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JOTTINGS

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

THE NEW FORMAT OF THIS PERIODICAL deserves only a brief word of explanation at the outset, as the various and sundry changes will of course become apparent to the interested reader in due time. The only major innovation is the separation of letters from more formal material, a move almost universally urged by the readers of this publication since the newsletter format was adopted some months ago. My own material will appear primarily in this column in the form of informal observations, although more ambitious material will appear from time to time under separate headings. This format will be maintained only so long as it continues to satisfy me; if it should cease to do so, Kipple may return to a former style of presentation--or it may strike off in a totally new direction. The material and the sphere of interest remain, in any event, the same.

ATTORNEY GENERAL ROBERT KENNEDY arbitrated a settlement in the Cambridge crisis which may at long last bring a full and lasting peace to the racially troubled community. It is perhaps wise at this early stage to avoid undue optimism, but at least this much is clear: provided that the representatives of the white community were sincere in their negotiations to the extent that they will abide by the terms of the agreement, it seems highly unlikely that the city would experience further strife. It may be unpleasant at this time to harken back to the weeks when Cambridge seemed at the brink of actual race war, but a few observations on the situation as it existed prior to July 23 may be worthwhile as a critique on the competency of the civil and military authorities whose duty it was to control the potentially disastrous situation. This competency is very much in doubt in some quarters--including the editorial offices of both Kipple and the Baltimore Sun--and there is considerable justification for the opinion that had the Justice Department not intervened, the situation would soon have passed beyond the control of the Maryland authorities.

When the Maryland National Guard occupied Cambridge for the second time, a modified form of martial law was imposed on the community. Under the provisions of this code, civil law was suspended: gatherings for any purpose whatsoever were prohibited, the sale of liquor was halted, all persons and premises were subject to search without warrant, and any individual could be arrested at the whim of the military

officials and held without charges and without right of bail for an indefinite period. Despite the harshness of these measures, demonstrations continued to occur and a full-scale insurrection was only narrowly averted--largely, I think, because the military authorities were conspicuously negligent in enforcing their own edicts. These strictures, if rigidly enforced, could have at least clamped a lid on the explosive passions of the citizens until a more permanent settlement was reached; failure to enforce them with sufficient enthusiasm after having imposed them, however, was an egregious example of poor judgement on the part of the National Guard. Nothing so quickly destroys respect for the law than the failure of its officers to carry it out. Demonstrations by both white and Negro groups subsequently occurred, but in only one case did this result in arrests--and the violators in this instance were released almost immediately, when their comrades threatened a mass protest. It takes little enough thought to perceive that when military authorities can be intimidated in such a manner, respect for their authority crumbles.

No small portion of the responsibility for this unfortunate situation must rest squarely in the lap of J. Millard Tawes, the only corpse ever elected twice consecutively to the office of Governor of Maryland. This vacillating official has imitated Dwight Eisenhower's formula for political success: when in doubt, do nothing. Governor Tawes has consistently imitated the attitude of the great golfer, rousing himself from lethargy every couple of years to conduct a lackadaisical campaign, and then, having been re-elected, retiring immediately to a state of catalepsy. Mr. Tawes has many times in the past been guilty of doing too little, too late, but seldom in the context of such a dangerous situation. His consistent retort to any suggestion that he intervene in Cambridge, prior to actually having ordered the National Guard into the area, was that it was a local problem which ought to be solved by those most directly concerned. Even after troops had occupied the area, the Governor refused to consider the possibility of personally entering the dispute as an arbitrator; it was a local problem, he once again stressed. Granted the dubious quality of this leadership, it is not surprising that most citizens of Maryland evince a casual disregard for any authority originating in the office of the Governor. Dynamic leadership was needed to resolve the dilemma of racial antipathy in Cambridge, but such leadership was not to be found in the Tawes administration. It came, at last, from Robert Kennedy, and I think that this last-minute intervention is something for which all Marylanders ought to be thankful.

O TEMPORA! O MORES! Representatives of forty-two American Legion posts in the greater Baltimore area recently gathered to unite their ossified mentalities in a concerted effort to preserve the principles of Americanism. This ludicrous assemblage of would-be oligarchs, in an extraordinary display of patriotism, passed a resolution calling for the impeachment of the entire United States Supreme Court, excepting only Mr. Justice Stewart. The indictment of that venerable body was brief, but damning: (1) they removed God from the schools, and (2) they voted in favor of the Communists at least 90% of the time. The only discussion preceding the vote on this resolution was a comment by one of the stalwarts of the Legion to the effect that he had "read somewhere that the only Bible in the Court belonged to Justice Stewart." This facetious remark was originally made by Mr. Justice White, but the earnest reactionaries of the Legion managed to completely ignore the obvious humor and instead interpret the remark as a horrid confession of un-American Godlessness. The contemptible resolution was thereupon approved by an overwhelming majority, and the Legionnaires gleefully

adjourned their sanctimonious council of censors, satisfied that they had struck a potent blow for God, Mother and Flag.

Baltimore's liberal newspaper, the Morning Sun, reprimanded the Legion in the tolerant, patient manner of a long-suffering mother lecturing a mischievous child:

"Frivolity isn't always fun. For the Baltimore district of the American Legion to adopt almost unanimously a resolution calling for the impeachment of eight members of the Supreme Court is frivolous, but it is not funny.

"Mr. Justice Stewart was omitted from the list of impeachables, for reasons not clear enough to justify such a singling out and branding. According to the resolution, the eight justices deserve impeachment because of their attitude on school prayer and because--still according to the resolution--they have voted in favor of Communists or their associates at least 90 percent of the time. If that were true, all would be lost anyway, beyond recovery by the impeachment of any number of judges.

"The Legionnaires who voted for that resolution ought to turn their efforts instead to the fight against woven Yugoslav dog-baskets, as urged in a 'Shoppers' Guide to Communist Imports' handed out to them at the door of the hall, and leave serious matters to serious people."

THE MAKING OF A LIBERAL: John Boardman's various newsletters often elicit an explosive response from this quarter, due to the schism which exists between our differing concepts of liberalism. However, no single piece of material in John's recent periodicals has so successfully irritated me as an article in The Pointing Vector #16 by Earle Stevens, entitled "Why is a Young Conservative?" Even John's constant and oppressive attitude of intolerance towards the political Right is only mildly annoying once one has decided to ignore any conclusions into which the prejudice intrudes. Mr. Stevens' windy polemic is less likely to evoke indifference or toleration, however, if only because the clumsy logic and specious reasoning of his argument is so apparent. The essay is in reply to a few casual remarks in previous issues to the effect that the conservative revival on campus, much applauded by Barry Goldwater and William F. Buckley, actually does exist. Mr. Stevens sets as his goal the outlining of reasons for this unfortunate phenomenon, and in his gallant attempt to produce concrete causes for this questionable resurgence of reactionary tendencies among American youth, he becomes hopelessly entangled in a net of untenable assumptions.

His basic thesis, as I understand it, is that the current college generation lacked certain qualities and experiences in their early environment and upbringing which are absolutely essential to the formulation of a liberal philosophy. Mr. Stevens himself is a true liberal, he informs us, because he was born during the Depression, spent his formative years during the heyday of Franklin D. Roosevelt, remembers World War II and Hitler, and began his "real" education during the Truman administration. Since the students who are now attending college were born near the end of the war or slightly after, were not politically aware during the Truman administration, and know of the Depression

and F.D.R. only through history books, they cannot, reasons Mr. Stevens, be liberals.

The thesis is indefensible on the obvious grounds that, if knowledge of this era is essential to the existence of liberal ideas and ideals in the mind of an individual, there could have been no liberals prior to these events. Thus, utilizing the reductio ad absurdum: Thomas Paine and James Madison were not political liberals, because they were not influenced by Roosevelt, Truman, Hitler or the Depression. But since this matter is of great personal interest to your obedient servant--who was, after all, born in 1942, and consequently disqualified by Mr. Stevens from any pretensions of liberalism--I should like to examine his premise more carefully. Do the actual facts support the obvious corollary that the college generation of 1949-1953 was more receptive to the ideals of liberalism than is the current college generation? In point of fact, the generation of which Mr. Stevens is so proud to be a part contributed grandly to the general atmosphere of the Apathetical Fifties, the era of Madison Avenue, McCarthy, and the "beat" generation. This magnificent harvest of liberal idealists furnished the raw material for the "Beatnik" trend, surely the most apathetic and fatalistic fad in the history of the country. With the exception of a very few activists, this generation discovered the inequities of our society and in reaction shuffled off into a corner, assuming the Number Six Yoga Position, and proceeded to conduct a meticulous examination of their collective navels.

In contrast, the youngsters berated by Stevens form the hard-core of the Protesting Sixties. They may not have a great deal of first-hand knowledge about World War II or Roosevelt's political philosophy; but they are the students who demonstrated against the House Un-American Activities Committee in San Francisco three years ago, the students who engaged in New York's anti-civil defense protests, and the students who are daily beaten, spat upon and arrested for taking part in sit-in demonstrations aimed at obtaining equality for the Negro.

I'll rest my case as to whether or not this generation is capable of producing "liberals" on this empirical data, as opposed to the a priori hogwash of Earle Stevens.

ARGUING WITH RACISTS is a generally frustrating experience, but it does at least give birth to an interesting observation with respect to the relativity of compliments and insults. Steve Allen once observed that certain people termed him a pseudo-intellectual with the intention of delivering an insult, whereas in fact he was highly pleased to be the recipient of such comments. A similar paradox suggests itself to me whenever I decide to amuse myself by arguing with ardent segregationists. When it has finally occurred to such individuals that I have no intention of admitting that "n----s ain't as good as the rest of us", they devote their energies to decrying my obvious lack of patriotism. "You're just a goddamn Commie like Bobby Kennedy and Earl Warren!" These depressing mentalities fail to realize, of course, that by identifying me, however loosely, with the Chief Justice and the Attorney General, they are bestowing upon me the very finest compliment. My sincere--albeit exaggerated--"Why, thank you..." bewilders them completely.

RACISM is commonly identified with the patently ridiculous claims of the various neo-Nazi organizations, or the doctrine of hate espoused by those ludicrous champions of white womanhood and purity, Ross Barnett and George Wallace. Far more dangerous than the transparent bilge spouted by this league of pernicious scoundrels is the doctrine of the occasional intellectual who embraces the cause of white suprema-

cy. His thesis is constructed to appeal to reason rather than to emotion, and to the extent that this tactic succeeds, such an individual damages the cause of racial equality to a greater degree than could twenty fire-breathing fanatics.

Alexis Carrel is one of these rare intellectuals who advocates, albeit in more subtle terms, what is essentially the cause of Ross Barnett and George Lincoln Rockwell: viz., that the Caucasian race, due to certain fixed biological traits, is inherently superior to any other race of man. In Dr. Carrel's book, "Man, the Unknown", this ignominious doctrine is incorporated into the fabric of what otherwise might be merely an espousal of a particularly short-sighted philosophy. The book itself purports to be an exploration of the characteristics of man as a biological and social animal, but in actuality it is more a treatise on Dr. Carrel's personal beliefs with respect to extra-sensory perception, the decadence of the twentieth century, eugenics, mysticism, and much else that concerns man and his world. However, all of this is overshadowed by Dr. Carrel's saccharine pronouncements on the virtues of the "great white races".

"The great white races owe their success to the perfection of their nervous system--nervous system which, although very delicate and excitable, can, however, be disciplined. To the exceptional qualities of their tissues and consciousness is due the predominance over the rest of the world of the peoples of western Europe, and of their swarms in the United States."

One of the reasons for this biological superiority, according to Dr. Carrel, has to do with the effect of light on the nervous system of ~~Homo~~ sapiens:

"It is possible that lessened reactivity of the nervous system and of the intelligence may eventually result from too strong a light. We must not forget that the most highly civilized races--the Scandinavians, for example--are white, and have lived for many generations in a country where the atmospheric luminosity is weak during a great part of the year. (...) The lower races generally inhabit countries where light is violent and temperature equal and warm."

Having assumed the validity of his premise, Dr. Carrel manages to create some appalling examples of misplaced emphasis, of which the following is but a single example. While discussing the problem of mental diseases, the good doctor admits their seriousness, then adds as an afterthought:

"They are to be feared, not only because they increase the number of criminals, but chiefly because they profoundly weaken the dominant white races."

"Man, the Unknown" is probably valuable as a reminder that, despite our casual disregard of this point, the legion of bigots which still marches the earth is not culled entirely from the ranks of the unintelligent. The occasional scientist or philosopher who joins that sordid legion lends a degree of dignity to it which may serve to obscure its true nature in the eyes of many. The immense respect due Dr. Carrel as a scientist should never be allowed to temper the condemnation his personal philosophy so richly deserves. It is, with only minor

variations, the philosophy which stoked the ovens at Dachau.

THE RELUCTANT CANDIDATE: Barry Goldwater's not-campaigning is progressing with such splendid vigor that it already threatens to overshadow the enthusiastic campaigning of Nelson Rockefeller. The eloquent senator from Arizona has evidently decided to back into the Republican nomination for President in 1964, all the while releasing nebulous statements to the effect that he has not as yet decided upon a course of action. This tactic, which has been popular in the past, causes the nomination to take on the appearance of a spontaneous wave of public opinion, which sweeps the candidate into office over his feeble protests. (Derek Nelson will no doubt remark at this point that there is such a mass movement, and that I, as a liberal, simply refuse to recognize it.) Since, in any event, several recent statements of Senator Goldwater and his supporters have been indistinguishable from what other politicians would consider campaign remarks, it is not inappropriate to examine them in that context.

One of the unique characteristics of Senator Goldwater is his enigmatic attitude in the area of civil rights. Virtually every politician finds himself forced to assume a definite position on this issue. Barry Goldwater, however, embraces a thoroughly ambiguous position in this controversy, alternately defending the right of the Negro to equal opportunity and the right of the individual state to deprive him of it. The most concise statement of the resultant philosophy is this: Senator Goldwater believes that the southern states are morally wrong in oppressing the Negro, but he believes with equal vigor that they have the right to do it without fear of intervention by the central government. As a result of this attitude, which is unlikely to ingratiate Goldwater to either camp, Goldwater supporters are anxious to underemphasize the entire issue. Governor Paul Fannin of Arizona, a staunch ally of Sen. Goldwater, asserted at the recent Governor's Conference that Barry was neither a segregationist nor an integrationist, but "an American".

Speaking at a meeting sponsored by Human Events last month in Washington, the senator utilized a tactic which I had previously considered far too obvious for his taste. Barry urged the defeat of the Democrats in 1964 because, he claimed, Gus Hall is "urging the defeat of all Republicans in 1964" and because Hall "found much that was praiseworthy, in his view, with the approach of the new frontier." Sen. Goldwater hastened to add that he was not suggesting that the Democrats are affiliated with Communists, but he believes that the Communist Party's appraisal of American political parties is "of extreme interest to anyone who concerns himself with the American political scene." There is nothing particularly new and exciting about insinuating that the Communists have something to gain from the election of your opponents--after all, Richard Nixon made a career of it--but I had looked forward to a good deal more finesse and subtlety from Senator Goldwater.

In a recent interview by Gerald Griffin, Goldwater attempted to deal with the charges by Governor Rockefeller that he was being somewhat less than enthusiastic in disavowing the backing of the lunatic fringe of the Right. The senator without hesitation said a few unkind words with respect to George Lincoln Rockwell and his fellow American fascists. He denied, however, that the John Birch Society should be considered a "far right" organization, and observed that although he considers its founder, Robert Welch, an extremist, he could take no particular exception to the statement of principles of the society. It is disturbing to witness a self-proclaimed "libertarian conservative" admit that he can take no particular exception to the principles of an organization which advocates such strikingly non-libertarian concepts

as extensive censorship, the theory that an accused criminal or traitor is guilty until proven innocent, segregation, and the support of fascist dictatorships by this country--to mention only a few.

If Barry Goldwater is elected to the office of President of the United States, I may be forced to realize my long-standing desire to live in England...

ELSEWHERE IN THIS ISSUE appears an installment of a column by Walter Willis, reprinted from Warhoon #10, which deals with the long-standing controversy over the relative merits of competition and cooperation. Since its original appearance, I have read this column at least a dozen times, and each reading reinforces my initial respect for the essay. Totally apart from its content--which should, in itself, recommend the treatise to Kipple's readers--it is valuable as an exercise in argument. The essay is one of the finest, most lucid arguments I have ever encountered. Although the informality of the writing indicates a looseness in the fabric of the reasoning which serious arguments would do well to forego, this is a superficial and misleading impression. Actually, despite the style in which it is composed, the argument is a close-knit single entity, flowing naturally from beginning to end. It is for this reason that the several esoteric allusions to the in-group of which Mr. Willis is a member (devotees of science fiction) are not explained by editorial footnotes as clarity would appear to demand. Such interruptions would only detract from the smooth progression and delicate balance of the arguments.

ABORTION AND THE LAW: Three months ago, the body of a New Jersey school teacher was discovered in a driveway in Baltimore county, and an autopsy disclosed that her death had been the result of an infection resulting from an illegal abortion. Subsequent investigation turned up the grim, though anticipated details of the unmarried teacher's association with a salesman, and her apparently desperate wish to erase the result of their unfortunate affair. Several persons were arrested and charged with conspiracy to commit abortion, and Hilda B. Williams, of Baltimore, was accused of performing the operation. All of the defendants were released on bail, and last week Mrs. Williams was again arrested on a similar charge. In this case, the widowed mother of three children died after undergoing an abortion to prevent the birth of a fourth child. Mrs. Williams was once again released on bail, much to the astonishment of State's Attorney William J. O'Donnell. He has promised an investigation to determine why bail was allowed under such circumstances. (Incidentally, at the time of the teacher's death, Mrs. Williams had been awaiting trial in connection with an earlier abortion.)

The entire matter is a particularly effective indictment of the inflexible laws which govern abortion in this (and most other) states. No one seeks to forgive any individual who would enter into the business of performing abortions for profit without the proper training or equipment; the culprit is certainly a profiteering and thoroughly despicable scoundrel. But, in another sense, the law is equally guilty, for it is the unwavering rigidity of an archaic legal dictum which prevents qualified physicians from performing such operations. Maryland's abortion statute, like many other state laws, vigorously proscribes abortion except where it is deemed necessary to protect the health or save the life of the mother. Within the restrictions of this code, there is no room for consideration of the emotional state of an unmarried school teacher who becomes pregnant: at very best, she would surely lose her job and friends, and if her emotional stability was uncertain, the effect of this could be disastrous. Nor is the law equipt to

consider the plight of the mother of three, recently widowed, forced to bring another child into a socio-economic situation which is, to say the least, bleak. The law need not consider the problems of these individuals now, for they are dead. They died as the result of an infection originating during an operation which is one of the safest in the medical repertoire when performed with proper care. They died because, in a city containing thousands of highly competent physicians, they were forced to purchase the services of an illicit organization, whose "operating room" may have consisted of as little as a kitchen table and whose staff was comprised of untrained--but thoroughly greedy--amateurs.

I trust that those to whom abortion is synonymous with murder can reconcile their hypocritical concern with the existence of a fetus with their callous disregard for the lives of those unfortunate enough to fall victim to the charlatans who exist as a result of the unrealistic statute.

THE RECENT PRAYER DECISION in the case of Murray versus Curlett remains very much of a controversial issue in the Baltimore area. Recent racial difficulties have largely replaced it as a topic for discussion in the letter sections of the metropolitan newspapers, but vitriolic epistles condemning Madalyn Murray and/or the Supreme Court continue to appear sporadically. The fantastic zeal of these hideous documents is surpassed only by their abject stupidity. These communications run the gamut from the maudlin mouthings of Bible-clutching grandmothers, obsessed with the urge to enfold helpless children in the viscous veil of self-seeking sanctimony which comprises their religion, to the obstreperous vituperation of those would-be inquisitors in whose vermiform minds any deviation from self-styled Truth is equated with Communism. If these words appear even more vicious and less tactful than is my usual dissertation, let me plead that such discourtesy is but the natural result of being incarcerated for a considerable number of years in the same city with these uniquely appalling specimens of Homo nincompoop:

"We could be proud of our Supreme Court judges had they been interested in abolishing from the market the filthy, rotten literature, magazines and comics our kids and teenagers purchase these days. This is a much more hazardous evil and danger to their minds and the molding of their character. God help us--this should be our cry. 'Communitic' is how we judge such judges of the Supreme Court in mind, thought and deed."

"We spend millions (or is it billions) each year to fight Communism overseas, and in our own country we give in to it. If Mrs. Murray is backed by the Communists, then the Supreme Court is backing Communism."

"To maintain our freedom of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, we, as Americans, must be on guard at all times; ready to defend our rights. At times, our fight is not with guns but rather with laws such as the Supreme Court's decision on the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the Constitution. We did away with the Prohibition Amendment and the same can be done to stop other agitators. Do not let names such as 'The American Civil Liberties Union' fool us."

"I'm 15 years old. It might not mean much to get my say in this, but I don't think it is right to take the Lord's name out of the Pledge of Allegiance. Nor do I think it is right to take the Lord's Prayer out of the schools. I go to Hereford Junior High School and I am proud of it. Some of the children might say things, but when they heard this on the last day of school they were mad. And that is something to be mad about. It was just one woman that did it; no one else. That's all I have to say and I don't think it's right."

"I am not saying that this ban on the Bible is in itself a complete deprivation of our Freedom of Worship. But it is the first step. It is a Communist-instigated step. The Communist world knows that the only way it can break this nation is to first break its backbone--its unity in the Four Freedoms. Communism and the devil work hand in glove."

"If we really do trust in God I think the first thing to be done would be to put it in the Constitution in such a way there can be no dispute as to it being absolutely legal. Come on, believers in God, let us get behind our lawmakers with protests, and if we put God where He rightfully belongs, our country will have many of its internal problems smoothed out."

As the sun sinks in the west and the reader ponders the wisdom of smoothing out internal problems by legislating against heresy, we leave the unspoiled beauty of scenic Baltimore and its contented natives, secure in the knowledge that their blissful existence will never be tarnished by the intrusion of a sane thought...

--Ted Pauls

"The apotheosis of democracy grew out of the euphoria of the nineteenth century. Social philosophy having solemnly concluded that man is essentially and irrepressibly good, infinitely and irresistibly perfectible, it followed naturally that the best government is that most sensitively reflecting the developing refinements in man. There originated in this Couéism of the nineteenth century the reckless stampede to inflate the electoral lists, culminating in the grotesquerie of the State of Georgia, which voted in 1943 to give the vote to every 18-year-old." --William F. Buckley, in "Up From Liberalism".

"As a set of theories--or better, of assumptions about man, society, history--liberalism today is at a dead end. The optative mood has so thoroughly taken over that liberals often appear out of touch with the going realities. This is one reason it is so difficult to sort out distinctively liberal theories as such. Often failing to recognize facts that cry out to be recognized, liberalism is irrelevant to much that is happening in much of the world. Liberal ways of looking at these facts too often become mannerisms by which liberals avoid considering the structural conditions of social life and the need to change them. In fact, liberals have no convincing view of the structure of society as a whole--other than the now vague notion of it as some kind of a big balance. They have no firm sense of the history of our times and of their nation's or of their generation's place within that history." --C. Wright Mills, in "The Marxists".

the harp that once or twice

BY
WALTER
WILLIS

Ordinarily I'm not much of a one for serious arguments in fanzines, because fandom is a hobby and a hobby is relaxation, but this argument over "Starship Troopers" raises a question which is the most important the human race will ever have to answer and one which sf fans are in some ways particularly fitted to consider. And since I helped to raise it here myself I figure maybe I should put down as simply and clearly as I can what I think the answer should be and why.

I'll start by trying to prove my premises which are (1) that nuclear war can destroy our civilization and (2) that this would not be in the interests of the human race. These postulates seem to be in doubt only in the Chinese Communist Party and certain circles among U.S. ex-Marines, but some of the arguments the latter have been using confuse the issue, so let's try and get them out of the way. One of them is that people said gunpowder would destroy civilization and it didn't. This analogy is false because the change that has taken place is qualitative. It is a matter of demonstrable fact that a highly complex technological civilization like ours can be reduced to chaos by only a tiny proportion of the existing nuclear potential. The second argument is that the destruction of our civilization wouldn't really matter because the human race as a species would survive a nuclear war. This is arguable, but leaving aside the small matter of the suffering involved to the insignificant present members of it, like you and me, it would at best set the race back some hundreds of years with the same ghastly cycle still to go through and the same question at the end, still unanswered. Few of us would agree with the anti-scientific Romanticists that we'd all be happier coping with the complexities of the simple life in mud huts and dying of typhoid. The third argument, and here they're really scraping the barrel, is that it doesn't really matter if we're all obliterated because the rest of the Universe would carry on as usual. This was my first intimation that fandom now includes a number of extra-terrestrial entities, and I congratulate Dick on this unprecedented success with Warhoon. However, to those of his readers who happen to be human beings, the question of our survival does seem of some importance. If there are really any of us to whom it doesn't, would they mind getting the hell out of this argument, which can be of no possible interest to them, and committing suicide in some less spectacular way than blowing up our planet? Thank you and goodnight, Gregg Calkins. Oh, by the way, are you shooting Jo and the baby too, or are you going to ask them if they think their survival is important?

Well all right then, now that Gregg and

his extra-terrestrial friends have left the room I think we're probably all agreed that nuclear war can destroy our civilization and that this is to be avoided. The question then becomes how to avoid it, and this is the one which the people who put forward those weird arguments have been trying to evade. Because they haven't got an answer. An answer is not possible to them within the framework of their beliefs.

Basically the trouble is that they think in little mental pictures which have no relation to reality. I can imagine for example their visualization of the current world scene. It's captioned "Survival of the Fittest!" and it shows two sabre-toothed tigers battling it out, one labelled "America" and the other labelled "Russia". After a good clean fight the sabre-toothed tiger labelled America wins and, breathing a little heavily, leads a third, female sabre-toothed tiger labelled "Uncommitted Countries" into a cave marked "Western Civilization" to breed a race of superior sabre-toothed tigers which takes over the planet. The most obvious fallacies in this analogy is that nations are not individuals and that if the sabre-toothed tigers had been armed with nuclear weapons neither of them would have survived. But the most important fallacy is that this does not happen to be the way evolution took place. For, as you may have noticed, the sabre-toothed tigers did not take over the planet. They lost out, not because they did not keep in trim by fighting, but because they didn't have the intelligence to adjust to their environment. The animal that did and took over the planet was far weaker and slower and less ferocious than any sabre-toothed tiger, and you would think that these people who keep chanting "survival of the fittest" would tear their eyes away from the fine bloody spectacle of these sabre-toothed tigers for a moment and wonder how he did it. But if they won't, let's tell them. He did it by the use of a new and invincible evolutionary weapon called cooperation. Instead of slugging it out toe to claw with the sabre-toothed tiger, these Men got together in groups and helped one another and protected those who weren't fitted for fighting and who just stayed at home thinking up little things like spears and wheels and bows and arrows. This is the way the human race has survived worse dangers than rival species, and this is the way it will survive in the future if we don't listen to the modern throwbacks to the sabre-toothed tiger.

Perhaps we can now eliminate this "survival of the fittest" claptrap from the discussion. If it means anything at all it means that those who are fitted to survive, do. Surprise, surprise! Actually it is merely a meaningless catchphrase left over from a 19th Century controversy which was settled long ago, but the people who use it in its present context are not just a hundred years out of date--more like a hundred thousand. Even if we were to admit that animal evolution was mainly through inter-species or inter-individual violence, which is by no means the case, the fact is that the laws of animal evolution which these people so imperfectly comprehend ceased to apply to the human race a very long time ago. When, in fact, he became Homo sapiens, the social animal. There have been brief attempts to re-introduce them, like the Spartan custom of exposing babies on winter hillsides (whatever happened to the Spartans?) and the Eskimo custom of marooning sickly relatives on icefloes (have the Eskimos taken over Canada yet, Boyd?), but generally we have not killed off those 'unfit' to survive. There are no doubt theoretical objections to letting diseased and defective people like Beethoven, Mozart, Keats, Einstein and other non-Marine types clutter up the place instead of having a population entirely of All-American halfwits and similar fine soldierly types, but any improvement in our stock can only come through voluntary genetic control. Mankind owes its pre-eminence to social cooperation--brotherly love if you want to use non-technical language--the strong helping the weak so that their less

obvious gifts benefit all: to revert to the animal laws of evolution means to become animals again.

Well now, to get back to the current situation. The means of survival for individual Man in a hostile environment was in cooperation with other men. The means of survival for the tribe was in cooperation with other tribes. What is the means of survival for the Nation? The Hydrogen bomb hasn't posed this problem, it's just made the penalty for the wrong answer more drastic. The answer of the Heinleiners when you pin them down to it is that of course there is no answer, because there have always been wars and there will always be wars and all we can do is destroy other nations while they are destroying us. The fact is that neither of these axioms of theirs is true. There have not always been wars: war is a transitory phenomenon of the last couple of thousand years, unknown to primitive man, mere growing pains in social organization, like slavery. And there will be no more wars: there will just be a number of explosions. And incidentally they won't be let off by ludicrous leathernecks leaping about from planet to planet lobbing atomic grenades, they'll be let off by bespectacled button-pushing boffins who wouldn't hurt a fly.

The Heinleiners won't admit the possibility of a united mankind now, but in "Starship Troopers" the Leader seems to concede, no doubt reluctantly, that it may happen in the future. But he won't give up his beloved wars so easily. Space, he eagerly declares, is chock full of hostile races whom we must organize ourselves to fight. We must train our children to be hard and cruel and vicious so that they may be ready to kill and kill without pity those horrible slugs who are going to breeze in from Antares next Wednesday. (They're bound to be horrible, of course, because they're different from us, like N-----s and Kikes.) Well, all right, I'm a fan, I'm bound to admit that the Antareans will land next Wednesday, maybe even next Tuesday. I don't know if they look horrible or not, but I know one thing about them that Heinlein doesn't. They'll be civilized. No race can master the technology for interstellar flight without a complex civilization. And no stable and complex civilization is possible without cooperation. In other words the Antareans will have learned what we are learning, that the only way of survival and progress for intelligent creatures is cooperation with other intelligent creatures. If they find us as Heinlein wants us, organizing our whole society for hate and violence, they'll write us off as perverted lunatics and that's what we would be.

A couple of personal footnotes. First, I've been castigated for assuming without proof that "Starship Troopers" represents Heinlein's real opinions and is not a mere literary tour de force. A fair charge. I offer in evidence: (1) A crackpot manifesto signed by him and circulated by G.M. Carr urging more H-bomb testing. (2) The recurrence of sadism and worship of violence in Heinlein's work since 1949. I remember the first fanzine article I ever wrote was a complaint about the Fascist tendencies of "Gulf", with its arguments against democracy, its gloating description of torture and its use by heroes who obviously had the author's blessing. (3) The fact that the vicious philosophy of "Starship Troopers" is put over plausibly and with no indication that the author realized its stupidity. I think we're entitled to assume that the world of "Starship Troopers" is Heinlein's Utopia, God help him.

Secondly, I hope I haven't offended Gregg Calkins, who has been a good friend of mine for many years: if I have, all I can say in excuse is that it's my life and that of my wife and children, and yours, that he's so bravely declaring his willingness to sacrifice. That's a

THE GREAT DEBATE

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The statement that "Parents are not now capable of competently instructing their offspring and may never be," while generally correct, is not entirely true. There have been, there are, and there will be numerous individual cases--more numerous than one might suspect--of parents adequately educating their children. The word "adequately" is, of course, relative. It means simply "to the level at which the child has a reasonable chance of utilizing a good part of its potential". There are also many cases where the parents have educated their children more than adequately. To get down to concrete cases, I propose to educate my own children more than adequately. I feel I am qualified to do it.

It is still true that most parents today are not qualified to give their children an adequate education. This was not always true. In the older, and simpler societies parents have actually provided most of their childrens' education, including a training in trade or profession. As the human population grew to its present staggering size there has been a real lessening of the sense of responsibility of an average individual and a tendency to ride along with the river of humanity as long as the status quo is reasonably comfortable and undemanding. Hence, percentage-wise, there are, today, far fewer individuals who have even the will to educate their children, let alone qualifications.

Re IQ tests: I agree that the IQ tests are at best a rough guide for estimation of learning capacity. To begin with, we are not at all sure what they mean. There is no doubt that they indicate some kind of an intellectual variable related to the capacity to learn, or perhaps to the analytical capabilities of the subject's mind. However, the IQ tests tell nothing of the subject's determination to learn, or of the subject's capability in applying his knowledge effectively. More education has been wasted on lazy geniuses than I care to contemplate. At the same time, many effective and creative men are operating under the handicap of a limited education because their IQ test yielded a low figure. Fortunately, these cases are not yet too common since it has only recently become fashionable to sum up a man in terms of a set of figures resulting from a battery of psychological tests. Add to these figures the man's ten-digit telephone number, his social security number, the figure in his bank account and the year of the model of his car, and for all social purposes you have defined that man completely and quantitatively. You can now punch him on an IBM card for easy sorting out whenever your socio-economico-political graphs call for his particular combination of digits. If our current progress in computerization of everything continues, it is easy to foresee a country operated by a computer much as a chemical plant might be, with a punched card for every man, woman and child.

However, I digress from the subject at hand, and to return to your comments on education: A precaution is necessary when applying the system of individual rate of progress in different subjects to avoid excessive concentration of the student's energies in a narrow field of

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endeavor. A broad view of the universe must precede specialization, lest perspective and sense of proportion be lost. Hence, I feel that some subjects should always be compulsory, and that a minimum standing should be required in these subjects at any particular time.

Re your list of subjects: I am surprised that languages (other than English) are not listed. While English is admittedly a very flexible and practical language, with a very rich vocabulary, and about to become a world language, it would be folly to think that the English language is sufficient for full expression of all man's thoughts. Having the good fortune of being fully bilingual (my other language is Polish) I appreciate more than most people on this continent the largely unrecognized fact that there are in every language certain idioms which are impossible to translate accurately into any other language. No language encompasses the full range of semantic reactions of which man is capable, and each language has structural peculiarities which makes it more conducive to expression of certain classes of semantic reactions at the cost of ease of expression in other areas of semantic response. Knowledge of more than one language--and it does not matter whether the languages known are in current use or not--besides expanding one's capacity for self-expression, makes one aware of the inadequacies of the human languages.

For a concrete example of what I have been talking about we can take one of the most common words in the English language, and perhaps the most used and misused one: "love". There is no equivalent in the Polish language. To use the Polish word which the dictionary suggests as the equivalent of "love" in some typical contexts in which the word "love" would be used in English speech would be simply ludicrous. The ideas associated with the word "love" and the alleged Polish equivalent are only similar--but by no means identical. To appreciate the full difference of meaning between these two words, one must be fully bilingual--no, more than that, one must have a dual cultural background. They are very different indeed in flavor, in intensity, in use. It is possible to use each one to express certain associations of feelings and ideas which are impossible to express with the other. One of the most frustrating experiences of my life have been my attempts to translate Polish poetry into English. It's hardly worthwhile. For anyone interested in Polish poetry my advice is: "Learn Polish."

History is a dangerous subject to teach. There is no such thing as an objective view of history. Teaching of history should be entrusted to the individuals with the highest integrity, and the students should preferably be exposed to a number of opposing viewpoints, without any propaganda in favor of one or another.

Mathematics: I disagree emphatically with any current system of teaching mathematics. First of all, much of so-called "advanced mathematics" is as simple or simpler than arithmetic and fractions. And yet a large body of mathematical thought lies hidden in the gobbledygook which the mathematicians use to conceal the fact that one does not have to be a genius to have a comprehension of the theory of rings or know that a Klein bottle is a pair of Moebius strips joined at the edges. I feel that symbolic logic is a far better exercise for the analytical capacities of the student's mind than arithmetic and just as useful. I do not propose to discard arithmetic, but I would like to see a broader view taken of mathematics as a whole beginning with the first grades. Even kindergarten is not an unsuitable place to introduce some fundamental mathematical notions. Young children are capable of far more advanced mathematical operations than is generally thought. They are just as logical and rational as the adults, frequently more so. There is no reason why young children cannot be given a broad exposure to the nature and structure of mathematics as a field of human thought, so that

they will see the place of each mathematical technique they master in the whole scheme, and have some idea of the structure of thought upon which it rests. It has been one of my chief complaints against my educators that until I graduated from the university and began educating myself, mathematics had always been to me an incomprehensible and disjointed mass of meaningless symbolism.

Physical Sciences and Biological Sciences are, of course, closely related. Chemistry is a branch of physics in any case. However, that is a matter of classification, and since all classifications are artificial, I shall not quibble.

Philosophy: What is the reason for starting with comparative politics and ending with comparative religion? Why not the other way around, since presumably religion is more fundamental than politics. Wouldn't there be the very devil to pay, if little boys and girls throughout the country started asking embarrassing questions at their Sunday Schools? Perhaps you're right--leave comparative religion for later, when the kids have been more permanently brainwashed at their respective Sunday Schools. (My reasoning in choosing to delay the study of religion was simply this: except in the small minority of cases where the children are blessed with a liberal home environment, anything they are taught concerning religion outside of their home or church will be over-ridden by parental preference. This will, of course, result in certain preconceptions and prejudices later in life, but these are less likely to intrude when the youngster has reached the age where he begins to think for himself. In other words, it will probably be easier to erase such a bias from a sixteen-year-old mind than to teach a seven-year-old ideas and concepts which are diametrically opposite those of his parents.)

In general, I would suggest that teaching of all subjects should begin with a fundamental over-all view of that particular field of human thought, with emphasis on its place in the general scheme of things. This is possible, in spite of the objection that young children cannot grasp generalities or abstractions, simply by relating such an over-all view to the child's actual experience. To give a simple example, children can be quickly divorced from the notion that "physics" is some marvelous and mysterious mumbo-jumbo that the teacher does at school, by bringing about the realization that everything they perceive with their senses is "physical". This at once establishes a proper perspective on the study of physics. Yet this was rarely if ever done when I was at school. "Physics" was hardly a part of reality for most of my classmates; it was a textbook, a set of memorized answers for the test, or a weird gadget in the lab, of no earthly use outside of it.

A word about your omissions. I agree with regard to "Geography", though I doubt that "anachronism" is a correct word for use in this context. Music per se might be a matter of individual extracurricular activity; however, as a branch of Art, it should be properly studied under the classification of Social Sciences. Painting, drawing, etc., as activities, along with music, play a very significant role in increasing the scope for an individual's self-expression. However, whether "increasing an individual's scope for self-expression" falls within the definition of education is debatable. I see now that your system of education is concerned purely with presentation of facts, and not with self-expression or realization of one's potentialities. If that is the case, then languages other than English are properly excluded. However, I feel that is too narrow a view of education. While I readily admit that the so-called "progressive education" has gone overboard on the self-realization theme, this was obviously the extreme swing away from the stifling atmosphere of purely factual, learn-by-rote education of fifty years ago. I believe, as usual, in some golden mean, wherein the

factual education is blended in customized proportions (depending on the personality and capacity of each student) with the extension of the student's scope for self-expression. Otherwise, we might become walking encyclopedias while remaining socially illiterate. The current trend is in the opposite direction, of course. Kids are being educated to become social whizzes while their ignorance of the world they live in is abysmal. The question is, though, whether expansion of the scope for self-realization should constitute part of the program of formal education, or whether this is best accomplished informally. I suggest that informal methods are probably most effective in this area of education. I also suggest that, if we are going to leave it to the individual student to acquire this important part of his or her education informally, we should allot sufficient time in which this can be done. For example, a girl who wants to be a ballerina should not be required to take on as heavy a schedule of factual education as a future engineer.

Marion Bradley: That kids don't want basic education is not such a tragedy as we tend to think, nor do I think that the educational system is particularly to blame, although it certainly isn't blameless. It is natural for kids not to want to be taught. They would much rather be free to do whatever they happen to want to be doing. Kids are irresponsible by nature; you cannot measure them by adult standards. It is natural and normal for a kid to dislike work of any kind, and acquiring an education involves work--there is no getting away from it. Kids have always resisted being educated and always will because education calls for discipline and kids are essentially free spirits who despise any kind of discipline. Nevertheless, if kids are not to remain kids forever, they must be disciplined, they must learn to be responsible, and they must acquire a modicum of basic education. As adults, we realize this; most kids don't. It seems, therefore, that it is a particularly irrational type of idiocy for adults to ask kids what they want to learn and restrict their education only to those subjects which happen to be of interest to the kids. The practical facts of life are that it does not matter so much what the kids are taught, so long as they are in fact taught something and made to work. Their unwillingness to work is something that a teacher should take for granted, and it should also be taken for granted that this unwillingness must be overcome. Not with a switch and a threat, of course, although this method may have to be resorted to in more drastic cases, but with firm authority. At the same time, if the teacher can make the work part of education interesting and challenging to the students, so much the better. But this is not as essential as the necessity for the student to work, willing or not. The very effort the student is required to put into mastering a subject is an education in itself, a more fundamental education than any accumulation of factual knowledge.

The fact that kids don't want an education does not, as I said, worry me in the least. That is normal. However, the other point which Marion raises in her comments, that of what has come to be called "the uneducables", is indeed a cause for serious apprehension. It appears to me that unless man can take control of his own evolutionary process, he is bound to become extinct in the near future. The law of natural selection has failed in the case of mankind. The low IQs are multiplying much faster than the high IQs in the absence of a competitive environment. It used to be that the low IQ had a low chance of survival in a relatively hostile world. Nowadays, between medicine and social welfare, a low IQ has, if anything, a better chance of survival than a high IQ. There are indications that the human brain, on the average, is shrinking. It had been static for the past hundred thousand years or so.

Over-population is not the most serious problem mankind is facing. The most serious problem is the gradual lowering of the average intelligence. This, in combination with over-population, forebodes a catastrophic decline of the human race unless a general realization is brought about of the drastic measures necessary to halt the processes of degeneration and decay which have already set in and are assuming alarming proportions.

Our hope is that those with the highest intelligence among us will be able to rescue us from the alternative solution to our problem: wholesale slaughter of the surplus population. That alternative appears more and more certain as time goes on, regardless of the ups and downs of international politics. The dull-normals and the morons are gaining more and more influence over the course of human history. They have been outvoting rare intellects for quite a while now. (Is there any reliable data to prove that the relative number of stupid human beings has increased? Offhand, I can't think of any era in recorded history where the ignorant have not "outvoted" (outnumbered) the intelligent. The greater birth rate among the unintelligent is not in itself significant, unless your thesis is that intelligence is wholly or largely hereditary. And, to return to an earlier point, what evidence exists to indicate that the human brain is, on the average, shrinking, or that this is in any way significant? Brain size, as you must know, is not a reliable guide to intelligence.))

Of course, it can be argued that a low IQ does not imply inability to get along with one's neighbor, and that a high IQ does not imply high morality. High IQs are just as likely to precipitate a global disaster as the low IQs. On the other hand, the low IQ is unable to do much about his fate; the high IQ can. This is why we must look to our geniuses to save us from extinction and hope for the best, which, admittedly, may not be good enough.

"This is a world not of sciences, but of religions. The people in it would rather Believe than Know, Guess than Learn. And it is a peculiarity of most religions--indeed, a general condition of faith itself--that those who believe in one eschew all others, regard their God or their gods as the true divinity, and their system of conduct as alone irreproachable. Thus the heart of religions--even of those dedicated to brotherlove--consists of a superior intellectual posture, an absolute intolerance. Through its mechanism, such passion as man has for truth, his earnest wish to be right, and his desire to excel among his fellow men lie open to perpetual exploitation while his laziness, his irresponsibleness, and his will to conform shape him for the most accessible religion or for that religion most convenient to the nature of his personality, whatever it may be. Fear is, moreover, the father and mother of every religion and of all the gods--their offspring, intellectual stupidity." --Philip Wylie, in "An Essay on Morals".

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I'm a great admirer of Bertrand Russell, but I have never been able to understand why he has so emphatically dissociated himself from the Logical Positivists, who, after all, consider themselves Russell's disciples. I suppose it's pretty obvious, but it took me quite a while to pinpoint the reason. Like yourself, Russell is passionately concerned with ethical questions, not only intellectually, but also very actively. I, on the other hand, tend to agree with the logical positivist position, which rules out ethical and moral questions from the realm of philosophy. I think that where Russell differs is in the prestigious as-

pect of identifying these questions with Philosophy. Since he's very involved with the human condition, he cannot divorce his involvement from his more definable analyses, and tends to lump all of his attitudes, whether logically or prejudicially based, into one category--Philosophy. As a philosopher, he has stature--as an ethical man (and a moral man, according to his own conscience) he does not have that much standing so far as the general public is concerned. So he can write to Khrushchev, Kennedy or Macmillan, and make himself noticed, if not obeyed. It's wonderful that a man that I so much agree with ethically can make himself heard. But I agree with A. J. Ayer that if philosophy is to align itself with science, then ethical questions are irrelevant. This is not to say that they aren't to be discussed; it's just that they are open questions, and since the province of philosophy has been to answer questions, it should restrict itself to questions which can be answered. (Ethics may be considered under the heading of philosophy or apart from it, as dictated by individual preference; this is merely a disagreement of definition. I myself prefer to classify ethics as a part of philosophy, because it is convenient to do so and because most of the great philosophers of history have traditionally thought in this manner. As to the deeper question of whether or not "open questions" may legitimately be considered within the realm of philosophy, I find the attitude of the logical positivists completely untenable. It has always been the province of philosophy to deal with "open" questions: theology, metaphysics, aesthetics and ethics. If you remove the latter subject from the domain of philosophy because its premises are tentative and its questions may be unanswerable, then certainly the other

THE MONKEY'S VIEWPOINT

FROM THE AMERICAN RATIONALIST

Three monkeys sat in a cocoanut tree
Discussing things as they're said to be.
Said one to the others, "Now listen, you two,
There's a certain rumor that can't be true,
That man descends from our noble race--
The very idea is a disgrace.
No monkey ever deserted his wife,
Starved her babies and ruined her life,
And you've never known a mother monk
To leave her babies with others to bunk,
Or pass them on from one to another
'Til they scarcely know who is their mother.
And another thing you'll never see--
A monk build a fence 'round a cocoanut tree
And let the cocoanuts go to waste,
Forbidding all other monks a taste;
Why, if I'd put a fence around the tree,
Starvation would force you to steal from me.
Here's another thing a monk won't do--
Go out at night and get on a stew,
Or use a gun or a club or a knife
To take some other monkey's life.
Yes, man descended--the ornery cuss--
But, brother, he didn't descend from us!"

classes of study are equally out of place. What, then, is left to be considered "philosophy"?))

"Everywhere men have evolved religious systems in which religious behavior has repeatedly and independently been calculated to secure similar ends. This fact bears testimony to the unity of the human mind. Everywhere the religious experience creates the atmosphere and attitudes enabling human beings to regulate their conduct in the world in which they find themselves. With the development and deepening of the meaning of the religious experience within the matrix of an increasingly complex social world, human beings begin to understand that the communion with the supernatural powers must be extended to the communion with one's fellow human beings, and finally to a moral obligation of fellowship that is universal.

"The anthropologist observes that the freedom to develop and subscribe to any religion one chooses in a democracy leads to the democratization of religion, and thus gradually to closer understanding among people, which unbending orthodoxies have before successfully prevented. In the religions of the world the anthropologist sees the unceasing struggle of humanity toward the attainment of the community of man, the reverence for life and the destiny of man which, in a mysterious universe, gradually lead the anthropologist to the discovery that the way of humanity must inevitably be through the path of cooperation." --Ashley Montagu, in "Man: His First Million Years".

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It was very interesting to see you reject Derek Nelson's fears of dictatorship arising from a socialist state by casually saying that we need simply "see that it doesn't materialize". On the other hand, judging from such things as your replies to my letters, you seem to think that every government acknowledgement of religion should be fought as Creeping Theocracy. (Federal aid to education, medical care for the aged, and other "socialistic" programs which are advocated by liberals do not entail the endangering of legitimate individual rights. It is true that such measures may contribute to the increase in government power in certain areas, but this alone is not particularly dangerous. So long as constitutional guarantees are unrestricted by such measures, they are not apt to lead to a dictatorship. Government recognition and promotion of various religious sects seriously endangers the civil liberties of those citizens who do not happen to belong to the sects in question. In addition, there is this distinction: the advantages of welfare measures in terms of human comfort and life far outweigh the relatively unimportant heightening of government power; the risk, in other words, is offset by the gain. There is, on the other hand, no apparent advantage for the civil community in the promotion of religion, whereas there is a significant degree of disadvantage.)

The fact that more than one group claims to know the will of God does not necessarily mean that none of them are right (unless you accept the dogma that God does not exist). It means that if you want to know the will of God, you must examine the evidence which the various groups put forth to justify their claims to see if any of them actually can do so. The Catholic Church can. (Every religious sect in existence has the evidence to justify its claim to knowledge as to what constitutes the will of God. You assert emphatically that the Catholic Church possesses this knowledge, a Methodist asserts with equal vigor that his faith possesses this knowledge, a Hindu that his does, and so on. All of these claims are, in the final analysis, based on unprovable assump-

tions, and therefore all are equally valid (or equally invalid). One may be objectively valid, of course, but there is no way to be certain that this is true, or, if so, which claim is valid. In saying that your moral code is based on the will of God, you are actually saying that it is based on what you believe to be the will of God--that is, what you believe to be right. This is as it should be; all moral codes are based on what the holder believes to be right, whether he be a Catholic, a Buddhist, or an atheist. When two individuals assert diametrically opposing views, both claiming divine authority, at least one must be in error--perhaps both. This is why recourse to "the will of God" is useless in any argument. Much the same difficulty applies to any premises which are intuitively perceived and consequently unprovable, including my own: I believe these premises are valid, just as you believe that yours are valid, but I can't prove it; neither can you.))

One objection you have to my suggestion for just and equally distributed aid to education is that it would increase the pressure on children to adopt the religion of their parents. Yet in #42 you say that the ideal education would be given by the child's parents. Surely this would maximize parental influence over the child's religion. Unless, of course, you wish to say that anyone who still believed in God would not meet your standard of being intellectually capable of the task. ((It was made clear that my proposed educational system would not indoctrinate children in any dogma whatsoever. Each child would be allowed to decide for himself his religious affiliation or lack thereof when he reached the age at which this was possible. Any parent who refused to observe this minimum standard of objectivity would not qualify as a teacher. Of course, this would probably include most parents, but the concept was, after all, the "ideal", and hence admittedly improbable.))

The prospects of my suggestion being adopted are not as bad as you seem to think. A number of foreign countries, even some with established state religions, have programs of reasonably fair aid to all schools. Adequate voter education could bring this about in the United States as well. ((Incidentally, how is it possible to fairly aid all private/religious schools? If the aid were given on the basis of need (i.e., the number of schools operated by each sect), the bulk of it would go to Catholic schools--clearly a preferential move. On the other hand, if each group or sect seeking to establish and operate schools received exactly the same amount of assistance, this would plainly favor the smaller groups. The only genuinely "fair" method of aid would seem to be for the government to insure that each sect had the same number of schools serving the same number of pupils, which is not acceptable to me (on the grounds of government control) and which would certainly be unacceptable to most theists.))

You reject my parallel between the flag salute, from which a parent who objects on grounds of conscience, such as a Jehovah's Witness, may have his children excused and a school prayer from which a parent who objects on grounds of conscience, such as Madalyn Murray, may have his children excused. You say you would object to the flag salute "if the federal government issued a proclamation implying that anyone who failed to salute the flag was un-American." Yet, in your reply to Derek Nelson, you describe the "social compulsion" which you say works against the freedom of a child to refuse to pray. In your description, you make no mention of a proclamation by the federal government. Does not the refusal of a child to salute the flag in class run counter to the standards of his fellow students every bit as much as a refusal to pray? ((You are correct; I withdraw the qualifying remarks. The flag salute should be removed from the public schools since it is, de facto, compulsory--by social coercion, if not by law.)) My other two examples were meant more as reductio ad absurdum than as serious suggestions, so

I will make just one point. I had in mind primarily the sale of meat dished in school cafeterias. These meals are subsidized by government funds and prepared by government employees. Clearly then, the government preference is being given to one position. (And those parents who want their children to eat meat can give them meat at home!) (If the eating of meat were compulsory, or if any coercion against non-meat eaters were involved, I would oppose such an arrangement. Since this is not the case, however, I find nothing objectionable in the situation. Incidentally, the mere fact that government-subsidized school cafeterias serve meat does not constitute a preferential attitude, so long as vegetables are also served and the individual student is guaranteed a completely free choice as to what he should eat.)

Dave Mason's description of Southerners is similar to a racial bigot's description of Negroes. In both cases the characteristics of some members of a group are attributed to the entire group. Only the pejoratives have been changed to include different innocents.

Katherine Hulan: While it is true that we share some of the effects of original sin, we do not commit it. It was committed only once. The catechism you quote identifies actual sin, which you mention, as sin "which we ourselves commit". Since no mention was made in the quotation I questioned of the kind of sins which were supposedly being committed in ignorance, I did not distinguish between mortal and venial sin. Both are deliberate. It did occur to me that someone might bring up the distinction between what theologians call "formal" and "material" sin, but even that does not affect my statement. Considering the ordinary, non-technical usage of the phrase "to commit sin", I think my objections to the alleged quotation are still valid. I don't see why you accuse anyone of "speaking with a forked tongue" when I pointed out these discrepancies as evidence that the news coverage of the incident in question was garbled.

"We may define 'faith' as a firm belief in something for which there is no evidence. Where there is evidence, no one speaks of 'faith'. We do not speak of faith that two and two are four or that the earth is round. We only speak of faith when we wish to substitute emotion for evidence." --Bertrand Russell, in "Human Society in Ethics and Politics".

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Re your comments on education: You should have limited your topic enough to permit a stab at a searching analysis; that is, instead of spouting off in sixteen directions at once, you should have devoted a column to a single specific aspect of the problem. Your failure to do so resulted in at least one glaring error: Just what is the "distinction" that you hold in regard to homogeneous grouping? It simply is not covered anywhere in the article! (This referred to the idea of basing the classes on capacity as determined by experience, and relying less on tests of various sorts--which turned out to be not very distinctive at all.)

Anyone who is familiar with the field of education has heard all about homogeneous grouping, particularly its defects. Nevertheless, I think there is a crying need for it. To illustrate, let me relate a couple of true horror stories from my high school. I had the misfortune to sit in a heterogeneous class in solid geometry that turned into a nightmare of forced, uncontrolled homogeneous grouping. The class had the usual quota of "Duh! Who, me?" football players, a handful of the average, five students who were interested in music and art but were

taking the course on command of their parents, and eight students who could have passed the final examination the day they walked in. Moreover, the teacher hadn't taught the course in over eight years. By the end of three weeks he was ready to pull his hair out! The "brights" were getting an "A" on all his tests, but were not doing the dull homework; the rest were already a week behind, and showed by their tests that they didn't understand what they had covered. Worse, the "brights" persisted in asking questions that were over the heads of the rest and occasionally--horrors!--beyond the teacher. Since he was forced to segregate the bright pupils, he searched for something for them to do--and failed. In the end, he permitted these eight to turn around in their desks and play chess...

Horror story #2: This same class then marched in lockstep to a class in physics. Here the teacher didn't believe in ability grouping in any form. The result? The "brights" dawdled through and got a "B" for not turning in homework, while the rest of the class progressed through four weeks of training in the use of the slide rule before they ever got to physics, and then the class ran out of time after finishing the Ohm's Law, only halfway through the textbook. Is it any wonder that these students will find college physics difficult when their background is equivalent to eighth-grade science?

Thus, we see two extremes, and surely the best path leads between them. It is our duty to resolve the problems that are inherent in ability grouping--for the sake of all.

I am certain that we can find a way to equate the "B" of the student in advanced physics with the "A" of the one in regular physics. There must be a way to prevent the formation of intellectual cliques. If only we can keep the misled followers of Dewey and Kilpatrick from leading us down the path to oblivion in education for the masses. For, you see, the masses are asses! Maybe professional educators think that Rickover and men like him are fools, but these same "educators" were idiotic enough to make the following statement in their official accreditation report on my school: "There is far too much emphasis on academics in this school!" This, in the very school that gave birth to the situations related above, not to mention other gross deficiencies in the basic educational curriculum.

I emphatically agree with your essay on courage; in fact, there are a number of people I know who hold this opinion. For example, in talking to an ex-Marine friend, I recall his comment to the effect that "Most of those who really had guts were scared out of their wits! The war 'hero' was generally some damn fool who didn't understand the danger and hence soon got his head blown off."

Not only is our musical technician, Bill Christian, literal-minded, he doesn't even have a clear understanding of the nature of hypnosis. Hypnosis is not necessarily a state of dulled perception. If the subject is told to concentrate on a musical performance, he will probably be even more aware of the technique of delivery than the average. I, too, obtain a transcendental emotional reaction to music. Nevertheless, as a performer myself, I can assure Bill that getting involved in the emotional context of the music is essential to a good performance, and that it heightens the awareness of the technicalities. A performance can't be perfect unless you are aware; whether it be Bach or Brubeck, you will find that an emotional involvement in the music can result in even the tiniest error becoming obvious, even painful.

I sincerely hope that Charles Wells is not a Catholic; if he is, he is suffering under some grave misconceptions of dogma. A Catholic cannot commit a sin if he does not believe that the action or thought involved was sinful. He is not required to confess this action, though he might do so out of repentance when he is informed that it is a sin.

I am an agnostic, leaning towards atheism, but twelve years of brain-washing in a Catholic School drove that concept into my mind. The only quasi-exception to this is Original Sin, which is believed to be inherited. You might ask, how does the Church hope to require you to lead a moral life, if you don't sin unless you believe it is a sin. The answer is simple to our quick-witted theologians: (1) You are required, under pain of mortal sin, to "believe" all that the Church teaches in matters of religion; (2) the Church is very explicit as to what constitutes sin and to what degree; (3) regardless of what you say you believed, you "believed" what the Church said, and thus any action contrary to their wishes is a willful sin. Neat, no? You feel that French kissing is not a sin, or at most a venial sin; the Church says it is a mortal sin; thus, when you French kiss, you commit a mortal sin, irregardless of your true beliefs.

"If a clergyman, or a church group, or a religious person, speaking explicitly from the basis of his religion, should deal with public affairs, this creates either an awe or an anger that is unjustified: an assumption that the pronouncements necessarily have some elevated authority, or an assumption that they illegitimately claim such authority. A radio program that tries to relate Christian faith and ethics to current affairs must contend with the assumption on the part of the listeners that it is claiming to speak for God, the Church, or some high religious authority; that the participants might be speaking only for themselves, but endeavoring to relate their speaking to their religious faith and tradition, is not accepted as a possibility by many in the listening public. A journal of Christian opinion has a difficult time explaining that it knows it is only a journal and does not claim to be the authoritative voice of some Christian body." --William Lee Miller, in "The Churches and the Public".

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My ideological position is the much-misunderstood one of Libertarianism. From some basic principles, I have attempted to work out a system of organization for a Utopian Libertarian society, which I try to test for flaws and loopholes by arguing it against various opposing right- and left-wing views. I also attempt to apply these principles to the contemporary political situation, with the result that I rarely find people who agree with me on more than one or two things. For example, on the matter of civil rights, my opinions cut vertically across a spectrum divided horizontally into Liberal and Conservative. So I can't really consider myself as belonging to either camp.

Up to a month ago, I was nominally a conservative, though I had several disagreements with the more orthodox right-wingers. I thought it ironic that racists like Eastland and Thurmond who don't whisper a word against state laws compelling private establishments to operate on a segregated basis have suddenly become strong defenders of property rights now that there is a danger that these rights will be violated by the President's bill. My real break with Organized Conservatism came when I saw, in the July 2nd issue of National Review, an article in which Madalyn Murray was libelled and insulted. I agree with Mrs. Murray, but more than that, I was disgusted at the language National Review used. That article resulted in an angry letter from me, and in the loss of all respect which I had for NR.

—THE HARP THAT ONCE OR TWICE...concluded—

worrying thing to hear from America, which already seems to us Europeans to have the most belligerent population in the world. He says that he and Heinlein do not advocate war. I know they don't, not in so many words: they just say it's inevitable. That's all the doctors said about "childbed fever" when Simmelweiss tried to make them stop it by washing their hands. This sincere, practical, realist opinion killed thousands of mothers and babies.

--Walter A. Willis

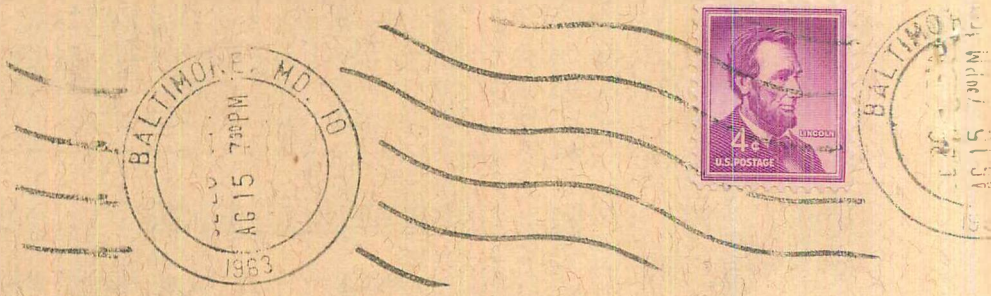
CLOSING NOTES:

Letters and notes are also on hand from Carl Lazarus, John Boardman, Jay Lynch, Mark Owings, Richard Mikkelson, E.E. Evers, and Hal Curtis. Mike Deckinger and Vic Ryan will appear next issue.

A word of explanation as to the esoteric symbols in the upper right of the address box: A number is the number of the last issue you will receive under present circumstances; the letter "T" indicates that we exchange periodicals; "S" means that this is a sample copy; and the absence of any sign whatsoever means that you receive this issue because your name is mentioned (slightly) herein or I owe you a letter or because I have a soft spot in my ~~head~~ heart for you...

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