

# The Vanguard American

"All surrender to tyranny begins with self-corruption." — Mumford.

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## Crossroads

HOLGER J. KOCH.

While the thoughts contained in the following are to a certain extent occasioned by Enok Mortensen's critique of a previous article, it is not to be taken as a rebuttal in toto. While some of its elements have specific reference to the question under debate, others are simply a summing up of previously expressed thoughts or a further development of the ideas.

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In the face of E. M.'s contention that the folk-school is an accomplished fact in American society, and that it has acquired certain characteristics of thought and method appropriate to the desired objectives, I have no choice but to forego the use of the appellation in connection with the objectives I have in mind. This is, in a manner of speaking, a relief. For while the word "folk" is phonetically reminiscent of the Danish "Folk", it covers nowhere near the same conception of the people as a spiritual entity; it also has a tendency to place the school within a limited area of the people as, for instance, "rural", "workers", "common", etc. which is extremely unfortunate in my opinion; unless, of course, this expresses the school's attitude. In that case the school becomes essentially a form of social service and has little in common with the Danish movement.

The reason I feel that our thinking and efforts, as regards a "school", should be dissociated from the economic problems of existence, springs as a matter of necessity from the realization that the only logical line of further human evolution lies definitely within the realms of the spirit. Man may be "soul and body", but certainly not on equal terms. Man is man only because of his spiritual nature; because he has mind and conscience; because he can reject the physical imperative inherent in his body, and let his actions be governed by moral laws and principles never perceived, or even vaguely devined, by his senses. His evolution as a moral being will be predicated, NOT on

the closer unity of his soul and body, but on their further separation.

In scientific jargon: man's physical evolution has reached its goal. He has evolved a mind which makes bigger and better biceps unnecessary. His dominance over his environment has reached the point where he is in far greater danger of destruction by his own technical inventions than by the aberrations of the elements. And while he still fails to make the earth's abundance available to ALL his fellows in complete equity, the reason is no longer that of physical impotence, but entirely of moral laxity. He is physically able to supply every member of his society with all the necessities required for healthy and efficient living. The trouble is that he persists in expressing his mental superiority by the ability to amass for himself a share of the common goods out of all proportion to his needs.

Nor will he be tricked or coerced out of this satisfaction by the inauguration of "just" economic systems or regulations. Any law that man can make, man can circumvent. By the same token it is obvious that the constant revolutions and reforms, peaceful or otherwise, by means of which the "under dog" becomes the upper dog, changes the situation not a whit, as it does nothing more than to shift the momentary dominance from one faction to another. The shifts, like the swells of the ocean, will go on forever without disturbing the MEAN level of morality. It is certainly not a despicable trait in us that we sympathize with the needy and the oppressed; where we miss the point is by dealing with the problem on the physical level only: the starving must be fed, the oppressed must be succored—and the thing goes on and on; with every wave crest a new trough appears.

It is a vicious circle but there is a way to break it. The way is to WITHDRAW from the economic tug-of-war. Do we feel that we must hang on to our end of the rope for

dear life or be dragged into the miseries of destitution? How do the "oppressors" feel?—that we are trying to drag them off the perch? Is it then any wonder we are all red in the face? What would happen should one of the factions lose interest in the whole thing? The other faction would take it all? Maybe, although nobody seems to be anxious over whatever nobody else wants. On the contrary: it is DEMAND that fixes value. If the "poor" should suddenly stop pulling—and by that I mean stop CRAVING things and stop envying those who have them—would not the "rich" go right on the back of their laps? If nobody envies you, what's the fun of eating off a gold plate?

Oversimplification? — Perhaps. "We have to live!" Or as one man at a church convention was heard to express it as he entered the dining hall after a protracted "spiritual" session: "Just the same, we can't live without this!" ("Det er alligevel det her vi skal leve af!") One man put it this way, "Man does not live by bread alone." Our glib rejoinder is: nor by the spirit alone. It sounds sensible. What bothers me is that within three years that man could find no possible way to stay alive without wounding his spirit. — So he died.

I see no hope for real gain in a continued tug-of-war. I see unlimited possibilities in an attitude that tests all activities by their bearing on man's moral and spiritual development. The greatest good of any deed is the effect it has on the doer. Righteousness is something we do, not something we demand. I feel so defeated by reading the story of crusading for social and economic "justice" in this country over the last hundred years. That "justice" is never something to be, to live, to pour out,—it is forever and always something that must be wrested from the "oppressors", the "capitalists", the "ruling classes"; by peaceful means if possible, by violence if necessary. Whatever the gain—it isn't worth the cost. The cost is not the scars received on the picket line; it is the scars on the souls of men who are taught to hate. Not all wealth in the world is worth that much; not even staying alive is worth that much.

If we are to have a school or the beginning of a new American national life which is anything more and better than what we have had, then we MUST break that vicious circle of self-interest. To me it is simply a matter of putting the horse before the cart. It seems obvious, that as long as we try to settle economic problems by making demands and then bargain for the most favorable settlement, the view opens upon nothing but endless squabbles, trickery, and ill-will. Should we on the other hand succeed in fostering a spirit of mutual responsibility, so that the primary concern of each individual and group is to see that the other fellow and the other group are properly cared for, we should have settled, once and for all, the whole troublesome question and be free to go on to more important matters of living. It seems simple enough for most malcontents to agree that the wealthy ought to adopt such an attitude of concern for the less fortunate but see no reason for the poor to feel a like concern for the rich. There may be cause to worry about the wealth of the rich and the privations of the poor; but the thing that appears really hopeless is the selfishness of both. I can't say which of the two has more of it; I only know that the one who first gives it up will be the ultimate winner of the contest.

The only way to stop a war—whether between neighbors or nations—is for one of the warring factions to quit fighting. At least I have never seen a quarrel brought to an end in any other way. That applies equally to friction between races and religions. We defeat an "enemy" and he is still an enemy; perhaps more so. But he can't be an enemy unless we accept him as such. If we stop thinking of him as an enemy, the war is all over. It takes two. Enmity can't be "fought out"; it has to be ignored. Race equality is established, not by those who fight for fairness and justice, but by those who refuse to admit the presence of a problem—by the "color blind". Only he, for whom a "problem" could not exist, aids in solving it. There is only one possible way to bring about justice and righteousness and mercy and brotherhood and that is to BE all these things. It is quite beyond our power to impose them on others.

Contrary to an understandable first impression, this attitude of withdrawing from the struggle for comfort, position, power or recognition, either for one's self or one's fellows, would not mean withdrawing from the most active participation in the life of the group or the people. It would, contrarywise, mean entering into this group-life where the need is greatest, the stakes highest, and the demand severest: wherever the group faces the moral choices that must be made. The need is greatest because, while we as a nation have reached an all time high in technical knowledge, initiative and efficiency, we waver and compromise when we have to make decisions on moral principle. We will not, for instance, face the race question, labor union dictatorship, pressure-group politics, etc. although the constitution is clear as are the principles involved. The fact that a firm stand for justice and righteousness is synonymous with political or social suicide is reason enough for refusing to speak out. We haven't the moral courage of our convictions. The same situation prevails, as every one knows, in all relationships and all departments of group-living. Little first-hand knowledge of human behavior is necessary to realize that the dry-rot of compromise and duplicity must have blighted a fearful number of human personalities which should have been guiding lights in the life of the race. Soil-conservation is fine, but how infinitely more we need soul-conservation! It is estimated that three million adults in this country permit their lives to be guided by the stars; — how many are guided by high moral principles? George Fox, Abraham Lincoln and Mahatma Gandhi have one thing in common — and it may be the very thing that made their names household words around the world: they couldn't be swayed. Humanity is begging for leaders of high moral principles—who can't be swayed!

Continuity is a fundamental principle of life, but when the American people a hundred years ago inaugurated a program of expansion, conquest, commerce, exploitation and mass production it broke with most of the moral principles which had guided the development of the people in the early years of its life. Abraham Lincoln stands like a tower of strength in that raging sea of ambition, greed and opportunism. A man who couldn't be bought or frightened. A man who had to satisfy his conscience before his cupidity. He stands out like a lone tree on a prairie landscape, not because of exceptional talents or a brilliant mind, but simply because he would retreat into the depths of his soul and come up with a moral principle in his hand

and never let go of it. There was throughout the people an undercurrent of belief in such principles, but they had little effect on the shaping and conduct of public policy. Gradually the more overt forms of conniving, piracy, and violence gave way to a "business-boosting" respectability which is still the norm for our national and individual behavior. It is a policy bereft of morality and vision and one that has no prerequisites for carrying the people or the world into a new day of genuine, peaceful, co-operation. There is no element within in that might function as the growing-point for a natural evolution into something of a higher moral order.

I see no chance of advancing now except through a break with the attitudes and philosophy which created this material and technical expansion. In my mind it is analogous to certain of nature's experiments which ended in impasses, dead-end streets, from which they could not be extricated and so were left to perish of their own inutility. (Dinosaurs, Mastodons etc.) I may be wrong, but that at least is my reason—and to me it seems adequate—for wishing that some movement within the people might break with the exterior past and its utilitarian philosophy, and inaugurate, or rather resume, man's moral development on a higher level. The race as such may have all the time in the world, but individually we have not. In my opinion this would not entail any form of monasticism—withdrawal from the world of action; although intolerance might, as it often has in the past, tend to drive such a movement into temporary isolation. Essentially it would mean focusing the attention on spiritual needs and objectives and letting all other matters fit themselves into the pattern as best they can. Man creates all his problems out of his own attitudes and aims. He stands in the center of his world, encompassed about by a maze of material and social problems issuing inevitably from his moral inadequacy to cope with an existence, toward which he is moving, demanding a high degree of personal righteousness while his body imperiously demands to have its wants satisfied without any quibbling about the morality of the means. To attack these problems from without, or without resolving the inner conflict which creates them, is a waste of effort, as the process must be repeated indefinitely. Only as the individual personality becomes morally and spiritually activated and ceases to be bewildered by conflicting demands of soul and body, the problems disappear. As the animal has no problems because its behavior is governed by its physical instincts alone, so moral man has none because his actions are governed by moral motivations alone.

Western civilization is faced with a choice which is pregnant with momentous consequences; broadly it is: which of two Jews to follow, Karl Marx or—Christ. Marx held that man's cultural, moral, and spiritual life has a MATERIAL BASIS and that it is economics which determines human history and evolution. Christ held that all life is MORAL and has a SPIRITUAL BASIS. The ultimate effect of Marx's philosophy is clearly observable in Russian communism: all values, moral and spiritual, are tested and determined by their economic usefulness. Truth, friendship, honesty, decency have no value in themselves but only as they further the ends of building the powerful economic state. (We do the Communists a certain injustice in ascribing what, by our standards, would be immoral and

despicable behavior to willful wickedness and malice. The reason is, perhaps, that if Marxianism is carried to its logical conclusion, such concepts as truthfulness, honesty, friendliness, etc. have no intrinsic meaning or value, but are "real" only as they are useful in a materialistic sense. When Communists distort the truth, ridicule and insult, murder with lies and stilettos, they are not really being "unfriendly", they don't "hate" us, they are merely doing the job at hand—stabilizing their political and economic position—with all the means at their disposal WHICH EXCLUDES NOTHING ON MORAL GROUNDS. If an "immoral" deed is economically unprofitable they wouldn't touch it. By way of "contrast", we suspect the Nazis of occasional brutality for the sadistic satisfaction it afforded them.)

The same Marxian philosophy is rapidly undermining our own society. Whether in high places or low, in Capitalism or Labor Unionism, wherever there is a tendency to let the end justify the means, the church of Marx moves like a mighty army—toward self-destruction.

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## Work

By HAROLD PETERSEN.  
(From the "Messenger")

There are two reasons why man works. The one is to make a living; the other is man's urge to create or to probe the mysteries of life in order to improve an imperfect world in which he lives. The one is for self preservation, the other is for perpetuation of life values.

Our age has come to view work as a curse. It will always be a curse when observed from a purely selfish and economic point of view. I grant that there have been many good reasons for strikes. There is no good reason why men have to sweat for a small wage while their employers become rich through their labor. But I believe it is time that we begin to realize that the present labor unrest is not altogether due to insufficient wages, for that complaint comes from too many who have no just reason for complaint. I think it can be said that no wage, however great, is sufficient when man's heart is not in his work. In other words, when labor means nothing more than a living—a pay check at the end of the week—it is dull, boring—a curse. Much labor in our huge mass productive system is monotonous because it is impersonal. Man is a mere cog in the machine. He may see the finished product in which he has made some small contribution but his own little part is lost in the huge corporation for which he works. He is there only because his little part means a living. Eight hour days can be long—even one hour of drudgery is long.

But this impersonal relationship to labor has crept into so many other fields where there should be less reason for it. The old country doctor who worked the full twenty-four hours of the day to care for a sick community is disappearing. The modern clinic closes at an early hour so that the doctor can go for his round of golf. Where is the farm hand who used to feel an interest in all the crops of the field which almost equalled his employer's? Where is the professor who after his round of classes led the Boy Scouts on a hike or led in some community work? Even ministers have their office hours and time schedules which provide for a daily nap and call for a late breakfast. To-

day a job has come to mean a pay check and the policy seems to be to get as much as possible for as little as possible.

This is not true when man sees in his labor something creative or when he labors because he desires to improve the general environment in which he lives. It is true that man will always be confronted with the necessity of making a living but it is also true that man's urge to perpetuate life values has often made him unmindful of his own economic security.

Thus the scientist probing the mysteries of the unknown, hoping to make some new discovery for the benefit of the human race, is in that envious position of being able to forget time or just how great or small his pay check may be. The farmer has often sold his product for a price so low that nothing was left to compensate him for his labor. And yet, he has experienced time and again the thrill of seeing a full crop mature which, more than money, paid for the sweat from the labor he had spent. Think of the pioneer building his log cabin or sod house and clearing a few acres of land every year. It meant long hours of hard work and no pay check to compensate him for his labor. Yet, he felt more like a king than the man who today rents for half share the best of America's rich farm land. There were many early American politicians who had the life and the future of America at heart and sought office neither for money nor fame. To them a bribe would have been a disgrace to the duty which they through their office rendered. There was the old town blacksmith, who, tired and dirty at the end of a hard day's work, still had time to fix some broken rod of a late arriver. The pastor traveled far and wide on foot or horseback; his salary was small and there are no records of complaint. It was not claimed then that small salaries kept men from going into the ministry. The teacher felt as if every child in her care was her own. She taught because she loved it. To break a contract or to strike would, a quarter of a century ago, have been considered a disgrace to the teaching profession.

What is wrong? Is it that we today are not living well? Our standard of living is higher than ever before. Do we all expect to be kings? Have we ceased to fight the powers that monopolize wealth and instead come to envy them their position? The more we individually seek to become rich, rich with as little work as possible, the poorer we become collectively. In spite of high incomes and a high standard of living, we are in America poorer collectively than we were twenty-five years ago. For we have lost our sense of belonging together, working together and sharing things together. We have lost sight of work being a "call." In our desire to get rich—or, at least, to get big pay checks—we have forgotten that life demands of us a work which cannot be paid in money but which will mark the happiness and welfare of those who live in the world with us and of those who shall live in the world after us. Work is, at best, not a curse; it is a blessing. But it will only become a blessing when we see in it more than our pay checks.

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"I do not believe that multiplication of wants, and machinery contributed to supply them, is taking the world a step nearer its goal. . . . I wholeheartedly detest this mad desire to destroy distance and time, to increase animal appetites and to get to the ends of the earth in search of their satisfaction." — M. K. Gandhi.

## Conscientious Objection

By ESTHER HARLAN.

The problem of conscientious objection to war (to all physical violence) is one facet of the increasing conviction that all human differences today belong wholly on the psychological level—a conviction marking as momentous a liberation for humanity as a whole as, for instance, was the transition from water-breathing to air-breathing (in its time) for all physical life; conviction that physical coercion is essentially a subhuman phase in our long evolutionary climb; that increased psychation-potential is our sharply differentiating human achievement—the realization of an emerging new-dimensional consciousness and experience. And the factual basis for this conviction is both illumining and reassuring—man is the only animal whose nerves of sensation do not end in the lower, oldest portion of the brain but go on through to the cerebrum or cortex where we do our thinking, where discretionary action is initiated. By reason of our actual physical construction, this evolving brain-tool built up fibre by fibre, infinitesimal nerve-cell by nerve-cell throughout eon on eon of subconscious effort and direction, we are now distinctively, irrevocably, thinking creatures. Potential dominance of our somatic impulses, habits, "laws," has been willy nilly so to speak thrust upon us as arbiters of our future, our own "fate." And "mightier than all the armies and evils of earth is an idea whose time has come."

William Harvey's announcement that his tests had established the fact of blood-circulation throughout the human body incited his medical colleagues (goaded by the discomfort of a radically new idea) to drastic physical assault. But are many of us really acting much more sensibly today? Why must we be so calamitously slow to realize the inevitable qualitative identity of all so-called "ends" and "means"? The sheer stupidity of "war to end war"! As well prattle of sweetening, de-brining, a quart of sea-water by overwhelming it with a gallon of **EXACTLY THE SAME STUFF!** For as a matter of plain demonstrable fact tested since the beginning of time in the laboratory of life, the "means" to an "end" must be invariably and throughout every step, of the very nature and essence of that proposed desired "end" in process; in every detail of method and process must be literally of the quality and substance of the goal, the ideal, in the making. For the only reality, the only "ultimate result", is the result experienced step by step, day by day, today, tomorrow and the day after in successive days and years and generations, each step itself of the very character and substance of the goal itself—this is the core of any sound psychology, fundamental in the essence of life itself.

In this perspective, the words "conscientious objection" or "non-violent-direct-action" are relevant and accurate, but the word "pacifism" essentially misrepresents and confuses the basic issue—occasionally even leading to such absurd discussions as re the "self-sacrifice" of a "pacifist" (by implication, some mere inert wooden-Indian sort of object practically inviting annihilation) if confronted by physical attack; and apparently on the further (equally unwarranted) assumption that physical violence on the

part of the "pacifist" would then save his own skin intact—which of course is ridiculous, contrary to fact. If an unscratched skin is indeed any "pacifist's" primary desideratum and criterion of values, he is still (consciously or unconsciously) paying psychological homage to the prime fetish of the status quo; he may be a "pacifist"—whatever that word may be supposed to mean; he is obviously not a thoroughly convinced conscientious objector to physical violence. Perhaps he may be regarded as merely mentally spastic?

Possibly a few quotations from some of Gandhi's experiences may not seem irrelevant on this side of the world? (Incidentally Gandhi never "preaches"—which is essentially passing over a problem to someone else to solve—he has never asked others to do anything he has not himself already tested by long experience—basing all his conclusions and statements on experiential proof.) "Non-violent resistance is by no means a passive state but on the contrary, is an intensely active attitude of mind and spirit—far more active than any kind of merely physical resistance could be, or any degree of violence" . . . "Terrorism and deception are not weapons of the strong and confident, but of the weak and confused—those who at bottom dare not trust completely to the justice of their own cause and the truth of their own motives" . . . "It is really from deep cowardice and fear that men take refuge in brute force—at heart distrusting their own inherent powers" . . . "In reality, an evil or unworthy action is a cry for help. A man who acts evilly is, as it were, at war with himself. To ignore his unworthiness and instead share with him your own kindness of heart, is like extending your hand to him to help him up out of a bog into which he is sinking" . . . "To try to remove (kill) my opponent is practically the same as admitting that I am powerless while he remains in opposition to me. But to refuse to resort to brute force (refuse to debase myself to the level of mere animal) and hold steadily to the truth that my opponent is mistaken and can not finally prevail against truth—this is making use of soul-force and is true manliness" . . . "Violence in any form or for any so-called 'reason' multiplies evil. To rely on soul-force (complete non-violence) means that you have counted the cost beforehand and will not fail yourself and your cause no matter what the cost" . . . "Quite often what in 'law' is a deliberate 'crime', yet my own intelligence and conscience tell me is, rather, the highest duty of every intelligent citizen" . . . "In the Empire of Non-violence every true thought has its value and its influence" . . . "Non-violence is in no sense a negative position, nor the weapon of a coward or a weakling. Only the strongest, those of unflinching will and self-control can make use of it. As one gradually outgrows and sloughs off threadbare materialistic ideas and standards, and becomes habituated on a new psychological level where intelligence outweighs iron and steel, one realizes more and more the powers inherent in one's own soul . . ." (What is this, indeed, but William James' longed for "moral substitute for war"?)

"There are different levels of self-understanding, and each has its own sincerity." Probably every conscientious objector to this war has made a different rationalization of his own initial action. By and large, probably they are all just average human beings (so were the men whose hands and feet froze at Valley Forge) but obviously at some level in some way, each conscientious objector has

sensed in some way the emotional urge, the psychic pressure, of this impending new-dimensional human achievement, experience, this "idea whose time has come," and hence has been impelled to assert his basic inalienable human right to be FULLY HUMAN. Whatever their differences, they are all at least of one mind in their refusal of war—refusal to be brow-beaten into mere mechanical slaughter of fellow humans. And hence, at least to the extent of their numbers, they thereby literally HAVE STOPPED WAR. What other way is there to stop all war?

And it must not be forgotten that many of the thousands of conscientious objectors in this country (more than 8,000) volunteered to work in mental hospitals (physically dangerous work in the most depressing surroundings) and in "guinea pig" experiments (subjected to heat, cold, high altitude and starvation tests, etc.) for the benefit of applied medical science. Also it must be remembered that (though under pressure) Congress specifically provided that all conscientious objectors were to be paid the equivalent of soldiers' base pay (while doing "work of national importance".) But because of opposition of military authorities (notably General Hershey) and the carelessness or ignorance or cowardice of the various so-called "historic peace churches" entrusted with the "welfare" of the camps, etc., to which conscientious objectors were assigned, no payment was ever made—not even compensation for injury, nor maintenance for dependents—resulting in literally slave labor. Naturally, there is grave apprehension that such "use of conscript labor on a national scale may be made to serve as a basis for the same treatment of any unpopular minority, or even all unemployed youth—literally fascist concentration camps." It requires mental endurance and courage of a high order on the part of conscientious objectors to combat this insidious evil that seems to be creeping into American ways; as a matter of fact it requires more courage to be a conscientious objector and face a hostile world, than to march off with comrades and music while crowds applaud.

But as Whitehead reminds us, "not only the dynamic of courage, but no less intellectual grasp based on a wide perspective regarding all casual factors" is a necessary element in the making of the kind of character that can, that must remake today's brutish stupidity of violence into a sane, truly HUMAN world. To have been the pioneers, the spearhead, in such an adventure—is no small matter.

And there is another aspect of the situation that should concern us all—is it fair to let the whole burden fall solely on men of draft age—chiefly those of the impressionable years of the late 'teens and early 20s? Why should not all of us who are opposed to human slaughter and appalled by the barbarities of the atomic bomb, take at least as definite a stand as Thoreau did when he refused to pay taxes to a government that used the money to protect slavery (return escaping slaves to their "owners," etc.) His going to prison in protest is still a "living" action. Why should not we all voice our protests clearly, continually (especially those of us who are advanced in years and of little use for any other sort of service) and act in accordance with our convictions? How else can the world-wide war-pattern be conquered for all humanity, unless enough of us raise our daily actions to the level of our highest vision and moral courage?

## Promises

By MABEL I. HOYT.

"A bad promise is better broken than kept"—an old saying but essentially true, whether it be between persons or nations—and treaties are broken and pacts discarded. Now, a month after New Year's resolutions are being kept or broken, we are reminded of the promise made at the beginning of the year when one made a promise that "he would never throw stones at whales"—so easily kept that it is reminiscent of others equally unimportant in one's life.

But Nature's promises are always fulfilled. "Men do not gather figs of thistles" is still true. Apple trees grow their own brand of apples and grape vines never fail to produce grapes.

Trees grow leaves, each after its own kind. Even now when snow covers the earth, the promise of leaves is in the buds that are swelling day after day—their fulfillment is sure. Many years ago a deadly frost killed all the new leaves and left the tree bare. Then an old, wise nurseryman told of latent buds that the trees provided. They never developed unless there was a need for them—and so it was last spring, when the blackened leaves fell and left the trees stripped of foliage; and then those waiting buds, like a miracle made foliage again.

Isn't it equally true of us as with trees: We have latent powers that lie dormant for long—until discovered by accident or a search. The promise is that if we use the knowledge we have it will grow and develop. Nature never fails to keep a promise of wealth or growth. So our Father never fails to give abundantly to those who will use the beginnings that are small but are their own—and it is equally true that what is given to one to do can never be done by any other and if neglected it will never be done—the loss will be personal and never fulfilled. Faith used always means growth.

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## Economy

By AAGE MØLLER.

Last issue of "IN FACT" informs me that the Justice Department is going to crack down on the nation's investment banks in order to get into the core of monopoly. A thirty month investigation has been made by qualified people. Many government people, Lincoln, Jackson and Roosevelt included, have tried in vain to enter the citadel of money power. It is probable that the time has arrived for action. The only thing such a job can achieve is to ferret secrets out into the open, and that is perhaps the only thing needful.

Here is something in the economic problem which to me seems to be valuable. It occurs to me that the small groups who decide to apply the cooperative method to financial affairs are on the positive side. I also feel that I am on the positive side in working with the people who promulgate principles which will set land free from speculation. I cannot see how the new energies can be used on the basis of monopoly.

Outside of this I don't want to waste time on the economic problem. I can't gain anything or contribute anything by trying to patch up something which actually is obsolete. Our price system will die a strenuous death but it will die, so why not let it die. It begs me to discuss many current economic issues, for a lot of discussion helps the old giant to maintain appearance.

We are living in a crisis out of which must come a new mentality, also a new way of culture-life. The old order which must perish wants to hamstring us, hold us, tell us that there is no "practical" way out. We have our "schools" of economy, each one advancing its panacea, but all these schools are traditional, addicted to an era which now is dispensible.

I am sure we are, comparatively speaking, on par with the people who listened to Jesus in Palestine. They heard him present the eternal principle of rightness, but they also heard him advise them not to take an extra grip along, not heed the ridiculous specialization of the "schools." They were all in bondage to the temple bank and the priests' futile attempt to economize themselves into a Jewish theocratic world power. It was necessary on the part of the people who wanted to enter a new dispensation to venture an inward personal freedom for the temple bank ideology.

I need not elucidate on the treachery of an old economic system. It is amazing how things, illusive property, and hectic attempts of saving the stove poker when the house is on fire, can blind people, so they cannot visualize. They can also stifle people, so that they cannot live creatively. Here is a group of people who have come together for three days convention. I know they could experience the abundance of life together; they could also experience the dramatic adventure (both tragical and comical) together; but the convention is tawdry prattle, for the main objective is a paltry budget.

Should a group of young people assemble for weeks or months for the sake of finding the golden apple, they had better avoid the CIO, the AFL, the NAM, the C. of Com., the technocrat schools of economy. There is nothing in these schools which can release the cramped soul.

I hear our Master say that there is one thing possible and that is a personal liberation from a civilization which is ready for the grave. That liberation is the one thing needful and with it the things will easily be rearranged.

### "BARABBAS"

A Hungarian by name of Emery Bekessy who went through the European crucible has written a book called Barabbas. The man carrying that name was underground leader in Palestine at the time Jesus went from place to place healing, teaching and preparing his disciples to take over. Barabbas was qualified. Years of robbery had toughened him. He was used to privations and caves. Every drop of blood in his veins was a force of hate directed toward the Romans. He was fanatically devoted to the cause of liberating his country. Half Jew and half Samaritan he was capable of mustering an army counting people from both groups. That would correspond to a White-Negro army.

Barabbas could not help hearing about the lay preacher from Nazareth who deeply effected common people, and he realized what a coup it would be if he could induce this

man to cooperate with him. He thought that a conversation would bring this Jesus to his senses so that he would give up his pipe-dream talk about love: Love your enemy. Bah! Not only was such idiotic but it was harmful to the cause of freedom. The Romans, he knew, would understand only the language of a bow and arrow.

Daredevil as he was he ventured out in the open to find the strange Rabbi. They met at the home of Lazarus near Magdola. B. knew that he had met his master but he put up a front. In the conversation between the two, Jesus proved to B. that he was not fighting for freedom. His whole underground movement was a falsity covering the fact that he tried to promote himself. It was not a free people he was interested in but a big Barabbas, ruling like the Romans ruled. Therefore he was not different from the priests whom he despised. Jesus also proved that his movement was a flop, for he was only being used by the priests and as soon as they had used him, they would dispose of him.

Here was truth of eternal quality, and B. knew it, but he would not give in. So he commanded his emotions to raise the temperature of his hate. In the evening he and his men threw stones on the door of Lazarus intending to scare Jesus out in the woods where they could kill him. He had been promised a fat reward by the priests for doing so. Jesus walked out among the men. The calmness and serenity of his person made them slink and creep away like beaten dogs.

We follow now the Barabbas-Jesus drama to the end. Barabbas won and was defeated. Jesus was defeated and won. The truth was manifested that freedom, justice, and love can never be associated with violent force. The use of such force is now and always concomitant with inflated egotism. It is always a part of false religion. The fact of love as the only workable basic law of human life was also manifested.

Besides this the author has said many startling things about the greatest of all historic dramas, the execution of Jesus Christ.

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## No Compromise of Principle!

It is becoming obvious to the world in general that the state of the so-called Western civilization in the immediate future and perhaps for many years to come will be decided by the outcome of the contest between two powerful nations, United States and Russia. Not just because they are physically powerful nations, in fact the only two in the world who CAN do more than talk, but because they represent two fundamental philosophies of life so inherently antagonistic, so mutually invalidating, that the better they understand each other the wider the chasm will become that separates them, and the less common ground will they find for joint action.

Unless I have completely misunderstood Communism, its philosophy is out and out utilitarian; that is, every principle, every feeling and every line of action is judged solely by the effectiveness with which it serves the political and economic ends of the state. Against this complete and enthusiastic repudiation of moral inhibitions, our

philosophy of human dignity, integrity and freedom, of moral responsibility, shows up none too well; but it must be remembered that it is so much easier for human nature to be utterly selfish, to revert at a stroke to jungle ways from which we have so recently evolved, than it is to struggle upward against the combined resistance of nature and environment to gain a precarious foothold on the narrow ledge of personal and social righteousness. Our record of moral progress is, indeed, poor enough; we stand accused and convicted of evasions, compromises and downright corruption; nevertheless, such little moral decency as we have is all that keeps us from utter disintegration; if we lose that, then we lose our souls; and, I think we may say, mankind loses its only chance for more milleniums to come.

This we must remember when we bargain with Russia. Remember that we are dealing with a philosophy which will barter EVERYTHING except the last, low, square foot of will to survive. We must take nothing to that marketplace which has the breath of life in it. Take money and goods and atomic bombs, take our pride and our boastfulness, but take none of our moral principles — weak and shabby though they are — take not the freedom of our friends nor the souls of the oppressed; take not our trust in righteousness nor our faith in the high destiny of man! These are not for sale while our hearts are still warm and there is a breath in our bodies!

We are not dealing with the Russian people. They are a great warm-hearted, guileless people whom we shall know for our friends again when all this is over.—We are dealing with a ruthless, unscrupulous, usurper, without a soul, without human feelings, with ice-water in his veins and a calculating machine for a brain. He is set to debauch and devastate humanity, to corrupt and enslave. He is the destroyer of souls. He cannot be stopped with arms and explosives; he feeds on violence and discord. But against justice and freedom and righteousness he has no weapon. The heart and hopes and brotherhood of mankind is against him and must prevail! For these America must speak. Speak so that the world will know who is friend and who is foe.

At this moment comes a paragraph to us from across the seas. In cautious tones such as they speak who live around the corner from the men with the hob nailed boots; but with all clear as the guarded gesture to the initiated. We quote a paragraph from the Danish weekly "Morgenbladet":

### IDEALISM.

"It has without doubt made a deep impression on many to read the account of the fate suffered by the Danes deported to the Baltics. Not so much the details of deportation, hunger, illness, and mass death. With these we are already so familiar that it scarcely moves us any more. We know what violence to expect in dictatorships.

"But the nature of this account deserves special attention. There are no angry words, no flaming hatred, no terror; only the resigned reporting of relentless fate; — yes, and then the many details that show how different the Germans and the Russians really are. There was always a grain of sadism in the German treatment of prisoners. The Russians are characterized by a certain harsh, idealistic necessity. Persons who are dangerous to the safety of the

state must be removed in one way or another and there is no reason for special anxiety about their welfare. On the other hand, there is no special reason for making it more disagreeable than necessary.

"This is not intended as a defense of Russian methods. A dictatorship is a dictatorship and an aggressor state is no more welcome because it treats the people it deports fairly decently.

"Nevertheless, we should be wise to realize that there are other types of inhumanity than those expressed in sadism and terrorism, and that these types—all the more because they appear comparatively decent—are no less a very real threat against HUMAN freedom and dignity."

Before taking off for the Moscow conference, J. F. Dulles said:

"During the war, millions died that ideals might live. We who survived have a sacred duty to carry out that last will and testament and to make a peace which will embody those ideals.

"We who are going to Moscow will try to do that, but to succeed, we shall have to feel behind us the spiritual support of a united American people."

H. J. K.

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## Pancakes and Purposes

OR

### RECIPES FOR A GOOD SOCIETY

By W. CLAY MARKS.

My mother's pancakes are appealing in appearance and nourishing. M-mm! And are they delicious!

So I asked her, "How do you make them so good?"

"There are two requirements," she answered, "(1) Right materials, and (2) enough of them."

#### WHAT MAKES A GOOD PANCAKE?

The specifications for pancakes are food value, flavor, and appearance. Are there any parallel standards for a Good Society? What should be the relation between man and man, between man and social organizations, and between the different nations? Let us try to answer these questions with factors as clear as those for pancakes.

#### WHAT MAKES A GOOD SOCIETY?

In a Good Society, the relations between men would be friendly. Differences in color and culture would not result in caste and class distinction. The relations between man and community institutions would be voluntary since government is for men, and not vice versa. Corrupt power craving and callous absentee control would be progressively reduced by the decentralization of political and economic power. Selfish nationalism would be replaced by a world citizenship relationship in which generous consideration for minorities would be secured by a federal government.

#### ACTION MUST MEASURE UP TO PURPOSE.

Action is more than motion. It is effort with a purpose. That is why it is so important to agree about the nature of a Good Society. If our purpose is a free, friendly, and

cooperative community, world-wide, we should examine our means of action carefully. The means determine the social-outcome in the same way that habits determine character.

Social action is a function of groups and movements with a general aim of political reconstruction, economic democracy, and social brotherhood. More specifically the political objectives are: democratic world federation for peace, civil liberties with equal rights for minorities, and good administration and social legislation in government units. Economic democracy is a broad purpose which involves increasing popular participation in decision-making and in benefits. Brotherhood is no mild distant wish for many groups in action. It is a mutual confidence and cooperation between peoples of different communities, and different philosophies and religions.

The Dictionary of Sociology says that social action is organized effort to change social and economic institutions. Thus it differs from social service which is effort to adjust institutions—for example, to help a family enjoy slum living. Social action would try to get rid of the slum. Social service aims to make hell more comfortable. Social action aims to replace the hell.

#### BEWARE OF THE SLIP BETWEEN THE PAN AND LIP.

The worst social action is the use of contemptible means for worthy ends. They corrupt the character of those who take part, making them unfit for a Good Society. Even in a good cause, deception and violence are like sawdust and sand in pancake dough. For instance in defending minorities, they would turn the fear and distrust of a race crisis into an open riot.

Liberals have another fault. They use piddling means—utterly inadequate. One can not feed a family on one pancake. Even less can organizations change an entrenched institution by passing resolutions. Those who never do more than write congressmen lack either motivation or resourcefulness.

#### RECIPES FOR A GOOD SOCIETY.

Whether they are potato pancakes, buckwheat pancakes, soybean pancakes, or whole-wheat pancakes, my mother's flapjacks are wonderful because she meets the two specifications: right materials, and right amounts. Whether our effort is for social, political, or economic objectives, we, too, must meet the specifications.

The best social action is a people's movement, a popular participation movement, an education movement which develops good will in new social and—or economic relationships. In his book, *An American Dilemma*, Gunnar Myrdal amplifies this:

"Folk movements require close understanding among the individuals in the group, a deep feeling of common loyalty, and even a preparedness to share in collective sacrifices for a common distant goal."

Do not think that because we talked in terms of pancakes, we were discussing the subject lightly. College professors of the social studies, and professed liberals rarely understand the basic principle:

The ingredients used, and the way they are handled, should be determined by the kind of result which is wanted.

Do WE understand it enough to employ means which meet the pancake specifications? Do we seek means which are appropriate and adequate?