

children know for a fact that they are not going to grow up. I'm going to make sure, bloody sure, they grow up and live to be 92." By this time small children were crying and asking to have their pants changed. Many parents and some bystanders were eager to oblige. Older kids were becoming indignant, and some of the museum's live exhibitions were bleating and stomping their hooves. Still Dr. Caldicott went on, "My drive is fear, fear for my kids," she hollered. Even her dupes were growing uneasy. "There aren't Com-

munist babies," she roared. "There aren't capitalist babies. A baby is a baby is a baby." Finally she shut down. She looked relieved. A long-time *American Spectator* reader of Christian sensibility offered to change Dr. Caldicott's pants.

•Mr. Eric Hoffer passed on, as did Dr. Kenneth Clark and King Indris, Libya's last monarch. He was 93. At Poole harbor in southwest England Mr. Mike Spring set off intent on becoming the first paraplegic yachtsman to make a solo round-trip voyage to the Azores. Mr. Spencer Sawyer,

the former Little League coach from Sacramento who trained his players to knock off banks, was sentenced to 30 years in federal prison and branded a "modern-day Fagin" by Sacramento's literary prosecuting officials. And in Olathe, Kansas inhabitants of the Johnson County Jail will no longer have to wash their own underwear, a penal practice that has been going on in those primitive parts from time out of mind, thanks to the local American Civil Liberties Union pests. The heroine of this blast for justice is Miss Claudia York, who

crowded, "The underwear was not a constitutional question. It was just kind of tacky," tacky having become a nonce term of great popularity particularly with liberal aesthetes.

•Finally *The American Spectator* may have readers in the Vatican. The papal envoy to Britain, Archbishop Bruno B. Heim, suggested in a letter to the laity that British supporters of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament are either adherents of Soviet rapacity, blinkered idealists, or idiots.

—RET

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

Tree Stumping

Robert Nisbet's otherwise adequate look at environmentalist silliness ["Modern Man and the Obsession," *TAS*, May 1983] was marred by silliness of its own. He wrote: "The greatest heresy preached in the Middle Ages was that of St. Francis and his followers. Had Franciscan pantheism prevailed utterly, the cost would have been nothing less than Western civilization."

To accuse St. Francis, a thoroughly orthodox Catholic, of pantheism is to misunderstand him entirely or to empty the word of all meaning. If Mr. Nisbet thinks St. Francis was a simpleton who spent his waking hours conversing with periwinkles, I suggest he begin his homework with G.K. Chesterton's biography of the saint.

Mr. Nisbet should be told that the Church does not canonize people who think a godlet lives under every rock.

—Karl Keating
San Diego, California

Why did Robert Nisbet have to spoil his brilliant article on "Modern Man and the Obsession" by citing Christianity as a parallel to environmentalism (and socialism)? His argument itself showed that environmentalism is the most recent stage of that man-centered liberalism of which earlier stages were Renaissance/Enlightenment humanism, economic liberalism, and socialism—of all of which Christianity is the diametric opposite.

All liberalisms are elitist. Despite pious lip service to broader and broader swaths of humanity, their effect has been to concentrate power and control ever more narrowly. Now, as can readily be seen from Professor Nisbet's piece, liberalism in its environmentalist (or death-wish) stage professes to serve all

humanity by preserving nature, but actually the only ones to benefit are the affluent few—who themselves are in the process of being progressively pared down, until even these are excluded in the name of "sacred nature."

Environmentalism and socialism are on one side, Professor Nisbet. Christianity is on the other.

—Stephen B. Miles
Falls City, Nebraska

Robert Nisbet's review essay on environmentalism was excellent. Those who have had dealings with such agencies as the California Coastal Commission, and attended meetings of people whose aim is to "control" the coastlines not only of the United States but of the entire world, can understand what is going on in the name of protecting the environment. The movement so well started by Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot has been subverted.

Many thanks for printing Nisbet's excellent article.

—Edgar Bissantz
Santa Barbara, California

Who Thinks What?

Like everyone with a decent respect for good writing, I think that the opaque prose that is characteristic of psychiatrists—as well as other professionals—deserved the exorcism that Thomas S. Szasz gave it in your April issue ["Learned Psychotics"]. However, while we are on the subject, let us consider some of Mr. Szasz's absurd expressions as well. He tells us that "... no human being can know what another thinks..." It follows that reading Mr. Szasz's article—or anything else—is a waste of time; one still won't be able to know what he thinks. In that case it seems we are quite wrong to castigate the bombastic psychia-

trists, for their prose is no more thoughtless than anyone else's. The clear implication of this statement is a sort of solipsism; I can know that I think but there is no ground for extending the compliment to anyone else.

Mr. Szasz may try to rescue himself from this position by introducing a distinction between what people think and their "linguistic expressions": we can know what people write and say but not what they think. This strikes me as a distinction without a difference. Whatever one's favorite epistemological theory, it has no bearing on the fact that when one hears or reads an intelligible sentence, one is fairly said to know what the person who said or wrote it thought. For Mr. Szasz to suggest otherwise is an offense against common sense. Even the psychiatrists he vilifies so remorselessly know better than that.

—Thomas Main
Managing Editor
The Public Interest
New York, New York

Deism and the English

Having recently published a book on the holy and the daemonic in eighteenth-century literature, I really must take exception to Stephen Miller's remark, in "Religion and the Intellectual" [*TAS*, April 1983], that most English writers of that age were Deists. Although Miller rightly excludes Samuel Johnson from his generalization, he has apparently succumbed to the clichés about the period popularized by Peter Gay and other "whig" critics.

In fact, only one major English writer was in any sense a Deist—Gibbon. Both Dryden and Swift despised and attacked Deism. Pope, a Roman Catholic all his life despite the discrimination then enforced, was

greatly mortified when the natural theology of his *Essay on Man* was misinterpreted as Deistic. Defoe, Richardson, Smart, Cowper, were as far from Deism as a Christian can get, and Fielding was at most a latitudinarian. Readers of this journal will know where Burke stood, Whig though he was. Blake scorned the Deists as much as he did the jejune pious, and Hume was too skeptical to be one. And then it was the century of the great hymns: Watts, the Wesleys. Boswell was too much the gadfly to be anything very long, but a Deist he never was. Austen was too sensible.

The Enlightenment never took hold in England as it did in France, and the fairest flowers of English Deism must be sought among the likes of the third earl of Shaftesbury or Bolingbroke—not, after all, very hardy perennials.

—R.D. Stock
Department of English
University of Nebraska
Lincoln, Nebraska

Your Tax Dollars at Work

Rita Kramer's article on Marva Collins ["Marva Collins and American Public Education," *TAS*, April 1983] was informative and refreshing, but I feel that on one point she gives too much to the enemy.

On page 11 the author states that "more damaging" were charges that Marva Collins, a foe of special education programs for minorities, accepted \$69,000 from CETA in order to start her school. Well, good for her! . . . I have no doubt that Marva Collins was right in taking that money, just as she is right in deploring such programs in general. As a taxpayer, I am delighted to learn that someone has put some of my money to good use. . . .

—Russell W. Martin
Orange, California

EDITORIAL



IN FOREIGN PARTS

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

In Sen. Christopher J. Dodd's now widely celebrated rebuttal of the President's speech on Central America only one statement stung me as perhaps plausible, to wit: the senator's claim that he had been to backward regions and seen for himself how poverty breeds revolution. Had I spent any time in such remote parts? No sir, I had not. So, Senator Dodd, I have rectified the situation; last month, I tapped *The American Spectator's* chief foreign correspondent, Mr. Taki Theodoracopulos, and told him to pack all the requisite travel equipment, ointments, tonics, and anti-malarials. Together we traveled to one of those little lands where as a Peace Corps volunteer Senator Dodd learned the elements of New Age statecraft. We went to Monte Carlo.

There was a grand prix motor race there, and we went down to see firsthand how the guerrilla movement fares. As Taki observed, conditions in Monte Carlo support Senator Dodd's thesis 100 percent. There is very little poverty and almost no guerrilla activity. Perhaps the left-wing Democrats now crippling our foreign policy in Central America could arrange grand prixes for Nicaragua and El Salvador. Yet how does one put on such a wide-open affair as a grand prix in a place like Marxist-Leninist Nicaragua?

I see Senator Dodd, even now, ensconced with his Third World advisers planning the Managua Grand Prix. The Ferraris and Renaults shall be stripped of all frivolous kapitalist advertisements, bedizened instead with wholesome revolutionary exhortations; once the checkered flag has fallen it is off to the presidential palace and the victory ball, the Sandinists having decorously left their AK-47s in the cloakroom, the local members of the Chamber of Commerce having sworn

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to refrain from lewd references to the profit motive; all the palaver is of parks and schools and day-care centers. This vision is an old favorite with left-wing Democrats: unimpeded by CIA plots, the Marxist-Leninist regime turns "moderate," prosperous, harmless to the United States or any living thing.

It is of course a pipe dream. It has never taken place anywhere on this diverse and occasionally amusing orb. Yet somehow the left-wing Democrats see all Marxist-Leninist regimes as abounding with potential friends. They hear of leftist revolution in the jungles and envision young men and women sitting by late-night campfires talking of the libraries they will build once the last agent of the *ancien régime* has been reeducated, strumming big Gibson guitars, and singing old Joan Baez songs, the kind that supplied so much inner warmth to Senator Dodd and his cohorts when they were waging America's youth revolution in the glorious 1960s.

Actually the prerequisite for prosperity in Central America is political stability. In the 1960s and early 1970s the economies of the region were expanding robustly. What brought them a cropper was OPEC and the ensuing worldwide recession. Then



the noble revolutionaries began their butcherings, butcherings that the left-wing Democrats ignore whenever they wax eloquent on anti-revolutionary savagery in Central America. Life became more dangerous.

If the Marxist-Leninists win, kiss *au revoir* to grand prixes or to any other kind of economic elixir in the region. After all, is there any Marxist paradise on earth that is not an economic shambles? Cuba? Russia? Poland? Hungary and East Germany, we are told; so why do those countries need all the border guards? If the left-wing Democrats now rendering impotent American foreign policy with the same discredited analyses they applied to Angola and Southeast Asia before these went Communist in 1975 were serious about bringing economic growth to Central America, they would not allow a Communist takeover.

With the Panama Canal so close and American cities well within missile-range, Central America is indeed within our sphere of influence. There is still time to end the violence, and history has shown repeatedly that the only way to end the violence of Marxist-Leninists is with superior power. Ask Lech Walesa. □

MASTERS OF DISASTER

Last month the National Elementary School Chess championship slipped from the grasp of New York City's Hunter College Elementary School, which did not seem right. The Hunter College Elementary School is populated by children of the New York intelligentsia. They were beaten by a team from Indianapolis, Indiana, a team composed of inner-city kids with no Ph.D.'s in their lineages, a team billed as "The Masters of Disaster"! Were the eggheads from New York victims of street-gang mayhem? Not at all, they were victims of persistence, that incalculable element in the human spirit that allows for marvels in the face of all

sociological findings to the contrary.

The element flickers and flares irregularly but, when it does, it flickers and flares without regard to race, color, creed, or national origin, as the phrase has it. The Masters of Disaster are black, and for one reason or another black kids are not supposed to be chess champions. Nor for that matter are poor kids, nor Hoosier kids. Thus there are a lot of anomalies here worthy of our attention.

One is the question of race. Decades have elapsed since the civil rights movement carried the day, yet we are, alas, no closer to the goal of a color-blind society, a goal which any serious-minded student of human nature knows must be realized for enduring racial harmony. The complexities of race in America are such that only a genius would attempt to discuss it wisely, and he would need far more space available to him than a mere column. Here there is only space to say that we shall continue to depreciate human achievement as long as we look at Americans as whites and blacks or, for that matter, Poles or WASPs. And there are good biological reasons to drop these categories—racial and ethnic particularity is less and less possible in a land like ours, and according to our ideals it is less and less creditable.

Social science has told us much that is true about human beings, but it has also told us some things that are palpably untrue and certainly it has diminished the wonder of human achievement by insisting on quantifiable explanations for human behavior. Elements that cannot be quantified get short shrift in social science, and persistence or willpower are such elements. They are also the elements chiefly responsible for such achievements as were attained last month by the Masters of Disaster.

Two-and-a-half years ago a fifth grade science teacher at Indianapolis's School 27, because he liked