THE ENVIRONMENT OF FREEDOM by HOLLEY CANTINE

PACIFISM AND REVOLUTION by FRANK TRIEST

POEMS by DACHINE-RAINER

LONDON LETTER by GEORGE WOODCOCK

SPRING 1946

VOL 3 NO 2
RETORT

A QUARTERLY OF SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY AND THE ARTS
VOLUME 3 NO. 2 SPRING, 1946
Editors: Holley Cantine and Dachine Rainer

EDITORIALS
THE ENVIRONMENT OF FREEDOM Holley Cantine
PACIFISM AND REVOLUTION Frank Triest
THE CRIMINALS OF PEACE Alexandra Mazurova
L'INTERNATIONALE Eugene Pottier
LONDON LETTER George Woodcock
THE DANCE Dinsmore Wheeler
POEMS Dachine Rainer
BOOKS Robert Neil, Dachine Rainer
RECORDS

The views of contributors to RETORT do not necessarily coincide with those of the Editors.

RETORT, Box 7, Bearsville, N.Y.
Single Copies: 25c, Subscription: $1.00 a year (four numbers) Canada: $1.15 Foreign: $1.25. Handset and hand-printed by voluntary labor. Retort does not pay for contributions. Manuscripts must be accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelopes.
BEWARE OF YOUR "FRIENDS"

Carlo Tresca was an anarcho-syndicalist of strong principles. He was not a union bureaucrat, an ex-mayor of N.Y. City, a police official. Nor were these his friends. Yet these were the commemorators at the recent memorial meeting 3 years after the death of Tresca.

During these years the myth of Tresca has been elaborated to include in his eulogy 'the friend of man.' Alfred E. Smith was the 'friend of man'. All politicians are. Tresca was an enemy of the state, an enemy of the enslavers of men.

The following is a partial list of the speakers:

Ex-Mayor LaGuardia
State Industrial Commissioner Edward Corsi
Rose Pesotta of the ILG
Assistant Attorney General Lipsky

It is necessary to insist that these men were his enemies—that between their capitulation and their exploitation of the resources of men and Tresca's struggle for the freedom of men no friendship could exist.

Neither the desire for vengeance, nor the sentimental wishes expressed by Giovannitti that Tresca is in the company of George Washington, Roosevelt and Lenin in heaven are tolerable respects to pay to an anarchist.

What is required is a dedication to the principles of a free society and an uncompromising warfare against the obstacles of class society and the State. We regret that our enemies now include his 'friends.'
THE ENVIRONMENT OF FREEDOM

HOLLEY CANTINE

One of the primary goals of the radical movement has always been the freedom of the individual. The concept of freedom, however, is capable of being interpreted in a number of different ways, and the various schools of radical thought have never been able to reach agreement about what constitutes freedom, and still less concerning the way in which it is to be attained.

At one extreme are the economic determinists, who conceive of freedom—as, for that matter, they conceive of everything else—as a byproduct of a high material standard of living. Freedom for them is essentially 'freedom from want', or more precisely, 'freedom from work'. According to their conception, man is free when he does not have to devote more than a very minor fraction of his time to physical labor—his chief enemy is nature, which he must enslave and put to work in order to 'liberate' himself from toil. Once this has been accomplished, and the technological resources of society stand in relation to all men as the working class now stands in relation to the leisure class, man will at last enter the realm of complete freedom, where he will fill his extensive leisure with pursuit of art and science. Until then, anything that contributes to the increase of the technological resources—at present the great panacea is atomic energy—no matter how much it may interfere with concrete freedom in the present, is a necessary step in the direction of the ultimate liberation of mankind.

At the opposite extreme is the philosophy of naturalism, as exemplified by such thinkers as Tolstoi and Gandhi, who see freedom as an outgrowth of an organic way of life, and who would therefore do away with most of the technological advances of the past few centuries, and return mankind to a simple peasant economy, integrated with nature, and thereby achieve the inner strength that is the basis for freedom. This school of thought finds expression today among many socialist pacifists, and in a slightly altered form, in the sex-economy theories of Wilhelm Reich.

THE ENVIRONMENT OF FREEDOM

In most respects, these two extreme positions are diametrically opposed to one another, but there are some ways in which they are very similar. Both of them assume that nature is exemplified by an essentially animal existence, unreflective and unintellectual, and that civilization is completely antithetical to this. Further, they both assume that freedom is a byproduct of the proper material environment, almost as a reflex action. Both seek to 'liberate' man from what they believe to be a hostile environment, and think that as a consequence of this he will automatically become free.

In their criticisms of each other, both of these two viewpoints are frequently capable of making valid points, although they are usually too biased to be able to see the entire picture. Thus, the machine cultists are undoubtedly correct in their contention that man cannot be considered truly free when his time must be devoted to an unending struggle for a bare existence; while the nature-worshippers are equally accurate in pointing out that industrial society has regimented the majority of the workers, making them mere extensions of the Machine, and has thereby deprived them of freedom in a more devastating manner than any previous system. Neither of them are willing, however, to pay much attention to the criticisms of the other, contenting themselves with pointing out defects, and drawing the superficially obvious conclusion that their own position must be therefore correct. The issue, as they are inclined to see it, is total industrialization versus a complete return to nature; they both think in terms of unilinear progress, but advocate opposite termini of the Historical Railroad Line. That there might exist other alternatives which embody some of the features of both of their systems, they do not care to recognize.

II

The concept that freedom is a corollary of abundance, and therefore can only become universal in a highly developed economic system, is an aspect of the general nineteenth century theory of progress. According to this hypothesis, freedom is essentially the ability to engage in creative work in the arts and sciences, and the chief limiting factor to freedom is the necessity of laboring long hours at menial tasks. The minds of primitive peoples and peasants are considered to be completely enslaved by

※ See 'The Myth of Automatic Progress' RETORT, Vol. 1, No. 3
superstition since their level of productivity is too low to permit them to spare any time for reflection and intellectual speculation. Once the material resources of mankind had increased sufficiently to permit a small number to enjoy leisure, a certain amount of intellectual curiosity began to manifest itself, and ever since, freedom has been a prerogative of the leisureed classes. The great technological developments of the industrial revolution laid the foundations for an economy in which everyone can enjoy almost unlimited leisure, and in which therefore freedom will be universal. This conception is almost invariably held by state socialists—Marxist and otherwise—although it was first elaborated by the liberal bourgeoisie.

Like most aspects of nineteenth century progressive thinking, this conception of freedom is grossly oversimplified, and to a considerable extent its emphasis on only one of the necessary conditions for freedom obscures and even contrasts a more rounded approach to the subject. It is unquestionable that leisure is closely related to freedom, but it does not at all follow from this that a highly developed technology is either necessary for leisure, or necessarily produces it. On the one hand, it is quite possible, as has been demonstrated by many primitive peoples, and by numerous individuals in more complex societies, to achieve a great degree of leisure on a low technological level, by limiting one’s material wants; and on the other, it is entirely possible that a complex industrial system might create a situation in which the production of goods becomes such an all-embracing preoccupation that leisure is utterly impossible. One has only to look at the war-economies of the industrial countries in recent years to observe the way in which the interests of production can dominate a society, and there is no guarantee that the development of the technological resources of society will ever, in itself, lead to a system that is willing to curtail production in the interests of greater leisure for all. As the labor-time required to perform certain processes is reduced by improved machinery, new demands can mysteriously develop or be deliberately created by those in control of the economy. If the society is one in which material wealth is the dominant preoccupation, there is quite literally no upward limit to the amount of production that can be required. It can be argued that the tendency to produce unlimited quantities of goods, without concern for their utility or necessity is a characteristic feature of capitalism, and that once industrial society is itself ‘liberated’ from capitalist property relations it will reverse this tendency and produce only for use, but there exists as yet no concrete evidence that this will actually take place, and what evidence we do possess points in the other direction. Soviet Russia has been rid of capitalist property for nearly thirty years, yet more than any other country, they are obsessed with the idea of unlimited production.

Moreover, leisure alone is not an adequate guarantee of freedom, even assuming that a stage may someday be reached when industrial society will achieve its productive saturation point. Much depends on the type of leisure and the intellectual and moral atmosphere in which it exists. The leisure of the privileged classes throughout history has seldom been employed for creative pursuits or intellectual speculation. Far more frequently it has been compulsively filled with protocol, an endless series of ‘social obligations’, sport, or simple debauchery. And whatever increased leisure industrial society has from time to time provided has not been of such a variety to conduct to much optimism on this score. Indeed, industrial society, to an ever increasing extent, demands the power to dominate not only the working hours of the individual, but his ‘free’ time as well, filling it with mindless diversions like movies and comic books, dehydrated education, and an ever more elaborate secular ritualism. Universal literacy, and a widespread attendance in universities has not resulted in a great increase in the productions of the free intellect; instead, it has degraded intellectuality, and enslaved the minds of men as completely as any savage superstition.

The concept that freedom is inherent in a state of nature is a very ancient one and is present in many of the major theologies from the Garden of Eden myth of the Old Testament to the Tao of Lao-Tze: Its current vogue, however, is largely among those intellectuals who have become disillusioned with the fruits of the Century of Progress, and have, in their rejection of the theory that technological progress is the basis of all good things, gone to the opposite extreme.

The fundamental assumption of this belief is that there is a way of life that is natural for humanity to follow—a way of life that is instinctual and intuitive like that of the lower animals
logical patterns, which, if duplicated elsewhere, would produce similar results. For example, the free sexual behavior of the children and adolescents in the Trobriand Islands is sometimes cited as the reason why these people have such a well-integrated and non-authoritarian culture, and the conclusion is drawn that if only this society would adopt the Trobriand Island pattern of sex education it would rapidly get rid of its social tensions and authoritarian behavior patterns, and become as free and harmonious as theirs. One has only to examine the culture of the inhabitants of the neighboring island of Dobu, to discover that this theory is rather drastically oversimplified. The Dobuans have the identical sexual institutions as the Trobrianders, but in every other respect their culture is dissimilar, being thoroughly unharmonious and vicious. The Dobuans, in fact, virtually alone among Pacific Islanders, found life on the slave-labor plantations of the white imperialists so much more satisfactory than their own 'natural' way, that they never made any effort to escape.

Even those primitives whose social institutions were completely free and harmonious were not impervious to corruption and eventual destruction when confronted with a new situation for which they were psychologically unprepared. The Eskimos, for example, whose way of life might well serve as a model for a libertarian society, and whose adjustment to the physical environment was so nearly perfect that white explorers who visited their region largely adopted Eskimo techniques as superior to anything in their own heritage, proved, in most instances, incapable of resisting the attractions of western materialism when it was introduced to them by the fur traders, and permitted themselves to be enslaved and their culture largely destroyed before they realized their mistake. Superficially, it might appear that their old way of life must have been inferior to that offered them by the traders or else they would not have abandoned it, but a closer examination of the situation reveals that they were rather the victims of a monstrous fraud, which they lacked the sophistication to penetrate in advance. The Eskimos believed—and were encouraged in their belief by the fur traders—that they could take only what was good from the whites, and retain their own institutions and values (in a few places, in fact, they have actually succeeded in doing this) but for the most part they got themselves so deeply involved in obligations to the trading post—obligations which they could not fully understand
because of their very elementary knowledge of arithmetic, but which the deep sense of social responsibility which is part of their cultural tradition would not let them repudiate—that they found it impossible to continue their old life of hunting and fishing, which provided them with adequate food and clothing, but not with the ‘valuable’ furs which the white men demanded in return for their commodities. They had therefore to become trappers of luxury furs—which unfortunately belong to species which are of little value for food—and thus became dependent on the trading post not only for the few articles like needles and rifles which they could not produce for themselves and which did greatly improve their ability to cope with the environment, but for sustenance as well. Similar examples could be cited from virtually all of the areas where primitive man has come in contact with western commercial civilization.

An intelligent libertarianism can learn a great deal about socially harmonious free institutions from the more or less accidental creations in this field that primitive peoples have achieved, but it cannot afford to make the mistake of assuming that the primitive, unconscious quality of these institutions is worthy of imitation, as many of the back-to-nature philosophers frequently maintain. The fact that these societies have proven to be so easily corruptible under the impact of the material temptations of western imperialism indicates that ‘nature’ alone is insufficient to guarantee that healthy institutions will survive, and that an element of self-consciousness and sophistication is essential to prevent them from being undermined and eventually destroyed by superficially attractive alternatives. The savage, like the wild animal, to a large extent lacks the ability to evaluate the results of adopting a new course of action. He can be induced to commit himself to obligations whose full consequences he cannot possibly understand, if the bait is sufficiently alluring. Societies that remained free and healthy only as long as they were not tempted by unscrupulous traders and slavers, or by well-meaning but short-sighted missionaries, are not a satisfactory model for building a new social system, unless care is taken to avoid the defects in understanding which brought about their destruction.

It is the chief characteristic of true social maturity that the probable consequences of a course of action are examined and that one steers clear of actions which are likely to have undesirable consequences. We have undoubtedly a long way to go before we can say with complete assurance exactly what course of action will prove most satisfactory in all respects, but we would be foolish in the extreme if we should turn our backs on the lessons already learned, and, by raising spontaneity and unconscious choice to a principle, attempt to change society without making full use of the critical faculty and empirical observation. The values of an intuitive and instinctual way of life cannot outweigh the disadvantage that too much reliance on the instincts makes it impossible to function on a high enough level of awareness to be able to guard against corrupting influences.

IV

To both the economic determinists and the naturalists, freedom is something of an afterthought, an additional benefit of the proper environmental conditions, which however, are chiefly desirable for other reasons. To the former, freedom is one of the end-products of an economy which provides leisure and material abundance for all; it consists primarily of the ability to engage in cultural activities, and while the importance of such activities is frequently stressed, they are considered distinctly secondary to material well-being. To the latter, freedom results from living a life close to nature and in accordance with basic instinctual drives; it consists essentially of the ability to resist domination by external authority, which is obviously of very great importance, but only as a means of preserving the good society from destruction; the paramount values of this society are contentment and emotional stability.

Both of these definitions of freedom are incomplete, and somewhat patronizing. They both suggest that man is chiefly an animal, whose appetites—for either material possessions or instinctual gratification—take precedence over everything else. Moreover, both of them are too preoccupied with the satisfaction of these appetites to be able to provide an adequate basis for any kind of freedom. Leisure, and at least enough material security to prevent anxiety about the satisfaction of elementary physical needs, are undoubtedly primary prerequisites for freedom, but both of them can very well exist in a thoroughly regimented society—they are not infrequently to be found in prison, for example. Likewise, the satisfaction of instinctual drives—at least to the extent required to prevent the individual from succumbing to neurotic compulsions
to dominate others or submit to domination—cannot be ignored in any serious consideration of the conditions for freedom, but it also is no guarantee of freedom. Far too many primitive peoples who possessed, to the highest possible degree, the gratification of their instinctual needs have been enslaved and their societies destroyed by the temptations and lures of western imperialism (quite apart from those who perished as a result of physical attack) to permit an objective observer to retain much confidence in the ability of instinctually satisfied but naive people to remain free under pressure.

A truly free society must, of course, satisfy the animal needs of man, both material and psycho-physiological, but it must do much more than this. Starting from the assumption that freedom is itself a fundamental human need—a need that can be denied for considerable intervals to most individuals, but not without seriously damaging their personality—it must cultivate an outlook that values freedom for itself, as a specifically human quality. Animals in the wild state seem to possess in some measure the urge to be free, but once domesticated, they almost invariably become well adjusted to captivity, and after a few generations—provided their appetites for food, sex and companionship are taken care of—are able to put up with conditions of enslavement that are almost completely unnatural—witness the cows in a modern model dairy, for instance—without suffering or rebelling. Man, however, perhaps as the result of his more complex nervous system, cannot adjust so perfectly to enslavement; he can ultimately become outwardly apathetic and resigned, but the wish for eventual freedom seldom dies out altogether, and may manifest itself suddenly and violently even in life-term convicts and individuals who were born into chattel slavery. Moreover, those individuals who possess the greatest amount of the qualities which differentiate man most sharply from the other animals—creative ability and intellectual curiosity—are also those who have the strongest desire for freedom, and are frequently willing to endure great physical hardships and instinctual deprivations in order to attain it.

It follows therefore that a society which is sincerely interested in extending and preserving freedom, both in order to protect itself from being destroyed or corrupted by external forces, and because it recognizes the human importance of the urge itself, should place the highest value on the cultivation of the intellect, encouraging learning, the development of the critical faculty, and creative activity on the part of everyone from earliest childhood. This does not mean that the extension of formal education is of any particular value: on the contrary, the type of schooling in punctuality and obedience that is the main feature of most formal education is the direct antithesis of what is needed for freedom. We need a new kind of education, without regular classes or hours of study, which permits the student to learn things for himself by participating in various activities, and which emphasizes the role of art, and creative speculation, as basic factors in the development of a free personality. The creative impulses of small children, instead of being deadened by routine school-work, or rendered passive by the present-day emphasis on art 'appreciation' rather than actual creation of art by the majority of people, should be strengthened, whenever possible, by providing children with the facilities for creation and an atmosphere free from direct or indirect coercion. Today only those children whose creative impulse is especially strong—the reason for which is still to be determined—manage to remain creative after they reach maturity, and thereby retain some capacity for free living. The libertarian goal is to permit everyone to develop to the point that only these few individuals attain in existing society.

WE STILL HAVE SOME COPIES OF THE FOLLOWING BACK ISSUES:

VOL 1, NO 3
'The Myth of Automatic Progress' by Holley Cantine
'The Doukhobors' by Ammon Hennacy

VOL 2, NO 4
'Eric Gill' by Herbert Read
'London Letter' by George Woodcock
'Conscription and the State': Don Calhoun vs Holley Cantine

VOL 3, NO 1
'On Treason against Natural Societies' by Paul Goodman
'Can Democracy be Socialized' by Arthur W. Calhoun

50c per copy
PACIFISM AND REVOLUTION

FRANK TRIEST

Among the casualties of the present world war series have been the traditional pacifist and traditional socialist-revolutionary movements. Nothing vital remains except their traditions: both have come to an impasse. The former perhaps because it could not recognize and carry out its revolutionary implications, the latter perhaps because it could not recognize and adopt methods compatible with its goals.

It is more than likely that a verbal rapprochement between a small element of pacifists and revolutionists has come about by a positive reaction to the growing ineffectuality of their respective movements. The traditional organizations with which the pacifist and the revolutionist each have been connected have become spiritually impoverished and socially insignificant. These movements seem as incapable of discarding theories and practices which no longer function, as they are incapable of regarding the fact that, if the justification for their existence remains entirely in the past, their present acts contribute nothing positive for the future. The increasing numbers separating themselves from, or already independent of these organizations, who are gradually recognizing that they have some things in common, encourages the speculation that the pacifist and the revolutionist might even someday become indistinguishable. In regard to this speculation two thoughts might be considered: 1) that social-revolutionary ideas are explicit in the conduct of all pacifists, and 2) that non-violent methods of solving social conflicts are the only ones compatible with the ideals of the social revolutionist.

The first idea concerns the fact that the pacifist’s opposition to war today takes place within the framework of a system which needs war or the possibility of war to sustain itself. And to approach his ideal of a world free from organized killing, the pacifist must throw his weight toward changing that system. The second idea concerns the fact that organized violence is one of the means, and social injustices the result of the capitalist system. And to approach his ideal of an equitable society, the social-revolutionist cannot adopt the same means which perpetuate the injustices of a system which he wishes to eliminate.

That the creative potential of the pacifist might come more from his concern with the realities of life and belief than from his concern with material progress and immediate demonstrable fact, does not deny that it is expressed and communicated by worldly acts within the social framework. On the part of some pacifists, however, there seems to be an attempt to seek a vacuum within which their activities might be freed from any worldly or social implications; war is looked upon as an isolated phenomenon, politically and economically unrelated to social processes. But war today is not so uniquely a separated event; it is merely the most overt, violent, and logically extended expression of fundamental assumptions of the modern authoritarian State. Our present capitalist-industrialism maturing into Statism generates the social injustices on which it feeds; it is a system in which war and the hatred between class, race and nation become necessities. Regardless of how the pacifist’s beliefs are arrived at, theoretically none of them sanction these social injustices. Explicit in some, and implicit in all pacifists’ attitudes is a social philosophy radically at variance to the status quo.

While it cannot be said that our present politico-economic system is the basic cause of war and hatreds, it can be said that it is the occasion today in which the causes are set in motion. To remove the causes it is also necessary at the same time to prevent their occasion. If pacifism, in the modest definition of one pacifist means “... the deliberate refusal to support the organized killing known as war”, and its “goal is to abolish organized killing”, it cannot retain that meaning or start toward that goal without the deliberate struggle to gain both the objective and subjective conditions which would prevent the occasion of war. Pacifists must focus their attention on a wider area than the battlefield. What takes place exteriorly on international battlefields is but the extension of what takes place interiorly elsewhere.
— the extension of national politico-economic patterns as well as the extension of individual behavior patterns. War is the logical continuum of national responsibilities and individual irresponsibility.

Paradoxically the highly nationalized contemporary State at constant warfare transcends its nationalism by conducting war against all men. Pacifists must rise above their nationalism; if war is the enemy of the pacifist, so is the sovereign nation which conducts war. The nationalized political State and the community of human beings are not necessarily identical; loyalty to both are impossible today. The continued and emphatic demand on the part of some conscientious objectors for 'work of national importance' in lieu of service in the armed forces is not accidental. It might indicate their blindness to the fact that the most fitting place to do such work is exactly in the armed forces. Or it might be that such expressions innocently partake of the same disintegration and moral short-circuiting as reflected in the type of statement as the following made by 'pacifists' to whom the State has "given consideration and allowed a form of cooperation" and who obligingly indulged themselves by helping to administer a law of peacetime military conscription for the duration and six months thereafter: "The participation of the American Friends Service Committee in Civilian Public Service does not imply its approval of conscription. We continue to believe that the entire war system, including its conscription of the lives and services of men, is morally wrong."

Mere emotional and ideological opposition to war hardly describes pacifism. Whenever it takes action in conformance with its ideas it is made felt in objective situations, and is, in varying degrees, in conflict with the contemporary State. This action, particularly during wartime, takes on the quality of disobedience and disloyalty to the State. Pacifism becomes an empty word if it remains on the questionable level of mere criticism of the status quo. Aiming at a 'cooperative' opposition to a system in which lying and killing are not only legalized and popularized as necessities but are invested with moral purposes, pacifism can do no more than an attitude of impassioned tolerance which borders on sheer hypocrisy. Aiming at the elimination of war, pacifism can do no less than also aim at the elimination of Statism. It can no longer afford the respectable excitement nor the luxury of reforming the State—it must face the responsibility of helping to bring about a radical change. Pacifism in action today is revolutionary.

The immediate political meaning of the pacifist's refusal to cooperate with any National Military Training and Service Act lies in his challenging the State's power and right to conscript its citizens for purposes of war. In his opposition to the State, the pacifist meets the social-revolutionist in a common political activity. But neither the pacifist nor the revolutionist ought to be content to restrict themselves to a mere political activity. The opposition to the State in both cases extends beyond a political relevance only if it is consciously directed toward eliminating the State, not toward reforming it or controlling it.

The argument has been put forth that the duty of the revolutionary pacifist is "to seek control of society in order to aid in its transformation" (Mulford Sibley); that this control resides in his ability to replace those who are now in power; and that individual war resistance must give way to mass war resistance. Although the insistence in the above argument is that power must be principled and non-violent, the underlying emphasis is on the power to prevent war. It apparently assumes that if a violent minority in power can start a war, then likewise a non-violent minority can stop a war if it has enough power. The same argument has been put forth many times in the past regarding the social-revolutionist; although in this case attention is given more to tactics than principles, and non-violence is not insisted upon. But the emphasis is also on the control of society in order to change it—i.e. control of the State to gain the power to build socialism, or as it might be said, the power to prevent capitalism.

If a minority wishes to control a situation it must not only hold power but it must be organized. And the development of its organizational structure will follow inevitably the logic inherent in the existing authoritarian world order in which it takes place. The means at the disposal of an organized minority who wish to prevent war will be essentially the same as those at the disposal of any other organized minority. The minority in power with its good intentions of stopping war (or building socialism) would be, as any other group in power, careful to be composed of the 'right' and rid of the 'wrong' kind of people. By the time they 'control society' they will have more in common with the minority they
continued as a transformation of their personal likes and dislikes, of their outlook on life and their values, and only the accumulation of such individual changes will produce a collective solution." (Carl Jung).

The pacifist and the social-revolutionist cannot afford to place their values under protective custody of formal organizations; the values in which they believe must be lived out personally. If opposition to the State is directed toward controlling it, it can never go beyond a mere political relevance nor go beyond the success of a organized machine. Activity cannot be focused exclusively on politico-economic situations. It must include a rejection of the entire basis of modern civilization. It must include an opposition to the predominant philosophies of practical materialism and enlightened rationalism which replace a reverence for life with a theory of automatic world progress. It includes an opposition to any system by which means can be justified in terms of intended ends. The acceptance of this materialism with its particular emphasis on intelligent service and control leads to an instrumentalism through which values and principles become subordinated to techniques. The intellectual concentration in practice is directed to the so-called progressive improvement of techniques, means, tactics; and the concern with ends, values, and principles is merely emotional. This in turn leads to the justification of any activity simply because it is action and is result.

Although this instrumentalism has been less applicable to the related end-means concept of the individual pacifist then to the social-revolutionist, it is nevertheless applicable to both the traditional pacifist and traditional revolutionary movements. Both movements have developed into rigid proportions of formal organization, and institutionally neither are free from the process of subordinating principles to techniques. These organizations, whether pacifist or revolutionary, once having gained a mediun of success tend to forget their original aims while concentrating on the means of self-preservation. They usually accomplish this with the help of slogans and in the name of Unity, the Proletariat, or the Divine Spirit. At this stage they seem unable to judge their achievements in reference to the objectives for which they were organized; action tends to be adjusted for organizational longevity.

There has been no real disagreement between the individual
pacifist and revolutionist that a better world—a more equitable society—is a goal toward which to work. But in considering how, the pacifist has stressed the means by requiring them to be consistent with the ends he seeks; action for him becomes more a matter of principle. The social-revolutionist has stressed the ends by requiring them to be equitable enough to justify his means—means which need not be consistent with the ends he seeks; action for him becomes more a matter of tactics. Social justice for the pacifist is a principle on which to act now. For the social revolutionist it has been more a form with which to characterize the social organization he wishes to achieve.

Pacifists have always given importance to methods of nonviolence. Although non-violence is indubitably a part of pacifism, it is as incorrect to speak of a pacifist solely in terms of non-violence as it is to speak of non-violence strictly in terms of pacifism. Non-violence as well as violence can be an instrument to bring about harm. Non-violence as related to the pacifist has value, but its value does not reside in itself as a technique. The value lies in the causal relation, the requirement it has with the idea of social justice. Not the absence of conflicts but the absence of organized violence to solve conflicts is a minimum requirement of a just society.

Toward the end of her life as a revolutionist Emma Goldman was reported to have said that “the most pernicious idea in that the end justified the means. Eventually the means became the end and the end continues to recede.” Today Dwight Macdonald notes that “. . . after our experience with the bureaucratic degeneration of the Bolshevik revolutionary movement, radicals must be more concerned about individual morality, than they have been in the past.” If the social-revolutionist continues his concern with individual conduct, might he not require non-violence to be the means appropriate to his ends? A revolutionary movement which goes deeper into “human behavior and human values,” becoming more concerned with individual responsibility, and a pacifist movement which goes deeper into the politico-economic aspects of the world, becoming more aware of its revolutionary rôle, have eventually a common meeting ground. Pacifists must be revolutionary, and the social revolutionists must be pacifist today in order to communicate the values in which both believe.

THE CRIMINALS OF PEACE

ALEXANDRA MAZUROVA

As the ‘Criminals of War’ are paying at the gallows for committed cruelties, and victorious nations take revenge for the insults and pains they have suffered during the struggle, it seems timely to ask how much analysis was done by those who have coined the expression, ‘Criminals of War.’ To men faced by a great problem which unsolved would invite disaster, this one expression may be so misleading that the true conception of the problem might be blurred. ‘Criminals of War’ sounds strange. It is a legalised crime until people renounce the Ten Commandments, and as long as Thou shalt not kill’ and ‘Do not covet . . . are still accepted laws of God. Does war not give lea-way to cruelty? Can human beings wage war without compromise with justice? With the declaration of war does not the moral code break in two—one set of rules for ourselves and another for the enemy? Do we not condone our own cruelties committed in the interest of our cause? (Of course we say the end justifies the means but so says the enemy also.) Do we allow mercy to deter us if there is danger of defeat? Do we care what price in death and destruction our enemies pay for our victory? (Remember Nagasaki!) Would we chastise one of our own who committed the same cruelties? Have we not called renegades who came to our side patriots? Have we not harrassed the nation’s emotions and blinded its sense of mercy to make it war-minded? If so, is there a moral code of war? There are only degrees of inhumanity, lesser and greater breaches of moral laws by which men agreed to live when not at war.

It is only in terms of Peace that criminals can be judged. According to war laws, they are heros, they have done what war allows. There were times when men attempted to regulate the inhumanity of war by establishing certain traditions. That was when armies fought with armies. Now whole nations fight and suffer, not only soldiers with whom war is in some degree a profession. Now men, women and even children are also combatants, making war a lynching, an out-pouring of undisciplined, savage defense and attack.
'Criminals of War' is a term which has as little sense as 'Free love'. Anyone who has ever loved knows that love is a voluntary surrender of freedom—a delightful slavery by choice, while war is a release from moral obligations, an excuse, and even a prescribed duty to act against the laws accepted in peace. War criminals do not exist; they are 'Peace Criminals.'

Is it in the name of Peace that we chastise them? Do we really hope when sending them to the gallows as the ones 'responsible for war,' to uproot the cause of future conflicts. Obviously not, for after a total purge of 'War Criminals' new suspicions are brewing on the international scene, and fears are expressed of coming wars, this time between 'peace-and-freedom-loving nations' unable to resolve their differences peacefully. The righteous of today are suspected to become so-called 'criminals of war' tomorrow.

In view of this the present trials lose their constructive quality as a step to prevent wars and to return the world to peace-time justice. To ascribe to building of peace what actually is an aftermath of the ravages war has left in people is fallacy. Why not, instead of posing as gods of justice, admit that the mind of man, torn off its hinges by propaganda and the inhumanities of the struggle, seeks to discharge the accumulated hatred and offense, to relieve itself of its effect and to function normally in terms of peace.

To create a 'better world' by killing all 'bad men' may seem a very simple solution, provided that killing of defeated and disarmed men could ever be justified. The building of peace for all, not of power for the chosen and victorious, can begin only when men cease to deal with each other as 'enemies'; when the rights of all are once more equal, and what is bad for one is considered bad for all; when those who remember 'Pearl Harbor' do not forget Hiroshima.

In one of his early books Winston Churchill (of all persons!) said that "one who can win a war can never make a good peace." Indeed, the historical record of peace-making by victors is a sorrowful one. Probably the main reason for this lies in the fact that while industry takes time and makes efforts in reconversion from war to peace production, no process of psychological reconversion is deemed necessary to legislate peace. With war cries ringing in their ears, with imagination inflamed by experienced horrors and the rage of battle, people clamor for a deal with the defeated enemy in terms of war morals, believing that their momentary rise to power ought to be exploited for their national aggrandizement.

At the end of hostilities attention of the masses is focused on reconversion to normal material life only. No one wishes to stay an extra day in uniform, away from home. All are anxious to return to normal work and normal eating, to do without rationing and other war-time regulations, to have all the comforts of the pre-war life plus the new ones, which are always promised as compensation for the sacrifices.

While Nagasaki was still smoldering from the atomic bomb war news over the radio was interrupted by exhilarating domestic news such as: "more chicken on the market, nylon stockings for Christmas, washing machines and aluminum pots next month". No voice was ever heard announcing: "Thou shalt no longer kill", nor "Covet neither the oil of the Middle East, nor the sphere of influence in the Balkans, nor even a loan from Uncle Sam." Instead 'peacemakers' spoke of "lucky the secret of the atomic bomb is ours. We must not pass it on to the World Security Organization."

(To which solemn pledges were just being made at San Francisco!)

While war was fought common hatred bound the allies; now that the object of this common hatred no longer threatens, the tie is broken, yet the ugliness of the war make-up is not effaced from the souls of men. The animal, the cynical, the selfish creep out as no one has retooled people's minds to peace-time thinking. Trust in goodness has not been returned to men by a stroke of a pen. True the guns are silenced, strikes are back and nylon stockings, eagerly awaited gas no longer rationed (even if not always available because of labor disputes), social securities are forthcoming, plastic houses planned and helicopters discussed but the fateful problem "will people live at all" is still staring men in the face.

Now that the means of destruction are total only a true peace can save the world. Those who talk of black-mailing other nations with the secret of the atomic bomb are also and more so 'Criminals of Peace.' They wish to take a chance hoping other countries will not overtake them in discoveries. They stimulate the race 'who first' in deadly weapons, knowing that no concentration camps, no massacre of innocents in the past, could equal the catastrophe they are inviting.

What blurs their vision? How can they escape the gallows of their own conscience?
L'INTERNATIONALE

EUGÈNE POTTEIR

The verses below, set to music by Pierre De Geyter, have become, more than any other piece, the anthem of the radical movement in all parts of the world. We print them in the hope that those of our readers whose talents lie in that direction will be moved to attempt an English translation that is more in keeping with the spirit of the original than the existing version.

C'est la lutte finale:
Groupons-nous, et demain
L'Internationale
Sera le genre humain.

Debout, les damnés de la terre!
Debout, les forçats de la faim!
La raison tonne en son cratère:
C'est l'éruption de la fin.
Du passé faisons table rase:
Foule esclave, debout! Debout!
Le monde va changer de base;
Nous ne sommes rien, soyons tout!

Il n'est pas de sauveurs suprêmes:
Ni dieu, ni césar, ni tribun.
Producteurs, sauveurs-nous nous-mêmes,
Décrétons le salut commun!
Pour que le voleur rende gorge,
Pour tirer l'esprit du cachot;
Soufflons nous-mêmes notre forge,
Battons le fer quand il est chaud!

L'ÉTAT COMPRIME ET LA LOI TRICHE,
L'IMPÔT SAIGNE LE MALHEUREUX;
NUL DEVOIR NE S'IMPOSE AU RICHE,
LE DROIT DE PÂVRE EST UN MOT CROUX.
C'EST ASSEZ LANGUIR EN TUTELLE,
L'ÉGALITÉ VEUT D'AUTRES LOIS:
"PAS DE DROITS SANS DEVOIRS, DIT-ELLE;
ÉGAUX, PAS DE DEVOIRS SANS DROITS!

HIDEUX DANS LEUR APOTHÉOSE,
LES ROIS DE LA MINE ET DU RAIL
ONT-ILS JAMAIS FAIT AUTRE CHOSE
QUE DÉVALISER LE TRAVAIL?
DANS LES COFFRES-FORTS DE LA BANDE
CE QU'IL A CRÉÉ S'EST FONDU.
EN DÉCRÉANT QU'ON LE LUI RENDE
LE PEUPLE NE VEUT QUE SON DÛ.

LES ROIS NOUS SCÂLAIENT DE FUMÈES;
PAIX ENTRE NOUS, GUERRE AUX TYRANS!
APPLIQUONS LA GRÈVE AUX ARMÉES,
CROSSE EN L'AIR ET ROMPONS LES RANGS!
S'ILS OBSTINENT, CES CANNIBALES,
À FAIRE DE NOUS DES HÉROS,
ILS SAURONT BIEN TÔT QUE NOS BALLES
SONT POUR NOS PROPRES GÉNÉRAUX.

OUVRIERS, PAYSANS, NOUS SOMMES
LE GRAND PARTI DES TRAVAILLERS.
LA TERRE N'APPARTIENT QU'AUX HOMMES,
L'OISIF IRA LOGER AILEURS.
COMBIEN DE NOS CHAIRS SE REPASSSENT!
MAIS SI LES CORBEAUX, LES VAUTOURS,
UN DE CES MATINS, DISPARAÎSSENT,
LE SOLEIL BRILLERA TOUJOURS!

C'EST LA LUTTE FINALE:
GROUPOUS-NOUS ET DEMAIN
L'INTERNATIONALE
SERA LE GENRE HUMAIN.

PARIS, JUIN 1871
December 28, 1945.

The dominant political topic of the day in England is, as was to be expected, the record of the Labour Government during its first few months in office.

After the elections there was an atmosphere of general expectancy. The majority of the workers and of the lower middle classes, who had voted the Labour Party into office, looked forward to some very startling turn of events in their favour. Their expectations were somewhat vague, but they included such minimum hopes as quick demobilisation, the ending of irksome personal controls, the assurance of full employment and a level of wages not much below that of the war years, the confirmation of such necessary conditions of work as a shorter work week and reasonable holidays with pay, the cleaning up of government departments and the services, and a generally tougher attitude towards employers. Probably there were many other hopes which were fostered by fairly strong groups, such as the liberation of India, the upholding of civil liberties and the reformation of the prisons, but it is fairly safe to say that the average non-political citizen who voted Labour was not much concerned with these minority objectives.

If the Labour supporters had been at all observant of the Stock Exchange prices, they might have been a little less confident in their dreams of the advent of political justice under the auspices of the Attlee government. For, after a slight preliminary flutter round about Election Day, these figures returned to a remarkable stability, and, as the full implications of the government’s nationalisation programme became known, they rallied to something very near, at times even above, their original level.

It is certain by now that the City financiers do not consider the Labour government as their enemy, and that, indeed, they are looking forward to increasing their livings by acting as parasites on its monetary transactions.

The matter which finally led the financiers and industrialists to accept the Labour Party to the bosom of the City was the nationalisation arrangement for the Bank of England. Some £58,000,000 have been handed out in compensation to the stockholders, their stock being redeemed at a rate of 400, which is considerably higher than the market price of the same stock for several years back. After this gracious act on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the capitalists breathed freely again and began to accept the idea of nationalisation with a pleasure which is in surprising contrast to the consternation with which they regarded it years ago.

For the capitalists have realized what the workers who voted the Labour Party into office have as yet failed to grasp. Nationalisation, on the British Labour pattern, instead of doing any harm to the capitalist, actually protects him from the ill winds of commercial chance, for it turns him from a shareholder to a bondholder with an assured rate of interest, based on the inflated wartime rates of industrial profit, and gives the active members of the capitalist class the same position, as managers in state corporations, as they held in their own individual concerns. The rentier becomes a permanent pensioner of the state, the manager becomes a state bureaucrat.

Naturally, by no means all the capitalists were pleased by these developments. The professional politicians and publicists of the Conservative Party do not wish to lose their positions as representatives of the ruling class and by now realize that the Labour leaders are their serious rivals. It was in anger that they staged the Censure Debate a week or so back, a pathetic business in which the Tories pretended to be the champions of individual liberty, and made some very true criticisms of the Labour Government in what can only be described as a hypocritical spirit, since they initiated some of the very encroachments on freedom which they condemn the Labour Government for maintaining.

The fact that the Censure motion did not represent the attitude of the capitalist class as a whole towards the Labour Government was shown by a number of incidents that occurred about the same time. I. The Chairman of the Federation of British
Industries, the most influential capitalist association in the country, pledged his members to work within the framework of Government policies, and declared, "We believe Britain's future can only be assured if we reproduce in the days ahead the close and intimate understanding which linked Government and industry together in the war." 2. Lord Rothschild, Britain's leading representative of the great international banking family, took his place on the Labour bench of the House of Lords. 3. A Commission to enquire into the gas industry has recommended nationalisation. It was headed by the Chairman of Lever Brothers and the Unilever combine, one of the largest capitalist groups in this country. 4. Dorman Longs, one of the largest steel combines in England, is embarking on the building of a rolling mill to cost £8,000,000, in spite of the fact that the steel industry has a high priority on the nationalisation list. A director told the press, "We were not deterred by any considerations of ownership."

These are only a few of the manifold indications of the sense of well-being that has been perceptible among financiers and industrialists since the advent of the 'first real workers' government' in England.

It will be seen that the Labour government has addressed itself with vigour to the making of a safe world for the wealthy. On the other hand, it is gradually dawning on the workers that the Labour Party is not doing much for them. This has become evident during the recent series of strikes and demonstrations in the docks, building, transport and gas industries. In the case of the dockers, the Labour government sent in soldiers to act as strike breakers and convoked a slanderous press campaign based on lies about food rotting in the ships (they were all fitted with refrigerators, in any case). In the case of the builders, I was in Whitehall when a deputation arrived from a demonstration of 150,000 men in Hyde Park. The Minister of Health, former firebrand Aneurin Bevan, blandly refused to see them. I talked to the men after this, and found that they were all disillusioned with the Labour government, and expressed sentiments of disgust which I have since heard more frequently from other workers.

As in America, the industrial battles are being fought over the abrupt fall in wages owing to the return to normal hours at the end of the war, which brings the income of the workers back to a basic wage quite inadequate to meet the greatly increased cost of living. Conditions in many industries are now so bad that men returning from the army find that their civilian pay is a good deal short of their army pay with allowances and keep.

The recent examples of strikes and other forms of direct action within the discontented industries have been carried out by the men themselves. 'Official' union strikes are unknown in England today, because the T.U.C. works hand-in-glove with the government and the owners in building up a managerial opposition to the workers' claims. All the strikes arise from the spontaneous discontent of the rank-and-file, but in spite of this fact they have shown evidence of a considerable instinct for the tactics of direct action. The union leaders and the newspapers have tried to make out that the strikes were fostered by political agitators, but in reality they have contained almost no political element at all, and the Trotskyists, accused by the capitalists, had no part of any importance in the disputes and have very little real influence among the industrial workers.

In almost every other field the record of the government has been poor, and has led to much discontent. Food is in shorter supply than it was during the war, but anyone with money can still buy easily on the black market. The housing programme has been delayed, and demobilisation is still slow, although a series of incidents in the army has speeded it up recently. All the old brasshats remain in the army, and their counterparts still maintain the Tory attitude in the civil service and the police force.

The discontent against the government has so far been diffuse and only a few minority movements have put forward criticism from a left-wing attitude. The Communists, of course, are playing their usual role of jackals to those in power, and are busy denouncing strikers. The I.L.P. and the Trotskyists are cautious in their criticism, and even the independent left intellectuals often adopt a line of "after all, our side's batting now, and we mustn't barrack, even if we think they're playing badly", as a leading left socialist journalist said to me the other day. The anarchists, who have now formed a national federation (The Union of Anarchist Groups), alone keep up a consistent general criticism, but a number of mixed groups are running campaigns for limited objectives.

There is the 'Save Europe Now' campaign, whose object is the sending of food to the continent. This so far has won a certain support, mostly among the middle classes, but it is a regrettable
fact that the majority of the workers still resent the idea of sending food to Germany. There is the campaign of the Freedom Defense Committee for an amnesty to release conscientious objectors and the thousands of soldiers sentenced to extremely high terms for desertion and other military ‘crimes’. This campaign has the support of the I.L.P., the Anarchists, the active section of the pacifist movement, and a large group of writers, musicians and artists, but again the general public is very apathetic, and the government has so far refused to grant any kind of amnesty. A third campaign is being organised by the No Conscription Council to avert peace-time conscription, and it is rumoured that a group of 100 Labour back-bench M.P.’s has been formed to oppose continued conscription when the question arises in the House of Commons. There is some popular feeling on this question, but I doubt if it is sufficient to influence the government.

All these campaigns show that peacetime problems are arousing much idealism among limited groups, mostly of the intelligentsia, but the population as a whole is apathetic to anything except sheer material stimuli, and even the militancy of the strikers, admirable though it is, seems to be motivated by nothing more far-sighted than a desire for increased wages.

It is unfortunately true that the Labour Party does represent about as far as the average man can see in a progressive direction. When the Labour Party fails, then the mass of the people, if they do not turn back to the Tories, will be fair game for any clever demagogue with a sufficiently radical-sounding programme. The old fascist groups, which are crawling back to life, are completely discredited, and the communists have lost all the influence they had in the army and the factories during the days of Russia’s popularity. But a new neo-fascist group might get a very large support in three years’ time, if the Labour government continues to act as it does today. This tendency might well be assisted by a recrudescence of nationalist feeling over the bitterness against America because of the loan terms, and the fear of Russia as a military menace in Europe.

Meanwhile, it would be foolish to look optimistically for any really revolutionary outcome of the Labour Party’s betrayals, at least in the near future. The British workers have a good deal to learn and unlearn before they will go beyond mere discontent to a consciousness of social responsibility and a real desire for freedom.

---

THE DANCE

DINSMORE WHEELER

The Saturday after New Year’s the Avicennas called for us and took us to the Pueblo where we followed the Buffalo Dance from spot to spot.

One row of elders sang and beat drums; the second row behind them merely sang. Facing them at and at right angles to the elders were four parallel rows of dancers. The singers and drummers were the top of the T; the dancers, the tail. The long, shiny, black hair of the dancers was unbraided and fell down over their shoulders. A few of the men wore real buffalo heads, but these must be scarce nowadays. Mostly they had a couple of feathers fastened at the back of their heads so that they stood straight up just the way you’d think Indian feathers should, and some had pieces of buffalo hide tied across the tops of their heads. Their torsos and legs were bare and they wore loin cloths of white buckskin or white cotton. Some had beaded belts; some beaded moccasins; some, store shoes with the heels removed. Their bare skin was smeared with rich pink-brown earth color and on their backs—possibly their chests, too—each had four white splotches that looked like enlarged frost crystals. There were between fifty and sixty dancers, all males, and all the way from forty-five to six years of age.

There seem to be three steps, each one set by the monosyllables of the chorus and the rhythms of the drums. In one pattern the dancers stand on one spot and, with shoulders sagging forward; keep time with their feet; in another, their feet unmoving, they sway their bodies from side to side in a partly stooping position, while the drums are beat so rapidly they seem to roll (although each is struck with only one stick). In the third pattern the dancers in each line trot after the leader who describes a kind of oval. When the leader returns to where he started, they stop.
RETORT

The sun was behind a high, white sky; the air was faintly blue with sweet-smelling wood smoke from scores of chimneys; and as Joe Avicenna explained it, the clear mountain atmosphere brought out the chroma rather than the brilliance of the colors of skin, hair, beads, blankets, buildings, wood and earth.

That background of the dance, that is the Pueblo... the North and South buildings! I've come to know it a lot better than I would have otherwise, I mean if I hadn't made those buggy and stage trips for Harry Streeter. But by hell, I used to have to work, sometimes plead, sometimes almost bully to make the people see the rightness, the humanity, the significance of the place. They saw many dogs and snooty dogs with their drawers drooping and all the obvious anomalies like screen doors, white enamel chamber pots and new cross-cut saws laid across the top of an outside bread oven.

I don't blame these one-shot tourists. You've got to go there again and again to feel the hand-molded shape of it, see anew the hand-washed texture of it, and the incredibly deep, rich, velvety color. The Avicenne's house has charm... let's say the charm they give it... and one is swept in by their affection for it. But with all that, it is almost cold and mechanical because it is so completely calculated compared with the Pueblo—'The Village' as the Indians themselves call it. One doesn't have to affect a neo-Rousseauian attitude toward the Indian, one doesn't have to overlook his filth, his arrogance, hocus-pocus, desperate racial chauvinism, his double-dealing and muckery to see that in these pueblo buildings man has achieved an unbelievably convincing, alive, warm, breathing extension of himself. We gasp at that miracle called nylon—coal, air and water. Nylon is elementary and contemptible beside what the builder and maintainers have incorporated into these buildings—of wood, earth and water. Nylon at its best decorates the flesh, makes it more provocative. This is very nearly flesh itself.

Our red brothers and their customs, beliefs and appearances have been all but painted, written about, photographed, investigated and recorded to death. But everything heard or seen or read falls away when you stand in the midst of the dancers and on-lookers, the singing colors, the throbbing pulse of the drums, the glowing adobe flecked with gold straw, the silver and turquoise jewelry and coral beads and beaded designs on buckskin, the pinon

THE DANCE

smoke as satisfying as the earth smell of humus, the black, glistening, swaying hair, the brown, reddened skin, the foot-churned mud, the weathered tapestries, the bracing cold, the light, high-altitude air.

For the moment I existed only in the pattern of chanting, beating and motion. While it lasted I had that same sense of out-of-self release that one gets from the Seventh Symphony of Beethoven... that comes from the revelation that man can surpass himself. While this outlandish rite of the Indians absorbed me, it seemed that everyone there was for the moment purged of fear, maliciousness, envy, shallow price and corruption. It seemed that God never was necessary because man himself is capable of divinity, and with all his baseness is less reprehensible than some Super Spirit if only because less puffed up with pretensions that never pan out.

I don't know whether anyone else shared that hypnotic feeling, that transporting illusion, but the sadness of it had me close to tears. Man out of his own body and imagination can construct beauty like this pueblo, this dance—beauty that shrinks the majestic mountains, at whose base we stood in ant-proportion insignificance, into the cold dead rock heaps they essentially are. And yet in what ugliness and desolation we mostly wallow. While the dance lasted—at that moment and at that place—no one was robbing anyone, no one was wounding or killing anyone, no one was deceiving or lying or terrorizing anyone. And yet the moment the music and the movement stopped, each human being there would recede into his snail shell to become again a member in good standing or in bad standing of that society of the 20th century whose aims, whose mechanisms conspire to set man against man and man against himself. What a dungeon we live in when this dance and the ecstasy it kindles should make us want to weep for our moribund and bare-bones existence. That simple, natural sharing together of beauty like this should be exceptional, should taste so sweet and strike so hard... what a bitter gloss on our hidden hungers.

EVOLUTION

towards this the lizard and ancient amphibia labored: that you possess a four chambered heart to house four lovers.

D.R.
DACHINE RAINER

ALIENATION

to Anais Nin

barbed and tombed the site remains a scattered pyramid
with metal images leading a procession thru the ruined graves.
beyond this sense of loss
untenable stacks of gravel screech and grate each wish,
stretch and multiply.
wide and smooth and strange for stone
more as tho seven ancient oceans laved and assuaged
our fright: historic time run out.
art is a place where homeless we come,
a perfect dream of man that shrinks the sky,
a monumental chaos bound to our previous selves.
emergence from the fetish with mended and rejecting power,
with huge fragments of a savage vision
within a focus to which all light withdraws.

EPITALAMNIUM

beyond this dual existence outside time
if life were lonelier still, more grim,
a rembrandt darkened canvas
thrust from shadow on grass, elongation of pain
from absence of being to terror to calm,
your suns would gladden me:
the visions swarm like midsummer bees
with time a petalled afterwards,
you figure in each golden form of need.
built upon you so, desire is flower worn,
is delicately flown and colored
a hedge with sparrow sounds; a vision of comfort
surrounding the green imagining of galaxies
startling your eyes, in reflection of a vow
beyond this dual existence outside time.
LOST IN ACTION

Missing from (of lemon rinds
the fruit's previous taste of the ripening sun)
what:
the still and green of being

certain days but not the total, sluiced off
by sleep or consequence; to judge accomplishment
or measure each neurotic gesture in the muscle,
is not for this one, a boy, who hung from the top hair
by the tangled skein of the umbilical,
severed, regnarled and tightened is by the harsh twining
of events, external to the early dark.

any abyssmal certitude offered
with sacrament and chant
is powerless to recant

missing from (and still the sun
all former green will yellow color)
what:

the pattern receding to brown and blacks from
yellow and tart juice, and then the synthesis
of mold green from chlorophyll
and menacing puffy white.

so with the human plant
Missing from
what
process, engendered by . . . ?

to condemn loss or decay amoral
judges any soundproof universe
what span is measure, what loss
is great to more than one?

to some one, the total is a giant
washed under sea by urchin groups
a mountain, perplexed by frozen elements,
it is a dark wood of fungus and rotted bark.

damp and under damp the dark, the indistinguishable creatures,
the unmade, the forever fixed in rigid grouch,
change wrought like spun gold
from the static clasp

and under death another death:
the cyclical function of process.

protest? Missing from
what
PLASTIC

what organ herds the legends in our sleep
glass bells intone the break of domes
what scarlet fragment stains this cloth
combines with clotted blue our resources or tombs.

tentacles fasten on the keyboard
set off a human tone
not iron rust nor accidental veining thru the ore
proclaims us man.

the return to bone is broken on a mallet—
ground purple wreath to flame
the wish of chisel to persevere
thru brittle bone; of mallet and chisel and stone

to plasticize the will.

"Ten beggars sleep in the same house,
but two kings cannot occupy the same country;
ten beggars cover themselves with the same blanket
but two kings cannot pass thru the same country . . ."
from the Persian

The ego is a colossus and a country
from every watchtower blaze the oil lamps
in separate conflagrations;
the sullen wave is impotent as spittle.

Whether land or mind is corked at sea
the spiral holes the sponge,
withdraws its skewer texture
to gash a vacuum.

Ground between charcoal teeth
ashen is the breath
and black the petals
the class is a driven master.
CHRIST IS RISEN

to a.s.
the house is filled with images
that rock upon my mind,
archaic christ i painted on the wall
has swallowed form:
your ribbed chest and narrowing hips
sway past leaf and trunk
the cross is swinging crazily;
your outer self an exhibition
of rusting nail

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

the green sleers are the pitiable
for their rigid space is barred from us.
in order to entomb, theirs become the corpses
theirs the key-clang and the silence.
all others leave to deaths or freedoms
theirs remain the brittle skulls
that dry beneath apparent life.

BOOKS

THE GREAT SHORT NOVELS OF HENRY JAMES. Edited
by Philip Rahv. Dial Press. $4.50

At a time when we can clearly recall the sway of the so-called
"Marxian" literary aesthetics, it is a matter for some conjecture
that this country should so heartily approve the qualities of James' 
atrasty. For James does not appreciably qualify in any of the once
vaunted attributes of "socialist realism"; he is to no degree inter-
ested in the modern problems of nationalism, industrialism, or
collectivism; His prose, massive and subtle, is hardly comparable
to the crisp language of war communiques and case histories, nor
do the sentient speeches of his characters savor of the flat, undel-
iberate dialogue we have heard from the Hemingway school.

But I can see how, in a world where free choice, value, and
conscience of the individual, has all but been annihilated, some people
(even Mr. Fadiman) should be perceptibly attracted to an author
who, neglecting or disregarding the obvious social determinants, has
concentrated his superb artistry on the unfolding of the most signif-
ificant qualities of the human personality, as well as an appreciation
of the value, literary or human (to James it was the same thing), of the
personality when confronted by certain dramatic situations.

With the present renewal of interest in Henry James ushering
forth a series of reprints and anthologies of his enormous output,
comes "The Great Short Novels" which is certainly as represent-
ative as any of these. The published novels [limited to those between
twenty and fifty thousand words in length] trace James' development
as a writer beginning with 'Daisy Miller' and 'Madam de Mauves', his
early works, and ending with 'The Beast in the Jungle' and 'The
Turn of the Screw', works which border on James' strongly debated
latter phase.

Often as in 'The Beast in the Jungle', one encounters on pages
filled with an atmosphere of hopelessness and bitterness, a sense
of the isolation and bewilderment of the individual. Some of the
stories, like 'Madam de Mauves' and 'The Author of Beltraffio',
give one a sense of the lurking evil and rapacity present in people and situations that might belie their true nature. Contrariwise, James gives us an appreciation of the sensitive, scrupulous person, whose existence has often been denied. It is his presentation of this moral hero or heroine for which James has been criticized; if to present noble natures is a failing, James' work assuredly misses the mark.

The characteristic of James' work which is perhaps the most potent of those forces, and which has been dominant in bringing about his present popularity, is his perception of the overpowering role played by unconscious motivation. This is why many of James' characters lack a will to act in the obviously rational way and why their irrationality is cloaked by their thinking that they have behaved in a self-sacrificing and scrupulous manner. Of course, James, not being a post-Freud writer, was unable to state explicitly why such conflicts arose.

A great deal of unfavorable criticism has been occasioned by James' preoccupation with the problems of the artist. It might be said, however, that James' interest in this problem is a point that enhances his right to be called modern. The artist, in the Jamesian sense, is representative of all persons at odds with society by virtue of their acute awareness and quick sensibility. James' attempt to justify the artistic approach to life could well be made into a defense of all honest non-conformists. To say that the problem of the artist is a minor aspect of life is tantamount to saying that to endeavor to reach beyond the realms of animal satisfaction is trivial. Historically, any attempt to transcend the physiological level has been closely allied with artistic expression.

The approach to James must be toward other things than plot, if he is to be appreciated. Except for 'The Turn of the Screw', James' plots do not justify the length of his books. In general, they deal with such themes as the spiritual emptiness of aristocrats, the human isolation of sensitive people, and the ruthless ambition of worldly people.

What is striking to the reader is the difficult nature of James' style. Yet I think if we examine him to any degree, he will be found to compensate for this with the exactness and completeness of its effect. While the first stories offer no stylistic difficulty, by the time we reach the last, 'The Beast in the Jungle', we are aware of the typically 'latter phase' flavor. For instance;

'Marcher softly groaned with a gasp, half-spent, at the face, more uncovered just then than it had been for a long while, of the imagination always with them.'

One objection to this type of phraseology is that it is too indirect, too elaborate. James' sentences often show a tendency to qualify his thoughts and descriptions. However, one must be cognizant of his purpose to portray the mechanism of intense consciousness.

One contribution of Gestalt psychology has been to point out that when someone (even a child) perceives an event, it is done so not in terms of this or that clear-cut quality, as Locke asserted, but as a total pattern, a relation of figure against ground. If this is so, then James' presentation of the mind grasping even the most remote nuance is proper. And so in the above quoted sentence it is permissible for him to tell us of a 'half-spent gasp' and 'a face more uncovered' than 'always', for it is just by such means that we learn that this gasp is different from others and why it is so. It describes a total impression more distinctly as soon as these important shades are made known. Because one major object of style is to convey a situation with its most exact meaning, James' style is to be commended.

Admitting the power of such a description of a consciousness that relates to the world of the imagination, we find in the same story: "... he had failed, with the last exactitude of all he was to fail of; and a moan now rose to his lips. This horror of waking—this was knowledge, knowledge under the breath of which the very tears in his eyes seemed to freeze. But the bitterness suddenly sickened him, and it was as if, horribly, he saw, in the truth, in the cruelty of his image, what had been appointed and done. He saw the Jungle of his life and saw the lurking Beast; then while he looked, perceived it. His eyes darkened—it was close; and instinctively turning, in his hallucination, to avoid it, he flung himself on his face, on the tomb."

The well-known charge that James lacked passion is refuted if only by the last quotation. It is true that James rarely gives us physical images. What he does is present the impression of reality on a certain mind. But is precise material description necessary when we are given the flavor, the implications of the subject? It is exactly at this point that I believe the realistic criticism of James is ineffective. Must one see the blood of the passion, if
it's nervous energy contacts us?

All that James wrote, however, is not worthy of equal praise. 'The Great Short Novels' to my mind, present two stories that border on the mediocre: 'The Siege of London' and 'Lady Barbarina'. One wishes that Mr. Rahv had been less scrupulous as to word limitation and included such splendid novellen as the 'Spoils of Poynton' and 'The Death of the Lion'.

But then nothing short of the complete works could satisfy the complete Jamesian.

ROBERT NEIL

THE BERLIN STORIES by Christopher Isherwood. New Directions. $3.50

The background of Germany on the eve of Hitler has not yet been adequately portrayed by social historians so that Mr. Isherwood's stories, full as they are of the social scene in the Germany not yet Nazified, are, aside from their lively story interest, of no small value.

In the tale, 'The Last of Mr. Norris,' one follows the attempts to pursue his profession of a weak, vicious, but somewhat likeable spy. Mr. Norris, of an oiliness outweighed by a sentimental kindness, is observed by his friend, the writer Arthur Bradshaw; they meet together from time to time in a Berlin that has been presented before to our imaginations, a Berlin of smart cafés, impeccable counts, questionable women, and wise-cracking foreign correspondents. Mr. Isherwood's presentation of this Berlin is more convincing than others, if only because he is more interested in understanding people than in preparing a presentable commercial scenario. But he also paints another, less known Berlin: the world of fagged-out middle-class boarders, the domain of pathological sexuality.

The second novel, 'Goodbye to Berlin', consisting of a series of revealing character studies in a matrix of the Berlin social scene, as it crawled with the growth of Nazism, is even more rewarding to the student of pre-Hitler Germany. Decay is rampant throughout this section of the book; it is observed in the German working-class family as well as in the middle-class family; in the English visitors; in department store executives and deranged outcasts. It is a tired, perplexed, unbelieving Germany, with the presentiment of an unknown impending evil floating around the meretricious garden.

BOOKS

parties, penetrating the disintegrated families in the tenements. This disillusion and detachment, which Erich Fromm has emphasized as a factor in the German susceptibility to Nazism, is often implied in Isherwood's many character sketches.

With an awareness of the individual and social circumstances, he has written a tender picture of that far-off Berlin, that 'immense, damp, dreary town' where 'young men were waking up to another workless empty day to be spent as they could best contrive....' ROBERT NEIL

THE WAR POETS: An Anthology of War Poetry of the Twentieth Century. Edited with an introduction by Oscar Williams. The John Day Co. replete with pinups of your favorite poet. $5.00.

There is no such category as war poetry. To quote John Berryman, a contributor to the present anthology, 'I should be sorry if the relation between one of man's most destructive and witless activities and one of his most purely and intelligently creative activities should seem very close or satisfactory... war is an experience, worse than most, ... those who have it will be affected in different degrees... some trained to speech will talk about it, others trained equally and affected strongly will have nothing to say; those affected most—the dead—will be most silent.'

Those who were neither dead nor silent, Oscar Williams tricategorizes: War I poets, War II poets, and civilian poets of War II. He adds a small section Comments by the Poets on the problems of war and poetry; for the few remarks that were not politically impoverished, Julian Symons, ee cummings, and John Berryman are responsible. Karl Shapiro, here, as in his poetry, is divested of either the stamina or wit to present any consistent position.

The poets in the first and third categories we are already well familiar with. In both categories the honorable cynicism of ee cummings stands out with particular emphasis: In War I he wrote My sweet old etcetera My sweet old etcetera

aunt lucy during the recent war could and what is more did tell you just what everybody was fighting for
RECORDS


An excellent recording of a brilliant performance of one the most difficult works to render successfully. Ormandy has concentrated on tonal clarity, so that each essential part of the complex structure of the composition comes out distinctly. The vocal performance in the fourth movement deserves high praise.

BACH: Sonata in E. Wanda Landowska, harpsichord, and Yehudi Menuhin, violin. Three 12 in records. Victor DM-1035. $3.50.

An exceptional interpretation of a Bach masterpiece, performed by two outstanding artists.


This performance equals the Horowitz-Toscanini rendition of this beautiful concerto in virtuosity and musical craftsmanship. Serkin emerges as a pianist of the first rank, and the orchestral accompaniment is highly competent.


This album is an important addition to recorded chamber music. The performance is stylistically clear without being academic, and the tonal beauty is exceptional.


The ‘Protee Suite’ is compiled of incidental music to a play by Paul Claudel. Aside from its essentially ahuman cacophonous quality —a quality that characterizes most modern French music—it possesses magic, warmth and frolic. This dichotomy, present in composers like Debussy, incorporates the best of the romantic tradition as well as the break from it.