From time to time THE LAUCKS FOUNDATION calls attention to published material that might contribute toward clarification or understanding of critical issues affecting world peace. The accompanying reprints constitute Mailing No. 10.

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Of several minds: *John Garvey*

CAESAR IN OUR FUTURE?

SECULARIZATION & THE LAW

AT ONE LEVEL there is no argument. The Marxist and the philosophical anarchist and the socialist and the Republican all agree that without some commonly established way of arriving at social order people will suffer even more than they ordinarily do. If law is defined simply as the way order is achieved, everyone is for it. But in our time the nation-state—whatever its ideological cast—has the final word where law is concerned. This is not the only conceivable way: in ancient Celtic societies, for example, the judiciary was not a function of the central governing authority; instead, contending parties agreed on the choice of a judge whose word would be final. Wisdom and fairness, not state appointment, were the criteria by which a man was accepted as a judge.

There is an ambiguity about the word "law." To one set of people it means the way in which any given society agrees to order itself, and it is hard to argue with such a sunny definition, which puts community and agreement at the center. Another use of the word is not so benign. For many people law is identified with coercion, which is, in this view, law's bottom line: look at what happens to you if you do not obey, if you do not fit in, if you are vagrant or strange. The way law affects the poor, the "least of the brethren," is in Christian terms law's judgment of itself. There is a necessary tension between the definitions. The generous and optimistic definition is based on recognition of an obvious need to acknowledge and pay reverence to the idea of communal obligation, to put that idea into a form which binds us to one another, and—especially in our age—to state an alternative to the individualism which leaves each of us finally abandoned.

What law means should not be seen too easily. Antigone confronts Creon, who insists that her rebel brother's body must not be given reverence: he must be a sign to the community of the peril involved when one transgresses the community will, or at least the will of the community's representatives. Antigone knows a higher reverence, and will honor her brother's body even if it means death.

Antigone is, in communal terms, a moral absolutist and quite unreasonable. But in the ceremony of tragedy she is honored communally. A reasonable community has some mental room for what it cannot bring itself to accept in ordinary practice: the unjust king recognizes the authority of the prophet, even while plotting the prophet's death. A complacent ecclesiastical official recognizes the authority of Francis of Assisi's witness, and wishes it weren't so. The old line about hypocrisy being the tribute vice pays to virtue is built into the operation of a reasonable society, and into the way that society will regard law and the limits of law.

Few people would mourn the passing of the order which mingled the spiritual and temporal too casually, reducing problems of spirituality and collective order to religious and civic administration. The separation of church and state is certainly good for the church, which for too long, from Constantine through Torquemada to Cromwell, enjoyed the use of a weapon which it should have foresworn for the sake of the Gospel. The willingness of Christians to use coercion has been seen in all its ugliness only with

the triumph of a society in which Christianity is far from being a self-evident good. All of the social props had to be kicked out from under Christendom for Christianity to learn an essential lesson about itself: there are some things it must not depend on. (Dorothy Day has said that the taking of the papal states by Italian revolutionaries was an act of Divine Providence.)

But the vanishing of the mingled church and state, which followed the Renaissance and Enlightenment, left Western society with no basis other than democratic consensus or some form of despotism, or something in between, for arriving at binding decisions. These forms make as much practical sense as any, and passing of the old forms is not to be mourned, from either a religious or political perspective, by anyone who appreciates the wonderful way democracy has had of keeping despots out of power. But this victory over tyranny had an odd side-effect: when a sense of the transcendent was shifted from the collective to the individual level, it began to be seen as a subjective thing, as if collective agreement made for truth, and as if a sense of the transcendent—dumbed down to a taste for religion—were something like a preference for chocolate.

The danger which accompanied the rise of Christendom (Christianity supported by the power of the state) has become clear to us: few people can be found who would defend the Inquisition, the Crusades, or the use of excommunication as a political tool. But there are dangers in the shrinking of religion to the level of the individual, and in our century the social consequences of the loss of a transcendent sense of life has already begun to make the Inquisition look paltry. With the disenthronement of the authorities who claimed to be able to interpret and enforce the divine plan, we came to assume in practice that there is no transcendent meaning; or if there is, it is beyond social consideration. Perhaps a consideration of the possibility of this meaning may be entertained by individuals and communities, but it is considered dangerous when their search, with all of its unsettling results, begins to touch the larger society.

There was a time when those who opposed slavery were considered religious fanatics. This was the case with Quakers during our own colonial era, and the Quakers were considered downright seditious when they opposed participation in the revolutionary war. The opposition of abolitionists to slavery was often seen as a sectarian thing, as the opposition to abortion is today. Yet in the cases of war, slavery, capital punishment, and abortion we reach the place at which religion and civic order necessarily touch one another. Unlike the regulation of traffic or the rate of taxation, these issues are directly related to what we believe about life, its source, end, and meaning.

This is where secularization poses its major problems. Here a rough but necessary generalization must be made: where meaning is concerned we are faced with two possibilities. The first is that there is no intended pattern to things other than the one we intend; meaning and purpose are things we read into the universe, putting them there, like arbitrary signposts, in an attempt to make sense of our lives. If we are alone in this sense, if meaning is only a symptom of humanity and not something which includes and transcends us, the rules are ours to determine and write out, according to our own best lights. There is nothing beyond practical detail to trip us up.

The other possibility is that there is a pattern intended, and a reality beyond us, a reality which is in some ways beyond our knowing, which nevertheless has a claim on us. In this case we cannot simply define the way we will take; our work will instead be one of discovery and attention, a much more delicate thing than rule-making (or rule-obeying).

The assumption of secularity is that the belief in a meaning beyond human definition is (a) nonsensical; or (b) if reasonable, beyond the possibility of decent articulation, where that articulation is likely to lead to enforcement, since enforcement has in the past led to a denial of values which are central to decent society. There is clearly a world of ideological difference between (a) and (b), but they might look the same in practice, a fact which defenders of any totalitarian ideology or theocracy fail to see—a Khomeini or an orthodox member of the Communist party can see only weakness or waffling in the tolerance of diverse views. There is this difference, though, between (a) and (b). View (a) tends towards an optimistic view of law; enshrining human definition as it does, it is limitless. View (b), accepting the radical limit of human speech and definition, and allowing for a slow, extra-legal process of social growth, involving both individual and communal insight, has a built-in appreciation of limitation, contingency, and precariousness.

Law is becoming our culture. If it is good, a common opinion has it, it should be legislated. If it is bad, it should be forbidden under the law. This is one result of the reduction of questions involving spiritual and moral values to the subjective level: they must one way or another be dealt with communally, and law is our common language.

Lacking symbols of authority, we ask the state to fill a void it cannot fill. Even the word "authority" has narrowed for us to its ugliest dimension, leaving behind its deeper associations of responsibility, stewardship, and wisdom. No human being or set of laws can adequately fill out a symbol. But because we have lost our sense of the symbolic, while retaining a natural need for a world informed by symbols, we act unwisely. Every four years Americans are led to believe that they may elect the Messiah—this is what the public relations front-men want, anyway—and some people are really disappointed when the water isn't changed to wine after all. A secular view of law which takes as its base the radical limits of law and human definition can serve us, but it will reveal what law cannot do, and it will leave us facing questions for which our culture has no answer. There is a void, a collective and cultural void as well as an individual one, which will be filled. It is easier, emotionally, to ask law to deliver us from our deepening boredom and restlessness. The problem of secularization is that it could lead to a genuinely godless society, and a society which does not know how to render anything to God will finally render everything to Caesar. JOHN GARVEY

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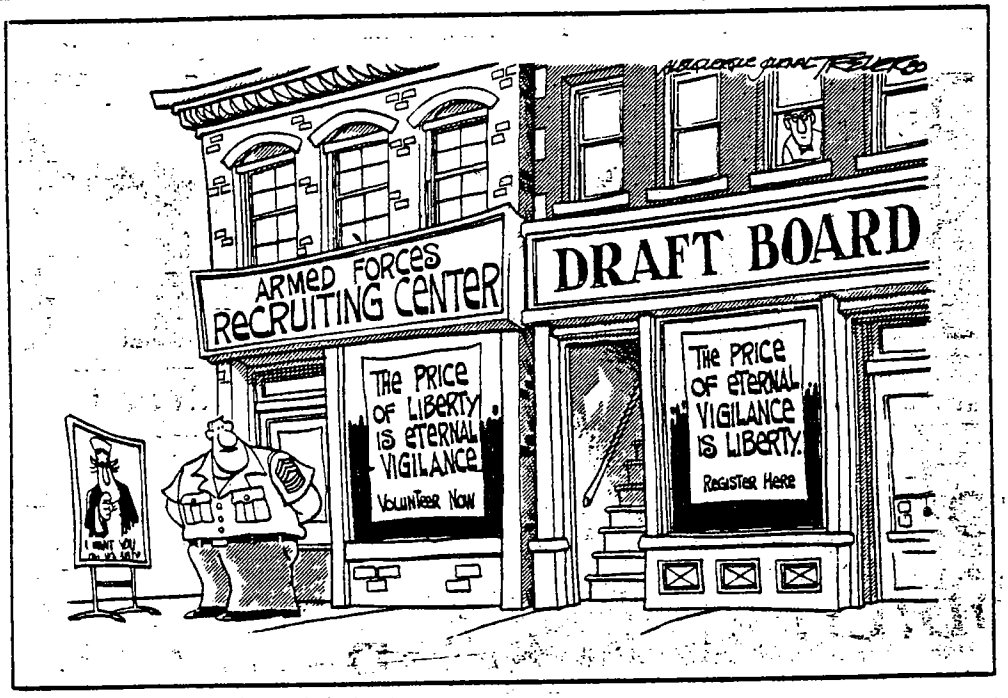
PAPA

I think I feel a draft

Minneapolis



ONE PROBLEM we noticed about the old Selective Service was that it was so selective. It had a way of selecting those who couldn't afford college. As a result young black men bore more than their proportionate share of the casualties in Vietnam.

The all-volunteer Army and the abolition of the draft were supposed to be a fairer system for defending our country, but now it turns out that the people who are being trained to fight and die for us are, more than ever before, poor and colored. The Army is now 36 per cent black, and if trends continue, it will be 42 per cent black within three years. White youths have more options, and volunteering for military service is not a favorite option with many of them. The military has tried to persuade them, but soldiering can't be sold like toothpaste.

This is just one reason that is causing a reevaluation of the volunteer Army now. And making some of us squirm. After all, only the draft was abolished, not the Army. Despite our best wishful thinking, there's still a legitimate defense need for an Army and somebody's going to be in it. If not our sons, then whose? We reject the idea of risking our sons' lives to defend our oil interests, but can we accept somebody else's volunteer son's life being risked for the same cause?

Because of this, the draft is now — ironically — being proposed as the fairer method of staffing the military.

Among those arguing for a return to the draft is a former stage manager for one of America's longest running shows, "Light at the End of the Tunnel" — General William C. Westmoreland, former Army Chief of Staff and commander of our forces in Vietnam.

In terminating the draft, America told its youth they had no obligations, he said in a recent interview with *U.S. News and World Report*. "The idea of rights of citizenship has been overemphasized to the point where we have eclipsed the duties of citizenship," he said. "Rights, rights, rights — that's all we've heard about the last decade. We've heard nothing about duties, nothing about responsibilities of citizenship."

Good Southern gentleman that he is, Westmoreland would not extend the responsibilities of citizenship to us womenfolk. Why, there are enough (six per cent) women in the armed forces now, says the general, and recruitment of them "already has gone beyond the point of diminishing returns."

Despite this questionable chivalry, the general may have a point about the duties of citizenship. But we must at the same time remind him that many who fought to end the draft were also exercising their responsibilities as citizens. They were unwilling to assent passively to an unjust war.

Better than the general's recommendation that we simply return to the good old Selective Service system is the idea of a National Youth Service put forth by California Republican Congressman Paul McCloskey Jr.

McCloskey, an ex-Marine, also has doubts about the all-volunteer Army. "I think the country is far better served by an Army, in times of peace, of reluctant citizen soldiers," he has said. "There is a great benefit in having a reservoir of ex-military men (sic) who will carry to their grave a very deep skepticism of what admirals and generals may advise is the means and necessity of keeping the peace."

The National Service Act would provide that *all* 18-year-olds would be required to select one of four ways in which to serve their country:

— Two years of military service, which would entitle them to four years of educational and training benefits.

— Six months of active military duty followed by five and a half years of military reserve duty.

— One year of service in a civilian capacity, which would enable them to choose from a wide range of community service projects or environmental projects.

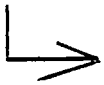
— Opting not to serve in any of the above ways, thereby becoming eligible for the draft — but a draft that would be activated only if there were not enough volunteers.

All service could be delayed until a person's 23rd birthday.

This, according to McCloskey, is the fairest way to spread the obligation of protecting our country. Those who doubt the legitimacy of a military action would not have to prove that they were conscientious objectors. They could just elect a year of humanitarian service.

Of course, such a plan is a restriction on young people's freedom, but the restriction applies to all young people, not just the underclasses or the unlucky. And not just the males.

A definite benefit of this bill is that it would require, for the first time, young women to plan their lives to include service to their country. Westmoreland and a lot of other people will not regard this as a step forward, but women have something to gain. They would gain extra time to mature, time that might also involve learning new skills, traveling, meeting new people. By serving their country equally, women would undercut arguments later in their lives that somehow their rights as citizens



can be diminished. They will have paid their dues the same as the men.

If the burden of defense could be shared more equitably — by the middle-aged as well as the young — perhaps there would be less inclination to regard those who do volunteer for the Army as "those poor suckers."

As McCloskey has written, "The key to the problem, again, is restoration of the concept that the privilege of U.S. citizenship justifies a universal duty of service to the nation in one's youth. Once this concept of duty — currently a casualty of the Vietnam war — is restored, once it is accepted that the purpose of that service is to *defend* the country, not to invade foreign nations, the National Youth Service alternative may well prove the best way we have to both provide a quality and respected military force, yet also meet the aspirations of our young people who wish to serve the country or their community in an humanitarian capacity. Once the duty is a duty shared by all, that duty will merit its own respect. Once the duty is accepted, in my judgment, enough 18-year-olds may volunteer so that *no one* need be drafted."

McCloskey may be too optimistic, but his ideas deserve our attention and discussion.

— Mary Bader Papa

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Of several minds: *Abigail McCarthy*

THE IDEAL & THE ISSUE

FACING REALITY IN HELPING FAMILIES

THERE WAS an element of desperation in the protest of the presidential candidate's wife to the trendy young woman interviewing her. "You don't understand my life at all! You can't seem to understand it. I can understand yours because I know so many young people, but you don't understand mine." Barbara Bush, wife of the Republican contender for the presidential nomination, was reacting with near exasperation to the reporter's persistent and repetitious questioning of what people today call her "lifestyle."

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What couldn't the interviewer understand? That Mrs. Bush had married young, had been married to the same man for thirty-four years, that she had had no career other than wifehood, rearing her children and performing the civic and volunteer duties associated with marriage to a prominent man. And that, furthermore, she insisted that she was fulfilled by that career, and, more, had grown and developed in capability and independence as a result of it.

Odds are that the interviewer was being deliberately provocative. Surely she must have known that the role which Barbara Bush had accepted and enjoyed has been considered the normal role in the family for a woman throughout most of American history; that it is considered the ideal role by those who push for legislation to strengthen and support the family in our culture. And yet—one realized it with a start—Mrs. Bush *is* almost unique in her experience among this year's presidential candidates' wives. Even Rosalynn Carter has, as she puts it, "always worked"—in the family businesses, it is true, but still outside the home. For varied reasons other wives have been so troubled in the role that they have had to resort to extreme measures to recover from alcoholism. Still others are the second wives of divorced men and were career women before their marriages. One former candidate has no wife at all. Thus, the projection of family life in America at the highest and most visible level is no longer that of the enduring monogamous family with the father as breadwinner, mother as homemaker. Men presenting themselves as choices for the presidency include those with troubled families, those who are divorced, those who prefer an alternative "lifestyle." The fact that this inclusion is made with so little offense to the national sensibilities shows how far we have come from what was once the national ideal. Do not misunderstand me. The ideal persists. For the majority, one suspects, it is still the ideal. But there are many, like the young reporter, to whom it is genuinely puzzling.

The presidential variations from the ideal are only the tip of the iceberg. Can we then base our plans for public policy and legislation on that ideal family? This is at the heart of the struggle for delegates in the three regional meetings which comprise the White House Conference on the Family this year. It may well be that they are right who feel, as do the American bishops, that the departure from what was the ideal norm stems from the fact that the family has not been properly sustained and nourished in public policy.

"The test of how we value the family is whether we are willing to foster, in government and business, in urban planning and farm policy, in education, health care, in the arts and sciences, in our total social and cultural environment, moral values which nourish the primary relationships of husbands, wives, and children and make authentic family life possible," says the administrative board of the United States Catholic Conference in listing the issues Catholics should consider in making choices in this campaign year of 1980. The conference sees a practical application of the ideal in programs and policies relating to housing, employment, food, education, health care, human rights, and the family farm.

"Families, especially those whose influence is lessened by poverty, or social status, must be allowed their rightful input in these decisions which affect their daily lives," the statement continues.

Well and good. But the underlying assumption that family policy deals with the whole, unbroken and permanent family is making political choice difficult. (One has the sad feeling that to attain or to restore the ideal—"to nourish the primary relationships of husbands, wives, and children," to make "authentic family life" possible, we would have to step back a hundred years in time and begin again.) What of other families—families which are not even given the dignity of definition in this formulation? Must we not deal with what *is*?

Margaret Adams, senior national affairs editor of a family magazine, testifying at the preliminary hearings of the Pennsylvania Forum on Families gives dimension to the problem by explaining her personal situation. A woman of 55, she works as much because she *must*, she says, as because she enjoys working, in order to support her two fatherless sons "who have been twice bereft of their father's presence within their once ideal family existence—first through divorce, and, shortly thereafter, because of his death." In addition, because of the earlier deaths of a brother and sister, she finds herself the one remaining child of aging parents. These parents, entering their eighties, have nine grandchildren in three single-parented families. They find themselves called upon for emotional and financial assistance, and part-time child care as well, in a decade of their lives in which, according to the ideal and the words of scripture, they should have been able to count the blessings of children and children's children.

In addition to the strain of this situation, Margaret Adams and her parents are anguished by the knowledge "that the children of the broken homes of today will be hard-put to establish traditionally stable, well-balanced families tomorrow." There is further anguish in knowing that these children find themselves "scarred by the subtle mark of *inferiority* that a tradition-bound society inflicts upon *all* children who, quite naturally through death, have one parent or none, or through divorce, have 'non-traditional' parents to see them through their childhood or early adulthood." Single parents—often made so by cruel circumstance—work as hard as traditional parents to rear their children in dignity and decency. They need child-care centers, tax relief, part-time and flexi-time working hours, community centers for after-school recreation, scholarships, and safer, better schools and better programs for the aged for whom they are also responsible.

The fear is, of course, that we are breeding people who, like Mrs. Bush's trendy interviewer, no longer value the traditional or understand it. Agreed, we have come a startlingly long way from the ideal—so far that there are many who do not accept it as the ideal. But political choice must be made on the basis of practical reality and justice for all—that is, for each and every person whatever his or her family constellation. Everyone belongs to the human family—the family of God.

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

Repressing the Reality of Failure

By Not Accepting Responsibility for Its Actions the U.S. Is Courting Grave Danger

By WILLIAM PFAFF

There has been something very odd indeed about American conduct in recent days. The fiasco of American policy and of American arms in Iran seems no longer of interest. Since the failure to rescue the American hostages, the New York Stock Exchange has gone up, interest rates have come down, President Carter's popular approval has risen, he has continued to win primaries and confound Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, and everyone has congratulated the commandos on their bravery. The main controversies have concerned Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance's resignation, the fight between him and presidential adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski and by how much the military budget now should be increased.

This represents collective repression, on a truly grand scale, of unacceptable reality—the reality of failure. But as Sigmund Freud observed, the repressed returns. It frequently does so by producing inappropriate and irresponsible behavior in matters that have no apparent connection with the unpleasant experiences whose acknowledgement is repressed. The potential for dangerous miscalculation thus exists in the United States today quite as much as in the Soviet Union.

It certainly exists now in Moscow. The American failure has been destabilizing because it weakens the position of the United States with respect to the Soviet Union. It invites miscalculation. There is far more risk to the world in Soviet miscalculation than in deliberate Soviet aggression. The policy of the Kremlin is not made by gamblers. But on a number of occasions the Soviet leadership has made very stupid errors as a result of mistaken, or ideologically misguided, assessements of the opposition. Among these errors were the attack on Finland in 1939, the refusal to acknowledge the scale of the German threat in 1940 and 1941, consent for the North Korean attack upon South Korea in 1950—and, it may eventually prove, the present invasion of Afghanistan. One of those errors nearly lost World War II to the Nazis. Another, Korea, militarized the Cold War with effects to this day. We did not need a third miscalculation about what the United States might do, if hard enough pressed.

Something like this repression occurred in the United States at the end of the Vietnam War. The removal of American troops from Vietnam was taken as some kind of success, while the errors that had put them there, the failures that caused them to be removed and the fiasco that followed in Vietnam—and the calamity in Cambodia—were treated as if they had little to do with America.

The other response to Vietnam at that time was, of course, the one that said the United States was guilty of every crime and failure, an evil country—which was simply another exculpatory fantasy, since to allege absolute evil is to renounce responsibility. A little of this can also be seen in the Iranian affair. Some Americans, a minority, seem willing to blame the United States for all that has happened to Iran, as if the shah, his secret police and the hundreds of thousands who once cheered him in the streets of Tehran were not Iranians. The Iranians themselves currently act as if they bear no responsibility for their own national past—it was all done by the CIA.

But a certain amount of ideological intoxication and delusion is inevitable in a revolution, and one day the crowds in Tehran will grow tired and the simple tasks of existence, of jobs, food and security, will impose change. There is no excuse, and a great deal of danger, however, when U.S. policy is made in an atmosphere that disguises failure.

The fact of failure needs to be acknowledged as an act of realism and a means to change. Instead of Cyrus Vance resigning, the secretary of defense or the chief of staff and the men who planned and commanded the raid should have resigned. The indispensable principle of military command is responsibility. You succeed or you get out. That seems no longer to be true in the United States. Equipment failure is not an excuse. It should have been foreseen and allowed for. Comparable Israeli operations, over shorter distances, have made use of a reserve of four times the number of needed helicopters. Blaming the military budget, as commentators George Will and William Buckley have done, is ridiculous. On a $118 billion defense budget in 1979, the American military services could reasonably be expected to produce six functioning helicopters—or even two dozen.

This is not said to lay the blame exclusively on the military men. The Nixon and Ford administrations, as well as the Carter Administration, created the situation by which the United States has been reduced to its present plight. There is blame enough to go around. But it is time for people to take that blame, quit or be fired, reorganize and re-think, forget about public relations, politics and their press image, be serious—be responsible. □

William Pfaff is the author of several books, including "Condemned to Freedom."

MANAS

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THE FORMATION OF VIEWS

HOW do people change their opinions? No one who has worked for a while for some good but unappreciated cause fails to wonder about the answer to this question. There are callings in life that depend upon finding at least partial answers. Merchants with goods to sell and advertising men with over-stocked clients devote much attention to the art of shaping people's desires or likings. Politicians practice a similar art with more or less success. The more money a candidate has, the better his chance to win an election. This means simply that, up to a point, opinions are purchasable. But these opinions are, by definition, low grade. A brief comment would be: "Is that any way to build a good society?" And the inevitable answer: "Well, no, but we do it because we have to."

The argument shouldn't stop right there, but it usually does.

A more basic approach might begin with asking: How are opinions formed in the first place? They are formed in response to experience. Take the angers and vengeful intentions which lie behind war and revolution. These feelings have causes which are either direct or indirect (often fabricated). People suffer hurt or injustice and are aroused to militant action. In the case of the colonization of Africa, as Norman Angell pointed out in one of his books, the "natives" at first decided that white men were abusing them, so they set out to kill the whites. But then they began to realize that there are different kinds of whites—French and German and English. So their anger was better focused, but still terrible mistakes occurred. They sometimes killed their best friends, not knowing that some Englishmen, say, were trying their best to repair the wrongs of colonization. People learn from experience, and then, after more experience, they learn to change their ideas. But when they are enraged, mistakes don't matter to them. It takes a lot of experience to alter the thinking of outraged human beings. The pressures have to be somewhat relieved to give time and opportunity for reflective judgment. Education is needed, but the only education that works involves more than the manipulation of symbols. Symbols are capsules which abstract from experience; they don't have the impact of what happens to us in everyday life.

Symbols are also the tools of propagandists, and can be made to distort or replace experience. This partisan education through symbols is worse than natural ignorance, since it produces what Plato called "double ignorance"—thinking you know when you don't.

An aspect of this problem is considered by Philip Morrison, a theoretical astrophysicist at M.I.T., in an interview with Susan Fairclough, printed in *Technology Review* for last November. Morrison is a member of the Boston Study Group, whose *The Price of Defense* was published in 1979. Questioned by the interviewer about post-war public opinion, he said:

> I think that the American experience in World War II was very unfortunate from the standpoint of the post-war world. Americans didn't encounter war at all in America. That gave them a very unsatisfactory view of what warfare is like.
>
> *Fairclough*: Do you think it's part of human nature to have wars?
>
> *Morrison*: Well, it's certainly in the nature of our societies to have war. I don't know that it's in people's nature. War was not a concept among the Eskimos—they were rather surprised by it. They knew about murder; they didn't know about war. They couldn't, because war would mean losing the game animals, thus making Eskimo society very difficult to maintain. Human nature is a plastic and malleable thing. I impute human nature to society. Murders are going to happen among people, as well as bad temper and so on. But war is none of those things. . . .
>
> The trouble is that there isn't enough direct experience, especially in these rather subtle matters like international relations. That's the hardest problem—that societies have means of interacting now which are just not within the experience of the average person. So he or she can only form a very vague understanding of what these interactions mean.
>
> *Fairclough*: Could the educational system help by integrating experience more with quantitative study?
>
> *Morrison*: Sure, it has to be done. It means that words and calculations and diagrams and memorizing the principles of physics have too great an emphasis compared to the actual experience of what all these things mean. The schools should depend more heavily on real experience and less upon symbolic experience.
>
> It's a very clear historical development. When the average family was a farm family, people had plenty of material experience. They knew about life and death, the growing of seeds, and the weather; the environment was very rich. But what they didn't have was a big flow of symbols. So schools set out to rectify that. Let everyone learn to read and deal with symbols and see pictures of faraway places. Very sensible thing to do. But now it's caught up. Now the people in the city have no such experiences. They work in their houses or they go to an office. The environment is air-conditioned; the windows do not open. They rarely see the

moon or the stars or a horse or a cow. Some think milk comes from bottles in the supermarket. And they have a flood of images: thick newspapers every day, television, and a computer that tells them what to do at work.

Asked what might be done to improve our understanding of national defense, Prof. Morrison said:

I have no special prescription for that—it's obvious there has to be a change in public opinion. That means newspaper editorials, letters to congressmen, organizations, city councils, and a hundred different media saying, "Our resources are limited and we have too much in defense. We need to worry about the broad social health of the country more than a military threat; and indeed our own military is becoming as serious a threat as anybody else's."

This is what *The Price of Defense* contends. Explaining, Morrison said:

In short, you can say the arms race is itself a danger, entirely apart from "the enemy." Up until now, people have only considered the enemy to be a problem; but eventually it's clear that the arms race will be the main problem. There's some transition point; we argue that we're past that point.

The weapons we invent are more likely to destroy us all than vanquish the enemy for several different reasons: first, just by the unprecedented physical damage in nuclear war; second, by the fact that they push an enemy to develop still more; third, by the fact that they induce a lack of reason in the apprehensive opposition, who may become frightened and lose control. The history of previous wars, which were not as cataclysmic as this one would be, shows very clearly: to induce fear is the worst possible way of averting a conflict.

In addition, there is the temptation to intervene, which we had in Vietnam. We can't end that possibility because Americans have such power that even a small fraction of our force is large compared to that of a quite respectable military power. But by reducing our force to something commensurate with our problems, at least you inhibit intervention.

Philip Morrison knows something about nuclear physics and weapons. During the war he was a member of the Manhattan Project, which developed the atom bomb, and ever since he has been campaigning for moderation in U.S. military commitment. His logic seems sound enough, as far as it goes, and his influence may persuade a number of people to change or modify their opinions. But it is hardly necessary to point out that his argument, as developed above, based on some thirty years of thinking—for him an intense sort of experience—is self-evidently valid only for people of similar intelligence. Some ideas, if inherently reasonable, are widely transferable; others are not, because they are too abstract, not enough related to experience people are familiar with.

What can we do about that? Not much. Needed is the kind of maturity of mind that Prof. Morrison and a few others have developed, but maturity is not something we know how to teach. Yet we have to try. As he says, "Sure, it has to be done." But he knows and we know that it won't get done in a hurry.

There is another thing we can attempt. Grasping Prof. Morrison's reasoning to show that the arms race itself is more dangerous than "the enemy" requires fairly sophisticated thinking: call it, then, the educational "growth" solution for the threat of military giantism. But there is also a "design" solution, actually a page out of Schumacher's book. If we're small—or comparatively small—we won't, as Morrison says, be tempted into casual wars of intervention. If we could be very small, we'd be like the Eskimos and not even know about war. But then, of course, someone will remind us that the Eskimos, being innocent of war, had no defense against the white men who came their way, looking for furs and other items that might be saleable in New York and London.

So how does one really change people's opinions? And, at the same time, how do you get people *not* to try to change the opinions of other people like the Eskimos?

At this point it becomes necessary to divide the problem up. Considering populations as totals, the matter is really hopeless—that is, hopeless unless you have in mind the persuasions of a Genghis Khan, the Conquistadores, a Hitler, a Stalin, or a nuclear warhead. You work up your case for a changed opinion—about, say, war and national defense—and then, as they said on Madison Avenue twenty-five years ago, you run it up on the flagpole to see who salutes. Which flagpole? The *Reader's Digest*? The *Atlantic* or *Harper's*? The *New York Times*? The *Saturday Review*? The *Nation*? The *Progressive*?

The more carefully you think about the paper in which your finely-drawn argument has a chance of appearing, the more the possibility of wide circulation goes down. A mass audience is not an audience that responds well to abstractly reasoned appeal, however articulate. You could say that the more real sense in your argument, the fewer the people you will be able to talk to with persuasive effect. Really good thinkers need the collaboration of pressures from history to get their points across. Tom Paine had the redcoats on our shores, and he won a big audience, but see what happened to him after freedom was won. Paine was one more victim of business as usual. The help from history was gone. And see what happened to Gandhi, who made a big dent in Indian history when one of its accidents split open a vista to his vision. But then, after Indian independence, the avenue to vision was closed.

It all seems quite discouraging. Do we expect too much of human beings? But what do we know, really, about the achievement and consolidation of human progress? Is there any sort of "rate"? If we have the idea that we ought to work to spread around good ideas, and in this way alter public opinion, wouldn't it be best to know more about what we are up against by having a better understanding of human nature? For example, would we obtain more patience for both others and ourselves if we shared with Ortega the idea that "at times what happens to man is nothing less than *ceasing to be man*." The Spanish philosopher continued:

And this is true not only abstractly and generically but it holds of our own individuality. Each one of us is always in danger of not being the unique and untransferable *self* which he is. The majority of men perpetually betray this self which is waiting to be; and to tell the whole truth, our personal individuality is a personage which is never completely realized, a stimulating Utopia, a secret legend, which each of us guards in the depths of his heart. It is thoroughly comprehensible that Pindar summarized his heroic ethics in the well-known imperative: "Become what you are."

People reach good opinions by a process that may not show at all. First, they change through some mysterious

THE FORMATION OF VIEWS

(Continued)

inner development by self-energized effort to gain maturity. What is maturity? It is finding the height at which good decisions are made. It is not this or that correct opinion, but a way of seeing. Mature people are people you can count on, and who, for the most part, don't need to change their ideas and opinions, because they know what they know, and when it comes to what they don't know, they know that they don't. This is far more important than having the right ideas!

Maslow said of his healthy (mature) subjects:

> In practically all of them, I found a rather good-humored rejection of the stupidities and imperfections of the culture with greater or lesser effort at improving it. They definitely showed an ability to fight it vigorously when they thought it necessary. . . . The mixture of varying proportions of affection or approval, and hostility and criticism indicated that they select from American culture what is good in it by their lights and reject what they think is bad in it. In a word, they weigh it, and judge it (by their own inner criteria) and then make their own decisions. . . .
>
> For these and other reasons they may be called autonomous, i.e., ruled by the laws of their own character rather than by the rules of society (insofar as these are different). It is in this sense that they are not only or merely Americans but also members at large of the human species.

Of them, then, it could perhaps be said that they have become what they are, in Pindar's sense. They are few, and have been called the Saving Remnant. From among them emerge the Lincolns, the Tolstoys, the Gandhis, the Simone Weils and the Jane Addamses. It is always this company which shapes the best thinking of the age—of any age—and which generates the conception of the Utopia in which others, in their best moments, participate, and hold and guard in the depths of their hearts.

But other lines of influence have had a larger part in producing the feelings and attitudes of Americans. In *The Quiet Crisis* (1963), a book written by Stewart Udall in the hope of generating better understanding of the care of the land, the landscape, and the whole natural environment, there is a passage about the Mountain Men of more than a hundred years ago. They became our folk heroes, the creators of Western tradition—starting with Daniel Boone, Kit Carson, Jim Bridger, and Jed Smith—men whose daring, bravery, and toughness made a legend of the American frontier. Udall says:

> None of the mountain men got rich trapping, and most died poor. Beaver plews sold for six dollars apiece in peak years, and a good trapper could make one thousand dollars a season. But at the summer rendezvous the fur companies charged outrageous prices for supplies hauled in from St. Louis, and most of the time the trappers decided to stay on another year in the high country and hope for a bumper harvest. A few cleaned up, and John Jacob Astor, running part of the show from back East, became the richest man in America because he knew how to organize the extermination of the beaver. . . .
>
> The trappers' raid on the beaver was a harbinger of things to come. The undisciplined creed of reckless individualism became the code of those who later used a higher technology to raid our resources systematically. The spiritual sons of the mountain men were the men of the next wave—the skin-and-scoot market hunters, the cut-and-get-out lumbermen, the cattle barons whose herds grazed the plains bare.
>
> It is neither fair nor quite true to say that the tradition of thoughtless land exploitation started with the mountain men, but certainly part of it can be traced to them. Leatherstocking, James Fenimore Cooper's idealized frontiersman, found God in the trees and water and the breath of summer air; but the true-life mountain man made his demands on America's abundance without thought, without thanks, and without veneration for living things. These men embodied, as few others have, one facet of the self-reliance of which Emerson later wrote, but they wholly lacked the self-discipline which alone gave it grace and meaning.
>
> In all this the circular process of history was at work. The land was determining the character of the men who, in turn, were determining the future of the land itself. The result of this interaction was the clearest possible example of the American ambivalence toward the land that continues to dominate our relationship to the continent and its resources. It is a combination of a love for the land and the practical urge to exploit it shortsightedly for profit.

These are some of our roots, better, most likely, than various others.

Today we are being pushed, almost against our will, in the direction of maturity. Nature herself is imposing a "design solution" of belt-tightening devices. The land is continuing the circular process of history, determining the future of the men and women who live in America by presenting circumstances under which discipline must be practiced, whether we like it or not. Some discoveries may be made. Quite a few may find that discipline is a good thing, better than rioting self-indulgence, and opinions may change as a result. Some maturity may emerge as a by-product, and be finally welcomed with thanks.

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