

## Editorial

# *What is wrong with the United States*

The July 26 *New York Times*, in an article about Japan, presented a picture that Americans are becoming quite familiar with: glitz and glitter on the one hand, and a smothering conformity on the other. For example, the caption below the accompanying picture reads: "Above: The gleaming new Tokyo Metropolitan Government Office Building, a model of both efficiency and conformity."

This is typical of the attitude which castigates the Japanese for not destroying their society at the rapid rate which we in the West have chosen to do. In the United States and Europe, New Age ideology has fostered the spread of irrationalism and developed a fear of, or outright hostility to, science and technology. This is coupled with hedonism, and disregard for even the most fundamental family values. In addition, we face the brutality which is manifest in the reemergence of terrorism in Italy and in Peru, and in the cities of the United States, where children are turned into drug couriers and gunned down.

Under such conditions, atrocities by Serbia on a scale rivaling or exceeding those committed by Adolf Hitler are allowed to continue without serious challenge, and a renewal of the war against Iraq is threatened on the flimsiest of pretexts.

Japan has not been immune to the virus of New Age ideology, or the rock-drug counterculture, even though Japanese children have not suffered to the extent of their western counterparts. The following comparison made by the author of the *New York Times* article, Steven R. Weisman, is intended to show the inferiority of "conforming" Japanese culture, compared to the freedom given an American child. We ask our readers to judge for themselves. Weisman writes: "From their first day in school, for example, children in Japan are taught that they are to serve the good of the larger group.

"Important tasks are assigned to the youngsters, so that they learn early that their colleagues are depending on them not to let them down. An American friend once asked his English class to list the goals of an ideal

society. From the young students came such things as 'personal responsibility,' 'sharing with others,' and the like." The author contrasts this to a value system in the United States which he obviously believes to be superior. American children, he says, value freedom of speech and privacy most highly.

Thus, the author attacks Japanese society for inculcating respect in their young people for the golden rule and traditional values found in the Christian Bible.

Japan is a society which in many ways is reminiscent of the United States before the assassination of John F. Kennedy, before it began to atrophy. This is particularly so in the positive attitude toward science and technology found within the Japanese population. At the time of the Moon landing, the United States was an inspiration to young people all over the world.

A similar opportunity to reawaken a spirit of cultural optimism within the population of the United States and Europe has existed since the 1989 announcement by Martin Fleischmann and Stanley Pons, of the reality that nuclear reactions could be produced virtually in a test tube, and at room temperature. After an initial flurry of interest, their announcement was greeted in the United States and Europe with hostility both from the scientific establishment and the media at large.

This was not the case in Japan, where research on "cold fusion" will be receiving major support from government and industry. In the United States, there is a new opportunity to reverse this blunder. In late July, Dr. Edmund Storms at Los Alamos National Laboratory issued a report on a cold fusion experiment in which he achieved considerable excess heat. Using palladium donated by Tanaka Metals Co. of Japan, he was able to replicate an experiment by Japanese scientist Akito Takahashi, which was designed on the model of the work of Fleischmann and Pons.

If the United States and Europe are destroyed, it will not be because the Japanese compete unfairly. It will be because their populations no longer rejoice at the occurrence of scientific potential, which would allow us to provide a good life for all children.