanford University get along without it?

Personally, I think this is a problem to which we know some of the answers already. But we had better get to work applying them before it is too late. I do not accept the economic-cause-of-war view, nor do I believe that a Marxist-organized economy is the way out. But a lot of people do, and, in this world, if enough of us *think* something is a cause and something else is a panacea, we may behave the way we think. What I am trying to suggest, all too briefly, is that most of our economic problems are really psychological problems; that their outcome depends in some part on the orientation large

numbers of people take toward the problems. We can, I believe, handle the economic problem if we handle the socio-psychological ones that surround it. But we had better integrate this economic problem-solving deep into our non-violent program.

The question which remains, of course, is, "What about the Russians"? Well, what about them? I join George Kennan in refusing to be frightened because the Russians claim that they are going to produce more meat, eggs and produce than the United States. In fact, if they can do it, more power to them. I can see no threat at all to us if other people are, for the first time, abundantly fed, well-clothed and housed. Actually, such well-fed people are going to be much less inclined to risk the adventurism of attacking others. Meanwhile, we in the U.S. are already producing more food than we can consume, so we hardly need to worry about the possibility of the Russians producing still more. Unfortunately, of course, there is a more sinister aspect to the tensions between us and the Russians. The Russian leaders, whether Lenin, Stalin, or Krushchev, grew out of a brutal struggle, becoming men schooled to forego every scruple in political combat. Nevertheless, there is a hopeful side to this coin: Krushchev, in his 20th Congress speech, revealed that the Russian people are filled up with repression, torture and murder, and that there is a popular hunger throughout the country for a loosening of tensions. This current appears even in the top leadership ranks. And it has undoubtedly, according to any number of American and other observers, led to an amelioration of the totalitarian rule practiced under Stalin.

From this we should take hope. Not the hope that Krushchev is becoming "soft," and would shrink from using violence; but the hope that comes of the realization that repression, torture and murder—the Terror, in short—produces its own final revulsion even in a society, like the Russian, that has never in history been out from under the Knout. The Terror is inhuman, in the profoundest meaning of that word, dehumanizing, as it does, both the victim and the executioner. Hence, at the first opportunity, people who have been living under the Terror rise to shake it off—within the limitations of the time.

It is precisely now, then, in the development of the Russian Society, that we might most hopefully tackle some of the problems that engender the extreme tensions between the U.S. and Russia. Instead of launching satellites primarily for the purpose of using them as weapon platforms from which to threaten each other with mutual extinction, the time is ripe for us to take the initiative—to act unilaterally, that is—to perform a liberating, hopeful act from which all the world can take encouragement.

In a world in which violence has now been brought to almost its ultimate heights, both socially and physically—in the totalitarian state and in modern thermo-nuclear warfare respectively—men, including Americans, cannot afford to overlook possible alternatives. None of us really believes violence in either of these forms offers mankind a hopeful way out. On the other hand, none of us can *prove* that nonviolence will immediately lead to a solution of all crucial problems. But we can take the calculated risk that it is a more hopeful method than violence and that workable solutions are more likely to result from its functioning than from the functioning of the instruments of violence.

My appeal is this, in the name of our common humanity and the needs of men throughout the world today, that you not reject what I have suggested until you fairly consider and study it. Maybe I'm wrong. I wouldn't be the first man to be wrong. But perhaps I am right—or at least I may have my fingers on the hem of a larger fabric not yet clear to any of us, but which offers more hope and happiness for men than all the guided missiles, H-bombs, machine guns, flame throwers, bayonets, and devices of torture that the human brain can devise.

Walter Millis, in his book, *Arms and Men*, a study of American military history written something over a year ago, reached the following conclusion, after having considered the developments which brought us to the present crisis:

By 1956 there appeared to be almost no way in which the deployment of military force—which means men armed with murderous weapons, whether Roman short swords or high-powered artillery or hydrogen bombs, for the slaughter of other men—

could be brought rationally to bear upon the decision of any of the political, economic, emotional or philosophical issues by which men still remain divided. This is the great and unresolved dilemma of our age. One cannot doubt that a resolution of some kind will be found, for it is too difficult to accept a millennial view of history, a Twilight of the Gods, a prognosis of universal catastrophe and extinction. Presumably the human race will in the future, as it has done throughout the past, find means of getting along somehow, probably for the better than for the worse. But just how it will do so seems impossible to predict; while the old certainty of military action as the final answer to every problem—a certainty that has remained with us since the dawn of history—seems no longer available. It may be that for final sanctions in our human affairs we shall have to look toward other factors.

Somehow, such a conclusion seems fittingly American: in the face of gloomy facts it retains a pollyannaish optimism; it is unphilosophic and undoctrinaire; it doesn't quite know how the problem will be solved, but it defines the situation hopefully with the feeling that it can be solved. As products of American culture, you and I cannot easily fail to respond to its ingenuous hope and the feeling that "somehow" we will muddle through. This in part is the revolutionary aspect of the American tradition, which can remain revolutionary only as it refuses to limit its hopes or to share its generosity with all men: to cease being uniquely American in order to become broadly human.

The American Revolution brought to all men throughout the world the ringing message that freedom, though dangerous, is possible. That democracy, where practiced, allows greater scope to human creativity and happiness; that democracy is the negation of tyranny. Americans today can serve their revolution only by ceasing to be status quo-ers, by opening its concepts and methods to all the world, so that the American Revolution ceases to be American and becomes a world revolution. This cannot be accomplished by violence, nor by attempting to direct affairs from some lofty perch. It can only be accomplished by sharing, by developing further, our insights into our general participation in the human predicament and the world's social

problems: it can be accomplished by recognizing—in Gandhi's words:

There is no escape from the impending doom save through a bold, unconditional acceptance of the non-violent method. Democracy and violence go ill together. The States that today are nominally democratic will either have to become frankly totalitarian or, if they are to become truly democratic, they must become courageously non-violent.

We must destroy the Russian menace by befriending the Russian people, in order to work with them and with all the peoples of earth, to achieve at least a portion of that wellbeing and brotherhood that are now, for the first time, attainable—attainable from our new and increasing knowledge and skills, if we apply them wisely, maturely, and humanely.

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REVIEW

AN ISSUE OF HARPER'S

HARPER'S for May, 1958, gives strong indication that the old, "respectable" journals have for some time realized that they must enter into the realm of serious criticism in order to stay alive. At least, from John Fischer's "Easy Chair" to Bruce Hutchison's "Why are Canadians Turning Anti-American?", we encounter a level of evaluation which used to be rare in either *Harper's* or the *Atlantic*.

Mr. Hutchison, who is editor of the *Victoria Times*, explains that present Canadian dissatisfaction with U.S. policies in Canada involves much more than the desire to keep America from draining off Canada's wealth. The Canadians, like the British, more easily adopt a global view toward Russia and nations friendly to the Soviets. While this may be laid to the fact that Britain now has few important interests abroad, and the fact that Canada doesn't need any, it is still something of an eye-opener to note that the "Russian Menace" may seem to a Canadian to be very little, if any, worse than the American Menace.

The United States, as we all know, has a finger in many pies, and our theory of growing extra hands and arms to care for these interests does not always meet with favor among such people as Indians, Englishmen, and Canadians. Canada's recent elections revealed enormous popular sentiment for an administration avowedly hostile to many American policies, particularly in respect to what Canadians consider Mr. John Foster Dulles' colossal mismanagement in international affairs. On this subject, Mr. Hutchison remarks:

It must first be noted that most Canadians have long been unofficial Democrats, because the Democratic party has generally reduced American tariffs while the Republican party has raised them against us. Moreover, the Democratic party's foreign policy has seemed to us more successful than that of the Eisenhower Administration.

This view (or prejudice) alone cannot account for Canada's present attitude toward Mr. Dulles and all the forces he represents. It is merely factual to say that an overwhelming majority of Canadians,

including all their leading statesmen, regard Mr. Dulles as an unmitigated disaster—a disaster affecting Canada as deeply as it affects the United States.

No Canadian government can say these things aloud, of course, but in the last five years the largest preoccupation of Canadian diplomacy has been to repair Mr. Dulles' blunders, as Canada sees them.

John Fischer, in his "Easy Chair" essay, endeavors to expose what he considers a dangerous situation in respect to both Congress and the Federal Communications Commission. It is no surprise to find Mr. Fischer describing the means by which the FCC secures itself against the sort of Congressional inspection some Federal agencies may anticipate. Nevertheless, the questioning of recent FCC decisions has led to an "investigation" in the form of what Mr. Fischer calls a "gentle academic study." Dr. Bernard Schwartz, an "innocent scholar," soon discovered that "nobody can peer more than an inch below the surface of the lot of Congressmen in compromising positions. Many of them are deeply enmeshed in the operations of these agencies." In other words, when the FCC becomes high-handed in obstructing access to communications channels by a liberal or radical group, it is most convenient to have Congressmen involved in the enterprise, while on the other hand a lot of profits to Congressmen can trickle in around the edges. The late senator Joe McCarthy, for example, accepted \$10,000 for writing a pamphlet worth perhaps \$200 if compiled by a professional writer, from a company very interested in some pending legislation. "Congressional immunity" seems to extend in many directions, since no official curiosity was expressed on the \$10,000 fee to McCarthy, and one of the reasons may have been that a surprising number of Congressmen and Senators own or control radio and TV stations. If you buck the people who get the word said you get into a lot of trouble. While McCarthy, so far as we know, did not himself own a communications channel, he had friends (believe it or not) who did. We agree with Mr. Fischer that this is a dangerous state of affairs, and that legal safeguards are needed to assure deviant or radical opinion channels of expression.

Also in the May *Harper's* is an article by Richard B. McAdoo, titled "The Guns at Falaise Gap," which reminds us of aspects of full-scale warfare that should not be forgotten. As McAdoo recalls, the men of the 989th Field Artillery Battalion, to which McAdoo belonged, began their European campaign under conditions which made them send letters back home describing war as "pure hell." But by the time the business of Falaise Gap had been finished, nobody said this any more—the hell was past describing. For a week, during 1944, from a Monday to a Saturday, allied forces slaughtered 10,000 Germans in the Falaise pocket and took 45,000 prisoners. Recalling that scene in 1944, Mr. McAdoo tells how it looked to him when the battle was over:

The floor of the valley looked much as it had before the haze closed over it on the previous Saturday afternoon. The roads from the Foret de Gouffern to Chambois had been cleared again—this time by Allied troops moving through to the east—but from the ditches out across the flat bottom-lands the ground was still strewn with wreckage of equipment and human beings. Among these countless tortured images of defeat, the sight of the forsaken horses stung most sharply. The dead soldiers were past caring, the wounded had been borne away by the medical corps, all of them had at some point taken their individual chances with the cause that had brought them to this end. But the animals had no choice, and now they were left to limp about the remains of the masters they had dumbly served.

Mr. McAdoo quotes from Eisenhower's *Crusade in Europe*, which hardly softens the picture:

The battlefield at Falaise was unquestionably one of the greatest "killing grounds" of any of the war areas. Roads, highways, and fields were so choked with destroyed equipment and with dead men and animals that passage through the area was extremely difficult. Forty-eight hours after the closing of the gap I was conducted through it on foot, to encounter scenes that could be described only by Dante. It was literally possible to walk for hundreds of yards at a time, stepping on nothing but dead and decaying flesh.

Another notable article is contributed to *Harper's* by Werner Heisenberg, Nobel-prize-winning originator of the "Principle of Uncertainty"

in physics. Presenting "A Scientist's Case for the Classics," Mr. Heisenberg offers a generalized critique of Western culture which seems to us to illuminate other articles appearing in the May *Harper's*:

We must stress the fact that the whole strength of our Western civilization is derived, and always has been, from the close relationship between the way in which we pose our questions and our practical actions. Other peoples were just as experienced as the Greeks in the sphere of practical action—but what always distinguished Greek thought from that of all others was its ability to change the questions it asked into questions of principle. Thus it could arrive at new points of view which impose order on the colorful kaleidoscope of experience and make it accessible to human thought.

It is this which made Greek thought unique. Even during the rise of the West at the time of the Renaissance, this habit of mind stood at the mid-point of our history, and produced modern science and technology. Whoever delves into the philosophy of the Greeks will encounter at every step this ability to pose questions of principle; in this way he can learn to command the strongest tool produced by Western thought.

Finally, it is justly said that a concern with antiquity creates a sense of judgment in which spiritual values are prized higher than material ones. It is precisely in the tradition of Greek thought that the primacy of the spirit emerges clearly. Today some people might take exception to this fact. They might say that our age has demonstrated that only material power, raw materials, and industry are important, that physical power is stronger than spiritual might. It would follow, then, that it is not in the spirit of the times to teach our children respect for spiritual rather than material values.

How do you identify a "spiritual value"? This is the important question, since the claim is commonly made that the Western, "free" societies constitute the bulwark of spiritual values against the encroachments of totalitarian "materialism." Mr. Heisenberg seems to think that the "ability to pose questions of principle" is a spiritual quality. If this is the criterion, then the peoples of the West have still much to learn from the pagan Greeks of antiquity.

COMMENTARY
SUBSCRIBER'S "EDITORIAL"

MANAS has received from a subscriber a letter which we have decided to print as a kind of "editorial." This letter is from a practicing physician of some eminence in his field. Ordinarily, we do not print letters which pay compliments to MANAS, but this communication is so clear, and, as we see it, so inspiring—and, finally, so representative of what the editors of MANAS would like to achieve, had they the ability—that it seems appropriate to share the letter with our readers. It begins:

With each issue of your excellent publication, my wife and I wish that all the thinking and responsible people we know could read it too and then convene to discuss your ideas and challenges. Then perhaps we, in a consequently aroused and enlightened body, could promptly initiate some obviously essential remedial action and some gravely indicated preventive action. Concurrently we should establish an ever-enlarging group of thoughtful, constructive participants in a determined joint effort to maintain values we cherish, recover values we prove, demand values we may believe in and so we've lost, strengthen the values we need, discard values we despise, revise values we've distorted, validate values we're seeking, question values we're bound by, accept and apply values we prove, demand values we may believe in and so build upon, and create new values we can live and grow by. That's how stimulating MANAS is to us!

No one has made a better description of the role MANAS would like to play than this reader.

The only possible qualification we might want to add would be to the effect that no "organizational" program is envisioned by MANAS as a means of pursuing these ends. MANAS seeks to serve the interests and concerns of the individual, remaining confident that human intelligence, when stirred to action, is fully capable of devising what organization is necessary for specific ends. The temper of freedom is infinitely more important than the mechanics of its organization, which too often become chains which hamper and confine. Nor is there, so far as

we can see, any real indication of organizational intentions in this letter.

Enclosed with the letter came sixty-eight names of persons to whom to send sample copies of MANAS. We have the feeling that many of the friends of this reader are likely to become subscribers to MANAS. We might say, in conclusion, that this means of helping MANAS to obtain new readers has proved to be the most effective. Our growth, which is continuous, although slow, has been largely a result of such cooperation from those who are already subscribers.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

RELIGION AND EDUCATION—II

A LETTER from a subscriber makes a good follow-up of our discussion of the conflict between the secular tradition in American government and education, and our "Hebraic-Christian heritage":

Editors, MANAS: You may be interested in a discovery we made when our small daughter entered kindergarten in our town.

Inquiring further into a remark she made one day, we found that the kindergarten teacher was requiring the class to say a short prayer of thanksgiving to "God," as part of the routine of serving milk each day to the children. After seeking an explanation of this unusual procedure in a public school, we learned some more interesting things. Upon hearing that we were opposed to such religious practices in the school program, the teacher appeared to be genuinely surprised. In some twenty-odd years of teaching all over the United States, she had never been questioned about this before. We learned that this "grace" was chosen after careful perusal of her class records with a view to offending no religious group, and was "merely a little courtesy" by which she undertook to teach the children respect for religion—Christianity. She did not explain how she could continue the practice on this theory after our child was entered, who does not belong in any Christian group.

Taking the matter up with the school principal, we found substantially the same attitude, including the assertion that during his years as principal of this school, the practice of prayer had never been questioned. He did admit, however that our objections were probably legally valid, and promised that the matter would be referred to the Superintendent, who would see what the law was on the subject. He also mentioned that a similar issue had arisen, once, regarding Christmas celebrations; however, the school had decided to go ahead and observe Christmas with some traditional Christian program.

It seems the more obvious, the more we consider it, that this kind of thing has no justification on any grounds whatever. The inclusion of a prayer in school routine is implicit endorsement, by the State, of the religion the prayer represents, backed by all the

authority of a compulsory educational system. That participation is not made compulsory is meaningless, since any child who objects (assuming that a six-year-old would, which is most unlikely) must separate himself from the group to do so, thus placing himself in a disadvantageous position in relation to the school system—a position which both State and Federal Constitutions contain clear guarantees against. That such a prayer is presented without comment is actually worse. How can a teacher worthy of the name present an interpretation of religion to her class which the children are not even permitted, much less encouraged, to examine or question? Indeed, presenting such material in any of the lower grades is, in fact, plain indoctrination—since young children assume that the teacher offers them the truth on this, as on other matters new to them, and they are eager to learn. In short, whether or not "God is good," or "great," or to be "thanked," is an individual matter upon which neither the State, nor its representatives the public school teachers, can properly have anything whatever to say.

Those who are interested in pursuing such issues in public schools, in order to clarify the difference between either conscious or unconscious indoctrination and complete open-mindedness, will find useful a memorandum prepared by the Attorney General of the State of California. In 1955, the State Board of Education requested the Attorney General's opinion on the question of whether it is constitutional to read excerpts from the Bible as a part of the school program. At the same time the County Council of San Bernardino County requested an opinion on whether the governing board of a public school district might require teachers to read a prayer to the class every morning. Attorney General Brown, therefore, provided a careful statement setting forth the reasons why the Bible may not be read in public school classes for religious purposes, and why religions may not be made a part of the curriculum of the public schools.

On the latter question, Attorney General Brown uses the question of prayer as an introduction to other questions:

It hardly seems open to debate that a public school teacher may not be *required* to recite a daily prayer, for no one may be compelled to perform a religious ceremony as a condition of his employment by the state or a subdivision of the state. By the same

token, neither may any public school student be required to participate in the offering of prayers. Since the request of the County Council of San Bernardino County asks merely whether or not a teacher may be required to read such a prayer, our answer must be in the negative. It is apparent from the discussion accompanying the opinion request, however, that our views are also desired concerning the broader question whether or not public school authorities may sponsor such prayers, even though no student or teacher is required to participate.

Citing a U.S. Supreme Court decision to the effect that "neither the State nor Federal government can pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions or prefer one religion over another," Mr. Brown continues: "For atheist or agnostic children, daily prayers would be a constant reminder of the conflict between home and school, and might well be a disruptive element which would weaken the moral influence of parent and teacher alike. In the last analysis, it is one of the fundamentals of American government that the home and the church have total responsibility for the religious training of each child; the state may not constitutionally intrude upon that responsibility."

Protagonists of religious influence in public schools, presumably in the interest of "moral education," often use the argument that men in public life make frequent reference to "God," and the public ceremonies are embellished, without question, with religious sentiment. On this point, also, Attorney Brown offers a firm opinion:

We believe that references to God in such public ceremonies do not constitute the same forceful intrusion upon liberty of conscience which would be involved in daily prayers in the public schools. It may well be that in the discharge of their heavy responsibilities our legislators and judges, as individuals, are entitled to call upon their God for guidance; perhaps only the members of a particular legislative or judicial body have standing to question such supplications. But group prayers in the public schools are another matter. Parents are taxed for the support of such schools, and their refusal to send their children there (unless they substitute private schooling) is a crime. To call upon children to participate in prayers which are contrary to their parents' beliefs (or in the alternative to require them to profess their non-belief) is a material, not a mere

incidental, encroachment upon the separation of church and state. Especially in the case of very young children, their right to absent themselves during such prayers would seem to be inadequate protection from the very real though subtle pressure which the endorsement of school and teacher would produce.

In the great ideological struggle in which the world is now engaged, enforced conformity of thought is not a weapon which our side may use—it is rather one of the evils against which we fight. Ours is the view that ideological differences should be decided ideologically, not by government decree. Faith is important—it is at the very foundation of our cause—but it is faith dictated by the heart, not faith dictated by the state. To the extent that public school religious exercises might conflict with the teachings of the home, we would be deviating from the concept of individual responsibility in religious matters and moving instead toward state control.

California's Attorney General makes it clear that any "promotion" of religion is bound to defeat the purposes of non-sectarian education. Religion might be *considered* by any school teacher, for the benefit of pupils, but only if that teacher knows how to distinguish between promotion and education. And this capacity is rare, for it presupposes the "philosophical scrutiny of religion" of which Prof. C. J. Ducasse speaks, including an appreciative study of religions other than Christianity, and a knowledge of agnostic, atheistic and naturalistic persuasions.

The average parent can best appreciate the religion-in-education issue when it comes to light by way of the practice of prayer-saying in the elementary school. For the child whose parents are opposed to the psychology of conventional prayer will feel very much left out when classmates participate in something known to them through the influence of home or church. They will, in other words, be made aware—within the schoolroom—of the differences in religious background, and made to feel that they and their parents are members of a not too respectable minority. Awareness of religious differences may be necessary, but it should not have its origin, for any child, any time, in a school supported by a non-sectarian state.

FRONTIERS

A Messy Mess of Pottage

AN editorial paragraph in the *Humanist* (for May-June) voices in a few well-selected words a complaint that is often found in the pages of MANAS. The subject is advertising and what is wrong with it. The *Humanist* lets the single, outrageously offensive ad go, turning to the total effect of the commercial culture of which advertising is the official spokesman:

The art of advertising—in its more sophisticated forms—lies not in telling lies, but in selecting truths. The real accomplishment of our sugar-coated society is not selling us bad refrigerators or even bad novels, but rather the presentation of everything—cars, works of art, education, and even such abstract qualities as "maturity"—in a standard, glamorized seller's package. It may still be possible to choose wisely among proffered alternatives; but it is almost impossible to elbow a way through offerings of the market researchers to reach or create the unsponsored interest, the unexploitable idiosyncrasy.

The trouble is, if you want to do anything, these days, the practical people always say that you have to hitch it up with some kind of "sales" program. If you want to write a story, you must think of the "market" for your story. If you want to manufacture something, four fifths of the price of your product must be devoted to the cost of getting it distributed. If you think nuclear testing is a bad thing and that it is important to tell people so, you have to go the same route—send out solicitors to raise some money so you can buy full-page ads in the newspapers, to explain why the United States—and other powers—should stop the tests.

In our kind of society, nearly all the wheels that go around are commercial wheels. There is no real place for the non-profit operation. Just to *have* a non-profit operation, you must form a corporation and fill out questionnaires to convince the government—federal and state—that your enterprise can be truly classified as "non-profit." To be "non-profit," you must be religious, or charitable, or educational, or scientific. And you

must be religious, charitable, educational, or scientific in a way that the government bureaus are willing to recognize. You have to be *their* kind of religious, charitable, educational, or scientific.

The government bureaus, of course, are concerned with catching the wandering tax dollar. They don't want it to get away except under the proper auspices. So, by a species of commercial reasoning, the government gets the right to say what is religious, charitable, educational, or scientific. Somehow, it is supposed to seem perfectly all right for the accountants who are working for the Treasury Department to decide on such matters. In somewhat the same way, it is supposed to seem perfectly all right for some Army officers who work for Selective Service to establish regulations which determine the "sincerity" of conscientious objectors to war on the basis of a definition of "religion," or, more precisely, a definition of "religious training and belief." The pattern is a familiar one.

You *must*, the argument runs, have some kind of *controls*. So, if you want to give something away, you are supposed to give to a special kind of corporation; if you want to be a conscientious objector, you are supposed to join some organization—a religious organization—so you can wear some kind of badge, proving that you are the real thing. No place, here, for the "unsponsored interest, the unexploitable idiosyncrasy." The private individual, the personal conscience, barely exists.

Down in South Africa, they have something called "the pass laws." If you are a black man, you have to have a pass or they can put you in jail if you appear on the wrong side of town. You're not supposed to exist there without a pass. The fact that you're six feet tall, have a head, a trunk, and two arms and two legs—that isn't enough to give you the right to exist. You have to have a pass.

Maybe it will get that way here, after a while, if we keep insisting on having all these "controls."

The paragraph in the *Humanist* introduced an article by James T. Farrell, called "The writer and his Conscience." Mr. Farrell's point is that it's getting harder and harder for a writer to make a living without hitching himself to the commercial system. Everything must "sell," these days, and the writer may have to conform or go hungry. He describes what is happening:

We will be guilty of oversimplification if we state that writers necessarily tailor-make their work for possible television, film, and other subsidiary rewards. Some do. But more insidious is the change in taste, in perception, in the way life is seen and felt. Television, motion pictures, and Madison Avenue with its near-perfected techniques (that is, for its own purposes), have established the life and notions of what is called "glamor" as an ideal. Along with this, a changing and false image of human beings is accepted as true. Not only masses of people, but many with education and taste, are beginning to prefer falsified glamor to the more difficult effort sincerely to explore the nature of experience.

. . . Not deeds, not the desire to feel more in love than it can give, but the consumption of goods is becoming the end of romance. To be seen with a woman who is considered glamorous is usually more important than to be in love with her. Romantic living is largely the life of consumption, a swimming pool on the estate, gadgets, fast cars, a hotel in India or in Istanbul which could be transported into the heart of New York, a life which in many ways imitates the banal idealization of life in so many movies, television plays and inferior novels. To have a thrill and to get a kick seem to be taking the place of experiencing worthwhile emotions. To my mind, there is no doubt that these developments mean that there are changes in the interior life of people.

These vulgar conceptions of the "good life" have always been around, but now, as the *Humanist* says, they are poured at you wherever you go. They have been made "official" by mass production. Pertinently, Mr. Farrell asks:

In what way is the quality, variety, calibre of a culture bound up with the fate and survival of a society? Both we and life change day by day. As this happens, we should try to know a little more clearly, where we are going. And where are we going insofar as the life of feeling, sensibility and thought is concerned?

Well, it seems to us that the packaged vulgarity of our time—the identification of glamor and romance with the marks and labels of conspicuous consumption—is all of a piece with the insistence on "controls," the identification of religion by government bureau, the requirement of conformity for the purposes of "regulation." It goes deep, this disease of which modern advertising is only a superficial—if omnipresent—symptom.