Current Wisdom

"Whom the gods destroy they first make mad" – Euripides

COLLEGIATE CHATAQUA

The Hon. Stuart Udal offers a little mush while massaging the involved students of Indiana University:

We're throwing away what we've always prided ourselves on — the ability to help other peoples. We've become a gluttonous, greedy nation acquiring wealth we do not need, and as we do this, we extinguish the hopes of other, poorer nations.

—Bloomington Courier Tribune

THE LIFE OF THE MIND

The state of intellectual inquiry amongst the effete slobs of The Saturday Review:

What makes a really grand hotel? Not the coolest daiquiris or the latest electonic shoe cleaners. To be suitable for James Bond or for conventioners in funny hats — or to have plumbing that works — is not enough. A grand hotel just is.

—The Saturday Review

A BLOW FOR IMPARTIALITY

After the highly motivated young Palestinian guerillas slaughtered Israeli athletes in Munich, a leading Arab gazette proferred an example of that incomparable logic now celebrated as a hallmark of the high-minded radical:

Public opinion has always been against the Arabs, never taking their side. . . into consideration. So public opinion needs a sharp blow to become impartial.

— Al Moharrer

THE SCIENCE AND TOMMYROT OF POLITICS

America the Beautiful as seen by Dr. James McGregor Burns, political scientist and holy roller:

The nation is essentially evil and the evil can be exorcised only by turning the system upside down.

—Uncommon Sense (Harper & Row)

USEFUL READINGS

Tripping with an NYR muse:

Henry Kissinger is the true hero of the present mood, the knight of the ideal. He never brushes against the local, the familiar, the merely national. He is not even married and thus is as far from the domestic as a knight-ruler can be. He lives in a blue void, floating through the skies of the world, his streamers saying Power and Foreign Policy drifting gorgeously behind him.

—Elizabeth Hardwick
The New York Review of Books

THE RACKETS

Having received the boot from his old concession at The Saturday Review, Mr. Norman Cousins now sets up a new tent to fleece high-brow yokelry with the same old dubious potion — a transparent swindle which the gullible oafs applaud!:

What about the magazine itself?

The central editorial idea behind WORLD is that the biggest change of our time has happened inside the human mind. People think of themselves not just as Americans or Russians or Chinese or Japanese, but as members of a human race now dependent on the same earth life-support system. They have an instinctive sense that their national governments are no longer able to perform their historic function, which is to protect their lives, their values, their property, and even their culture.

And they know, therefore, that new world institutions have to be created to perform these.

—WORLD Magazine

THOSE CHAUVINIST ERASERS

Assistant professor Jerry Bigner reveals the advanced state of scientific inquiry at Indiana University:

We know kids will sex-type objects anyway because of our culture. For instance, he said children identify chalk as female and an eraser as male.

Bigner said he didn't think it was "so wrong" to give children toys to match their sexes, but parents can go overboard by denying a son a doll or a girl a gun.

—Bloomington Courier-Tribune

ADULT READING

Dr. Gary Wills practices new modes of thought and expression with modern English in his syndicated column for modern minds:

Pen, penis, car, gun — one will vindicate the other, even at the cost of his own life. While thoughts of "a few bullets raced thru my head," he gunned his rattletrap car even faster toward a rendezvous with Nixon in Canda: "I did over 90 once or twice — danger gave me an erection." He would force himself in on people's attention, get it through, be the ultimate lover-rejector, no longer the rejected: "To wear white tie and tails & get Nixon — boy, WOW!" It was the only orgasm left him, and it would dwarf all the little wooings and lover-boy doings of gas station attendants and museum guards. Don Juan, the lady-killer, in white tie and tails. He goes to meet Nixon and fate "dressed in my vested conservative business suit and overcoat with gun and tie..."

—Gary Wills

AS YOU LIKE IT

The state of political analysis amongst the American Sophists:

McGovern prefers to discuss the "real," political issues. Thus Eagleton was dropped lest his medical career distract the public from the "real" issues — Nixon's record, the war, the economy.

—Christopher Lasch
The New York Review of Books

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY

Progress in social science brought about by the wonderful intelligentsia at Ms:

Unfortunately, as we are all aware, toys follow the prevailing values of society. Sexist toys will be with us until toymakers decide that there is no longer a market for them — until our culture recognizes women in other roles than housekeeper, hostess, mother, seductress.

—Ms.

MEMOIRS

An exciting revelation from the American Casanova:

Power is the ultimate aphrodisiac.

—Henry Kissinger
ABC Radio News

TRAVELOGUE

The distinguished historian, Clair Sterling, elucidates some of the unsung benefits of the Middle Ages:

. . .Unlike the opulent West, China does not abound in the more profligate kinds of waste: plastic containers, tin cans, old cards and cast off refrigerators.

—The Washington Post

STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS

A complicated analysis gives way to a reformer's homily in but one more stirring moment of television's literary hour:

Seven members of Congress are running for president now and until some dropped out there were ten running. Well, they don't believe they can run for president while remaining in Washington on the Senate floor. They feel a need to speak at political dinners, to sit at the head table behind a spray of chrysanthemums, eating chicken and green peas and to keep reaching across the table to shake hands, while dragging their coat-sleeves through the mashed potatoes, going to county fairs to pat the pumpkins and going to more elegant functions given by rich people who might give them money.

— David Brinkley
NBC News

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THE CONTINUING CRISIS
(continued from page 25)

passed the District of Columbia bar examination. Twenty brothers at Sing Sing have started a Jaycee chapter. And according to the FBI there were eighty-four bombings and attempted bombings in the United States during November. Mr. Bugsy Siegal's Flamingo Hotel floor safe was finally opened. It contained nothing. But real progress was made on the feminist front when the Bank of America announced it is ending its long-standing practice of paying taxicab fares for women who start or end work at night, and this obvious remnant of sex discrimination was actually pointed out by progressive male employees, a significant sign of the movement's progress. In Philadelphia, an eighty-four-year-old widow is recovering from five days of captivity during which four youths ranging from ten to thirteen years of age beat her with broomsticks, raped, tortured, and burned her, and robbed her of her savings of $229. Francis Gary Powers is now an airborne traffic spotter for a Los Angeles radio station. And the movement really picked up steam in North Adams, Massachusetts where protesters stole a figurine of the Christ child from a Catholic church nativity scene. They will hold it in custody until the church speaks out against the bombing in Vietnam. Finally Jerry Rubin and Abbie Hoffman were expelled from the Youth International Party for wanton capitalism.

AMERICANA: The National Kraut Packers Association has named presidential aide Henry A. Kissinger "Kraut Character of the Year." Mr. Archie Keller installed a parking meter in the bathroom of his Sacramento home. In Charlestown, West Virginia's Tom Andrews, 11, claimed a new world record for clapping. And a group of Cambridge, Ohio businessmen, possessed of a spiritual afflatus, are planning a $30 million Biblelands—complete with camel rides, fishing in the Sea of Galilee, and side trips to the land of milk and honey—all based on Disneyland. Mr. Adolph Hitler's $2 million parade car was auctioned off January 6 in Scottsdale, Arizona. According to a Gallup Poll, Mrs. Pat Nixon is the most admired woman in America, followed by Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir and Mrs. Dwight Eisenhower. And while attending the launching of Apollo 17, Mr. Charlie Smith, the 130-year-old ex-slave recently discovered in Bartow, Florida, expressed his doubt that the contraption is real, adding philosophically that "I'd rather be home in bed." Finally, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare published a study that should cause medical science a great deal of rethinking. According to the survey, the second most prevalent chronic condition of the body's muscular-skeletal system is corns and calluses.

MINOR NOTATIONS: Mr. Daniel Patrick Moynihan is leaving Harvard for the American Embassy in India. On December 7 the Apollo 17 blasted-off to the moon, landing on December 11 and returning to Earth on December 18. The Labor parties won in New Zealand and Australia for the first time in many years. Mr. Kissinger informed the press on December 16 that Hanoi and Washington "have not yet reached an agreement that the President sees as just and fair," and two days later American air planes began the heaviest bombing of North Vietnam ever. The President will continue wage and press controls beyond April 30. The more reasonable wing of the Democratic party showed Mrs. Jean Westwood the door. Robert Strauss and George Bush, both from Texas, are the new National Chairmen of the Democratic and Republican parties respectively. And on December 31 President Nixon ordered a halt to the blitz over North Vietnam above the 20th parallel. Peace talks resumed January 8.

FOR THE NONCE: *The New York Times* reports that stewardesses are becoming "radicalized," having established a Stewardess' Anti-Defamation Defense League. And in Cuba, Christmas will be celebrated for the last time on January 6 (the traditional day in "Catholic" Cuba), according to the Revolutionary Orientation Commission. □

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The Alternative is a monthly student magazine. Each issue is filled with the views of right-thinking young Americans (and a few older ones too) on such vital topics as national defense, the economy, television news, current movies and books, the Nixon Administration and many more.

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