

vidual soul alone, but of progress in history, in man's long story.

WE MAY WELL HAVE LEARNED that if we of the West do not look to our own virtue, and that of our institutions and our life and lives, we shall be ill

equipped to bring liberty to our colleagues now deprived of it, or to make either our culture or our liberty relevant and helpful to the lands newly embarked on unprecedented change. Let us, in many varied ways, turn to this, quite without flattery or illusion, but not quite without hope.

## “That Candles May Be Brought . . .”

*Some Closing Remarks — By GEORGE F. KENNAN*

THIS organisation, the Congress for Cultural Freedom, has had from the outset two orders of danger to consider in its work: the external dangers, brought to us from outside by those who do not believe in the value of freedom at all; and the internal dangers, the ones that can and do arise, unintended and often unperceived, from the development of our own society in a life where freedom can never be taken for granted but must, as Goethe correctly observed, be conquered anew with each passing day.

So far as the first of these dangers is concerned, there has been, since this organisation was founded, a certain change in the nature of the danger itself. A decade ago, there was still lively apprehension lest the deadening hand of ideological regimentation reach beyond the political limits to which it then extended and come to hamper the life of the spirit in regions still farther afield. Such an extension was conceivable only in two ways: by ideological and political conquest from within, or by war.

So far as ideology is concerned, the danger seems to me no longer great. We have all learned much in these past ten years. I doubt that there is to-day any country, in the part of the world not now controlled by Moscow or Peking, where educated people could be persuaded voluntarily to sell their birthright of creative independence for the pseudo-security of subordination to a militant disciplined movement, devoted to the maintenance of the illusion of purpose. The obsolescence, the rigidities, and the hypocrisy of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine, under its contemporary priesthood, are too widely apparent for that. To-day it is, in this respect, not we who are on the defensive: it is those who have still not learned that the life of the spirit represents the cumulative experience of civilisation over the course of millennia, not to be made the mere instrument of any single, passing, political régime, and who are now faced with the insistence of their own youth on the right to knowledge and enquiry.

IF WE TURN, on the other hand, to the question of the possible curtailment of the area of cultural freedom by means of war and conquest, here the

danger is no longer that the area of regimentation might be increased by such devices. That, too, is unlikely. The danger is rather that out of present political rivalries and military anxieties there will come a war of such destructiveness as to render meaningless the very question as to control over political and cultural conditions in its aftermath. Political regimentation hampers and disturbs the life of the spirit; nuclear war could deprive it of its meaning.

With respect to this danger, I can say nothing comforting. The *status quo* that has endured over these past seven or eight years is now, it seems to me, beginning to break up. The auspices under which this process is setting in are not reassuring, from the standpoint of the prospects for world peace. Mistakes have been made on both sides. New tensions and sources of frictions have arisen, partly from the logic of the weapon race itself. The problem is not made easier by the fact that one great segment of Communist opinion, centering around Peking, seems indifferent to the destructive implications of a nuclear war. The situation is indeed such that if we were obliged to think in terms of the weaponry, say, of the first World War, we would be obliged, in the light of historical experience, to recognise the chances for avoidance of war as poor. If to-day we do not have to come to so pessimistic a conclusion, it is only because we know that there are a great many people on both sides who understand that no rational political end is to be achieved, and no positive values are to be promoted or even defended, by the use of the weapons of which certain great governments now dispose. Some people take more comfort than I do in this factor of reassurance. To me, it appears as an intolerably fragile one, weakened by the ever-present possibility of accident and misunderstanding. However that may be, it is, for the moment, our greatest hope.

I do not know for how many others I speak when I say that I feel personally a great helplessness in the face of this situation. Perhaps this is only a personal predicament. Perhaps there are narrow limits to the frequency with which an out-

side voice can usefully be raised in matters of this sort. In any case, I can only join what I am sure is a very large segment of the common people of this world in praying that what Oppenheimer called "the grim and ironic community of interest" now prevailing between enemies will suffice to avert the catastrophe, and that our children will thus retain the possibility of participation in the continuity of a civilisation. This seems to me the important thing. Only in the framework of such a continuity, as I see it, does life have meaning. And we of this generation have no right, just for the sake of our personal safety, to deny to our children the possibility of this participation, which is the deepest and most sacred of human rights.

My main purpose in speaking to you this morning is to say that I find, in this sense of helplessness vis-à-vis this external danger, no grounds for passivity or despair in the face of the other category of dangers we face: those dangers, that is, that arise from the internal development of our own society. On the contrary: this great uncertainty, which parallels on the plane of civilisation itself the ever-present possibility of death on the horizon of the individual, only heightens the obligation to do what one can, while one can, in those fields of activity still open to him.

There comes to my mind, in this connection, an anecdote for the knowledge of which I believe I am indebted to my friend and critic Dean Acheson. In one of our colonial legislatures of New England, that of Connecticut, I believe it was, there occurred, many years ago, the following episode. The legislature was in session, on a hot summer day. A severe electrical storm began to gather, and the heavens became so dark that it became impossible to read in the legislative chamber. Many of those present feared that the end of the world might be at hand. Some even knelt to pray. It was suggested that the session be suspended. Thereupon the Speaker arose and pronounced himself as follows: "Gentlemen," he said, "either this is the end of the world or it is not. If it is not, I see no reason to interrupt our labours. If it is, I prefer to be found doing my duty. I desire that candles may be brought."

This, it seems to me, is the only attitude many of us can usefully take to-day in the face of the apocalyptic dangers that threaten us on the international scene. The duty we must prefer to be found doing is that of the creative development of our own society. And it is just such meetings as this, such discussions and such exchanges, which provide the candles.

FOR these reasons, I was particularly glad to be included in that section of the conference which has concerned itself with questions of social progress, of culture, vulgarity, and tradition. It seems to me that these questions lie at the heart of the internal dangers confronting the advanced industrial countries, particularly those, like my own, where the production of material goods has achieved fantastic levels. Most of us, I think, who took part in these discussions came away sobered by the complexity of this problem, keenly aware of the

dangers of over-simplification, conscious of the bewildering mixture of advantage and disadvantage, of good and bad, of hopeful and depressing, which the mass culture of the modern industrial society brings with it. I should hesitate to attempt in any way to summarize the impressions of these last days or to speak for anyone but myself with regard to the conclusions to which they point. But I would, before closing, like to stress one appreciation which stands out with particular force in my mind, after these discussions.

IT IS EASY TO EXAGGERATE the negative features of what we think of as mass culture. I have in mind particularly the cultural stimuli conveyed to great numbers of people by the centralised media of journalism, cinema, radio, television, comic books. It is possible that many of us have exaggerated the manipulative power of these media—their power, that is, to shape thought and behaviour directly; and certainly in my own country, what is occasionally surprising is not the sinisterness, but rather the innocence, in some instances the childishness, of the motivation from which their functioning has proceeded. It is also clear that the question of how they might be controlled in the public interest raises delicate and dangerous problems from the standpoint of the proper workings of a democracy.

For all these reasons, there is reason to hold, as some of our participants did, that this is a problem we can afford to treat with patience and good humour, and without too much concern.

BUT THERE IS ONE DANGER here which is not always perceived, and with regard to which even these discussions have not reassured me. The danger is that the development of mass culture, with its equalising and standardising influence, will gradually destroy the possibilities for the continued existence, side by side with it, of another sort of cultural life, operating on different standards, amenable to other modes of control, in need of other sources of support. The danger of modern mass culture, in other words, lies not so much in that which it provides as in that which it may crowd out and exclude. Whatever the advantages or compensatory values of the great modern mass media, they do seem to me clearly to suffer from one great limitation: they are primarily parasitical rather than creative in nature. They are not likely to provide, out of their own resources, that creative development of the life of the spirit which is essential to the assuring of a vigorous continuity of the cultural tradition. For this, something else must exist: something geared not to the reactions of the consumer but to the subject as such, something concerned only with excellence for its own sake, something which retains the privilege of the experimental, the esoteric, if you will, the revolutionary. We can live, I think, with mass culture, as it is now developing; but God help us if it is all we have, and if the pursuit of beauty, in thought and feeling, is not permitted to continue to proceed in certain older, more selective, and more individual ways, as well.

THIS is a problem admittedly less acute here in Western Europe than it is in our country. But you Western Europeans show so little hesitation in appropriating to yourselves those of our technological innovations which have caused this problem to become acute in America that I think it is also your problem of the future. It is not just a question of intellectual and aesthetic creativity. It is also a matter of the style of life. It may be necessary and even desirable that masses of people should live as they are now being disciplined to live. But it is vitally important that this should not be the only way of life that can be lived.

Please do not misunderstand me: I am not speaking of luxury. I am not saying that we should try to see to it that there continue to be people who live in great houses, with masses of servants, surrounded by that ponderous pretentiousness with which the privileged and the mighty of this world once liked to decorate their persons.

What I have in mind does not exclude simplicity: on the contrary, it is scarcely thinkable without it. I simply shudder to think of a world in which life is *nowhere* led with grace and distinction, where *no one* has the privilege of privacy and quietude, in which *nowhere* is true excellence cultivated for its own sake. I am not so worried at the fact that millions of people happily consent to listen to the same given sounds, or to view the same given sights, purveyed to them centrally by someone they do not know and with whom they cannot communicate in any normal way. I am concerned that those who do not wish to hear or see these things should not be required to do so. I am concerned that there should be some life left for those who

like to have the quiet of their own thoughts even in public places; for those who prefer to see nature as God created it and not as man has disfigured it; for those who would still like to confront a printed page or a landscape or the architectural treatment of a city square and to look at this alone, and not at the distractions with which the advertisers like to embellish it. I am concerned for the man, and particularly the child, who would like the experience to be immediate and not vicarious, who prefers an active to a passive participation in the articulation of the human condition. And while I am reconciled to the prospect that millions of young people should be semi-educated, I am very much concerned that this should not make it impossible for a few to get a really first-rate education.

THESE ARE THE THINGS that seem to me to be important; and I should only like to stress that if these considerations are not observed, it will be not just that minority in whose name I might seem to be speaking which is affected. That huge majority we call the masses will some day find their lives too impoverished as a consequence of this omission.

Let me, in conclusion, add my own word of gratitude to the Congress for Cultural Freedom, for the rich opportunities which this and other meetings have offered for a fruitful exchange of opinions and sharing of concerns. And let me record my appreciation to the City of Berlin, my former residence of many years, for the wide spaces, the bracing air, and the traditions of courage and faith which make it so uniquely favourable a place for the discussion of great problems.

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## BOOKS & WRITERS

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### Black Magic, White Lies

By Colin Welch

WHOEVER decided to prosecute *Lady Chatterley's Lover*\* may be proud of his handiwork. Despite his efforts the book is now in print. Apart from exposing the law to ridicule by forcing it to assess merits, literary and otherwise, which it is not qualified to assess, his achievement is solely this: to have secured for the book the maximum of publicity and a volume of clerical, academic and critical acclaim which might have astonished or embarrassed even its author, not the most modest of men nor one with any love of clergymen, dons, or critics.

The Bishop of Woolwich has told us that this, in his view, is a book which Christians "ought to read." In it, he says, Lawrence has tried to portray sexual intercourse "as in a real sense an act of holy communion." Mr. Norman St. John-Stevas has recommended the book to every Catholic priest and moralist. It is "undoubtedly a moral book," thinks he. Mr. Richard Hoggart declares that the book is "puritanical"—or rather puritanical in a sense which he defines: "the proper meaning of it to an historian is somebody who belongs to the tradition of British puritanism. And the main weight of that is an intense sense of responsibility for one's conscience." The Rector of Eastwood, Lawrence's Nottinghamshire birthplace, has suggested that the book might almost be given "to young people about to be married as a guide in love and marriage." Ho hum.

There must be others, neither prigs, fools, nor perverts, who have their doubts about all this; who, while conceding that *Lady Chatterley* is a work of great literary merit, indeed of dark, magical and terrible beauty, nevertheless believe it to be a profoundly immoral or even evil work. There must be others, in a word, who have *understood* it. If so, they have not yet spoken. They were not asked to at the trial. Since then they may not have dared to, such is the terror

inspired by Lawrence's victorious partisans. Yet a word or two must perhaps be said, lest posterity think we were all bewitched. And I hope it may be said without denying to Lawrence either the admiration due to his genius or the sympathy due to his sickness and sufferings in mind and body.

AS A GUIDE to love and marriage *Lady Chatterley* is somewhat unorthodox, to say the least, in that the central situation is doubly adulterous. The clergymen at the trial seemed somewhat shifty about this, as well they might be.

The Bishop of Woolwich, for instance, said that the book "portrays the love of a woman in an immoral relationship, *so far as adultery is an immoral relationship*," but that it does not advocate "adultery for its own sake." The Rev. Donald Tytler wriggled for some time before admitting that neither Connie nor Mellors appeared to "regard marriage as sacred and inviolable." He took refuge, however, in the highly arguable assertion that the book "is a novel, not a tract."

It seemed generally agreed that the adultery was largely incidental or irrelevant, a chance twist of the plot. It was implied, indeed, that the real meaning of the book would not have been much damaged or altered if Sir Clifford and Bertha had never existed and the two lovers had been happily married by page 120 in the Penguin edition. This, I think, is to misunderstand the main *negative* purpose of the book, which is to undermine or utterly destroy the Christian attitude to sex, love, and marriage—an operation in which Lawrence could hardly have expected or even welcomed the assistance of the clergy.

Most Christians, I believe, are taught to honour sex as an essential part of love and marriage, not as an end in itself but as a means by which love may express itself and marriage be blessed with children. If Lawrence does not

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\* *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. By D. H. LAWRENCE. Penguin Books. 3s. 6d.