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Forest Hill Presbyterian Men's Club, correspondence and speech,
1959.

Cleveland, Ohio

October 6, 1959

Rabbi Daniel Silver
The Temple
Ansel Road
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Sir:

Confirming your conversation with Mr. Stanley Stone, we would appreciate your addressing the Forest Hill Presbyterian Men's Club Meeting at the church on Wednesday night, December 2, 1959 at 6:30 p.m.

We have a dinner at that time, a brief business meeting, to be followed by the speaker of the evening. The meetings are generally completed by eight-thirty or nine o'clock at the latest. We would appreciate your talking about some subject that you believe would be of interest to our group. We would suggest some subject of current events and current interests; however, we will leave this decision to you.

If you have any questions, I would appreciate your contacting me. Also, I would appreciate your telling me of your selection of the subject you will discuss so that we can publish it in our church bulletin prior to December 2nd.

With kindest personal regards.

Sincerely yours,

Charles S. Wilder

Charles S. Wilder
Program Chairman
1542 Kew Road
Cleveland Heights 18, Ohio

Home Phone: YE-2-4779
Business Phone: MA-1-5600
Ext. 372

CSW/mf

6:30

Corner Lee Rd and
Mantiello Blvd.

Parking lot behind the church,
entrances on both streets

October 9, 1959

Mr. Charles S. Wilder
1542 Kew Road
Cleveland Heights 18, Ohio

Dear Mr. Wilder:

I shall be happy to speak to the Forest Hill Presbyterian Men's Club Wednesday evening, December 2nd at 6:30 P.M. If you can call my office around the first of November I shall be happy to provide you with the subject and whatever other publicity material you may need. Thank you for thinking of me.

With warmest personal regards, I remain

Cordially yours,

DANIEL JEREMY SILVER

DJS:lg

MISSILES, ROCKETS, AND MAN

What will the space age do to our moral standards?

For some twenty years, during the last half of the second century of this Common Era, Marcus Aurelius ruled as Emperor in Rome. This emperor was a man of unusual talent. He was a capable administrator and he was wholly at home in all academic and philosophic pursuits. I had occasion recently to reacquaint myself with some of his meditations. As always when I browse through his literary output I am amazed at its aptness of thought and its relevance to modern life. But on this particular rereading I was struck by a singularly archaic and outdated observation. He wrote in this vein:

Our children will see nothing that we have not seen, as we do not see anything unknown to our fathers.

I know of few observations by ancient thinkers which highlight in as dramatic a fashion the discontinuity of human experience between pre-modern men and our own age. The ^{PACE} path of progress in ancient times was languid and sluggish. Civilization changed so slowly that it seemed not to change at all. Pre-modern man could not free himself of his dependence on nature. Man lived close to death. Man feared the flood and the drought, the blight and the pestilence, the plague and disease. Man feared mass poverty and mass illiteracy and he had no ^{REALISTIC} vision of a world without these evils or ^{ONE} in which these evils were largely mitigated. ^{EVEN}

To ask an ancient, "Is there anything of which it can be said 'See, it is new'" was generally to receive an unhesitating answer, "No, there is nothing of which it can be said 'See, this is new'." "It has already been in the generations that were before. That which has been is that which shall be. That which has been done is that which shall be done. There is nothing new under the sun."

Listen now to a modern voice, a competent social historian commenting on life today. Here is his view: "The only life experience which we share with

pre-scientific man is the bond of our common mortality. The only life experience which we share with pre-scientific man is our common mortality." This is to overstate the case, but it is also to emphasize what we sometimes forget, that the life situation of modern man is unique, ~~that there is a radical discontinuity between our life and the world of those who lived more than two generations or more ago~~, for whether a man lived four millennia before the Common Era or four hundred ~~in four thousand years ago~~ years ago his life was lived out on a level, terrestrial, earth-bound plane. He was subject to the whims of nature, whims over which he had no control and against which he had few defenses. He was subject to the periodic incursions of plague and disease which destroyed whole communities and whole cities. Childbirth was a matter of grave danger. Childhood was the age of death. Man died young and lived amidst fear. No man could say that ^{INVENTION AND DISCOVERY} ~~his fellow men~~ had radically improved civilization, ^{on} had radically changed man's social environment. And ~~so men looked upon life as an eternal cycle of birth and rebirth, a world spinning free of the ground which, though it spun at a great speed, moved nowhere.~~

The ancients believed that man had been cursed by the punishment of Adam. Man was doomed to everlasting, back-breaking, spirit breaking toil. There was to be no relief, there could be no relief from this toil, for man had ^{few} ~~no~~ tool save a single mind and two hands, and no philosopher or thinker of the ancient world could see how, with this one mind and ~~these~~ two hands, man would ever be able to produce an abundance of food or a sufficiency of goods for himself and for his family, for his community and for his world.

The ancients believed that there was no relief from the curse of poverty. The New Testament says that "the poor shall always be among us" and this was generally believed throughout the ancient world. For they could not ^{IMAGINE} believe that man would ever be able to create a sufficiency of the good things, of the material things, to provide for all men. Today we have created ingenious labor-saving

machines. Man controls one mind, two hands, and often millions of horse power. Today we have not the bleak prospect of unrelieved work, but a social problem of leisure time and its constructive use. Today we are plagued with the fear of over-productivity. We know that the poor need no longer "always be among us". We have, at least in the Western world, created a society which has mitigated the worst of the curse of poverty and has shown that mankind can live in a world of sufficiency and in a world of plenty. The ancients lived close to death. They were cursed by diseases for which they had no cure. They were cursed by plagues against which they had no immunization. They were cursed by an abbreviated life span which destroyed the potential of so many before it had begun to be realized. We have immunized whole communities, whole continents. We have found cures for diseases always heretofore fatal. We have made childhood not the age of death but the age of health. We are faced today, not with a problem of death, but really ^{YOUNG} with a problem of old age, ^{AND WE HAVE CREATED A NEW SCIENCE ^{GENERATION} TO HELP} as our society is ~~having~~ to adjust itself to an increased number of elderly people and is ~~having~~ to develop institutions of social service and of health to meet and to cope with their problems.

The ancients, seeing life in its bleaker colors, were wont to cultivate a philosophy of pessimism. Marcus Aurelius was a stoic. He believed in resignation. He believed in the fact that the world could not be radically improved and therefore man should not radically commit himself to programs of world and social improvement. Faced with the success geometrically multiplied by success of our scientific age, having radically changed our world, we ^{BOUGHT} ~~so~~ began to be buoyant and optimistic, bursting with confidence, and yet strangely our philosophies accent and highlight the theme of despair and of resignation and of fatalism even more than that of Marcus Aurelius. Think of those who have looked into the crystal ball of ^{OUR} the future. Think of George Orwell's "1984". Think of Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World Revisited". Think of T. S. Elliott's "Wastelands". Nightmare

visions painted with nightmare colors upon a nightmare canvas. Is it that these men discount the extent of our scientific advance? No, not at all. Many of these men are scientists themselves and they know full well how far man has ascended up the ladder of technical progress. Why then their despair? Why then their vote of no confidence ^{LACK} ~~in our future?~~ They ~~have no~~ confidence in our future because they ^{LACK} ~~have no~~ confidence in us. They have no confidence in our future because, despite the achievements of the mind of man, they are not at all hopeful or ^{SANGUINE} ~~confident~~ of the potentialities of the spirit of man. They admire our intellectual maturity, but fear our social irresponsibility. That man is industrious they freely admit. They doubt that man is capable of unselfish long range planning and self restraint. True, we have had great discoveries, we have made ^{FASHIONED} amazing inventions, we have created tools and machines which can think for us and produce for us, but we have not yet proven that we are ^{REGULATING} ~~capable of turning~~ these machines, ^{FOR THE COMMON GOOD} ~~not to the good~~ of the few, ^{They doubt} ~~but to the good of all.~~ We have not yet shown that we are sufficiently morally aware or morally sensitive or morally determined to develop policies for the common good and for the common weal. These historians, these prophets of the future, look upon the history of man and they see it with jaundiced eyes. They say that man has never been able to control his greed, that man has always been concerned primarily with material acquisition ^{RATHER THAN} ~~not~~ with moral commitment. They say we are mentally mature but morally adolescent. They say that we will be incapable, unable to control the very achievements, the very inventions, the very machines, ^{OUR NEW WAY OF LIFE} ~~the very discoveries~~ which make for the blessing we have brought to our age ~~and the potential blessing which we might bring to all ages yet to come.~~

I take a less despairing view of human nature. I feel that they pre-judge us. I feel that they discount ^{RATHER} ~~too~~ off-handedly the achievement of the great. Civilization would never have developed had not individuals and whole societies of men stood firm in the right and proven in test their maturity of judgement and their capacity for self respect. But I, too, feel that the future is fraught with

great danger, and it is to a discussion of some of these perils that I would turn your attention ~~here~~ now.

Each of our achievements points to hope. It points also to danger. Think of our machines, our automated factories, our ability to produce an avalanche, ~~torrent~~ of goods, that can go into every home and surround every individual in our society with all manner of pleasure and of beauty. Think of these machines. Think of the factories which are being automated. Think of the men who have been freed from hours of routine, uninspired labor. But think also of the hundreds who have no more machines at which to labor. Think of the ^{THOUSANDS} ~~hundreds~~ whose jobs have been ^{MADE ABSOLUTE} ~~displaced~~, taken away, by machines created by other men. Think of the file clerks who ~~have been~~ displaced by small memory tubes which ~~can do the jobs of a~~ hundred men. Think of the accountants who ~~have been~~ displaced by fast computers which ~~can, with less error and greater speed, do the jobs of hundreds upon~~ hundreds. Think of the office secretary-typist, soon to be out-dated, ~~rendered extinct~~, by type-scribers of electronic capacity. Think of the problem of social reorganization, of technological unemployment, with which our automated machines face modern man. ^{Now} Economists tell us that technological unemployment is generally only a temporary social phenomenon, that every new machine creates new jobs. It must be manufactured. It must be serviced. It must be watched. But I am concerned with this period of interregnum, the in-between period. I am concerned because I know that however temporary a large pool of unemployed may be, it is in their bitterness, it is in their resentment, that Fascism is bred, and it is to such people that the demagogues and rabble rousers of every age have always appealed and from ^{whom} ~~which~~ they have always drawn their support. I am concerned, ^{THAT} ~~for~~ despite the ^{CERTAINTY OF MASSIVE} ~~knowledge that we will have such reservoirs~~ of unemployed, ^{MENT} we seem not ^{INDIFFERENT} ~~to be~~ developing ^{SUCH} ~~any~~ institutions of financial support, of job re-education, of vocational guidance ^{AS} ~~which~~ will foreshorten ^{THE INTERREGNUM} ~~this~~ period and ~~which will~~ make it possible for those who are no longer employed to be employable once again. I am

concerned because our society seems to be saying, "We will automate now and we will ^{work} think of the results of automation later, profits now, people later", and that is a philosophy of folly. If we are concerned with human values and with social values, then ~~certainly we cannot be unconcerned with those who will have no living.~~ We cannot be unconcerned with the happiness of those who will lack the ~~Technical~~ skills, or be unconcerned with the fate of our free society faced with the tensions of angry men led and misled by political adventurers.

Our new electronic media of communication presents us with our second test. A hundred years ago there were ^{fewer} ~~less~~ books in our whole world than there are in our Main Public Library here in Cleveland today. Forty years ago it required days and sometimes weeks for news to pass from one part of our world to another. Fourteen years ago it was still impossible to pass across the air anything except the spoken word. Today we can bring sight and sound into our homes, and soon all the senses will be excited by the images which will be brought to our television and other electronic sets. Now radio and T.V. have made it possible for us to be more thoroughly aware of all the political ramifications of life in our day. They have at times brought into our homes the best of the culture of our day, and have given us relief and entertainment. But I am concerned that these electronic media of mass communication are equally adept at bringing propaganda and government-directed publicity. The big truth and the big lie are passed across the empty air-space with equal ease. ^{mechanical} ~~I am concerned that as we watch and are entertained we develop critical faculties to make us aware of the dangers of slanted material and government manipulation and control of these mass-media.~~ Goebbels taught the world how this can be done. Radio Moscow and Radio Cairo and Radio Free Europe are agents under governmental direction. In a dictatorship these government radios are not turned only against one's potential enemies or towards people without one's border, but they are turned inward upon one's own citizenry, and they can brain-wash that citizenry into agreement with the policy of the government then in power.

Never before have governments had similarly useful media with which to convince the citizenry to their particular views and outlook. Never before has as large a power over our minds been in the hands of those ^{REN} who control and distribute the news and ^{FAST (00)} the opinion and the entertainment which passes across the air space. No one would wish these marvels of electronic communication undiscovered -- yet equally no one can deny that they present a rare and but lightly disguised threat to our basic liberties and freedom. Truth can be withheld, passions incited, unorthodox opinions ridiculed and slighted -- the free and real dissemination of opinion and fact will remain a basic social challenge.

And I am concerned also by a second threat which our electronic mass communications systems present to us, a threat perhaps even more dangerous than the first. We can turn off the radio or the television when we suspect them of propaganda. But this propaganda passes into our minds unawares. It passes to us at the level of the unconscious. Scientists can throw onto a television or movie screen today images of such micro-instantaneous speeds that our eyes do not see it, but our minds understand it. They can convince us of certain needs and motivate us to certain actions in a way against which there is no defense. The techniques of subliminous suggestion abused and misused by tyrants and by dictators would permit them to blanket the world with agreement, to develop a form of propaganda more subtle and more devilish and more fiendish and more dangerous than any yet to be devised. To be entertained now and to worry about safeguarding the dissemination of information later -- this, too, is for our age the path of folly.

The third of the problems which I should like to present to you today comes to us from a perhaps unexpected field. It comes to us because of the great strides and advances which have been made in the art of healing. Now again, none of us would undo these discoveries, they have brought too much of renewed health, too much of unexpected happiness to the human world, but all of us must be aware that where there were one billion people on the face of the globe in 1900, there are

two billion, six hundred million people on the face of our globe today and there will be ten billion people on the face of our globe in ²⁰⁵⁹~~2025~~. All of us must be aware that there are nations in Asia today which are starving because of over-population. All of us must be aware that in these nations understanding citizens are beginning to talk of government-enforced birth control, government-enforced control of the powers of reproduction, of human reproduction, otherwise, they fear, these societies will be condemned to sub-marginal existence, to misery, and to internal ruin. ^{SEEK} For governments today, ^{SEEK} because of the pressures of population, the powers of birth control ^{but to place in the hands of government} ^{is to give government control} ^{to delete segment of population} is to place in the hands of government one of the most essential freedoms known to man. It was the power over the birth of a minority which Pharoah in ancient Egypt coveted. If abused and misused, it is the power to destroy minority groups, unwanted groups. Birth control is vital and urgent but it must be developed under rigid legal safeguards. ¹¹ The problem which our world faces is not one only of overpopulation. It is one which perhaps can best be illustrated by a single statistic -- 70% of the food production of our world is grown in countries which represent 16% of our world's population. The problem which faces our world is one of unequal distribution of the earth's abundance. The problem which faces our nations of plenty is the development of a sensitivity to the needs of other peoples, the development of a willingness to give of what they have, to share not only their produce but their knowledge with the under-developed nations. For if we do not, not only will these nations be faced with economic ruin, but the people of these nations will turn to demigods who will promise them the world and they will march off to conquer the world, and they will bring our world into ruin. For our world cannot tolerate decade upon decade of misery-bred unrest, and unless Americans learn to spend more of what we ourselves have for the good of all men regardless of their national denomination, of their country's label, we are going to plunge our world into generations-long unrest.

We Americans have spent in the years since the end of the Second World War a great deal of money on point four programs and other programs for the development of these nations, and perhaps it may shock you to know that in no one year have we spent more on such programs of economic rehabilitation than we have in decorating our own tombstones. This is the need -- the need to live with a heart filled with compassion, with a mind willing to sacrifice something of our superabundance that those who are sunk so deep in need may not die of malnutrition, that countries may not die of economic plight, that these countries may not plunge the world into an atomic holocaust seeking to relieve economic and population pressures.

The fourth and last of the challenges which face modern man is the one which needs least to be enlarged upon but is most imminent and most potentially catastrophic. We are presented with a problem because of our new machines and our new mass media and our new medicine. We are equally, and even to a larger extent, presented with a problem because of our new means of power. Now we needed these new means of power. The fossil-fuel on which our earth has moved its machines and developed its economy will in a century or so be exhausted, but fission and fusion can not only turn the wheels of industry and bring light to our cities, but they can lighten the funeral pyres of humanity and burn and lighten the world with the fires of hell. Will there be war? Will there be peace? This is the crucial question facing us. Can we play now, be indifferent to these questions, worry later? There may be no later time. There is little time -- precious little time -- for our world to find again its sanity, for our world to recognize that you cannot build peace simply by building greater and more ferocious implements of war, that you cannot build peace even by simply testing these implements of war, for the test itself brings disease into our world and possibly death to generations yet unborn. How will we find this peace? This no one knows. But this certainly is true -- that unless all the citizens of our world know that they must spend more time with problems of foreign relations of peace than they do with building their

own vocations and their own professions -- for what use is a profession in a world atomized, of what use are the nest eggs we have built for our children in a world in which our children will not be able to breathe or to live? This is our challenge, the crucial challenge which faces us -- to build now, intelligently, competently, courageously, humbly, the institutions of world organization, the programs of world cooperation which in themselves are the seed of a world of peace.

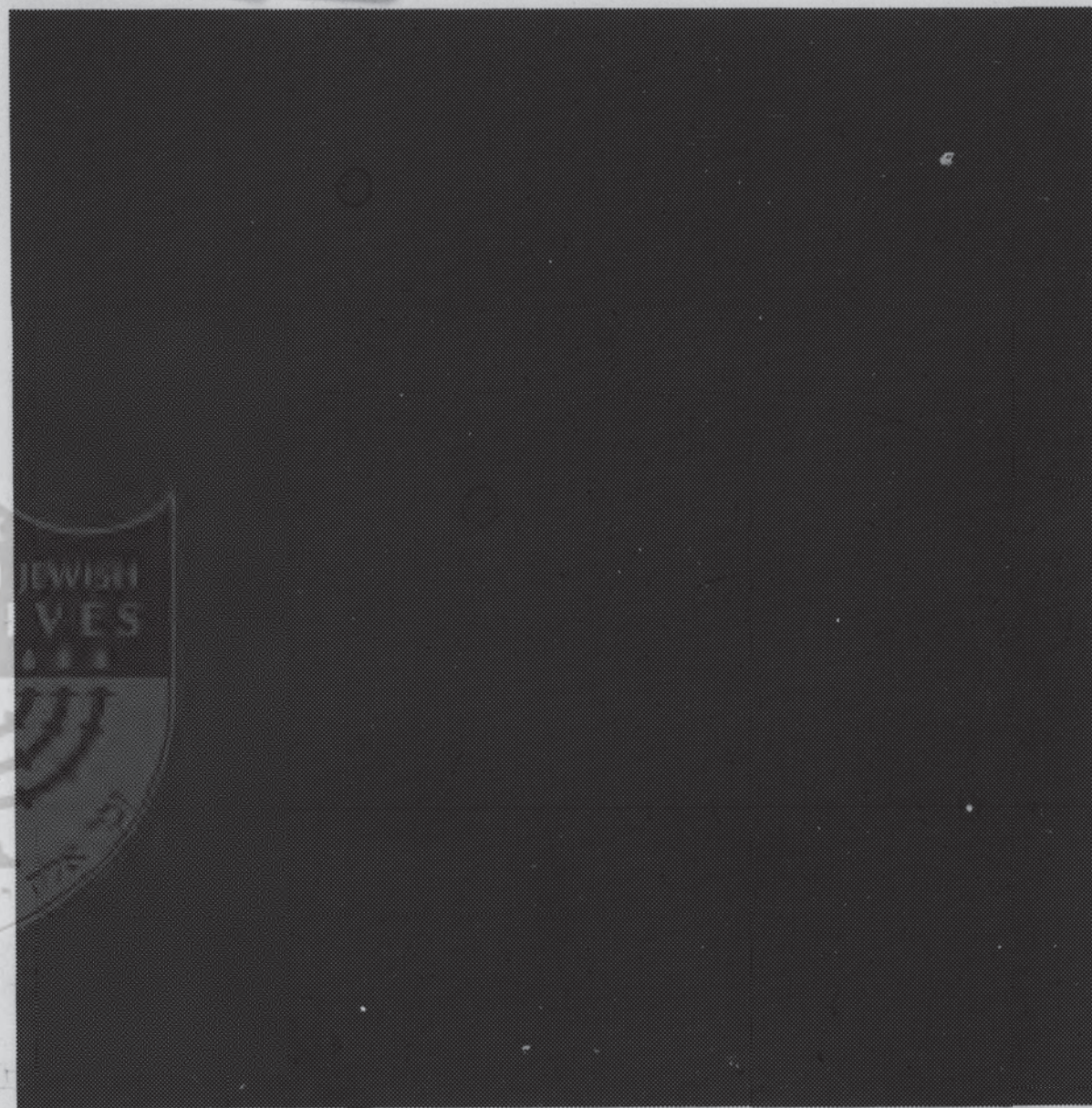
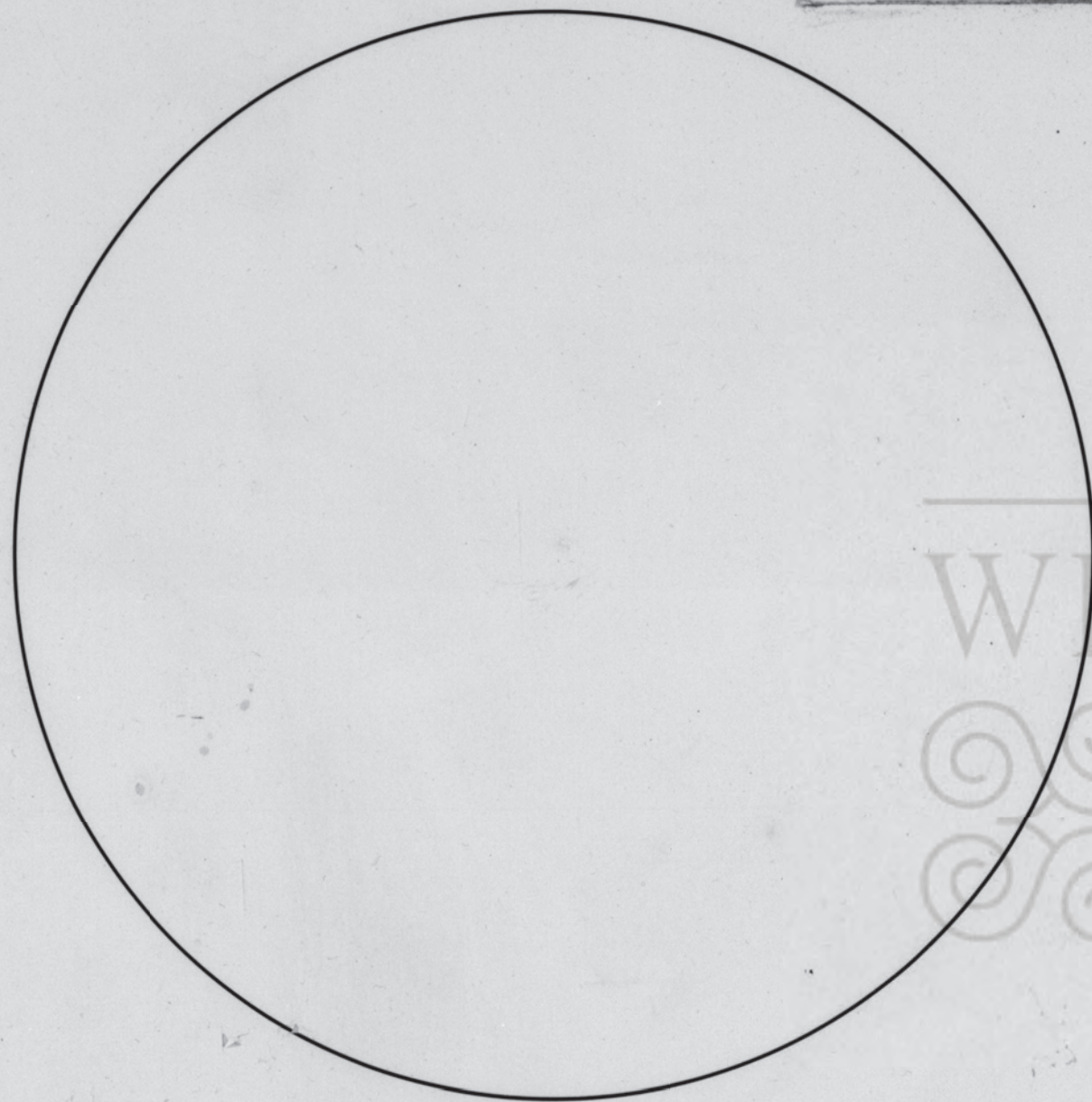
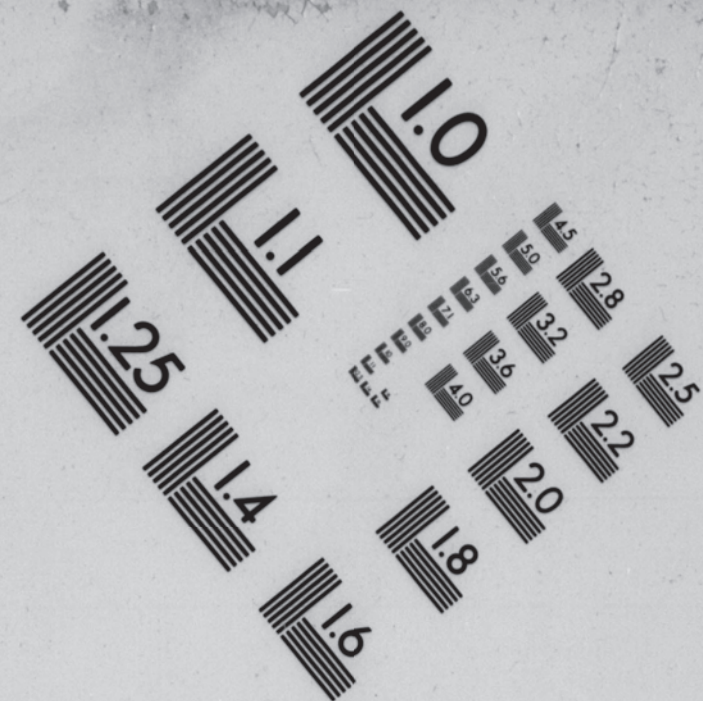
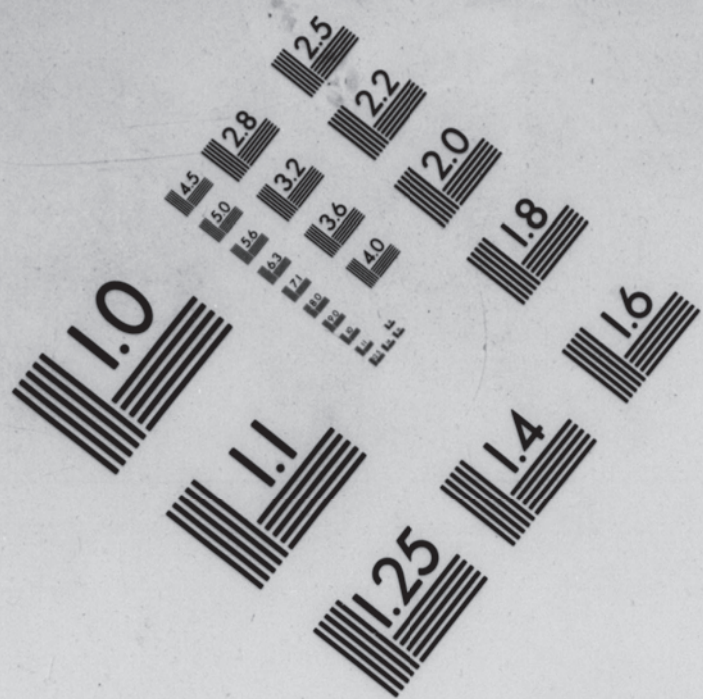
The ancients described the dangerous passage through the Strait of Messina, which lies between Sicily and Italy, in these ways. They knew that many of the ships which pass through these perilous waters broke up on its reefs, and so they said that on the Italian shore there rose a great sucking whirlpool which drew into its maw any ship which drew too near, and on the Sicilian shore there were dangerous rocky reefs and sitting on these reefs were a hundred lovely, beautiful sirens who sang out to the mariners and enticed them to draw close to the shore, knowing that their ship could break up on the rocks. Now we must also pass the ship of our civilization through a narrow strait. To our left are the unpredictable ^{passions} ~~whirls~~ and whims of tyrants and demagogues and dictators. Over these we have really no control. About these we can only pray that they will be less than we ^{AND CAPABLE OF CONTAINMENT} ~~fear and less dangerous to man~~. To the right -- to the right there are a thousand sirens singing to us a song of which we must beware, a song which if we abide and ^{seductive} listen to will bring us to our destruction. Their song is one of indifference. Their song is one, not to worry. Their song says to us, "Live now, think later. Build your machines now, worry about economic dislocation when you are faced with the fact. Entertain yourselves now through your television, worry about the controls of its freedoms later. Enjoy the long life promised you by your medicine, the health which it has given you now, worry about the dangers of overpopulation and malnutrition later. Live your life of peace and of plenty now, worry later about the dangers of war, when that danger is really there." Well, the danger is there, and the time is now, and the opportunity may not come again. If we want a world

for our children we have in our hands two choices, choices which the Bible presented to us in clear language -- "See, I have set before you this day life and death, the blessing and the curse -- choose life that ye may live." No generation has been faced more dramatically with this choice. There is death in our hands -- death for human civilization if we choose the wrong road, if we are indifferent, if we are morally insensitive, if we lack moral courage. But there is also the road of life, a fuller, finer, more prosperous, more plentiful, healthier life than men have ever known, for us and for our children, if we prove not unworthy, incapable, morally adolescent as we face the crises of today.

**CONTINUED ON
NEXT ROLL**



THE WESTERN RESERVE
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10825 East Boulevard
Cleveland, Ohio 44106



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