

## in the magazines

In its May issue, the *Atlantic* publishes the text of George Kennan's address, "Foreign Policy and Christian Conscience," which was recently delivered at the Princeton Theological Seminary. Mr. Kennan is here concerned with the question of Christian responsibility in international affairs, and he begins by distinguishing between those areas of government policy which have "Christian significance" and those which do not. Questions of method, he says, involving diplomatic behavior and the projection of a given policy, are more properly a concern of Christians than questions of purpose, which are often befogged by political imponderables or beset by purely secular conflicts.

The issues of the Cold War, he believes, do not represent a simple opposition of good and evil, and he warns against the dangers of misinterpreting the nature of international Communism and of confusing our purposes with God's design. On other issues, such as colonialism and foreign economic aid, Mr. Kennan does not agree with "the absolutes"—that self-determination of peoples is a Christian mandate, that gestures of charity should be incorporated as such into government programs. In the decisions of the United Nations, he sees no "particular Christian sanctity lent . . . by the fact that they represent the views of a majority of governments" and thus are supposed to transcend national sovereignty. He does see in the UN "a sense of conscience higher than the national one, a sense of the fellowship of fate by which we are all increasingly bound together." Its value is symbolic, and it is this that we should cherish.

There remain the questions of war and nuclear weapons on which Mr. Kennan believes Christians should take a stand. We cannot escape the moral implications of modern war: "the weapon of indiscriminate mass destruction goes further than anything the Christian ethic can properly accept." In renouncing these weapons, Mr. Kennan is aware that he will be charged with inviting defeat. "To this," he writes, "I can only reply: I am skeptical of the meaning of 'victory' and 'defeat' in their relation to modern war between great countries. To my mind the defeat is war itself. In any case it seems to me that there are times when we have no choice but to follow the dictates of our conscience, to throw ourselves on God's mercy, and not to ask too many questions."

Finally, Mr. Kennan turns to the consequences of atomic testing, of which even the little we know is enough to appall the Christian conscience. He deplores scientists' assurances that "not many deaths" will occur. "I recall no quantitative stipulation in the Sixth Commandment . . . I fail to see how any of this can be reconciled with the Christian con-

science." And there is a further principle involved by which we, as "custodians of the earth," are obliged to preserve for future generations the basic conditions of our environment, conditions which we inherited together with the moral laws that predicate them, and which we have no right to destroy.

These, then, are the "truly apocalyptic dangers of our time," and represent "not only political questions but stupendous moral problems, to which we cannot deny the courageous Christian answer."

The May 9 issue of the *New Yorker* carries an interesting up-to-date report by Christopher Rand on UNEF, the United Nations Emergency Force which was set up during the Suez crisis in 1956 to guard the Armistice Demarcation Line along the Gaza Strip and to patrol the international frontier between Egyptian Sinai and Israel. UNEF at present is composed of military troops from seven countries—Brazil, Canada, India, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Yugoslavia, and Mr. Rand's report includes information on the function and maintenance of these units as well as on the considerable body of civilian personnel sent to the area from UN headquarters in New York.

Walter Lippmann's proposals for a solution to the Berlin question are the subject of comment and inquiry in two recent issues of the *New Republic*. In the issue of May 11, Louis J. Halle, C. L. Sulzberger, Hans Morgenthau, Hubert Humphrey, Richard Lowenthal, Terence Prittie, and Otto Heinrich v. d. Gablentz present their views. Lord Henderson, Frank Church, Max Beloff, Theodor Eschenburg, and Karl Jaspers are the contributors in the May 18 issue. Mr. Lippmann, the editors promise, will soon make an appearance in the *New Republic's* pages to comment on the comments.

The May issue of *Social Action* is designed as a sort of primer for church members who are taking part in the "Nationwide Program for Peace" which will be launched next year by the Department of International Affairs of the National Council of Churches. Featured are articles by Dr. Herman F. Reissig and Dr. Kenneth L. Maxwell. Dr. Maxwell outlines "Some Contributions of the Churches to World Peace," while Dr. Reissig develops the thesis that "the price of peace in our time comes high, and it is not certain if the people of the United States are prepared to pay it." Copies of the issue may be obtained by writing to the Council for Social Action, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

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