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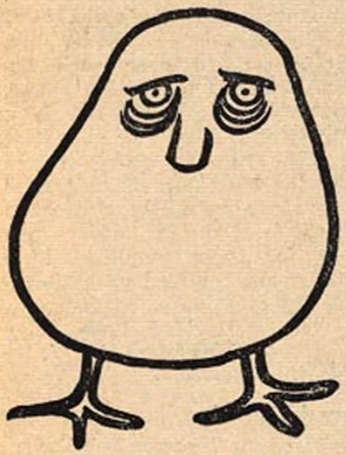
freethought criticism and satire



The Realist

December-January 222 35 Cents No. 14

An Impolite Interview With Alan Watts

Q. Would you call yourself a Buddhist?

A. No.

Q. Would you care to enlarge on that?

A. I simply feel that a human being must always recognize that **he** is qualitatively more than any system of thought he can imagine, and therefore he should never label himself. He degrades himself when he does.

Q. Would you call yourself a Taoist?

A. No. I am probably more sympathetic to Taoism than to Buddhism, but for the reason I just mentioned, I don't label myself.

Q. In Behold the Spirit and Myth and Ritual in Christianity, you give allegorical interpretations to stories that Christians believe are literally true. Do you think there's much chance that the organized churches will accept this interpretation in the near future?

A. I'm afraid not. They would have to, if there were a large number of intelligent people remaining in the churches, but nowadays it isn't necessary for intelligent people to remain there.

Q. What sort of reviews have your books received in the Christian press?

A. They've been very largely ignored. Once Reinhold Niebuhr reviewed **The Supreme Identity**, but not in the Christian press. He reviewed it in **The Nation**. To the best of my knowledge this is the only time a serious theologian ever tangled with me in print. And what he did was to distort my opinions and attack me for saying something diametrically opposed to what I had actually said. He claimed that Vedanta was a world-denying

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SIR REALIST:

What's Our Motivation?

. . . I have a sneaky suspicion that you quite enjoy debunking anything and everything just for the sake of debunking, rather than from any motive of providing constructive criticism.

Wanda Erickson
Seguin, Texas

Space-Theology

Bravo for many things, and in particular for your piece in the November issue, "Space-Theology and Other Misguided Missiles."

Paul Eldridge
New York, N. Y.

Editor's note: Regarding the letter above, if the sender's name strikes a familiar chord in some readers, Paul Eldridge was one of the late Haldeman Julius' more prolific writers. He also co-authored the classic, My First 2,000 Years, *with George Sylvester Viereck. He later broke with Viereck when the latter became a Nazi. Mr. Eldridge's latest book is a collection of short stories,* Tales of the Fortunate Isles.

Regarding the letter below, the writer is a "17-year-old boy skeptic."

All God's Seedlun

Reading your article on space theology, I took up a new line of thought:

In the year 1961, the Martians landed on the planet earth. They brought priests to convert the savage earthmen to their religion. They also had with them a death-ray. As they were all descended from plants, they worshipped a Great Plant, who had planted the whole Universe.

"We are all seedlings," they said.

Subsequently, all Catholic, Protestant and Jewish places of worship in the U.S. closed up shop, and the Great Plant was worshipped.

Some time later, the Jovians from Jupiter, with a Z-ray, managed to convert Martians to the Great Silicon Being. Earthmen, loving their jobs and security, took up this god also. All skeptics were Z-rayed.

Then the Pentagon announced that it had a new weapon which could blow up the entire Solar System. Upon hearing this news, the Jovians made a fast departure.

Now our real wrangle began: What to believe? Regrettably, it was found that the younger generations had been moved to cynicism by the rival beliefs.

One boy said: "If a plant-god is wrong and a silicon-god is wrong, why is a man-god right?" His father gave him a sharp disciplinary beating with a razor strap, showing that Faith had not yet died in human hearts.

Meanwhile, priests, ministers and rabbis were sent out to convert Martians and Jovians. While condemned by wrong thinkers, they were certain that extra-terrestial creatures would mend their ways once they found a true belief. The outcome still remains in doubt.

Roger Gilman
Newton Centre, Mass.

Economy

I, and my friends who are too cheap to subscribe, find your magazine very interesting, stimulating and illuminating . . .

Willard A. Wienke
Seattle, Wash.

Accusation

Mr. Robert Anton Wilson's chronic rage against the Church notwithstanding, my impression is that he is just another theologian in the Anti-Christ's clothing.

A. Finley Schaef, Pastor
First Methodist Church
Astoria, N. Y.

Editor's note: Coincidentally, I accused Mr. Wilson of more-or-less the same disguise when he chose to title his column in issue #13 "Notes of a Skeptical Mystic" rather than "Notes of a Mystical Skeptic." His response, to both Rev. Schaef and myself:

"I admit that I am a mystic. I deny that I am a theologian. For an interesting distinction between mysticism and theology, see Alan Watts' Myth and Ritualism in Christianity. *If I were to be pinned down, I would describe myself in Erich Fromm's words — 'a non-theistic mystic.'"*

Rotten Roots

I feel inclined to accept nearly every item in your magazine, but all together, it looks like a harangue against religion. Not that they don't have it coming to them, and three cheers for shooting the bolt. With a limited amount of space this is perhaps unavoidable, but I believe that other fronts are ripe for your rapiers.

I would like to see you rip into business. Not just capitalism, or corporation profits, but into the roots. The trouble is that the system is philosophically rotten to the core. Business people, and by this I mean: executives, clerical workers, sales people, etc. For most of them the dollar sign has replaced the cross, the ledger the bible, and the corporate seal the tablet of commandments.

It is the attitude of these people which both revolts and depresses me. The doctrine of ultimate significance. The company is all; it is the most important aspect of a man's life. Such utter concern over such nothingness. Man has within his power, now, as never before, to provide a life of welfare, pleasure, and ease for all. But no one seems to be satisfied with his share. So it's grab for all you can get. I have spent a very short time working under such conditions for these people. I have rarely felt more horrified or less confident of my own ideas.

David J. Loeb
Woodmere, N. Y.

Fractured Cliché

I'm subscribing because I believe: "Freedom of speech should be permitted — even for those telling the truth."

Barbara Fisher
New York, N. Y.

Union Label

. . . I'm pleased to note the addition of the union "bug" on your masthead.

Albert Carlson
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Editor's note: Although the "bug" is only a recent addition, the Realist *has been printed at a union shop from its very first issue.*

Double Exposure

Find a lot of items I like in the *Realist*. Find some I don't like. The ones I like, I like because they expose the hypocrisies of others; the ones I don't like, I don't like because they expose the hypocrisies of me.

John McClaughry
New York, N. Y.

Little White Libels

How do you get away with those "Diabolic Dialogues?" I can see that higher ups such as Eisenhower and Nixon would ignore satires on their activities . . . but when you get to the lower ranks with people like Van Doren (issue #13) lawsuits may be impending. Or are you hoping for some prominent personality to sue you as a way of publicizing the existence of the *Realist?* . . . It could turn out to be a costly form of advertising.

Bob Howard
New York, N. Y.

Editor's note: Sshhh. . . .

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EDITOREALISMS

The Two Faces of Jack Paar

If the concept of spectator conversation has any value to begin with, it is certainly destroyed by the implication of The Jack Paar Show that celebrities necessarily have something to say.

Thus, the contribution of Mickey Rooney, inebriated, was merely a logical extension of the contribution of Zsa Zsa Gabor, sober.

There are, of course, exceptions. Alexander King, for instance. Paar likes to take credit for discovering King. Actually, he was "discovered" by the publicity man at Simon & Schuster (his publisher) who first arranged for him to be on the program.

Paar's function is to "draw out" guests. But his questions are well calculated to rub, as D. H. Lawrence would say, "the dirty little secrets" of his audience.

That Paar does this deliberately is perhaps best illustrated by his asking Guido Panzini — "Italian golf star" — whether he "played around with other women" while his wife was still on the other side of the Atlantic. Since Panzini was a hoax — a character played by Pat Harrington, Jr. — Paar obviously was more interested in cheap titillation than skillful interviewing.

Even the spontaneity is sometimes planned. When the show was in California, he asked Dody Goodman about Forest Lawn. "What's that?" she asked. Actually, Paar had already discussed the famous cemetery with her backstage. But now, using Dody's apparent ignorance as a foil, Jack came up with an "ad lib" of questionable taste. "It's sort of a Disneyland for shutins," he said.

But, then, how much tact can you expect from a man who would ask Debbie Reynolds about her trouble with Eddie Fisher, in front of a TV camera? And, to have asked Red Skelton before millions of televiewers, if he is a member of Alcoholics Anonymous (he isn't) —was the height of indiscretion, if not downright cruel.

Nevertheless, Paar has gone on record as being "against meanness." Enthusiastic applause greeted this courageous platform.

What holds the program together is a periodic display of Paarish piety which has all the consistency of a mixture of molasses and vaseline, and all the inconsistency of a mixture of lies and truth: for Paar is, quite simply, a hypocritical agnostic.

As he told Jim Bishop, author of *The Day Christ Died*, "I want to believe. I want so badly to believe in Him. But I need proof. I need something. Help me." Paar received a copy of Le Comte de Nouys' *Human Destiny* from Bishop, who calls it "the greatest scientific exposition of God I have ever read."

A month later, Paar said to Bishop: "That book you sent me. I read it and read it and read it. The man is too deep for me. I don't know what he's talking about."

If Jack Paar ever becomes a believer, the first thing he will do is invite God on his show and ask Him about the sex life of the angels.

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PAUL KRASSNER, Editor
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Payola, Plugs and Politics

Not all payola is paidola under the counter. Those companies which donate large sums on telethons, for example, might not be so generous if their contributions had to remain anonymous.

Likewise, French-born vocalist Genevieve — who needs the money like John L. Lewis needs false eyebrows — was offered, and accepted, $200 a week from the Bon Ami (cleanser) people, because she had broken her leg during a performance of *Can-Can*.

The line forms on the right; just be sure to bring your crutches and your press agent.

The film *Happy Anniversary* has more plugs than a room full of bathtubs. Most blatant is an actual *commercial* for Exquisite Form brassieres. It is highly appropriate: an undergarment that stresses phony separateness in a movie that stresses phony togetherness.

(Incidentally, not too long ago, a firm was really planning to market a "togetherness bra" until an astute executive realized that this title would belie the purpose of the double-barreled slingshot. Meanwhile, *McCall's*, as of its September issue, no longer carries "the magazine of togetherness" legend on its cover.)

But the interesting thing about ordinary plugs is that the merits of a particular product aren't even considered. All that matters is that the brand name be mentioned. This insult to the public — apparently justified by results — extends into politics as well. After all, a politician doesn't go around kissing grubby little babies because he's a latent pedophiliac. He only wants their grubby little mothers to remember *his* brand name.

As of this writing, there are no admitted candidates for the presidency yet, although governors and senators are running back and forth across the country — making non-campaign speeches — and a certain vice-president who shall remain nameless even got his very own Mommy into the act, Philip Wylie notwithstanding.

So there are still quizzes on TV which are rigged, in reverse. Every time a politician is asked if he is a candidate, though he knows the answer, he just ain't tellin'. The suspense is boring.

Fixed Philosophy

The following letter was sent to the F.C.C. this month. We quote it without comment.

Federal Communications Commission
Washington 25, D.C.
Gentlemen:

As I inhale the highly moral atmosphere generated by the TV quiz program disclosures, I wonder when the most pious of outrageous frauds perpetrated upon a childlike and gullible public will be exposed as a mythical story, a story extant 1200 B.C., regarding the crucifixion (cruci-*fiction*) of one Chrishna of India. As a matter of incontrovertible historical record, there have been more than twenty crucified saviors *before* the time of our supposed condescending savior.

I dread the wrath that will come when humanity discovers the hoax. What a terrible shock! Will the sponsors and the actors be held equally responsible? Will the

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communication media be investigated?

Names of the saviors will be gladly furnished upon request to the undersigned.

Yours truly,
/s/ Otto Zarob
Three Oaks, Mich.

Significant Things of 1959

Most Significant Soap Opera

The Romance of Helen Trent: "The story of woman's eternal search for romance." It seems that Helen — who is eternally 35 but who, chronologically, is in her sixties — was now searching for romance in the beat generation, only to find that her friendship with some beatniks was being used against her employer, a political candidate, by the opposition party.

Most Significant Toy

For boys: *Super 'O' Military Train Set* — ". . . a dramatic all-new 54-inch missile launching military set. Mobile Missile Launcher receives missiles from Missile Car and fires them one at a time by remote control at ammunition dump (included) that really explodes (by spring action) when hit. Helicopter takes off and flies on scouting missions by remote control. Set includes IRBM Missile Car, Medical Car. . ."

For girls: *Marybel, the Doll Who Gets Well* — "A new concept in doll play, Marybel teaches children the comforting lesson that illness and recovery are part of the normal pattern of living. She gets measles, hurts her arm and leg (all make-believe, of course) and then, under the care of her young 'mother' she recovers. . . . Marybel comes packed in a gift box containing dark glasses, measle spots, arm and leg casts, crutches, band-aids, tape and gauze."

Most Significant Song

Kookie, Kookie, Lend Me Your Comb: A phenomenon which proves that it isn't necessary to bribe disc jockeys in order to sell over a million copies of a record. For there is a magic, intangible combination of lyrics and melody which needs only the vocal talent of a carefully-trained performer to catapult it into the hit parade.

Most Significant News Item

Mamie Eisenhower receives more than 2,000 letters every week.

Most Significant Advertisement

There was a three-way tie for this category.

Miss Clairol Hair Rinse: At last, a commercial which is honest enough not to promise anything, but merely *asks*: "Is it true that blondes have more fun?"

Wesson Cooking Oil: Emphasizes the lack of chlor-esterol-producing ingredients which impliedly cause heart trouble. Actually, studies have shown that it is *tension* which is responsible. And this ingenious sales presentation serves to *cause* tension in the purchasers of competing products, thereby bringing about the results of its own claims.

Kraft DeLuxe Margarine: "This," proudly states the ad copy, "is the margarine that tastes so good you can't tell it from 'the expensive spread.' One reason is that an extra something has been added. And, yes, that extra something *is* 'the expensive spread' itself!"

Most Significant Book

The Amazing Results of Positive Thinking: Based upon letters received by Norman Vincent Peale from readers of *The Power of Positive Thinking*, which was on the best-seller list for 3½ years. Its sales now total over 2,100,000 copies, with 35,000 to 40,000 more being sold each year. This is all in the hard-cover edition; there is no paper-bound edition. Now, that's *really* positive thinking.

Most Significant Movie

There was a two-way tie for this category.

Anatomy of a Murder: Unfortunately, the shocking use of mature vocabulary beclouds this film's subtle message — that justice is a plaything of courtroom gimmickry.

On the Beach: Obviously a propagandistic documentary about the end of the world. In the words of a N. Y. *Daily News* editorial, it "plays right up the alley of (a) the Kremlin and (b) the Western defeatists and/or traitors who yelp for the scrapping of the H-bomb. . . . See this picture if you must . . . but keep in mind that the thinking it represents points the way toward eventual Communist enslavement of the entire human race."

And besides, complained Ed Sullivan, there is, in the movie, no mention of an afterlife.

Most Significant Headline

ITALIANS AROUSED BY MORALITY DRIVE

Most Significant Comic Strip

There was a three-way tie for this category.

Dick Tracy: His latest foe is a Bad Guy named after a Constitutional Amendment. "Willie the Fifth" wears a hat which covers most of his face, and he constantly mutters to himself, "I will not answer — uh — on the grounds that I might — uh — incriminate myself. . . ." He also smokes a cigar which produces a slightly symbolic smoke screen.

Mary Worth: An indirect commentary on our time, as evidenced by the tremendous amount of mail asking this non-existent noseybody for serious advice. Sample: a teen-aged unwed mother-to-be, who doesn't know where else to seek help.

Maw Green: This strip by the creator and growth-stunter of *Little Orphan Annie* (it may some day be found that Annie is really the illegitimate daughter of Helen Trent) had a small boy asking Maw what a bachelor is. "A bachelor," she answered, "is a man who goes to work every morning from a different direction."

Most Significant Cross-Cultural Trend

In England, a 53-year-old boiler maintainer refused to move on when he was asked to do so by a constable. He was arrested for obstructing a policeman. He pleaded not guilty, saying: "I have a right to stand there, near my home, and get fresh air."

"Curiously enough, you have not," replied the magistrate. "People always think that. But the law states you have only the right to walk up and down, not to stand there."

Another British subject was similarly arrested for not being a predicate. He was waiting for a bus, and was charged with "causing an obstruction." He later remarked that "The only criminal in sight was me, illegally occupying twelve square inches. . . .

"I have had it hammered home to me that this is an offense and I am not quarreling with the referee. We, the people, are responsible for our laws. Not the policeman or the magistrate. We have traded personal liberty for security.

"My quarrel is with the attitude of the policeman towards the public.

"The hectoring tones, the stolid, humorless, official approach to the merest of trivialities serve only to antagonize ordinary, peaceable, contented citizens.

". . . the magistrate very courteously pointed out to me that to ignore the law can lead to chaos.

"But so can over-government. . . ."

Ψ

In the United States, over-government was rearing its ugly authority on both coasts.

In Philadelphia, the American Civil Liberties Union op-

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posed infringement "upon property rights, the right of peaceable assembly and the right to be left alone." They called the following police actions "without justification":

1) Entry, en masse, into coffee houses without warrant; 2) Mass arrest of some three dozen persons in one coffee house without warrant; 3) Refusal to permit these arrested persons to exercise their right to telephone friends, families or attorneys from the station house; 4) Oral threats to coffee house owners that the police would drive them out of business; 5) Irrelevant, sensational and unsubstantiated charges for the apparent purpose of discrediting the complainants and confusing the issues, relating to the character and activities of coffee house patrons.

Also criticized was the conduct of a magistrate's hearing at which 17 persons were found guilty of disorderly conduct without competent evidence against them and without being informed of the offense with which they were charged.

(A vice squad detective told the *Realist* that "disorderly conduct" is a "catch-all charge" police use when there is no specific law being violated.)

In San Francisco, there have been many arrests of innocent individuals under police abuse of the state vagrancy statute, wherein a vagrant is defined as "every person who roams about from place to place without any lawful business" and "every person who wanders about the streets at late or unusual hours of the night, without any visible or lawful business."

1) Police stopped a car in which a registered nurse was riding home from a late date, and they took her companion to the police station as a possible traffic scofflaw. She herself was charged with being a "lewd and dissolute person" and a vagrant. She was denied bail until it was determined that she did not have a venereal disease.

2) The operator of a restaurant-bar and a parttime waiter-bartender were charged with vagrancy because they had met after work and talked on a street corner for more than an hour. When a policeman observed that they had stood in one place long enough and ordered them to move on, one of the men tried unsuccessfully to discover how long was "long enough" and then suggested that he and his companion move "a few feet." Whereupon they were arrested.

3) A patron entered the Coexistence Bagel Shop, a local cafe, barefooted despite a police officer's warning that she would be arrested if she did. She did. And she was charged with vagrancy, malicious mischief and resisting a public officer in the discharge of his duties (sic).

4) A young man was arrested during a late walk which he claimed he was taking to get rid of the stimulating effects of coffee at a meeting of the Young Republicans.

What Makes Critics Happy?

Contrary to what some respectable-type cynics might think, the staff of a freethought magazine does not receive greeting cards around this time of the year which read: "Bah, humbug!"

Rather, for example, Mr. and Mrs. Brian Musgrave of Glendale, Calif., sent us a card sold for the benefit of one of our favorite organizations, UNICEF (the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund). Robert J. Howard of New York City sent us a card sold for the benefit of another of our favorite organizations, CORE (the Congress of Racial Equality). And John Favicchio of Flushing, N.Y. sent us a specially-designed card quoting Robert Ingersoll:

> The time to be happy is now.
> The place to be happy is here.
> The way to be happy is to make others happy.

But, that making others happy is more an ideal than a practice, was the underlying theme of a symposium we attended this month — "Happy Critics and a Rigged Society" — sponsored by *Dissent* (a quarterly of Socialist opinion) and held at Judson Memorial Church in New York City.

The conflict goes something like this. There are all these injustices, see. The mass media help sustain them by expounding the best of all possible platitudes. And the small-circulation periodicals shout the truth, but they function in a vacuum.

Somebody in the audience suggested that the symposium itself was functioning in a vacuum. "It would be more effective," he said, "to paint in big yellow letters on the *Time-Life* building: 'America, Search Your Soul!'"

"Why don't you go out and do it?" asked panel member Norman Mailer. The author of *The Naked and the Dead* had previously mentioned that until about five years ago he had been "a rational atheist" and then he "started smoking a certain little green weed, and I found God in every puff."

In the balcony, the minister's wife went into a deliberate fit of hysterical coughing as a protest against the aura of frustrated do-goodism with which the speakers had permeated the place.

"We're all social critics, too," said a member of the audience on the way out, "so it got boring."

The crux of the general dilemma was expressed in a specific letter to the N. Y. *Post* from J. D. Salinger, author of *The Catcher in the Rye* (a perceptive novel which, by the way, was one of the many factors that brought about the birth of the *Realist*).

Writing in reference to the plight of those sentenced to life terms in New York State (and other) prisons — where there is no provision that they may *ever* go before a Parole Board — Salinger wrote:

> If no mercy may be legally shown . . . then at least some further legislation should be provided so that when a man . . . is sentenced to life imprisonment the real terms of his sentence are pronounced in full, for all the world to hear. Something on this order, perhaps:
>
> "You will be imprisoned in a . . . penal institution for the rest of your natural life. If, however, after 20

"Bless his heart, he looks just like his Daddy."

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Reginald Dunsany:

The Tolerant Pagan . . .

The year 1959 saw the abolition of at least three politico-journalistic taboos in the form of public discussion of: the religious phases of birth control; the qualifications of candidates as affected by their religious affiliations; and the possible adjustment of our relations with Red China.

The Catholic Church has always tried to enforce its policy against birth control by keeping people in ignorance — through secular as well as canon law — about contraceptive methods. This position was buffeted by several influential sources.

- A report of the Draper Committee investigating foreign aid had favored birth control assistance for needy foreign nations.
- An agency of the World Council of Churches denounced the religious rule against birth control and substituted a policy favoring it.
- The Public Health Association for the first time came out on the side of planned parenthood.
- Although nominally impartial, a nationwide telecast by the Columbia Broadcasting System, "Population Explosion," was, in effect, the worst blow to the Church.

The losing fight of the hierarchy in the summer of 1958 to enforce the Canon Law rather than civil law in New York City's hospitals had resulted, as the *Realist* predicted (issue #2), in the virtual destruction of the taboo on discussion of the subject. The "hush-hush" attitude of public men and public agencies was being rapidly abandoned.

Open discussion of the issue was almost certain to lead to defeat of the Catholic contention that all birth control is "illegal under the Law of God" except the comparatively ineffective "rhythm" method, sometimes called Roman Roulette.

Some Catholic clerics could discern and read the handwriting on the wall. Msgr. De Blanc during the CBS broadcast, for example, had expressed hope that new scientific studies would turn up a device or method of birth control which could fit into the framework of Catholic dogma. It began to look as if the Church might find a face-saving device and reverse herself.

But then the Bishops and Archbishops held their annual meeting in Washington and proceeded to throw a religious monkey wrench into the political machinery. They did no more than restate the Catholic doctrine. But they did it in such a way that it was bound to cause trouble.

In an official statement entitled, "Explosion or Backfire," the Bishops attacked the "campaign of propaganda" in favor of family planning. They said that the term "population explosion" represents a "terror technique" and that it "provides a smoke screen behind which a moral evil may be foisted on the public."

Especially, the statement attacked the Protestants. It referred to "representatives of Christian bodies who endeavour to elaborate the plan into a theological doctrine which envisages artificial birth prevention within the married state as the 'will of God.'"

The key passage in the bishops' statement, from the political viewpoint, was their averment that Catholics "will not . . . support any public assistance, either at home or abroad, to promote artificial birth prevention, abortion or sterilization whether thru direct aid or by means of international organizations."

Rev. James A. Pike, who is chairman of the Clergymen's National Advisory Committee of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, immediately raised the question as to whether the policy laid down by the Catholic hierarchy was binding on all Catholic candidates for public office.

Senator John Kennedy replied that it would be a "mistake" for the United States government to advocate birth control in other countries, that this was a decision for the countries concerned to make for themselves. U.S. intervention would undoubtedly be regarded as "objectionable."

However, Kennedy said that if he

---

or 30 years you not only are truly penitent but have shown, in the indifferent opinion of New York State, a very marked improvement in character — comparable in quality and depth to that of the average free citizen . . . — you will then be permitted, slowly, charitably, intelligently, at the taxpayers' expense, to rust to death in a sanitary, airy cell superior in every way to anything offered in the 16th century."

This is all a matter for action, though, not irony. Can it be brought to the attention of the Governor? Can he be approached? Can he be located? Surely it must concern him that the New York State lifer is one of the most crossed-off, man-forsaken men on earth.

Ψ

If there was any conclusion reached at that symposium, it was this: it takes time for the messages of the little magazines to be picked up finally by the big magazines, and in the meantime, the former serve as "entertainers" of a sort. That, obviously, must include the *Realist*.

It is a significant coincidence that Alan Watts in this issue calls himself an "entertainer." But he goes on to mention "the spark that leaps the gap" between entertainer and audience. And that spark is the *only* justification for the continued existence of this publication.

That spark may be revealed by the mere act of renewing your subscription when an expiration notice arrives. The spark has also been revealed in other ways:

Russell Green of Gray, Ga. buys and distributes extra copies every month to journalists and college newspaper editors. Ruthe and Jack Cowl of Laredo, Texas send in several gift subscriptions for their friends. Dorothy Manuche of Great Neck, N.Y. writes us a spontaneous little note of encouragement because "it must be discouraging to battle against the stupidity of a whole culture. But keep it up. We need you." Mrs. Rona Kicklighter of N. Brunswick, N.J. writes us:

> . . . We got a phone call from some people in Franklin Park who are also subscribers to the *Realist* and who had read your quote of mine (issue #2) in reference to religion. They were starting to form a new branch of the Ethical Culture Society in Princeton, and from my views they thought we might be interested. We were.
>
> And, as a result, my husband and I have been very active in organizing this thing. I have to baby sit, so he goes to more meetings, but that's life. We have met some awfully fine and living people through this experiment. . . .

And this month we received an invitation to the wedding of two subscribers: Jacquelynne Pickler of Berkeley, Calif. and Wayne Moore of Fresno. We were unable to attend, but we'll be happy to combine their subscriptions.

newspaper editors. Ruth, and Jack Cowl of Laredo,

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Rumor of the Month

The movie about the life of Christ — entitled "Son of God" — was originally supposed to be presented in the new film process, Aromarama, until technicians with a flair for authenticity actually started to concoct a realistic barn odor for the scene in the manger.

were President and the question came before him, in the form of legislation or a recommendation from within the executive branch of government, he would decide it in accordance with his oath to do whatever was best in the interests of the United States.

This was not a very direct answer to Pike's question: Was the bishops' ruling binding on him? But Kennedy cannot be blamed for refusing to insult the prelates "in their teeth." He did state that he would decide according to his own conscience and oath. He made clear that the question was not closed merely because the bishops thought they had closed it.

He also asked that other candidates be queried. Their answers, too, were carefully phrased to avoid offense to the Catholic minority or its autocratic leaders. All of them were equivocal except Stuart Symington of Missouri, who favored planned parenthood.

That Kennedy and the Church were at odds was demonstrated by Rev. John R. Connery, professor of moral theology at West Baden College in Indiana, who opined that "it would be clearly wrong" for a Roman Catholic president to approve a bill sponsoring a program of birth control.

From the non-Catholic viewpoint, the most disappointing statements came from President Eisenhower and former President Truman. Truman referred to the term "population explosion" and said, "I don't believe in that hooey." He said that he is opposed to the use of federal funds to promote artificial birth control in underdeveloped countries.

Eisenhower declared emphatically that the U.S. Government would have nothing to do with providing other nations with birth control information "as long as I am here." If other countries want to do something about this question, he said, they should go to "professional groups," not to governments.

The President's reason was that "this thing has, for very great denominations, a religious meaning, a definite religious tenet in their own doctrine." Thus, according to President Eisenhower — or whoever prepares his answers for him, perhaps Jim Hagerty — in order to take an issue out of the realm of public action, all that any sect needs to do is to declare its official interest in it.

Writing in the New York *Times*, Arthur Krock said that "it is a speculation, but probably sound, that so far as the politics of 1960 are concerned, the President's firm words have ended the rising debate among the politicians ambitious to succeed him. . . . But this problem of overpopulation cannot be swept under the carpet because that is politically advisable for both parties. And if the President's formula of leaving international informational exchanges to professional groups is to be final, something may have to be done by Congress with Section 1461, Title 18 of the U.S. Criminal Code which bans such exhanges from the mails."

And certainly the issue was not swept under the rug even temporarily. Almost every issue of the metropolitan press since that time has contained a statement by somebody or other on the subject. In mid-December, while investing eight new Cardinals, the Pope attacked "death-dealing" birth control under which head he classifies all methods except rhythm.

As long as the issues remained in the general and abstract realm, such as separation of church and state, even federal aid to education, only a small part of the population gave any thought to them. But there are a few issues, such as divorce, birth control, etc., which seriously affect the daily lives of millions. They understand birth control like they understand the bread and butter and meat on their tables.

Who is there, non-Catholic or even Catholic, that practices birth control — and is so forcibly told that he is practicing "murder" — who may not develop some doubts about voting for a Catholic candidate?

Flop of the Month

Suggestion for a whopping business failure: a new lipstick; color — cranberry red.

Fantasy of the Month

From an editorial in Fortune magazine, entitled "The 'Business Remembrance'":

". . . Since everybody knows it is written off as a business expense, its qualification as a token of affection or esteem would seem to be highly dubious. . . . Many businessmen, of course, have some real friends in business and enjoy giving Christmas gifts to them; and no inhibition of that pleasant practice is suggested. Enjoyment may, in fact, be the best criterion. We can imagine a meeting of the board of directors to decide what remembrances they would really enjoy dispensing...."

Face-Lift of the Month

From Sheilah Graham's Hollywood gossip column:

"Marlon Brando is having to make extensive changes in the screenplay of 'The Ugly American,' due to President Eisenhower's triumphant tour of friendliness . . . A State Department suggestion. . . ."

Kennedy began to show personally the results of his change in fortunes. He told a Democratic group, in a seemingly resentful way, that the party would suffer if he were excluded from the nomination for religious reasons.

Meanwhile, local Catholic politicians were opposing Kennedy on the ground that his candidacy would hurt their local campaigns. Kennedy is not a very "good" Catholic. He never went to a Catholic school in his life. He has made numerous statements which clash with the church's "infallible" doctrines.

Especially if he became President, it would not be too hard for him to become a Catholic anti-clerical; and it is American Catholic anti-clericals that are now desperately needed for the reform of the Catholic Church. The bishops realize this situation, and there was respectable speculation to the effect that they had plunged a knife into Kennedy's back with their statement.

The bishops may have had more than one purpose. Obviously, they would not be too much hurt by the failure of Kennedy's try for the Presidency. They could do just as well with another Eisenhower in the White House as with any Catholic who would be under constant non-Catholic pressure.

Perhaps what they seek in 1960 is not the presentation to the country of one presidential candidate of the Catholic faith, but the nomination instead of *two* Vice-Presidential candidates of that religion.

This might conceivably help set a precedent to the effect that the Catho-

Euphemism of the Month

When Los Angeles journalist Paul Coates took a street poll on a deliberately misloaded question — "Do you think the Mann Act deters or helps the cause of organized labor?" — the results were disheartening: only 12% realized it was a gag; many thought the law should be repealed; others favored it ("I'm for anything that helps the working man").

But when Pat Buttram — a sort of junior Arthur Godfrey — told his CBS radio audience of the incident, he changed the Mann Act to the Versailles Treaty.

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lics are "entitled" to one of the two places on each national ticket every four years. This is the way it works out in Germany and just possibly such a tradition could be established here. The Catholic minority here is not so large as in Germany but it is concentrated in politically strategic spots.

Politicians are almost unanimous in seeking to prevent the "religious" issue from arising in 1960. They are just following their propensity for avoiding *all* important issues.

The extent to which the taboo on discussion of religious affiliations of candidates has been discarded is clear from a consideration of the attitude assumed by the Committee for Fair Election Bractices last winter as compared to the resolution adopted by the National Association of Inter-Group Relations Officials.

The Fair Election Practices Committee, headed by Charles Taft, frowned on all questions addressed to candidates based on their religious views and called them an unfair practice. This was the same position as that of the Catholic bishops. The clerics even tried to convince the public that such questions were a violation of the constitution. Taft — and the public in general — went along with them.

But this all changed after John Kennedy made his famous statements in *Look* magazine last spring. He indicated disagreement with the hierarchy on several subjects. He also showed his willingness to answer all reasonable questions without taking offense. Such questions are now being asked, one after another.

NAIRO, meeting recently at San Juan, Puerto Rico, issued a "statement of concerns and commitments" in which among other things, it said that "The question of political candidates' religious affiliations raised in some 1958 state elections, has become prominent in the preliminaries to the 1960 Presidential nominations. The news media and opinion polls reflect a mounting discussion and debate, which will test our pluralistic unity.

"We hold it salutary to examine differences, rationally. The asset-liability balance of this open debate will depend upon the manner in which it is conducted. Intergroup relations workers will share with religious spokesmen and other leaders a difficult responsibility: to encourage a fair debate which avoids irresponsible assertions, name-calling and impugning of motives; to conduct a dialogue with constant regard for the public interest."

The NAIRO statement seems to reflect the shift in public attitudes. In his nationally syndicated column, Roscoe Drummond wrote that "so far the discussion of whether an American President or other elected official who is a Roman Catholic would have the moral right or the inclination to go against the dictates of his Church on public policy is being conducted responsibly and fairmindedly.

"This is a notable improvement over the kind of debate and innuendo which marked the Al Smith campaign for the Presidency in 1928. Then instead of an honest and open discussion there was a state of emotional hostility to the Democratic nominee. And there were also charges that any raising of the position of the Catholic Church on aspects of public affairs was, *per se*, a proof of bigotry against the Catholic religion."

If the opposition of the hierarchy to open discussion had prevailed, the debate whould have sunk to the same low level as in 1928. For preventing this, a large share of the credit must go to Kennedy for his frank and candid answers to questions.

Likewise to be credited is the restraint exercised by Protestant groups, such as POAU. Although this organization has the most widespread reputation as being "anti-Catholic," it never challenged Catholic candidates as such. It only submitted a list of questions, involving dual loyalty, that it asked all Catholic candidates to answer.

The 1958 Resolution of the World Order Study Conference — held in Cleveland and sponsored by the National Council of Churches — had urged a "softer" approach to Red China. At the end of that year, news analysts called this resolution "the year's most explosive Protestant development."

It was challenged by Catholic leaders—whose feelings on the China issue are conditioned by resentment of the new "patriotic" Catholic Church in China, including most of its former native bishops — and by such other religious leaders as Daniel Poling, editor of *Christian Herald;* Senate Chaplain Frederick B. Harris; and the President's parson, Edward R. Elson.

Ever since, the debate has continued, with the Cleveland group gaining more and more open adherents. It now appears that the position which was so unpopular then, may soon become the official American policy. This, despite the Pope's personal representative in Washington, Apostolic Delegate Egido Vagnozzi, who said last month that recognition of Red China would be "one of the worst mistakes that could be made."

A report prepared for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by a group of experts recommended reconsideration of our Chinese policy. Chairman William Fulbright said that it would be unwise "to continue to ignore the over 600,000,000 people on the Chinese mainland in the naive belief that they will somehow go away."

And the National Young Democratic Clubs, meeting in Toledo last month, urged the "opening of diplomatic negotiations." Resolutions on the issue have been defeated in every YDC convention since 1952. This time, it was said that 12 western states, including trade-conscious California, supplied the pressure.

The next session of Congress is bound to see further debate on the China issue. And religious leaders can be relied on to supply the acrimony.

Finks Jinx Sphinx

Egypt's Film Censor Department has sent word to major American movie distributors that all films starring Marilyn Monroe, Carroll Baker or Elizabeth Taylor will be banned from the Arab country. The three actresses are recent converts to Judaism.

Explained the Egyptian censors: "This decision has been taken for the general security of the country." (The Arab League boycotts film producers and actors who "financially or morally support Israel.")

One result of the ban is that Egyptian moviegoers will not be able to see a certain film in which Miss Taylor is scheduled to star. Namely, "Cleopatra."

ALAN WATTS

(Continued from Cover)

monistic system, which the book had pointed out Vedanta wasn't at all.

Well, I got rather angry and sat down and wrote him a letter. I showed, in two columns, what I had actually said in The Supreme Identity, and the completely opposite things he claimed I had said. He answered with evasions. And that is about the only time a Christian theologian has cared to reflect on my writings in public.

Q. What is Zen?

A. (Soft chuckling.)

Q. Would you care to enlarge on that?

A. (Loud guffawing.)

Q. You call Zen Buddhism a "way of liberation." Would you distinguish between a way of liberation and a religion?

A. A religion is first of all an aid to social solidarity. It's a revealed rule of life which one hears and obeys. But liberation is simply concerned with discovering, not what is advantageous, but what is. The goal of religion is salva-

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tion, which means membership in a community, only possible through accepting and internalizing the conventions of the community. Unfortunately, people become hypnotized by conventions and think they are laws of nature.

In religion, also, you are concerned with saving your "self" or your "soul." Through Zen or other Eastern ways of liberation you come to recognize that the "self" is an abstraction from memory, which like all abstractions cannot be "held" or "saved" in any way, and that the real "you," so to speak, is the on-going processes of your living. Instead of being a block-like entity to be "saved" from the rest of the universe, you become one process in an infinite number of processes, all of them working together in harmony.

Q. If Zen is a way of liberation, why do you drink? Do you consider liquor a way of liberation?

A. No. I regard it as a part of life, like food or vitamins —

Q. Or religion?

A. Or religion. I suppose a man's religion is in one sense what he gets angry about, and one of the things I get angry about is any attempt to impede the production or distribution of wine.

When I was Dean of the American Academy of Asian Studies, I initiated the custom of having wine served at dinner. Several members of the faculty came to me and complained about this, saying that it would lower the reputation of the institution. I grew quite angry with them because in our Western culture wine has been a profoundly humanizing influence. I wanted the school to have a "human atmosphere" — the sort of gaiety and mellowness that one associates with the cultures of the Mediterranean. It's an important antidote to the puritan pomposity of the North.

People often ask me why I smoke and drink. I don't preach, remember. My philosophy is not concerned with what should be, but with what is.

Q. How would you evaluate the relationship between Zen and General Semantics?

A. Well, there's a very close tie in principle between Zen and General Semantics, but there is great difference in practice. Most semantics people I know talk too much and get increasingly involved in increasingly fine distinctions, as if language could be made n-dimensional. But I do think many of the writers — Korzybski, Bois, Hayakawa — have said things to wake people up.

I'm all for General Semantics as long as they call a halt to the discussion at about eleven o'clock.

Q. What about the relationship between Zen and Gestalt Therapy?

A. I read the book, Gestalt Therapy, by Perls, Hefferline and Goodman. I thought it was a very fine book. But I know nothing about how the system works in practice.

Q. What do you think of Wilhelm Reich?

A. I'm skeptical about his orgone theories, but I'm all for his thinking about sexuality. I feel that he's one of the men, along with Groddeck, who took Freud more seriously than Freud took himself. Another is Ian Suttie, author of The Origins of Love and Hate.

Q. What do you mean when you accuse the Freudians of "obscenity?"

A. Freud himself calls the style of sensibility of the infant "polymorphous perverse." Why "perverse?" Doesn't the word carry an assumption with it?

Or, take the delight Freudians show when they demonstrate that art or poetry derives from sexual impulses. I would say, so much the better for art and poetry. But the Freudians seem to think that in some sense this discovery has lowered the status of art and poetry. They can only think this if they have a fundamentally obscene attitude toward sex.

Q. What do you think of Jung's theories?

A. I think his most important discovery is his treatment of the problem of evil. He's a sheer genius when he reveals the creative and essential functions of our own dark side, how we have to assimilate it and make friends with it.

Q. What do you think of psychiatry in general?

A. the psychiatrists realize that they have been handed a real problem —they are getting the questions priests and ministers used to get, but they, too, don't know which end is up becauses their philosophical premises are largely unconscious. They admit it to their colleagues, but they can't to their patients.

Q. When Dr. Ellis was asked about the apparent similarity between his theory of rational psychotherapy and Zen, he replied that while both do away with self-consciousness, Zen throws out the baby with the bath-water. How would you answer him?

A. I don't know what he means.

Q. I think he was referring to the danger of becoming too detached from reality.

A. Detachment is not disinterest. Liberation means not getting blocked, not having too much feedback. Shakespeare's Hamlet is the classic case of a man with too much feedback. He couldn't act because he had to check his own checking and doubt his own doubts and question his own questions. To be detached doesn't mean you don't enjoy dinner; it means that the wheels don't stick. The "attached" person is too wrapped up in himself.

Q. Well, would you sign a petition to end nuclear tests or to get Caryl Chessman out of the death-house?

A. I would sign if I knew something about the issue.

Q. Would you send a CARE package?

A. I would not. I would send a package to somebody I knew. I dislike the whole attitude of impersonal charity. Nowadays, you can deduct a CARE package from your income tax, but not what you give to a beggar who comes to your door. If I were making the laws I would completely reverse that. I consider governmental charity and all official, bureaucratic charity to be the utter antithesis of true charity.

Q. Would you call Zen anti-rational?

A. More than rational, including the rational, just as white paper includes the words written on it. One can't be rational without knowing what it is to be irrational, as the two opposites depend on each other.

Q. Do you think some of the Chris-

Editor's Note

This is the first in a series of "Impolite Interviews" with controversial personalities of — and perhaps ahead of — our time. Others in the series will include so-called "sick" comic Lenny Bruce and rational psychotherapist Dr. Albert Ellis.

Alan W. Watts is the author of *The Way of Zen, The Wisdom of Insecurity, Myth and Ritual in Christianity, Nature, Man and Woman* and other scholarly, witty works.

Dr. Watts wrote his first book, *The Spirit of Zen*, when he was twenty. In the quarter-century which has passed since then, he has become known — through college teaching and lecture tours as well as his books — as a most perceptive and thought-provoking philosopher.

This interview took place in a Spanish restaurant in New York's Greenwich Village. The questions were posed by Robert Anton Wilson, with an occasional impertinence by Paul Krassner. We are grateful to Mary Jane King, of the N. Y. Society for General Semantics, for arranging the interview.

Bertrand Russell, in his preface to *Why I Am Not a Christian*, states: "With very few exceptions, the religion which a man accepts is that of the community in which he lives, which makes it obvious that the influence of environment is what has led him to accept the religion in question."

In the United States, it has been that very "influence of environment" which has been leading more and more individuals to *reject* their Judaeo-Christian "heritage." For some, Zen is the answer. For Alan Watts, it would seem still to be the question. The difference is a smile.

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tian mystics have used Christianity as a way of liberation in your sense?

A. Yes, particularly St. Dionysius, John Scotus Erigena, Eckhart — and if we go East we really get them: Simeon Neotheologios, and a whole tradition in the Eastern church.

Q. Would you call Shinran Buddhism a religion or a way of liberation?

A. In America, of course, it's a religion — a watered-down Buddhism trying to imitate Protestantism. But in Japan I would call it a way of liberation. A deep understanding of Shin doctrine is one of the very best ways to get to the inside of Buddhism. I don't want this remark on Shin in America to reflect on the priests but most of the Nisei groups — though there's a group of young people in Berkeley who are on the ball and know what Shin is all about.

Q. Would you call Theravada Buddhism a religion or a way of liberation?

A. A way of liberation.

Q. Would you consider the Quakers closer to your position than other Christians are?

A. Not very much. I dearly love the Quakers — they're so generous and open-minded — but what makes the difference is that they're still Idealists. They want the Good to triumph. They have my respect and affection, but I'm not an Idealist.

Q. Why do you say you aren't an Idealist?

A. I don't think a human being can act at all until he's all of one piece. If he's divided against himself — one part saying, "You should be better than you are" — he's incapable of effective action.

Q. But don't you try to make people better?

A. No. I am, if anything, an entertainer. I love to feel that certain spark leap the gap between the speaker and the audience. But I don't have any message of world-changing nature. The world might change, but not because you're trying to change it.

Q. Isn't that just a rationalization of apathy?

A. No. I once had an argument with Margaret Mead — she was being violently emotional about the necessity of stopping atomic armaments — and I said that it could be the very violence she was displaying which might bring about atomic war.

I told her, you go ahead and rouse people to a great pitch of emotion about nuclear disarmament; then I will show them that there's nothing they can do about it. We complement each other: It's a problem about which something must be done, and yet there is no way of doing it. And it is this very combination which could be the way to liberation.

Q. If you knew the atom bomb was about to fall, what would you do?

A. I should go right on eating dinner.

Q. Do you think mankind is going to blow itself off the earth with atom bombs in the near future?

A. No. I think there would be a very serious danger if real do-gooders came to power in the United States or Russia, but since Khrushchev is a gangster and Ike a representative of American business, this won't happen. It's just in the self-interest of both sides not to do it. I would have been horrified, though, if Dulles had become President.

I'm sometimes worried about Adlai Stevenson in this way, even though I have voted for him. Stevenson has humor, and this is such a rare and such an essential quality in the statesman that it outweighs the dangers.

Q. Why do you vote at all? As you said before, "The world might change, but not because you're trying to change it." And isn't that merely fatalism?

A. Why do I vote? Because if there were a tie and the casting vote might have been mine, I'd feel such a fool.

But, seriously, the question shows you're not getting my point. The problem is not whether to act or not to act, what to do or what not to do. The Chinese saying goes, "When the wrong man uses the right means, the right means work in the wrong way."

Thus, what I am saying is that the world cannot be changed by the "wrong" people, however right their doing or not-doing. And, by the "wrong" people, I mean those who act from the feeling that man is separate from the natural universe — either pushing it around or being pushed around by it.

The ideas of individual freedom and fatalism rest on the same assumption — that man is separate, the boss or the puppet. In my view, he cannot act with wisdom unless he feels that what he does and what nature does are one and the same.

Q. Do you think the Romantic Movement was close to Zen?

A. No, because it made an artificial distinction between the natural and the human.

For the Lack of Cash Monk Nearly is Ash

Police in Bangkok, Thailand this month seized Poh Kwong, a Chinese Buddhist monk, as he was about to cremate himself on a blazing pyre. He was despondent over loss of money intended for hospital charities.

Squatting cross-legged, with eyes closed in meditation, the monk was carried to a police jeep from beside the 5-foot pile of wood on which he had intended to burn himself.

Q. Do you think Surrealism is close to Zen?

A. It is something quite different. They began with a spontaneous following of unconscious promptings, and could have become something like Zen, but they became, not unconscious, but self-conscious.

Q. What do you think of the Beat Generation?

A. It's a journalistic invention. Having been invented and put on the market, many people bought it.

Now, I remember the real, original Dharma Bums of the 1945-'46 era — young veterans hitch-hiking across the country and stopping every place there was a 'sage' who knew something about Eastern philosophy. Some even went to Switzerland to speak to Jung. Many came to see me at Northwestern University.

They weren't interested in jazz or drugs or hot-rods, I assure you. Many of them are still around, very few of them in the Village or North Beach — they're on farms or in little communities they created themselves; they're out of the rat-race of keeping up with the Joneses.

They are the substance of which the Beat Generation is the shadow.

Q. In Beat Zen, Square Zen and Zen, you seem much more impressed with Gary Snyder than with the other Beat writers. What do you think of Gary?

A. He's a true Dharma Bum, a man of complete integrity. He's just the way Kerouac describes him in **The Dharma Bums** — little, wiry, bearded, Oriental-looking, always dressed in clothes that are old and patchy but scrupulously clean. I don't practice Zen the way he does, but there are many ways of doing it. I think very highly of Gary.

Q. I kind of figured that Japhy Ryder in The Dharma Bums was based on Gary. In the same book, Arthur Wayne is based on you, isn't he?

A. Yes.

Q. And Alvah Goldbook is Allen Ginsberg?

A. Yes.

Q. What do you think of Allen?

A. He's a brilliant, fascinating man. You should really interview him some time.

Q. What do you think of Jack Kerouac?

A. He's a very warm, feeling, sensitive personality, but because he has no bones he doesn't sustain it. I mean, of course, Zen bones. Jack has Zen flesh, but no Zen bones yet. I thoroughly enjoyed **The Dharma Bums**. He described Mill Valley perfectly in that book, right down to the refreshing smell of the morning rain on the wet leaves.

Q. In Nature, Man and Woman, you say that sexuality and mysticism need not conflict with each other. Do you think that anti-sexual feelings are

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more common in Christianty or in Buddhism?

A. In Christianity.

Q. Hinduism has a great deal of overt phallic-worship in it, and yet it also has a strong ascetic strain. Do you understand why this is?

A. We've got two separate problems here. From the most ancient times, Hinduism has included a strong ascetic element as one possible way of liberation but it also included the other extreme — you could also be liberated through extreme licentiousness.

That is, liberation can be found through any extreme way of life because any excessive pursuit of a goal brings you face to face with the paradoxes of grasping. The harder you chase 'happiness,' the less likely you are to find it.

As the cyberneticists have rediscovered, a system with too much control goes rigid and doen't move, and a system with too much feedback goes into wild oscillations and never finds what it's aiming for.

The only thing to do when your goals in life get you into this type of double-bind is to have a good laugh at yourself. Any excessive way of life will bring this lesson home to you eventually.

Modern intellectual Hinduism has obscured this point because it is essentially a British product. The Moslems destroyed the upper crust of India. They were followed by the British, and then Macaulay introduced the English educational system to India. The young Hindu read Jane Austen and Dickens, and so modern neo-Hinduism is heavly tinted with Victorian Puritanism.

Q. Do you think asceticism is ever justified?

A. Oh, yes. If you really want to enjoy making love, leave a space before in which nothing happens. If you're a little hungry, dinner tastes better. However, you don't want to get so hungry that you wolf your food, and you don't want to get so frustrated that you wolf your girl.

Q. What do you think of Brigitte Bardot?

A. Once upon a time, there was a Russian woman — in New York — and she was a famous hostess. At a particular party she was giving, there was a very beautiful young woman, and a young man there asked to be introduced to her. Well, they were introduced, and they conversed, and later he took her home. The next day, the hostess called him and asked what happened. He confessed that they had been intimate. "How was it?" asked the hostess. He answered, "It was like falling into the middle of a bicycle."

Q. What do you think of D. H. Lawrence?

I think very highly of him, although I'm more familiar with his poetry than his novels. I love his poetry.

Q. I think you write like a poet. Have you written much poetry?

A. Very little. However, I do consider my prose to be poetry, actually. I consider poetry the proper speech of mankind. It doesn't argue, but convinces by its own integrity.

Q. What do you think of J. D. Salinger?

A. I like reading him very much indeed. I feel I know his Glass Family quite well — they're my kind of people. My favorite — of all Salinger's writings — is **Zooey.**

Q. Yet, wasn't the point of this story that Christ is the answer?

A. But a different Christ from the Christ of the Gospels. Here, Christ was the Fat Lady. I think Salinger meant that Christ is always the unexpected revelation of the divine where you didn't think you'd find it.

Q. What other novelists do you like?

A. I'm not much of a novel reader, but one of my great favorites is Hermann Hesse, and I love what I've read of Joyce. I like a lot of Huxley's work. I was fascinated with Werfel's Star of the Unborn.

Q. How about Henry Miller?

A. Yes, very much — though I far prefer his essays and travel books. His treatment of sex has a great lustiness but no feeling.

Q. Who are your favorite poets?

A. Shakespeare, first of all. Basho, Li T'ai Po, Gerard Manly Hopkins, e. e. cummings, Kenneth Rexroth, Yeats, Housman, Whitman, Dylan Thomas, Emily Dickinson, T. S. Eliot —many others.

Q. What's your favorite Zen story?

A. I guess it's the one about Hui-k'o coming to Bodhidharma and asking for peace of mind. Bodhidharma said, "Bring out your mind here before me and I will pacify it." Hui-k'o answered in confusion, "But when I seek my own mind I cannot find it." "There!" snapped Bodhidharma, "I have pacified your mind." And, of course, Hui-k'o was pacified . . .

Q. What's your favorite passage from the Bible?

A. Job is my favorite book. I guess my favorite passage is, "The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and wither it goeth: even so is everyone that is born of the spirit."

Or another favorite is, in Proverbs: "Enjoy thy wife while she is young."

Q. I often think that Bertrand Russell is a rationalist in terminology but a mystic in feeling. What do you think?

A. I'm inclined to agree. I love listening to him talk — his humor, his precision, his attitudes on social problems — he's always so damned reasonable.

Q. What message would you like to give to Christians?

A. "Come off it."

Q. What message would you like to give to scientists?

A. "Dream."

Q. What message would you like to give to Khrushchev?

A. "Relax."

Q. What message would you like to give to freethinkers?

A. "Don't be so compulsive."

Q. Compulsive about what?

A. One can emphasize freedom in such a way as to be bound by it.

Q. Could you give a specific example?

A. Yes. If you wouldn't be seen dead darkening a church door, you might have a closed mind.

Q. Now that you've been interviewed by a freethought magazine, aren't you afraid of losing your popularity with all those little old rich ladies who are interested in Oriental mysticism?

A. I have never depended on them at all.

Q. If you could write only one more book, what would it be about?

A. A sort of very personal conversation. Maybe it wouldn't even have a title. It would be a tremendous affirmation of the natural universe in which we live as a kind of manifestation of love, where "love" means everything the word love can mean. I want somehow to say to people that they are crying in vain, gnashing their teeth in vain, quarreling and scratching in vain.

Q. Wouldn't you be saying THAT in vain?

A. I would be, if I were trying to alter anything — but if I were simply singing a song — no.

Q. And which are you doing?

A. I'm simply singing a song.

Navel Operations

The $30,000,000.00 *Sea Wolf atomic submarine has a figure of Buddha, purchased for $1.85, welded to the top of its nuclear reactor power plant.*

Contributions

We wish to thank the following persons for their contributions this month to The Realist Association — a nonprofit corporation which publishes the *Realist* — and donations to which are tax-deductible.

Anon. $5; Patricia Fellman $2; Edward Fiorito $5; Nestle Frobish $3; Frank Pinkner $1; Jesse M. Poole $6; S. Rosenblatt $3; Muriel I. Symington $1; Willard A. Wienke $2.

Music of Our Sphere

Upon Earth's podium we see
Mammon direct the symphony,
While God, to His extreme chagrin,
Is playing second violin.

—*Tom Pease*

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Religious Socio–Politics Around the World

POLYGAMY. In the appropriately-named city of Bountiful, Utah, the Anti-Polygamy Citizens' League has just been organized. It is believed that polygamists in Utah and neighboring Arizona and Idaho may number as many as ten thousand. This is true in spite of the fact that for 70 years the Mormon church has forbidden the practice. The polygamists consider that theirs is the one true faith and that the Mormons are backsliders.

The new league urges economic pressure: by the removal of polygamist leaders from federal civil service rolls, by boycotts against businesses operated by them, by scrupulous law enforcement, and by bringing an end to the popular practice of "viewing the situation in a humorous light."

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CAPTIVE SCHOOLS. A Texas court has refused to grant an injunction against the operation of a so-called "captive school" in Bremond, where Catholic nuns were hired as public school teachers, and who then, under the Bishop's supervision, conducted the school as a parochial school. The court did not hold the arrangement to be legal but only pointed out that the petitioners had not presented their case fully to administrative officers. The case was dismissed "without prejudice," and a new suit has been filed.

Meanwhile, in Ohio, a similar arrangement was abolished by action of a county attorney who held for several reasons that nuns could not be certified as public school teachers. The sisters take vows of absolute obedience to public school boards.

At another school in Ohio, complaints were filed on the same basis, but when the inspector was on his way to look the situation over, the crucifixes and other paraphernalia were removed; after the inspection, it is alleged, the equipment was restored to its place and religious instruction resumed.

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HIRE EDUCATION. The American Association of Land Grant Colleges and State Universities, which has long withheld its approval of the principle of federal aid to colleges, met in St. Louis recently and endorsed such a program. But the Association asked that aid be limited to public universities, which would exclude the entire Catholic system of colleges, as well as other sectarian schools.

An interesting phase of the Association's action was its objection to the present program of federal appropriations for scholarships in public and private colleges. The Association did not mention the fact that much of this money finds its way, very quickly, into the coffers of church colleges in the form of tuition payments. It based its opposition instead on the argument that giving aid to prospective students only increases the number of students clamoring for admission to college.

The colleges, in turn, don't have the money to care for the new students. In most colleges, the fees paid for tuition are not usually sufficient to pay such costs. In Catholic colleges, however, it seems that a "profit" can be made on such tuition because of the availability of unpaid or low-paid teachers.

After the meeting of the Association, the Church was heard from in the form of a speech by Cardinal Richard Cushing of Boston at nearby Kansas City. He urged more and more scholarship grants to students.

But it is important to note that the Catholics are not the only religious educators who nuzzle up to the public trough. The Baptists are probably the strongest proponents of separation of Church and State, but a recent study of their colleges reveals that only 3 out of 25 hav refused federal loans for their students on this ground.

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ONE MAN'S MEAT . . . In St. Paul, the suit against two Unitarian parents to force them to send their child to school instead of tutoring him at home was dismissed on technical grounds. The Catholic archbishop, who had supported the parents, expressed disappointment. He had hoped that the issue could be tried in court.

Catholic bishops are anxious to establish the right of parents, over the right of the state, to control the education of children. The bishops in turn try to establish control over the parents by means of the Canon law provision which requires them to turn their children over to the Church for education unless excused by the bishops.

Meanwhile, in Kentucky, the Board of Education asserted its control over the education of Christian Scientists by refusing two such children permission to absent themselves from health courses. And in the state of Washington, parents were required to send their children to school in spite of religious objections based on the serving of meat in the school lunchroom and the playing of music at assemblies.

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MARRIED PRIESTS? "Civilta Catolica," the Jesuit magazine of Rome, last month revealed that there is an active controversy now among Catholic clergymen on the question of whether they should be permitted to marry. Those who oppose the present rule of celibacy contend that all men need, if not a physical, at least a spiritual, "completion" in women, that marriage would help eliminate sexual offenses by priests, and that a change in the rule would make it easier to attract boys into the priesthood. Some even contend that it is impossible for a man to be "wholly continent."

But the Jesuit editors themselves seem to reject the proposal. The magazine contends that divine grace makes all things possible. It blames the lack of vocations to the priesthood on inadequate religious education. It also complains about the "miserably poor incomes of the clergy."

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ISRAELI BIGOTRY. The head of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Dr. Maurice N. Eisendrath, last month deplored what he calls the "strangle-hold" of Orthodoxy on religious life in Israel. He said that pressure emanating from the Orthodox political bloc has prevented "the spread of reform Judaism in that country." He protested also the "allocation of funds and facilities generously supplied by all segments of our American Jewish community to but one religious group in Israel."

A few days after that statement, James P. Warburg, former banker and writer on international affairs, told a congregation in New Haven that American Jews should not support Israel if that nation's policies run contrary to those of the United States. He said he had discontinued contributions to the United Jewish Appeal because of that organization's "high-handed procedure" in refusing to segregate funds contributed for relief or cultural purposes from funds that go directly or indirectly into the Israeli treasury.

Warburg added that "it is one thing to create a much-needed refuge for the persecuted and oppressed. It is quite another to create a new chauvinistic nationalism and a state based in part on medieval theocratic bigotry and in part upon the nazi-exploited myth of the existence of a Jewish race." He said that "nothing could be more tragic than to witness the creation of a Jewish state in which the non-Jewish minorities are treated as second class citizens."

Meanwhile, in Israel, Premier David Ben Gurion announced the formation of a new cabinet in which important posts were awarded to the National Religious Front Party.

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THE RIGHT TO ABORT. The Catholic Union of Kansas says that the ultimate aim of "overpopulation prop-

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aganda" is to legalize abortion and make it available through governmental bodies. It would be tragic, said the Union, if "God-fearing persons were to accept murder in the form of abortion as the solution to the so-called overpopulation problem."

The view that abortion, even to save the life of a pregnant woman, is a form of murder is comparable to the view of Jehovah's Witnesses which holds that blood transfusions are an "eating of the blood" in violation of the Biblican injunction. But this does not make the Roman Catholic hierarchy tolerant of the views of the Witnesses. For instance, in the Catholic Newark *Advocate*, there appeared a strong condemnation of the two parents, members of the Witnesses sect, who recently permitted their child to die rather than allow a transfusion.

"By the refusal of the court to intervene on the religious convictions of the parents," said the editorial, "and having interpreted the parents as being sincere in their beliefs, the child died . . . Such a decision brings out the necessity of resolving the right to a religious conviction in conflict with the right to live. Our courts have made distinction many times between the right to religious belief and the right to religious action. When the religious action seems contrary to right reason, then the courts have passed judgment recognizing the right to live."

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RELIGIOUS FREEDOM. The Maryland atheist, Roy Torcaso, who appealed the denial of his notary public commission (based on his refusal to swear to a belief in God) has lost his case in the lower court. He'll appeal the decision. The Washington *Post* said that "to compel a profession of faith is to invade the shrine of conscience in a most odious way." On the other hand, an editorial in *Christianity Today*, published by Billy Graham's wealthy father-in-law, said: "To the founding fathers, it was inconceivable that integrity, responsibility, morality, justice, and a free social order, could exist without recourse to a cosmic law higher than the laws of the state and to the Author of that Law, the Supreme Judge of the Universe."

Stanley Lichtenstein, ex-POAU official, pointed out the irony that although in this case Maryland applies a religious test for public office, "St. Mary's City now has the effrontery to hold another of the ill-founded, tiresome and boastful celebrations paying tribute to the State's alleged championship of religious freedom." He questioned Maryland's claim to be the cradle of religious liberty.

The so-called "Act of Religious Toleration," he points out, began "by proclaiming the death penalty and confiscation of the offender's estate for 'blasphemy against God, denying our Saviour Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, or denying the Holy Trinity, or the Godhead of any of the Three Persons.' In short, the Act took but one small step away from the prevailing barbarism by broadening the state's definition of acceptable Christianity. . . . By no stretch of the imagination did it grant fundamental religious liberty to all citizens. . . ."

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PRESS FREEDOM. After a national meeting of the bishops, archbishops, and other prelates of the Catholic Church in Washington last month, Bishop James A. McNulty — Chairman of the Bishops Committee for Motion Pictures, Radio and Television — urged "cooperation of Catholics and non-Catholics in a common effort for the cause of decency and morality." A special commission of the National Council of (Protestant) Churches was scheduled to make a report to the General Board of the organization.

Bishop McNulty with his Legion of Decency has already had considerable aid from non-Catholic organizations. But there have always been misgivings based on the tendency of the Legion to oppose not only indecency but also non-Catholicism. This particular form of interfaith cooperation was dealt a body blow last month by Pope John when in a public statement he urged legislation imposing "certain necessary limitations" on freedom of the press. He urged that such laws "direct the orientation of published matter toward moral and objective norms based on the eternity of the Divine laws" — as promulgated by him and his predecessors.

Pope John said that such limitations on the press were necessary in order to prevent newspapers from making "daily and systematic attempts on the religious and moral health of mankind." A number of metropolitan dailies seem to have been so flabbergasted by the Pope's words that they just ignored them.

But after the editors of the Washington *Post* had recovered their breath, they wrote a strong editorial saying that "his advocacy of legal restrictions is, we think, altogether the wrong remedy for the evils he protests, and cannot but cause deep misgivings among many persons who shun anti-Catholic bigotry. . . . Who is to interpret for the purposes of law what undermines 'the religious and moral foundations of the life of the people'? The Catholic Church? The Methodist Church? The Presbyterians, or Mormons, or Orthodox Jews? Citizens have been properly suspicious of the efforts of government in the domain. They are not about to assent to such an admixture of church and state in the exercise of legal authority."

FICTION BESTSELLER. Between religionists and unbelievers, the conflict concerning the Bible—not worth debating—is its infallibility. But between denominations, the issue is often: Of what does the Bible consist? Last month, Harpers issued the "Thomas Bible" — supposedly written from sayings of Jesus never before published, discovered in 1945 on papyrus manuscripts in Luxor, Egypt, and supposed to have been written in about 148 A.D.

Catholics are not expected to accept the Thomas Bible, since it destroys the whole basis of the Pope's claim to primacy over Christendom. According to their official dogma, the "number and identity of the books of the Old and New Testament were fixed by the year 405, and these were declared *de fide* by the Council of Trent. No archaeological discoveries can add to or take away from the books of the Bible, for only the Church can declare what books belong there and what do not."

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UNCLE TOM-TOM. In answer to charges of peonage and imperialism against its missionaries in the Belgian Congo and adjacent Ruanda-Urundi, which were followed by violence in both countries, Pope John has now established a separate hierarchy to rule his subjects in the two territories. He says that the purpose is to "pave the way for turning ecclesiastical jurisdiction over to native bishops" — but 29 bishops are being appointed now, of which only 3 are natives.

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SWEETER BY FAR. Although the Catholic hierarchy is so often behind censorship drives, it was a Catholic member of the Supreme Court, Justice Wm. J. Brennan, who signed the Court's unanimous decision reversing the conviction of a Los Angeles bookseller for "illegal possession" of obscene literature under a local ordinance. The book involved was *Sweeter Than Life* by Mark Tyron, the story of a woman who devotes her life to seeking revenge against men. It deals with homosexual experiences.

The key issue in the case was not whether the book was obscene but whether the bookseller could be convicted for having it in his store, even though he had not read it. Justice Brennan held the conviction void unless the prosecution could prove that the book was obscene.

Justice Brennan reasoned that the Los Angeles statute would so frighten booksellers as to eliminate all kinds of books from their shops and thus seriously restrain freedom of expression. "If the bookseller is criminally liable without a knowledge of the contents," he said, "he will tend to restrict the books he sells to those he has inspected. In that case, book and peri-

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odical shelves might be depleted indeed." The judge added that the seller's limited time and inevitable "timidity in the face of his absolute criminal liability" would tend to suppress books that the government could not ban directly.

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IKE ABROAD. The President was accompanied on his trip by Robert Murphy, whose resignation was postponed for that purpose. The inclusion of Murphy was seen by some as an olive branch to his clerical supporters. The Catholic press had called the offer of an ambassadorship to Germany a demotion, which forced his resignation. Secular commentators called the action part of the policy of de-Dullesizing the State Department.

A number of non-Catholic religious organizations protested the visits to Franco and Pope John. But there was a possibility that such visits could result in a lessening of Catholic persecution of Protestants in various countries.

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COCK & BULL STORY. The newly organized National Catholic Society for Animal Welfare, in the first issue of its quarterly bulletin, *God's Animals*, expresses the firm resolve that the Society "will avoid maudlin sentimentality, unsound philosophy, and heretical teachings regarding animals. It will bring out that the Church has a definite teaching on animals and has many times clearly expressed Herself through her Popes, Cardinals, Bishops and Saints. . . . The Church's history provides authoritative answers to these questions and the Society through its bulletin and other publications will strive to make them known."

The details of the Church's teachings, and the "heretical" teachings to be avoided, are not mentioned. One question is whether the Society intends to do anything about the bullfights in Catholic Spain or the cockfights in Catholic Latin America.

Distorted Values; Mere Child's Play

In real life, there is often no essential difference between the Good Guys and the Bad Guys except that the latter group at least doesn't pretend to be virtuous in its anti-social activities. The younger generation can learn from either side of the fence, then.

Last month, a member of a New York City juvenile gang, The Sinners, decided to "go straight" and look for a job. His fellow members didn't approve, and so they beat him up. "Going straight is for squares," said one of them—Alpine Hat, by name. "So is working," he added. "There's an easy buck to be made in this town, and that's what we're after."

The others agreed. A reporter inquired whether they didn't think their attitude might be wrong.

"Wrong?" asked Alpine Hat. "Look at Capone."

The reporter reminded him that Al Capone had spent most of his last years in Alcatraz Prison in San Francisco Bay. "All right," answered Alpine, "but he had dough. He was king."

And there you see the influence of the wrong side of the fence. The influence of the 'right' side of the fence was satirized last month on Jean Shepherd's offbeat radio show—"Hannibal Crossing the Alps"—by the unidentified voice of Herb Gardner, creator of the Nebbish greeting cards.

Gardner—in the role of a pompous politician—plugged a new organization called "Kids for Cash." One of its purposes is to do away with "unproductive childhood games" which have "no commercial value" and "lead nowhere"—including such "waste-of-time" games as hopscotch and potsy—along with the elimination of such "outdated expressions" as "home-free-all."

To fill the void, there would be such diversions as "Parents in Perspective" with its basic theme: "The hand that rocks the cradle can often overturn it."

Also, the "Dandy Deal of the Week"—an institution in which children's business ideas can be put into practice. In one such project, youngsters sold twenty-eight broken fountain-pens as new. The money was later returned, of course; it had only been "a dry run."

A typical slogan of "Kids for Cash" goes like this: "Learn to lead without ideas." Another one is, simply, "Follow me."

On Saturdays, a special game is played: "The Belief Bundle"—in which the child learns "flexibiilty of the mind." One youngster—only nine-and-a-half years old and a real champion—was "able to believe fully in twenty-two opposing ideas."

Yes, this organization is indeed a vital preparation for the future adjustment of today's children to society. More power to them . . .

To The White Citizens Councils

You who think you are
so much better than
the Ku Klux Klan,
ponder this:
a man doesn't
have to pull a sheet
over his head
to shut out the light.

—R.A.W.

MODEST PROPOSALS

(Continued from Page 16)

George Washington's *rosary* is discovered in the hidden archives, as well as Lincoln's *miraculous medal*. This kind of holy fakery is relatively harmless and saves the embarrassment of having to rename cities, states and automobiles.

One remarkable aspect of a World Wide Catholicism will be the total disappearance of sex. The exploitation of sex as a commercial image, as a commodity, as a status symbol will be replaced by celibacy and continence as the accepted, sought-after estate.

Controlling the media of mass communication and communicating at mass, it should be comparatively easy, and Madison Avenue will announce the winner of the Sister Rheingold Contest, after heated voting in bars for the demurest candidate from a selection of well habited Carmelites, Poor Clares and Dominican Nuns.

This de-emphasis on sex is—even more than rhythm programs and anti-birth control pronunciamentos—the official answer to the Exploding Population question. Channel their energies into sports, and glorify the celibate state. The resulting underworld traffic in pin-ups will make for an even richer and more powerful Mafia Syndicate, and we can foresee bitter gang wars with gory slaughters such as the Playboy Massacre for the control of South Chicago Candy Stores.

With the whole world Catholic, there'll be a problem of finding people to look down on and convert. Such a shortage of benighted heathen is going to stir up restlessness among the element normally inclined to missionary zeal and proselytizing.

One answer is to set up "reservations" in far-off corners of the world, with natives deliberately kept from the word of God. Teams of wide-eyed enthusiasts could be loosed upon them periodically. Of course in these areas, the normal bans on sex would be lifted

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so as to make the work more interesting and satisfactory for the missionaries.

Another answer for this restlessness is to outlaw the Jesuits every twenty-five years. This caters to the American Catholic's healthy distrust of the intellect and also provides a scapegoat without the danger ordinarily implicit in heresy.

And now we come to the subtle change in such things as cuss-words. The Catholic stubbing his toe will turn the air about him blue with such expletives as "Unitarian!" or "Mary Baker Eddy!" And in Westerns, a gun-slinger will be told to smile when he calls a guy "Calvin."

Funny and unkind accents will be developed to go along with the new repertoire of furtive "Lutheran" jokes.

The labor situation will improve: a twenty-hour work week and four annual vacations—only there will be enforced daily attendance at Mass, Matins, Lauds, Compline, Vespers, all Feasts of Obligation, Holy Days, and four retreats and two pilgrimages a year.

The educational system will become one vast parochial school—with released time for education.

Income taxes will be abolished — in favor of a sliding-scale tithe. The sale of indulgences, rightly condemned by the Church, will be revived in a more healthy form as a world wide lottery. The Christian Brothers will take over the manufacture of Scotch Whiskey. Backstage movie musicals will need an *Imprimatur* before they can be released for distribution.

And from every wall, from every corridor, billboard, display rack, comfort station, skylight — Big Father will be watching YOU!

NEGATIVE THINKING

(Continued from Page 16)

DEAR MOTHER: You are perfectly right to stand by your principles and feel ashamed of this creep. There is nothing old-fashioned about decency, in spite of what this creep says. Tell him you will leave him if he doesn't come back to his senses. This threat should work. If not, try to get him to consult a qualified witch-doctor for therapy.

* * *

DEAR ABU: I am a seventeen-year-old girl brought up by good parents and taught never to do wrong. Now my problem is this: my boy friend eats orang-utang meat, even though this is taboo and all right-thinking people know that it is harmful to health and dangerous to the mind. When I tell him this he quotes me things from English medical books and says I shouldn't believe all the things the old people of the tribe believe. He even says my own dear parents are old-fashioned, which hurts me very much. I know it would be a sin to go on associating with him, but I am in love and cannot do what I know is right.

"UNDECIDED"

DEAR UNDECIDED: There is nothing old-fashioned about decency. Get rid of this creep and find some young man who is less of an egghead.

* * *

DEAR ABU: My mother lives with my husband and me, and we are both very embarrassed about something she is doing. Even now I am almost ashamed to write it. She refuses to wear goat-dung on Monkey Day. My husband is a coconut-lender and, as you know, a man in business must be above suspicion. He says he is already losing trade because my family is getting a reputation for queerness. (My brother is an atheist who says there is only one God.) My mother is very old and won't listen to a word I say. She just says that goat-dung stinks and the Monkey-God probably laughs to see us all dabbed-up that way under the delusion we are worshipping Him. What can I do?

"RESPECTABLE"

DEAR RESPECTABLE: Tell your mother that there is nothing old-fashioned about decency. Throughout all these islands everybody dabs themselves with goat-dung on Monkey Day; only in the uncivilized portions of the world is the custom ignored. Tell your mother that if she no longer cares to act civilized she should go live among the barbarians in Europe or America.

* * *

DEAR ABU: Please do not laugh at me. I am fourteen years old and a friend dared me to look at the king's shadow and I did it and now I am terribly afraid. Is it really true that I will die?

"FRIGHTENED"

DEAR FRIGHTENED: Many backward and ignorant people believe that anyone who looks at the king's shadow will die. We are much too enlightened these days to believe any such old wive's tale. No, my poor boy, you will not die. Just go to a certified witch-doctor and have the curse removed — the ordeal only takes three days and is not *very* painful — and you will be saved. Let this be a lesson to you, however. Never transgress the taboos just because some shallow person dares you to. There is nothing old-fashioned about decency.

To Love, Honor and Beat

Recently, Dear Abby (an American version of Dear Abu) asked her readers to write in and tell from their own experiences if a wife could ever make a go of her marriage after her husband hit her. Excerpts (this is not satire) follow:

". . . My husband used to beat me up so bad I was ashamed to be seen in public. I would have left him but I was pregnant. We have been married nine years and he still beats me up. We have five children now. . . ."

"I got the surprise of my life when my husband ended an argument by slapping my face. I picked up the first thing I could find, which happened to be a milk bottle. I hit him over the head with it. Then I drove him to the emergency hospital so the doc could put twelve stitches in his head. That was 28 years ago and he has never raised a hand to me since. I thank you."

"Can a woman stay happily married to a man who has hit her? I say yes! Sometimes my husband loses his temper and socks me. But he has never hit me in the face or any place where the bruises will show. Also he has never hit me in front of the kids. I think this is very nice of him. . . ."

". . . My husband has slapped me around some, but he has his good points. Why should a wife throw out a perfectly good husband just because he belts her a few times? . . . Sure, I've had my lip sewed up and my nose broke more than once, but true love never runs smooth."

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John Francis Putnam's

Modest Proposals

A Catholic President, By All Means

About once a year, a series of posters appears in the New York subways under Catholic sponsorship, with the exhortation: "Pray! That all may be ONE!" By this, it is our understanding that they intend, by some benign force of collective marathon prayer, to make the whole world over in the Catholic Image so that the Purple International would become fact instead of lace-curtain-Irish fancy.

We doubt that prayer alone is going to accomplish this. But might it not happen, if there were a long *succession* of Catholic Presidents of the United States? Just think of it, the irresistible force of Catholic moral leadership—*and* money—at work in the world, coupled with the deciding weight of a Jesuit-infiltrated State Department . . . the possibilities are endless. Good old American know-how plus the spirit of the Playing Fields of Notre Dame . . . how can they lose?

Catholic America, the first jewel in the Crown of a Catholic World. . . . This implies a shift of gravity and power.

The English spoken in the U.S. as the true Universal Language of our time will have to displace Latin as the ritual tongue and will then atrophy into a stately archaism, with the accent and pronunciation as taught seminarians to reflect the subtleties of South Boston, cradle of many an Eminence and Prince of the Church.

The College of Cardinals will expand of course, to an unprecedented four thousand, and even Hoboken will have a Red Hat of its own.

That bitter sore in the side of Catholicism, the adamant resistance of the Jews, will at long last be solved by the new techniques of psycho-therapy and brain-washing (replacing the more traditional washing of the feet). Of course, with their natural gift for getting ahead in any situation, this will guarantee an impressive succession of Popes named Irving.

History books will make fascinating reading. It will be the *Renaissance* that will be known henceforth as the Dark Ages. The re-writing of History texts will never be as crude as the heavy-handed Stalinist emendations; rather, new heroes will come out of the sulphur clouds, and Torquemada will be a good bet to find himself admitted to the fine fellowship of Colin Kelly and Knute Rockne as an ideal of Catholic Boyhood.

Of course, a lot of shifts are bound to occur once

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Robert Anton Wilson's

Negative Thinking

The Morality of Head-Hunting

The tribe known as the Fubar dwells in the Northernmost parts of the Tarfu Islands, just off the coast of Australia. In the past twenty years the Fubar have adopted a great many, but not all, of the advantages of Western Civilization; and the process of their gradual evolution into a nearly-civilized community has been observed by the anthropologist, Dr. Heinrich von Luftkopf, and recorded in his book, *Fubar: A Study in Semi-Civilization.*

Dr. Luftkopf mentions that the Fubar now publish an English-language newspaper, and this interested me so much that I asked a friend of mine who was passing through that part of the world on business to procure a copy of this aboriginal gazette and forward it to me air mail special delivery.

Well, the *Tarfu Islands Tribune* arrived yesterday, and I have found it a source of endless delight and amusement. Because it is written *for* the semi-civilized *by* the semi-civilized, it reminded me somewhat of certain journals published in our own great republic. One feature in particular is so instructive that I want to pass it on to readers of the *Realist.*

This is a column called *Dear Abu* which appears daily and serves the same purpose as similar columns in the American press. In times of great cultural change such as the Fubar people have recently experienced, the individual often begins to doubt somewhat the traditional value-system, and he (or, more often, she) turns to columns such as this to be reassured that the superstitions indoctrinated in childhood are right after all.

Here, then, is *Dear Abu*, the wise woman of the Fubar people.

Here, then, is *Dear Abu*, the wise woman of the a fine and wonderful man, a good provider, a member of the Emu Totem. Now I am suddenly very ashamed of him. What happened was that when the head-hunting season began this year he refused to go with the other men in the battle canoe, saying that he was too old for that kind of thing and that we don't need any more heads for our walls, and alibis like that. The truth is that he is losing his religion and doesn't believe in head-hunting anymore. He says it's old-fashioned and doesn't make any sense. None of our clanfolk will talk to us and I feel terrible. What can I do?

"MOTHER OF TWELVE"

(Continued on Page 15)

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