

improve good will; rather he works on a universe in which society and man participate. Society does not reject God. The individual must first turn Him out of his life. It is the insufficiency of man that he should be unable to follow after God. A man may follow after his beloved, or seek after beauty, but to follow after God is a task of infinite difficulty. This is a condition of our world—and to such a world the Messiah comes not as reformer.

The Jew is the "between-man," between time and

eternity, between the sadness of the world and the joy of redemption. He neither believes that in this time and history has the Kingdom of God been foretasted nor does he know when it is that God appoints this time and history for redemption. For this reason the Jew is not bound to the stabilities of the world: he can create in ages when others would destroy and destroy in ages where others create—for he is the leaven of history. And this, we would think, is the messianic relation of the Jew to culture.

AFTER THE CRISIS

A Comment on Some Critics of the Cuban Affair

Maynard Smith

Whatever the final outcome of the Cuban confrontation, it cannot be doubted that the decisive action taken by the United States has scuttled, for the present at least, the Soviet Union's offensive military base in the Western hemisphere. That it has not settled the "Cuban problem" is, in terms of the intent of the recent action, true but irrelevant. It was not designed to settle the problem of Cuba but to eliminate the menacing military presence of the Soviet Union in Cuba.

The decision to check this dramatic extension of Soviet military capability met with substantial popular approval, however varied and incompatible the reasons, however strange the bedfellows. But some publicists, like the people but unlike the President, free of responsibility for the nation's freedom and security, rose to criticize the action either as to substance or procedure, and often to insist upon our own culpability for the conditions which made it necessary.

Everyone looked for a way out of the dangerous impasse, but it must be said that not all who looked had the same intellectual acumen or moral fibre. Some escape routes must be labeled for what they were: ignobility disguised as humanity, and aborted logic passing for prudence. But the difficulty, of course, is less one of courage than of intelligence and morality.

Among the lessons to be learned from this episode, perhaps none deserves more attention in a demo-

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cracy than the reaction of vocal and sometimes important citizens to the sudden and admittedly dangerous decision of the President. The following comments deal with but one segment of our citizenry. I omit discussion of those who believe we should not have acted; it is difficult to deal with them because the anticipated consequences by which alone they could probably be swayed are ruled out by the fact of the decision. Omitted also is any treatment of both those generally sympathetic to the long-term declared goals of the Soviet Union and those who would have invaded Cuba months or even years ago.

I am concerned here only with those who were in substantial agreement with the President's action, who are relieved that he took it, but are troubled by their inability to reconcile their factual relief with the normative demands of either their reason or their conscience. They find a contradiction between power and right. Too sophisticated to regard power as proof of justice, they are too naive to see that justice might validate power. Filled with intellectual ambiguity and moral guilt, they criticize the means to the end they welcome. They fail to connect power with purpose and to legitimate the use of power in the service of that purpose. What is worse, the purpose itself seems blighted—by their refusal rationally to probe both our ultimate and proximate ends and by the moral guilt involved in possessing great power without the conviction that there is any end which justifies its use.

Others, by approving the use of power but ob-

jecting to its initial unilateralism, have been able to combine their delight in its consequences with the saving guilt of a penitent conscience. The government is condemned for not first consulting with the Latin American states or with our European allies or with the United Nations or with all of these. What was done needed to be done, but it should have been done after consultation.

Now means, to be sure, are not indifferent; they are intimately connected with the end. But the dispute here is over the means to the means to the end. The criticism can be valid only if it can reasonably be believed that to push the continuum back this far would not in fact destroy the means to the end. Compelling evidence seems to lie in the opposite direction: there was a need for speed in the face of the rapid Soviet build-up and a need for secrecy to avoid losing the initiative in our defense.

As for taking it to the United Nations, it would seem to be a lesson of experience if not a matter of logic that while the United Nations can resolve or mitigate international violence where the national interest of neither of the two major powers is directly concerned, it is quite impotent where these interests are so concerned. Can anyone seriously believe that the United Nations would have acted, to say nothing of acted in time, to prevent the Soviet build-up from reaching at least bargainable dimensions?—which was probably its immediate function. With action needed, recourse to the United Nations would have been worse than futile; it would have been a blow to the organization itself. It is idle to expect the United Nations to do what, by the nature of its structure and the character of the antagonists, it cannot do. Far from strengthening the United Nations, such expectations weaken it, for they expose again its inability to check a major power. The organization should be left in all its potential power and prestige to deal with the many things it can handle. To expect more of it is in the long run to get less; to expect the impossible might be to kill it.

At any rate, I'm not sure that any nation is obligated to risk its security in the service of an international body until such time as that body can give reasonable assurance that the risk is minimal. We must work for that day, but it is not yet here. Nor, if I understand the principles of the United Nations correctly, will it be speeded by our neglect of our own or Western security.

The logic and history of what the United Nations is unable to do cannot be unknown to those who argued that this was a job it should do. Apparently they hoped that in this case it *could* act. And this

would have accomplished the result while attaching to us only a share in its responsibility.

The combined misunderstanding and moral guilt occasioned by the exertion of power showed itself in another striking way: the belief that if we expected the Soviet Union to abandon its base in Cuba, we should abandon ours in Turkey. So logical did this exchange seem to many Americans that only Khrushchev's conviction that it did not seem logical at all to our government could have deterred him from attempting to negotiate such a swap.

Whatever might be the moral issue involved in a willingness to trade old friends for "peace in our place," the intellectual error appears more critical. The trade appears logical if one has quantitative criteria for international justice. It is part and parcel of the attempt to make necessarily moral judgments without moral standards. If values are indifferent, one can quantify international justice; but if values matter, then something other than weighing, other than "equal" exchanges, must be considered. It is precisely the presupposition of the equal justification for these bases which causes the error. It ignores the qualitative differences between the intentions, the goals, the means and, manifestly, the explicit behavior in the last fifteen years of the United States, on the one hand, and the Soviet Union, on the other. Does not the legitimacy of the location and number of weapons of any kind depend upon the purpose they are to serve and the appropriateness and necessity of them actually to serve that purpose? Is it not essential to pass judgment upon the relative purposes of Soviet and American bases?

American bases in Europe, including that in Turkey, were established in response to Soviet aggression in Europe, from the Balkans to the Baltic. The Soviet base in Cuba, on the other hand, cannot be said to have been intended as a check against American aggression, for, our role in the Bay of Pigs fiasco notwithstanding, the United States has committed no aggression in the post-war period. Is a base established in Turkey for the defense of the West against Russia equal in justification and therefore trading value to a Soviet base established in Cuba for aggressive purposes—whether in this hemisphere or in Europe? To lose the connection between purpose and power, to abandon the values which establish that connection, would seem to destroy an essential factor in the making of intelligent and moral decisions.

There is still another tune which has been played by some critics: the record of our past sins in Cuba, and indeed in all of Latin America. But while the

United States probably gets more blame than it deserves for its late nineteenth- and twentieth-century Cuban policies, the policies are hardly relevant to the problem of Soviet offensive weapons in Cuba. It is worth repeating that the President's action was not directed against Cuba but against the Soviet Union. It was not occasioned by the nature of the Castro regime—much as some might have liked it to be—but by the Soviet's use of that regime to establish its bases in this hemisphere. We would have been justified in taking the same action had Russia established bases on the soil of a democracy in this hemisphere. Thought of differently, we would have been justified had the placing of missiles in Cuba been attempted by, say, Britain, a democratic country, if Britain had already asserted and shown its enmity to us as has the Soviet Union. The twinges of moral conscience with regard to Cuba can be

understood, but this cannot excuse what would seem to be the intellectual failure to make the factual distinctions.

Among all circumspect people, relief that Russia has been checked in Cuba is tempered by the recognition that we have neither turned the Soviet tide nor solved the "Cuban problem." To Santayana's reminder that those who fail to learn the lessons of history are compelled to relive it, we might add that the tolerable margin of error has been so reduced that opportunities for this experience may not often recur. If our recent confrontation has taught us a little better the legitimate role of power, without forgetting that it is a role and not the whole play, that it is a means and not an end, we might both expand those recurrent opportunities for experience and be better prepared intellectually and morally for the next encounter.

Other voices

THE ACCUMULATION OF PERIL

In this article, reprinted in part from the December 1962 issue of Liberation, A. J. Muste comments on various reactions, official and non-official, to the Cuban crisis—and makes several recommendations. Mr. Muste is well known for his years of activity in furthering the cause of peace. He has written and lectured widely on the dangers of a nuclear age.

Together we have lived through the experience of standing on the brink of nuclear war and of not being pushed or falling over into the abyss. What saved us? If, in a few days or weeks or months, in some other part of the world, a like crisis develops, can we be assured that we shall again be tough and smart—and lucky—enough to escape? Or are we indeed caught in a game of "Russian roulette," and if so, how can we pull out of that macabre game and devote ourselves to pursuits more in line with our professed traditions and ideals.

At the height of the Cuban crisis there were more people in this country to whom the possibility of a nuclear holocaust seemed a near-reality than ever before. If Khrushchev had this response in mind when he attempted to install missile bases on the island, he achieved his purpose. I do not sense, however, that Americans have concluded that having been so near the brink we must not get near it again.

The feeling is, rather, that if we could get near and not go over once, we can risk getting near two, three or even more times. This attitude is based largely on approval of President Kennedy's course, which is taken to prove that once you get tough with the Bolsheviks they will draw back.

Accordingly, there is not either in Administration circles or among the people generally or even, I think, among the intellectuals, for the moment any grave apprehension as to the future or any feeling that we need to explore fairly radical changes in national attitudes and policies. There is actual optimism on the part of some that a period of general relaxation is ahead during which progress will be made in negotiations about testing, disarmament, even Berlin perhaps. But even those who do not share such optimism think that things are under control, that a situation which in the President's phrase was about to become "unmanageable" is after all manageable, and that we can continue to "live with it"—as we have for a decade or more—as long as it is necessary, until a solution is somehow gradually worked out. The crucial question now for Americans generally and for those who belong to the peace organizations in particular is whether this evaluation is essentially correct. The programs we outline and the course we pursue will depend largely on whether we accept it. . . .