



ABBEY OF GETHSEMANI  
TRAPPIST, KENTUCKY

Jan 28, 1962

Dear Victor:

As we came out of our retreat I found in the pile of mail your proof and letter. First of all the proof is fine, I am very sorry you felt you had to do the cut over again, as it was quite good before, but now it is much better it seems to me. So therefore I am both sorry and glad. The new cut is lighter and more free. Or so it seems to me. So by all means go ahead, everything is right and ready as far as I am concerned.

The copyright problem as I understand it is not one that can be changed by dickering with Washington about the phrase "pro manuscripto". That may work with the censors but it does not work with the copyright office. I will make some kind of an effort to work this out for sure sometime when I am more in the clear, but for the moment I think we just have to put copyright by the Abbey of Gethsemani, or Victor Hammer, one or the other. Let me know which and I will apply to Washington for the copyright and at the same time will ask about promanuscripto, without hope of finding out anything relevant. The copyright line should read:

Copyright ~~by~~ 1962 by... ( whoever it is to be.)

It must be on the title page or on the reverse of the title page. That is, probably on the one where you have pro manuscripto. If you think the whole thing is foolish, then let it go, but it will make it difficult for J. or whoever publishes the piece later in a book commercially.

Frankly I think it would ruin the pro manuscripto and look senseless, so if you feel you want to just let it go, then please do so. I think the way the page looks is more important than anything else, and hang the copyright. At least that is what I think, really.

So now you have a full range of opinions to choose from. If you just forget about the copyright you have my full approval, there is no point in ruining the book for that.

As for brainwashing, the term is used very loosely about almost anything. Strict technical brainwashing is an artificially induced "conversion", brought about by completely isolating a person emotionally and spiritually, undermining his whole sense of identity, and then "rescuing" him from this state of near collapse by drawing him over into a new sense of community with his persecutors, now his rescuers, who "restore" his identity by admitting him into their midst as an approved and docile instrument. Henceforth he does what they want him to do and likes it, indeed finds a certain satisfaction in this, and even regards his old life as shameful and inferior.

In the loose sense, any mass man is a "brainwashed" man. He has lost his identity or never had one in the first place, and he seeks security, hope, a sense of identity in his immersion in the pressures and prejudices of a majority, speaking through TV, newspapers etc. Having no real power or meaning in himself he seeks all in identification with a presumably all powerful and all wise collectivity. Whatever the collectivity does is right, infallible, perfect. Anything, approved by It, becomes legitimate and even noble. The worst crimes are virtues when backed up by the all powerful collectivity. All that matters is to be part of the great, loud mass.

It seems to me that the great effort of conscience that remains for modern man is to resist this kind of annihilating pressure, this defection, in every possible way. The temptation comes unfortunately from very many angles, even seemingly good sources. The Cold War is the deadly influence that is leading western man to brainwash himself.



When the process is completed there will be nothing left but the hot war or the decline into totalitarian-blindness and inertia, which also spells hot war in the end. The prospects are very dark, aren't they? Yet I think perhaps some providential accident may happen that will wake everyone up. Some kind of plague of radiation, perhaps, something unexpected and unforeseen that will force people to come to their senses. But can we say we have done anything to deserve this? I hardly think so. Fortunately, if we only got what we deserved, we would never have very much of anything good. God is not simply just, He is also and above all merciful. I wish that this had not been so thoroughly forgotten.

The clipping was interesting, and I had already started a note to Carolyn which had that book included in a short list of other items. The French situation is very disturbing indeed. Much evil can come of this. Everyone expects De Gaulle to get it this year some time, and I wonder how long he can survive. He has been a good man in many ways, yet perhaps mistakenly Messianic too. But what could any reasonable human being have done with Algeria? If he goes, then France goes too. And this may be the spark that will finally ignite everything. The next few months will tell us a thing or two. And the next three years, or four: well, to call them fateful is putting it so mildly as to be ridiculous.

I wonder if there is going to be much left of the Western World by 1984, to fulfill George Orwells prophecies?

Meanwhile, we have only to be what we are and to retain the spirit and civilization which we were blessed with, and to ~~we~~ keep as human as we can. I hope you and Carolyn are well, and that Carolyn is gradually getting better. I look forward to seeing you then, perhaps in March?

God bless you always. With all friendship and affection to you both in Christ

*J. Lewis*