

in the magazines

"Emotionally, [Asians] are committed to their own religious and cultural heritage, but they also are determined to build modern nation-states, as rich and strong as any Western nation," writes Joseph M. Kitagawa in *Perspectives* (January-February). "This indeed is the aspiration of all Asian peoples today, and although they appear to be exceedingly confident of their own capacity to actualize this goal, they are frightened by the magnitude of their task and frustrated by the inner contradiction of the logic that underlies their alleged objective. And, if we envisage a meaningful dialogue between the East and the West, Westerners must not only listen to the voices from the East, but also feel the pulse of the heart, just as Easterners who expect to learn from the West should look for persons and human meanings in the midst of the complexities of the industrialized nations."

How can we in the West develop a better understanding of Asia? "There is no easy answer to this question," Mr. Kitagawa reminds us. "There are, however, some basic factors which cannot be forgotten. For example, we must appreciate the novelty and intricacy, as well as the potentiality, of the situation in the East—not only external factors, such as the social, economic, and political aspects, but also the Eastern 'world of meaning,' which is ever developing, and in which Easterners are destined to live. Concretely, this means that we must approach an Asian simultaneously as (a) an Easterner, (b) a modern man, and (c) a human being."

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Guenter Lewy, writing in the March issue of *The American Political Science Review* on "The Dilemma of Military Obedience in the Atomic Age," finds that "the paradoxical situation has . . . been created in which, according to one highly influential school of thought at least, the new weapons of mass destruction and the announced determination to use them have made the whole basis of the law of war obsolete, while, on the other hand, military codes of law continue to espouse high-sounding affirmations of the laws of humanity, and individual members of the armed forces are made explicitly and directly responsible for violating international law and flouting the dictates of the public conscience. The new weapons, if they are ever to be used in all their frightful destructiveness, seem to demand the complete suppression of all moral scruples . . ."

"Whether an airman who under orders dropped an atomic or hydrogen bomb could be considered a war criminal, whether he should challenge such orders and risk being punished by his superiors for breach of discipline or mutiny, whether international

law can effectively protect individuals against a domestic law which is illegal from the point of view of international law—these are questions which today may seem rather theoretical and removed from reality; they involve fine technical points. And yet it is perhaps no exaggeration to say that upon the answers given to these questions may some day depend the future of the human race."

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Kenneth Thompson, in the March 31 issue of *The Commonweal*, considers some of the problems raised by the relation between our society's fundamental beliefs and our politics. Does Soviet doctrine, with its "internally more coherent and externally more consistently articulated" ideology, offer a challenge to the democratic world in the "struggle for men's minds"? "If the treasure we have to offer the rest of the world is conceived too narrowly as freedom or equality or individual rights, our words and deeds may fall on barren ground. But the soil may prove more fertile if from our political storehouse we rediscover the broader tradition we share with Western civilization of 'order and liberty'."

The tendency of our leaders, Mr. Thompson writes, has not been to consider means instead of ends, but rather to formulate grand designs for international action "with which they intended to resolve all the troublesome problems that baffle and confound the people and the policy-makers." And by addressing the people solely in terms of "moral purpose, ultimate goals and towering intentions" leaders have helped to enfeeble the public philosophy. But it remains true that the question of armaments and the use of force—"the Achilles heel for liberal, humanitarian societies"—are subject to "the civilizing influence of practical morality" and to such conceptions of national honor as prohibit policies of violence enacted without moral restraint. "The United States," notes Mr. Thompson, "has flourished as a free political society with humane and just institutions partly because it has combined liberalism's values on the specifics of social and political justice with a 'Higher Law' tradition that enjoyed religious sanction."

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Out in March is the first issue of *Atlas*, a new monthly offering articles culled from foreign periodicals, "reproduced verbatim or faithfully translated." Lead articles on current world affairs in the March issue include contributions from *Le Monde*, the Brazilian publication *Anhembi*, *International Affairs*, *U.S.S.R.*, Japan's *Asahi Journal*, and the recently suppressed *Africa South*.

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