

despite some misgivings which I have about certain elements of the Cuban experiment, it seems to me, on reflection, that this seemingly perverse judgment of this tiny minority of Jews may yet prove more correct than the prevailing negative assessments of the Cuban experiment.

Why do I say this? Because nowhere in the Western Hemisphere have I seen a society in which there is such morale, such social dedication, such feelings of fellowship, such concern for children and young people. Nowhere have I seen in practice such a radical interpretation of human brotherhood expressed in the attempt at economic equality and sharing (not yet fully achieved) which converts from theory to fact the notion of our human interdependence. Nowhere outside of Israel have I seen such social concentration on education or such respect for teachers and learning, and nowhere else have I seen such attention and resources focused on the previously poorest and least esteemed.

Please do not misunderstand. It is not utopia; it is not the ideal society; it has harsh, non-libertarian features and many problems. Life is severe at the moment: shortages, rationing, long hours of hard work, due partly to the U. S. blockade (the resultant suffering and deprivation will, I think, one day be a source of shame to all of us) and partly to some apparent errors in development schemes and social planning. There are serious questions to be raised as well about various aspects of the society, among them the basic one of whether such a total transformation can avoid rigid totalitarianism.

Yet whatever the answers may be, and whatever the outcome of the Cuban experiment, this much at least seems clear to me: it is appropriate and important that there be further contact between members of the Cuban Jewish community and members of the United States Jewish community.

For Cuban Jews it would represent a continuation of the experience of fellowship with the largest and nearest Jewish community, a fellowship which would do much to reduce their painful sense of isolation. ("You are the first rabbi from the United States to visit us in eight years; why did you wait so long?")

For us, in addition to the fulfillment of a responsibility, it would be a moving and challenging introduction to a society at once dynamic, disturbing, and inspiring: an introduction which could contribute greatly both to our understanding of the plight of other developing nations and to a broadened understanding of the meaning of our own religious tradition in the world today.

The Author Replies

Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir: Professor Hans J. Morgenthau has written in the March issue of *worldview* to dispute a position I attributed to him in "Old Year Out, New Year In" (January). He comments: "I have long since been inured to misrepresentations of my point of view, but this account is so utterly and obviously false that I must set the record straight. From the moment I first warned against our involvement in Vietnam . . . I have consistently taken the position which Mr. Stillman says I have not taken, i.e., that the Vietnam war is militarily unwinnable, politically aimless, and morally dubious and that the issues at stake do not bear on the vital interest of the United States."

I have no wish to perpetuate a controversy since he has done much good work, but Prof. Morgenthau cites three of his articles (Asia: The American Algeria, July, 1961; Vietnam: Another Korea, May, 1962; and Bundy's Doctrine of War Without End, November, 1968) to bolster his contention that I have misrepresented him. But what actually did I say? That "after all, it was not so long ago that *serious* critics of official policy (among them Hans Morgenthau and the editorial board of the *New York Times*) held that the *real* folly of the Vietnam war was not that it involved the United States in an unwinnable contest in which its real interests were only problematically engaged, but that it risked escalating to an ultimate nuclear exchange with the Soviet Union." (The quotation is as the original but the italics are now supplied.)

I have not read all of Prof. Morgenthau's dicta on the Vietnam war; but unfortunately for his case, his researches into his own writings appear also to be incomplete. "Old Year Out, New Year In" is about the pernicious habit of political exaggeration which afflicts even the *serious* critics of official policy. I do not argue that Prof. Morgenthau never made a sane analysis of the American dilemmas in Vietnam, but that he fell victim to the habit of fevered analysis. For the fact is that in the *New Republic*, May 1, 1965, Prof. Morgenthau *did* argue that the war in Vietnam would lead to a clash between the Americans and the Soviets—an argument I regarded at the time, and certainly do now, as patent nonsense.

I quote from his article: "Having just returned from the Soviet Union. . . . [I find] the Soviet attitude toward American policy is one of despair, alarm, and

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exasperation. The despair is most keenly felt by those who have been identified with Khrushchev's policy of peaceful coexistence . . . who declare themselves to be fighting with their backs to the wall, barely holding their own. . . . [We must] recognize the dilemma in which the Soviet Union finds itself and the impossibility for the Soviet Union to remain indefinitely a passive bystander in the face of the progressive destruction of North Vietnam by American military power." He concludes by warning: "However anxious the Soviet Union is to avoid a direct military confrontation with the United States, it is not willing to buy the avoidance with its abdication as leader and protector of its Communist allies."

This is a pretty clear statement of the alarmist view I attributed to him: So much then for the "inexorable" pressures on the Soviet Union *four* years ago to enter the war. (Since then the United States has dropped, we are told, more bombs on North Vietnam than on Germany in World War II and committed well over a half million troops, without triggering a Soviet intervention.)

What of my reference to a nuclear exchange? Apart from the obvious fact that any military clash between nuclear powers runs the risk of escalation to nuclear war, Prof. Morgenthau himself makes the argument: "In the present conflict China is in no position to come to the aid of North Vietnam without risking destruction of its atomic and major industrial installations; for it is not yet a nuclear power. But the Soviet Union is under the cover of its nuclear forces. It could go a long way, albeit facing the risk of escalation, to demonstrate to the Communist world that China only speaks loudly. . . . If worse should come to worse and North Vietnam were to be involved actively in the conflict, they would have to rely for their protection upon the nuclear power and the conventional arms of the Soviet Union."

So far as I am concerned this clinches the matter. Prof. Morgenthau *did* say these things—and if *he* has said them, how much more fevered have been the imaginations of lesser men, both those who make our policy and those who oppose it.

The war in Vietnam is a great folly. Indeed, as I shall report in these pages, having made an extensive tour of Vietnam recently on the fighting fronts and having talked to politicians in the South, I have returned in a kind of despair. But it is not only Vietnam that is at fault in American foreign policy. We are both beset by real demons and the fictive demons of our imaginations.

There is no way out of America's present dilemmas unless we learn to distinguish the real from the unreal.
Edmund Stillman

I profited by a recent period of unexpected leisure to re-read some of John Dewey's works. The experience reinforced my conviction that he is the most significant philosopher America has produced. Dewey plied the philosophical art on a broad front. He had something to say on everything from educational theory to logic and metaphysics. He rarely failed to be original and stimulating even though he wasn't always right. Dewey's weaknesses and incompleteness have been thoroughly expounded by his critics. But it seems to me that we could greatly benefit today by re-emphasizing some of his strengths. In what follows I would like to comment on some of these.

First among them, I suggest, is Dewey's wholist approach. All his life he fought the narrowness, the disrupting dualisms and disintegrative individualism that characterizes so much traditional and contemporary thinking. It may fairly be said that the dominant theme of his writings was the continuous and interdependent quality of all aspects of life. When he was a young man he was much impressed by the concept of organism he found in the works of Thomas Huxley. He wrote then of his desire for a world and a life that would have the same properties as had the human organism in Huxley's thought. Hegel and Darwin were to be two of the influences that helped the young Dewey develop his theory of "organic coordination." The category that emerged as basic, and towards the clarification of which Dewey directed his intellectual energy, was that of human experience, *all* human experience. As William Levi has commented, philosophy for Dewey became a means of "widening the human horizon by a vivid illumination of the various forms of human experience." The fresh challenge to serious thought in our time, Dewey remained convinced, was to inseminate all modes of experience with intelligent direction. In this way, he hoped, the grievous alienation that afflicts the experience of twentieth-century man could be overcome.

Dewey's principal area of concentration was the dichotomy between science and human affairs. As he put it in *The Quest for Certainty* (and repeated many times over): "The problem of restoring integra-

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