

“educational” or current affairs programme, it has the devil’s own time getting the local stations to show them. Too many such programmes, and the locals will switch to another network (ABC has been the prime villain during the past two years) with a hungrier eye for the buck—and the first network’s advertising revenues plummet. Even if all three networks could be persuaded to collaborate for the sake of public virtue, the locals would soon turn to independent entrepreneurs who would provide them with the Westerns and gangster films that pull in the audience (and, subsequently, the advertisers).

What ails TV in America is not near-monopoly but near-freedom. The industry needs to be organised to assume its collective social responsibility, not further disorganised to pander to the lowest common denominator of public taste. But if Mr. Minow ever hinted at this, American conservatives and liberals alike would revile him as “a tool of the vested interests.”

WHAT THESE four examples are intended to illustrate is the dilemma of a “New Frontier” that is enmeshed in a radical-liberal tradition with little relevance to the basic problems of American society. The legislation so far introduced by President Kennedy is fully in this tradition: an increased minimum wage, health insurance for the aged, low-cost housing for the indigent, and so on. Most of this legislation is commendable enough—though one could wish for a more candid avowal of the problems connected with them. (Low-cost housing since World War II has, on the whole, been a major disaster for American cities.) What a future historian is bound to find astonishing is all the legislation that is not only not being introduced, but is not even being thought of. A revision of corporate law so that General Electric is recognised to be something more than a “person” like you and me; the recognition by law that our huge trade unions are something more than “voluntary associations”; an admission that, in an affluent industrial society, large public revenues have to be raised by some kind of sales tax (as in Russia, incidentally), instead of relying on a progressive income tax that progresses to absurdity (*no one* in America pays 90 per cent of his earnings in tax, though many are theoretically in that bracket), and a hotch-potch of excise taxes; an avowal that, in a healthy society, the mass media must be governed by some other criterion than private profit—I could go on for pages, and so could you. No signs of such new thinking are visible on the New Frontier.

The term itself, by the way, is revealing.

It goes back deep in the history of American reform. Ever since the 1890’s, the mirage of a “New Frontier” has haunted the American imagination. On this New Frontier, the individual American would once again, as in the days (or legendary days) of the unsettled West, be a sturdy, independent producer (and accumulator) of the nation’s wealth—free and equal and master of his fate. It is a nostalgic term; and every “progressive” movement in American history has been animated by this nostalgia. It seems to be part of the American character to look backward into the future. This makes for tricky navigation and unforeseen disasters. It has all been great fun and very exciting—but one wonders if the United States, in 1961, hadn’t better take a cold look at the compass.

Irving Kristol

Lawrence’s Other Censor

THE SIGNS of a growing counter-attack against the methods and attitudes of the defenders of *Lady Chatterley* are most welcome. It would have been a sad thing if the intellectuals of this country had allowed themselves to be frozen into the embarrassing moral stance in which they were displayed during the trial. Mr. F. R. Leavis in the *Spectator* along with Mr. Colin Welch (in *ENCOUNTER*), Miss Kathleen Nott (in the *Observer*) and one or two other adult reviewers have ensured that this will not happen. However, the counter-attack ought to be pressed further still—against Lawrence’s own moral equivocation in this book and his consequent failure of artistic integrity.

It seems to me that it is this failure which is the source of the book’s remarkable faults, remarkable for a writer as good as Lawrence; it was an enterprise beyond his moral range. The point is best made with the help of a particular example. I choose one which comes at the very climax of the development of the sexual relationship between Mellors and *Lady Chatterley*—the purification ceremony when they spend a night together, before her departure for Italy, and he “burns out the shame” in her. He does this by various feats of love-making which are undescribed, though we are left in no doubt that what Mellors did was unconventional and even perverse. He imposed his fancies on the woman. “It cost her an effort to let him have his way and his will of her. She had to be a passive, consenting thing, like a slave, a physical slave.” And again: “She would have thought that a woman would have died of shame.”

What really happened? One might have

thought that since Lawrence regarded this "phallic hunting out," that is the physical acts themselves, as crucial, he would have included some reference to them. Indeed, since they were, by his own account, more exciting, more truly masculine (finally convincing the woman of her utterly passive feminine make-up) than the bits of straightforward sex described in some detail earlier, the reader is tempted for a moment to suspect the existence of some second clandestine censor who managed somehow to expurgate a piece out of this unexpurgated edition. This censor, in fact, was Lawrence himself. He cannot bring himself to use words that will baldly describe these intimacies. He has to hint about things seen "on Greek vases." Was it, as he says so contemptuously about the other people who are afraid to use simple four-letter words about more ordinary sexual experiences, that he was in the end uncontrollably ashamed of the whole thing?

Certainly it leads him into a piece of strident, ejaculatory writing (with an exclamation mark to every other sentence in several paragraphs—see Penguin edition, pp. 258-9) which is of outstanding badness even among the long passages of pert, girl's gush writing that the book contains. Here is a specimen. He is giving Lady Chatterley's reactions to Mellors' unabashed wilfulness in sex, her thoughts about his superiority to other men. "What a pity most men are so doggy, a bit shameful, like Clifford! Like Michaelis even! Both sexually a bit doggy and humiliating. The supreme pleasure of mind!" Then after a further reference to the need for "sheer fiery sensuality, not messiness," there is the peroration: "Ah, God, how rare a thing a man is! They are all dogs that trot and sniff and copulate."

Somehow even copulation is now held against the Cliffords. That is tenable because Mellors has now shown her something better. But what? The clue only comes much later, coyly in characteristic fashion from Clifford himself. Lawrence never stops taking his revenge on the poor man. Clifford in his letter to Lady Chatterley (p. 280, Penguin edition), describing the fuss made by Mellors' wife about his sexual behaviour towards her, says: "Humanity has always had a strange avidity for strange sexual postures, and if a man likes to use his wife, as Benvenuto Cellini says, 'in the Italian way,' well that is a matter of taste. But I had hardly expected our gamekeeper to be up to so many tricks." It seems a reasonable guess that this same anal perversion was what had startled Lady Chatterley during the night with Mellors when she had been purified by "the refinements of passion, the extravagances of sensuality."

Now if this is what Lawrence really meant,

that the practice of these sexual perversities is an essential part of his process of resurrection from the depressed condition in which men and women to-day find themselves, it was peculiarly cowardly of him not to say so. This cowardice wants to be looked squarely in the face; it is useful in detecting the shoddy quality of much of the writing and most of the thinking in this book. Readers are made that much poorer when something which is meretricious, rhetorical, and weak is presented to them as a thing of genuine artistic quality. The worst weakness of the D. H. Lawrence of "Lady Chatterley" is a kind of high bible-punching pose that he adopts throughout the book; it keeps coming up in the throw-away pulpit preacher's words, sounds and phrases that are used to make the sex descriptions sound holy, and in the awful self-righteousness with which he asserts his (and Mellors') rights over a benighted world of lesser men.

In this way he manages to mask and muff, if not to conceal entirely, his essential message which is that the male in order to reach fulfilment must assert himself utterly, wilfully, perversely, *using* the female "like a slave" in sex. He gets some way towards saying it outright in the description of the night with Mellors. But in the end he funks it, because he does not have words that he is capable of using to express what he has to say. He retreats into gush. This breakdown in the writing, which seems to be directly correlated with a failure of nerve, is constantly in evidence through the novel.

Andrew Shonfield

Heroic Leadership?

TO AT LEAST one reader Professor Arthur Schlesinger's recent article in ENCOUNTER ["On Heroic Leadership," December 1960] has brought disappointment. The article puts one really important question: In countries where democracy is impossible, what kind of régime is the best from the point of view of the democrat? Now that great empires are breaking up into a host of independent states most of whose citizens are desperately poor and illiterate, this question has only to be put for its importance to be obvious.

That Professor Schlesinger does not answer it is not to be counted against him. To be able to answer it, we should need to study several countries which are not democratic, or are so only to a slight extent, and to enquire whether they are moving towards democracy or away from it, and for what reasons. It may be that the information needed to answer this question