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LETTERS

Letters to the Editor, with writer's name and address, should go to: **Newsweek, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10022.** Unless otherwise specified, all comments will be considered for publication.

Critics and Ghouls

Like many other Americans, I have been confused and disturbed by the recent furor over the Warren report. After reading Charles Roberts' objective account, "Eyewitness in Dallas" (*NATIONAL AFFAIRS*, Dec. 5), I must agree with him and admit that the conspiracy theory cannot be taken very seriously.

MARTHA MCSWEENEY

Burlington, Vt.

■ You get the feeling of gravedigging ghouls when you read the present furor over books critical of the findings of the Warren commission; the sole objective of the authors and their publishers was to make money. Nothing is served by raking over these dead ashes except sensationalism, and sensationalism brings in dollars.

CYRIL E. PAQUIN

New York City

■ Roberts says that the autopsy report on President Kennedy was written by "the best-qualified team of forensic-medicine experts the U.S. Navy could muster." He is incorrect. Commanders Boswell and Humes of the Navy are not forensic pathologists; Colonel Finck of the Army is a qualified forensic pathologist, but he arrived when the autopsy examination was already in progress and at an unspecified stage.

It is the Warren report that is on trial, not Edward Jay Epstein's "Inquest" or any other critical work. And thus far, the case for the defense of the report—to cite but one example—is pitifully feeble, and often inaccurate as to basic facts.

SYLVIA MEACHER

New York City

✓ Charles Roberts replies: If Sylvia Meagher narrowly interprets the phrase "forensic-medicine experts" to include only those pathologists who are certified in forensic pathology by the American Board of Pathology, then technically she is correct.

But if she implies that the three-man board was incompetent to conduct the autopsy and resolve questions of forensic (legal) medicine, then she is at variance with the professional opinion of Dr. Benwood Hunter, president-elect of the College of American Pathologists (and himself a certified forensic patholo-

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LETTERS

gist), who described the Kennedy autopsy team to NEWSWEEK as "absolutely topflight ... extremely well-qualified in forensic pathology."

As for the second point, Lt. Col. Pierre Finck participated in the autopsy, concurred in all its findings, and gave testimony filling seven pages in the Warren commission hearings.

Power Struggle Clarified

A report in THE PERISCOPE (Oct. 31) implied that United Auto Workers president Walter Reuther was being forced from the board of directors of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People by "black-power advocates." Many people have interpreted this as a reference to the so-called Young Turks of the NAACP. Contrary to your implication, the Young Turks are not black-power advocates; they enjoy the support of both white and black members and leaders in the NAACP.

Dr. EUGENE T. REED, President
New York State Conference
NAACP

Amityville, N.Y.

Drug Users and Abusers

"Turned-on Way of Life" emphasizes only the "kicks" side of the modern world's rampant abuse of chemicals (MEDICINE, Nov. 28). For many the motive is more serious: to discover hidden realities in life and to develop new and transforming psychological insights. Here the problem is far more insidious. Many advocates of LSD and other hallucinogens are convinced that the drugs are valid and effective tools for expanding consciousness, and a drug-god religion has even been founded on that premise. Psychedelic visions and experiences are often compared with higher states of consciousness described in Eastern mystical literature.

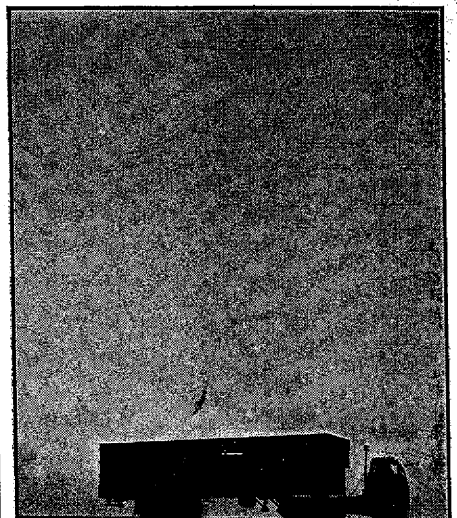
Actual authorities on the Eastern side have an explicitly different view. India's eminent spiritual master Avatar Mehar Baba has pointed out that even the authentic spiritual experiences and trance states of advanced yogis are "as toys for children" compared to the uninterrupted experience of oneness with God, which is real and final enlightenment. "If drugs could make one realize God, then God is not worthy of being God. These drugs—from marijuana to LSD—are harmful physically, mentally and spiritually ... Love others, make others happy, serve others even at discomfort to yourself—this is to love God and the way to find your Real Self."

RICK CHAPMAN

Gujarat, India

■ May I clarify the brief explanation you quoted of my views on drugs and drug-takers. I have tried to differentiate between the hard-core heroin users, whom I call oblivion seekers, and the experience seekers, who are generally of college age or slightly older and play with drugs like marijuana and the psychedelics.

It is my impression that the experience



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