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THE NATIONAL IDEA

ANY idea which was once an animating and inspiring force in history, but has become little more than a source of political slogans, needs to be brought out into the emotional open and studied without prejudice. Two kinds of leaders of men have used nationalist slogans during the recent centuries of western history—the builders and the exploiters. The builders saw some kind of human greatness in the national idea, but the exploiters used only the craft of leadership, without realizing or caring about the fact that they were debasing the verbal currency of idealism and wasting the resources that the builders had accumulated as capital for the future of civilization.

An exploiter, in politics and statecraft, is a man who talks about freedom and honor and national achievement—and more recently, "security"—not because he understands the social processes by which these ideals are realized, but because he has observed that people respond to such talk. He makes the work of honest leaders very difficult, for he perverts the vocabulary of political philosophy to ends of personal power and national egotism, until, finally, a revolutionary movement grows up to oppose the hypocrisy of the exploiters' leadership, appealing to the people with an entirely different set of slogans and purported or actual ideals. If the revolutionary movement has no greater understanding of the basis of human aspiration than the exploiters, then the humane motives with which it began are soon forgotten and it, too, adopts the exploiting techniques, applying them at a cruder and more brutal level of human nature. Proportionately to their desperation, and to the measure of their previous betrayals by other leadership, the people react to this new appeal, with results which are morally devastating to the human race.

This general analysis is not difficult to apply to the world situation of the present. It may be described as one of basic moral bewilderment in both national and international affairs, with the vocabulary of moral appeal to the masses rapidly sliding down the incline of propagandistic argument to the dead level of fear, mutual suspicion and unreasoning hate. At the end of the slide awaits the subhuman order of barbarism, which is warned against and opposed by the slogans of all the dominant powers, but which their policies are uniformly working to produce.

The present is also a period of somewhat frantic search for a solution by men of good will. All sorts of plans and programs are proposed; there are countless fractions and cells which offer various panaceas, some political, some religious, and some combining elements of religious, political and economic philosophy. The unpleasant fact, however, which no one of these groups seems willing to face, is that no cultural and moral foundation exists on which to build a better society; or if it exists, the plane and substance of its reality remains obscure. What, then, must be done?

One thing needed is a thorough reconsideration of the national idea. If there is any good in the national idea,—and it seems that there ought to be,—to discard it entirely before that good has been realized may bring on a form of political reaction that is far worse in its total effects than even the abuses of nationalism. The two great revolutions of the eighteenth century, the American and the French, were both expressions of nationalism in association with the surge toward human freedom. The idea of the *nation* served as a means for realizing in a larger degree the ideal of freedom and self-determination, and the national idea still serves in this way, today. The struggle of colonial peoples in the East to emancipate themselves from the control of Western imperialism has taken the form of militant nationalism, tempered, more or less, by the progressive political thought of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Chinese revolution of Sun Yatsen, the Indian revolution of Gandhi and Nehru, the Indonesian revolution of Soekarno and Shjarir,

and others still in process, were and are nationalist movements. They were inspired by more than nationalism, it is true, but it seems evident that the nation represents a concept of unity which a people can understand and work toward, at a certain stage of social development. If this is so, then the important question is: Can the national idea be sought and realized by a people without growing into a stage of unyielding moral opposition to the larger ideal of a world community?

Several of the successful revolutionary movements of the past have dissolved into relative failure because no real attempt was made to answer this question. The idealism of the French revolution was swallowed up by the nationalism and imperialism of the two Napoleons, who rode to "power and glory" on the momentum of the eighteenth-century revolt. The internationalism of the working class socialist movement—which had inherited the ideals of the eighteenth century—broke down completely when tested by the advent of the first World War. The French socialists—even the pacifist Jaurès—were finally persuaded that the French Republic was still the bulwark of revolutionary idealism against the advance of German barbarism, and they entered into the conflict with full patriotic enthusiasm.

Historically, it appears that the failure of internationalism engenders by reversion a more furious nationalism. This, at least, was its effect on Germany during the period of the pseudo-internationalism of the League of Nations. And Russia, while laying rhetorical claim to the ideal of international socialism, has not distinguished between the classes in its wars against other nations; in fact, to have any sort of socialist leanings was often an almost fatal mistake for persons living in countries which came under Soviet occupation during the second World War. In Poland, for example, labor and socialist organizers were among the first to be sent to concentration camps by the Soviet authorities. Blind loyalty to the Soviet State, which is only a new form of Russian nationalism, seems to be the sole source of personal security under Communist rule, today.

It is natural, therefore, when nationalism appears to be nothing more than a virulent and dangerously infectious disease, that the very idea of nationhood should receive much emotional condemnation. The contrasting idea of world federation does not solve this problem, although it may seem to, at the verbal level. World federalism may advocate the best possible *form* of an international society of peoples, but it assumes an alert and responsible world electorate—something which does not exist. A wide and virtually unbridgeable chasm separates the ordinary individual's sense of personal and political need from the big abstraction of a world legislature, or whatever the responsible agency may be, in the theory of federation, to maintain peace and order. And if the processes of political democracy and self-government are weakening and tending to break down within the smaller area of single nations, it is utopian escapism to suppose they can be made to work on a global scale, simply by some sort of internationalist incantation.

No criticism is here meant of the *ideal* of a world society. The problem is how to get one, and how to avoid failing to get one, for if a considerable number of people give all their energies to working for some program of international organization, and then are betrayed by astute diplomats as well as by their own miscalculating optimism and ignorance of the realities of political reform, the resulting cynicism and loss of faith will blight all future movements for human unity, for centuries, perhaps. It is not schemes of international organization which need our study and enthusiasm and support, but the problem of individual social responsibility. The modern world is lacking in what may be called *cultural morale;* politics, today, has no supporting philosophy of duty, no effective rationale for the public obligation of the private individual, and if we continue without it, there will shortly be no "society" at all.

Communism is a good illustration of a social order with a political philosophy but no moral philosophy. The "first principles" or premises of Communism are political, and the nature of the moral individual is ignored altogether. It is possible

to say this without intending to add to the present hue and cry against Communism, for the reason that the same judgment applies in some measure to *any* society, regardless of political labels, which is organized primarily for war. The War State is the practical negation of the moral individual, just as Dialectical Materialism implies it theoretically and works out in practice to the same negation of the moral individual, moving in this direction more rapidly because unimpeded by the checks of traditional religion and democratic ideology.

This is enough of analysis and criticism. What about the positive values of the national idea? As these values have been largely lost sight of in contemporary political thought, or debased by "practical" justifications of national self-interest, this question requires more than a few easy generalizations as an answer. The idea of the "nation" as the means of human self-realization saturates the writings of the Founders of the American Republic and appears wherever politics has been regarded as one of the practical means to non-material ends. Among contemporaries, it has found expression in the lifework of M. K. Gandhi. During the war, Roy Walker, an Englishman, compiled from Gandhi's writings an excellent pamphlet called *The Wisdom of Gandhi*. We quote from the section, "Through the Nation to the World," a passage on *Swadeshi,* which means the production and use of home manufactures, and the boycott of foreign-made goods—an important plank in Gandhi's campaign for *Hind Swaraj* (Indian Home Rule):

> Swadeshi is the spirit in us which restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote. . . . My patriotism is both exclusive and inclusive. It is exclusive in the sense that in all humility I confine my attention to the land of my birth. But it is inclusive in the sense that my service is not of a competitive or antagonistic nature. It is the way to a proper practice of Ahimsa or love. It is for you, the custodians of a great faith, to set the fashion and show by your preaching, sanctified by practice, that patriotism based on hatred "killeth" and that patriotism based on love "giveth life." . . .
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> For me the road to salvation lies through incessant toil in the service of my country and therethrough of humanity. I want to identify myself with everything that lives. For me patriotism is the same as humanity. I am patriotic because I am humane. It is not exclusive. I will not hurt England or Germany to serve India. Imperialism has no place in my scheme of life. The law of a patriot is not different from the law of a patriarch. And a patriot is so much the less of a patriot if he is a lukewarm humanitarian. So my patriotism is for me a stage in my journey to the land of eternal freedom and peace.

This is patriotism, and involves the national idea, but it is not "nationalistic." What is the difference? For Gandhi, to be an Indian meant to have an opportunity to give to India, not to "get" from her. What did Gandhi give to India? For one thing, a sense of *moral security;* for another, a renewed and living sense of the dignity of man.

It seems of great significance that while Gandhi struggled all his life for Indian freedom, he said remarkably little about the "rights" of men. He spoke of freedom to the world and he spoke of responsibility to the Indian people. Freedom, apparently, for him, belonged to another order of moral reality than the "rights" of which we hear so much in the West. Without freedom, men can have neither rights nor responsibilities, and if, as we believe Gandhi thought, rights develop only as responsibilities are fulfilled, then there was constructive logic in his emphasis. Freedom was the first necessity, which meant the withdrawal of British authority. If this was followed by individual and collective responsibility, he had faith that the rights would come of themselves. In any event, he must have been sure that they would not come at all without the assumption of broad responsibilities by the Indian people, and he began, early in life, to set an example of private and public responsibility to his countrymen.

This sort of personal behavior on behalf of a national ideal is a very rare thing, today. In Gandhi's case, of course, it grew from his religious philosophy, which was a non-sectarian Hinduism, based on the *Bhagavad-Gita,* but hospitable to ideas drawn from the New Testament and from the thinking of such Westerners as Henry David Thoreau and Leo Tolstoy. The important element in Gandhi's religion, for this discussion, is the concept of the life of both the individual man and the nation as means to

the enrichment of the life of humanity. For Gandhi, to be humanitarian was more than an admirable sentiment—it was a law of nature. This was his philosophy of the purpose of human life, and to spread it, he started working, not in constitutional conventions—although, in time, public assemblages heard his voice—but in the villages of India, with the Indian masses. And those who wanted to see Gandhi, to be near him and to learn from him, had to go to him among the villagers and do the same work that he was doing.

This is the rebuilding of civilization from the ground up—the only way to build anything that is intended to stand. The problem was to restore the Indian villager's sense of personal integrity, to help him to feel that he counted for something, was worth something, to others and to himself. He had to be helped out of his unimaginable poverty to a bare minimum of economic self-dependence, and to find work to take the place of his character-rotting idleness during several months of the year. The spinning wheel, now the symbol on the national flag of India, was Gandhi's answer to this problem.

We are dealing, here, with psychological and moral values rather than with practical comparisons. In other parts of the world there is the same sense of personal incompetence and personal worthlessness as afflicted the Indian villager—and doubtless still does, for India's reconstruction is but barely begun. In the United States, while psychological misery is masked by a relative material prosperity and by an inherited sense of national capacity, the symptoms of self-distrust are plain to see in the statistics of alcoholism and the mounting incidence of mental and degenerative disease. An even more significant sign of psychological decline is the vulnerability of the United States to hysterical fears of war, and the vengeful, witch-hunting mood of large numbers of the population. The Americans are behaving like people who are hag-ridden by guilty consciences, dimly aware of the loss of their virtue. Duty, for them, is an unfamiliar and alien idea. Even the word has an unpleasant sound, and while this may have a historical explanation, connected with America's theological past, duty nevertheless represents one of the missing links in the chain which connects morals with politics, or personal life with public responsibility.

In the last analysis, then, there are two major considerations in connection with the national idea. First, there is the question of the nation as the natural unit for the realization of distinctive cultural values, including the spirit of cooperation and the ideal of service which will pave the way to a voluntary world community. Recent discussions of the national idea have tended to overlook almost entirely the quality of love of homeland exemplified by Gandhi, and to ignore, therefore, the extraordinary potentialities for world peace and brotherhood inherent in this sort of patriotism.

Finally, there is the question of the roots of political idealism in philosophy and the idea of a natural moral order. A deep sense of moral interdependence seems to be the essential foundation for responsible citizenship, whether of the nation or of the world. And there is need, also, for a transcendental ideal of human purpose, to arouse that commitment to the general good, among the common people, without which the bonds of social unity will wear away and break. We need, in short, to restore the ideal of a worthy individual life, and to discover those inner moral compulsions which give to human worthiness the highest importance.

Letter from ENGLAND

LONDON. —Everyone is likely to agree that the next half-century will be a time of the gravest political and economic danger—outcome of past and present moral and intellectual disorder. An economic breakdown due to war and the struggle for power is not peculiar to the present age, nor is the crisis in population and world resources the first of its kind in human history. The world has seen many such crises, if not so universally known as is the existing peril. The shortage of food in Europe, for example, so dominant a feature of national thought since 1939, has been indigenous, in a more extreme form, throughout Asia for more than a century. It is always a striking perversity of the Western mind to assume that its own problems alone possess significance. This is not realism, but merely the intellectual and emotional fruit of an inveterate sense of superiority, due largely to a religion of industrial productivity.

These ideas come into the mind on hearing Mr. Aldous Huxley talking (in a broadcast here) about his new book, *Ape and Essence.* The position occupied by Mr. Aldous and Dr. Julian Huxley in English thought is rather unique. Charles Darwin may have enunciated the theory of evolution in its modern acceptation, but it was Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895) who popularized it, and the name Huxley, in this connection, has almost become synonymous with the theory. His grandsons—one as novelist and essayist, the other as scientist—have shared in the reflected glory of their eminent grandfather. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that their influence upon contemporary thought is anything like that enjoyed by Thomas Henry Huxley. Apart from the question of stature, there is today the widespread suspicion of the "intellectual," who is held to be, in some obscure way, a traitor to the collective unconscious of the race. Needless to say, Aldous Huxley's excursions into the realm of the Vedanta and "perennial philosophy" have not gone unnoticed in England, where it is felt by some that these matters of high import seem to have no relevance to the theme of his novels or his sociological outlook.

When Aldous Huxley, anticipating a future world more or less completely devastated, speaks of a large proportion of the children born with hereditary defects owing to the change in the germ-plasm induced by gamma radiation, we all listen respectfully. Not so many, however, subscribe wholeheartedly to his view that "the most hopeful way out of the present impasse is somehow to shift the attention from these perfectly insoluble problems of power and ideology" to "the cosmic problems of food and the relationship of man to his environment" *(The Listener,* Nov. 4, 1948). He quotes with approval Prof. Einstein's question to some Russian scientists who argued on Marxian lines against world government: . . . "are these problems of bourgeois imperialism really relevant to the basic point at issue?" We may in our turn ask Mr. Aldous Huxley, and those who think with him, whether an interpretation of the world crisis in political, economic, demographic, and ecological terms, is also adequate to deal with the fundamental *malaise?* If the problems of power and ideology are "perfectly insoluble," why ask us to tinker with harmful physical conditions, which are the expression of wrong ideas?

Even on the single question of food resources, it would be truer to say that Mr. H. J. Massingham. (who knows English country life and the problems of agriculture better than most) is much nearer the truth, and closer to the real English genius in this matter. He is always pointing out that the replacement of men and animals by machines is an effect, not a cause, of the impoverishment of the world's natural resources. In his view, "modern" agriculture is an industrial technique for compelling the earth to serve the ends of a highly artificial society accustomed to convert what it supposes to be inert materials and forces into power and manufactures. In other words, selfish exploitation both of Man and Nature is the root-evil in this as in so many directions. And if this be not a spiritual problem, what is it? We have tried (as John Ruskin characterized the political economy of his day) to form an ossifiant theory of progress on the negation of the soul.

ENGLISH CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
RETRIBUTION

SEEING Carl Dreyer's *Day of Wrath* is like stepping into the world of Inquisition-ridden Denmark, centuries ago. *Day of Wrath,* like the French film, *Symphonie Pastorale,* reaches the American public verbally only through subtitles, yet there is no feeling of being "outside" of the events depicted, nor of needing an interpreter to convey the essential action. Both these films are windows into the life of common folk—one might be tempted to call them "simple people," except for the fact that their insights are compounded of such depth and subtlety that we must perforce stop and wonder at the complexity of the most humble human being.

What will explain the unmistakable integrity of European films? Perhaps it is that they are not afraid of "tragedy," nor under a compulsion to end a story "happily ever after." European writers and movie-makers—some of them, anyway—seem to believe that men are at their best, and have the greatest dignity, when they are face to face with suffering. No Hollywood Western or crime-buster with several ambushes or gun-fights for every ten feet of film can approximate the thrill of seeing the human spirit testing itself against the measure of its weakness. If this sort of drama possesses little interest for us, the fault is not the dramatist's, but our own: we have become insensitive to the actual processes of human growth.

Carl Dreyer's production portrays the tragic climax in the life of a Danish minister—when the fruit of years of dedication is turned to ashes by a single act of selfish blindness. The plot is simply conceived and executed, and the sustaining mood grows from the words, *Dies Irae—"Day* of Wrath"—taken from the first line of a soul-shrivelling hymn of the Middle Ages. This terrible dirge faithfully sets forth the situation of unrepentant sinners at the Day of Judgment—a situation which the Inquisition was graciously conceived to remedy.

Besides the supposed wrath of God, other quite human emotions play a part in the film—the wrath of the mother when her aging rector-son takes unto himself a young girl for his second wife, bringing her to live in the same house with his already-grown son by the previous marriage. The mother's unbending resentment toward the girl arises from this flaunting of the traditional and the natural, but if she had not been blinded by her fanatical love for the rector, she would in justice have blamed him for the situation, rather than the girl.

The girl, too, grows wrathful. She meets the rector's son, is attracted to him, and realizes that the rector has taken her youth. She overhears him listening to the "confession" of an old woman denounced as a witch, and learns that her own mother had actually been a witch, but had been absolved and saved by the rector's interference—in order that he might marry her daughter. The old woman, Marthe, who is an innocent victim of the witch-hunting craze, pleads with him to save her, also, but the rector, neither admitting nor denying her charges, makes only suave promises that he will strive to gain "life Eternal" for her, and salvation from her sins. This priestly evasion earns him the wrath of both Marthe and his girl-wife, Anne, who henceforth can find little to nourish the respect for him which had previously warmed their relationship.

From the Day of Wrath—piously considered to be God's wrath, but only too clearly of human origin—when Marthe is burned to death, the picture climbs to a crescendo of tragedy in which not only the rector, haunted by his consciousness of sin, suffers and falls, but his wife, too, is dragged with him to the inevitable tragic resolution. That one knows from the start that the result of his error must be further and still more fatal error, is a tribute to the art and the integrity of the drama. The picture takes the medieval concept of Divine Retribution—wrathful or otherwise—out of its bloody frame, and substitutes the truer, if more strenuous, image of man's responsibility for his own acts in a universe which unfailingly returns the equal effect for every cause. *Day of Wrath* follows a pattern whose justice we intuitively recognize, and one which the film's director, Carl Dreyer, has judged adequate and self-sustaining.

COMMENTARY
THE RENUNCIANTS

THE internment for the duration of the war of some 75,000 American citizens of Japanese descent (Nisei), and their Japan-born (Issei) parents and relatives, bringing the total to more than 100,000, was a mass persecution, both infamous and illegal, of which many other Americans were greatly ashamed, and which the Supreme Court of the United States finally condemned as an unconstitutional detention. The country is acquainted with this arbitrary act of dispossession and confinement in the name of "security," although it is less well known that numerous West Coast businessmen and property owners used the evacuation as an excuse for acquiring the properties of the evacuees at enormous discounts, or, as in some instances, appropriating them outright.

But there is another story of contemptible behavior in connection with the mistreatment of Japanese Americans which is not generally known at all—the story of the Renunciants.

In 1944, while the Korematsu and Endo test cases were progressing through the Federal Courts—finally to reach the Supreme Court, where the latter case evoked the decision which declared the detention illegal—the Government began to release the evacuees in small numbers from detention and to relocate them in Eastern and Middle Western states. Many, however, were arbitrarily denied leave and were given no opportunity to clear themselves of suspicion. These persons were sent, along with aliens of Japanese birth who had requested repatriation to Japan, to the Tule Lake (California) Center for confinement. Originally, the Government intended to maintain segregation between the aliens wanting repatriation and the internees, not yet "cleared," who wished to remain in the United States. Segregation, however, was not carried out and the authorities permitted the two groups to mingle freely, making it easy for the prospective repatriates to proselytize for recruits among the others. The group wanting repatriation developed gangs which ranged around the Center, spreading propaganda for repatriation and using threats and even force to compel others to join them.

Meanwhile, the Department of Justice had secured passage of the Renunciation statute, under which a citizen could renounce citizenship, undergo internment as an enemy alien, and then be deported to Japan. Sixty-one Japanese-Americans availed themselves of this procedure and were ultimately removed to Japan. Some 5,371 more Nisei applied under the Renunciation statute. The adults among them (there were hundreds under 21) had lost their homes, property, occupations, earnings and security—and, most of all, the sense of "belonging" to the American community. Relocation was feared as the prospect of being thrust into an angrily hostile atmosphere. The Government did nothing to restore the faith of these people in the United States, but, on the contrary, assisted in their discouragement by allowing alien-led gangs to dominate the camps. It is not remarkable that, subjected to such pressures, these five thousand people agreed to renounce their citizenship. They were told by the aliens that they would be deported, anyhow.

The applications of the majority were approved by the Department of Justice, which ignored the duress under which the renunciants had made their decision. Tormented and terrorized by alien agitators, isolated and persecuted by the American Government, they wanted some kind of "home," and they chose Japan.

Then, in the summer of 1945, a group of renunciants approached Wayne Collins of the Northern California Civil Liberties Union—which had opposed the whole idea of the evacuation from the beginning, even though the national office of the American Civil Liberties Union had advocated "cooperation" with General DeWitt's program—and asked for legal protection against being sent to Japan. An action was instituted on

behalf of a thousand persons, to cancel their renunciations and to restore their citizenship, on the ground that the renunciations were the product of governmental duress. They also sought liberation from internment. The thousand were later joined by many others.

The story of this action is a long one, involving many delays, but it may finally result in a complete victory for all the renunciants who asked that their citizenship be returned to them—more than 5,000 in all. Last month, on March 21, Federal judge Louis I. Goodman disqualified the claims of the Government that some of the renunciants had freely chosen to be repatriated—children, for example, were cited by the Department of Justice as renunciants of this sort—and allowed the Government five days in which to dispute the findings of fact of the renunciants' attorney. As no reply was forthcoming from the Department of Justice, it follows that the citizenship of all these renunciants will be ordered restored.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

A CORRESPONDENT again takes up the question of "love," offering the suggestion—with which we naturally agree—that the element of consistency is of great importance, although it probably should be observed that constancy in itself may not fulfill all the requirements of love. The subtleties of love, or even of affection, of course, will hardly be penetrated by a series of contrasting definitions, but this correspondent calls attention to sidelights which seem worth notice. He writes:

> "I believe that confusion about love, especially parental love for a child, has been brought about by the materialistic psychology of Communism, which does not grant the possibility of idealism in love."

The same subscriber objects to "moral approval" as a *sine qua non* of love:

> "I think I disagree with the editor who says there can be no real love without moral approval. Sometimes there is great interest and affection between adults without moral approval. After all, if one bases love on universal fairness, how can he be such a bigot as to think his morals are the only right ones?"

It is always an excellent test for the educated man, or for the man who wishes to be an educator, to see if he cannot halt all trends toward blanket judgments, whether approvals or condemnations. Few "Americans" at the present time have anything good to say about any phase of the Communist idea. Yet if we are to uphold the search for truth in the face of all prejudices, we must examine such a hate-object as Russian Communism a little more carefully. It is incorrect, for instance, to say that *the* confusion about love has been brought about by the materialistic psychology of Communism, but right, we think, to say that confusion about love is always caused by materialistic psychology. There is much of "materialistic psychology" in conventional religion, and much in the development of laissez-faire capitalism. We might remember that Karl Marx's Communist Manifesto was born as a reaction against capitalistic exploitation of Labor, and that it became popular because an economic class-society is a fact in the modern world. The Marxist program was a materialistic program designed to cure the diseases of society by a materialistic psychology, which is why we cannot, as idealists, recommend Communism. But it is the materialism and not the Communism which we object to, just as it is the materialism of authoritarian religion, and not religion itself, which we feel may be legitimately opposed.

What is the Communist record on "love"? There are doubtless a number of pronouncements but we recall in particular the assertion that personal love should not be considered the be-all and end-all of life, that the needs of society are of greater importance than the needs of the single man, or woman. Further, it is said that men and women will live much more intelligent lives if their relationships are conducted with the feeling that both are working for some less personal cause than the acquisition of wealth for themselves and their children. So far, so good. Much of the Christian world was, of course, shocked by the story that Russian men and women could obtain divorces simply by mailing in a postcard to the Russian Government, announcing the termination of their partnership. How bad is this? We do not know, nor has it been a consistent policy in Russia. But there may be merit in the idea that marriages, and not divorces, should be hard to get. To believe that we can compel human beings to feel responsible to each other is a fallacy—and it is also a form of authoritarian materialism. Men have never been able to create responsibility by threat nor by external controls. Divorces, for example, are hard to obtain in many parts of the United States. We can understand the concern of the State in relation to children; but the State's concern with what individuals seek to do with their own lives must be held suspect, on the ground that institutional interference with free personal decision is a carry-over from long-gone

days in which the State and the Church were united.

As to moral approval in relation to love: one who feels that moral approval must be a part of his "love" need not be bigoted, nor think that his morals are the only right ones. Unless a man does feel "moral approval," it may be positively harmful for him to suppose that a condition of complete love or devotion exists. But determining whether he, himself, or the other person, is morally at fault when a break in rapport occurs is less important than the honest attempt to define existing feelings and to discuss possible reasons for their existence. It is true, as our subscriber points out, that there can be a great deal of "interest and affection" without moral approval. But this kind of interest and affection is not usually the variety that is either good for ourselves or for those upon whom we bestow it.

Walt Whitman's conception of love is described in his poem, "The Open Road." For Whitman, love was the by-product of traveling "the open road" with another. First, there must be a feeling that both persons are, at least temporarily, on the same road. Then, it must be recognized by both that the important thing is the journeying into greater depths of soul-experience, not the continuation of a personal relationship in one specified form. There are, Whitman might say, "different roads" for all human beings, and there are times in all human relationships when one or the other person will change direction either drastically or slightly. To say that such changes in direction have no bearing upon love is obviously absurd, since any workable definition of love must emphasize the enjoyments of sharing.

Whitman had a clear perception of continuity, which may be regarded as an important aspect of morality. But he did not feel that continuity could be guaranteed in a love relationship by men and women stating exactly how much time they were going to spend together. Whitman was convinced that a feeling of freedom for both is essential for love, including, for each, the right to "journey alone" for a time. But such journeying alone need not eliminate the hope that those who are temporarily separated, either morally or physically, may later come together again with a greater sense of mutual purpose and a greater wealth of ideas to be shared.

It seems to us that Whitman's philosophy is an excellent antidote to any form of "materialistic psychology." It embodies whatever of truth there may be in some Communistic assertions as to the falsity of many of our social standards, but at the same time places the emphasis upon the soul and not upon the body of man. It might be worthwhile to try a few sections of Whitman's "Open Road" on your child, and see what sort of a feeling-response is generated. There is often something about children which enables them to appreciate profoundly any man who cuts beyond conventional means of viewing human possibilities, and who defines happiness in adventurous terms.

FRONTIERS
The Scientific Method

ANYONE who seriously undertakes the study of what is implied by the term, "scientific method," and who tries to practice that method, even if only a little bit, is bound to experience a growing respect for the scientific approach to the field of human experience. The scientific method, as we understand it, is made up of one great principle and a number of rules for its application. The principle, which is that of *impartiality in the search for truth,* never changes, but the rules will vary with the field or subject matter under investigation.

Impartiality seems to involve two qualities of mind: first, the quality of ethical integrity, the possession of which provides the *will* to be impartial; second, the habit and discipline of accuracy in observation—and this second quality, of course, only contributes to the wholeness or effectiveness of the first. A man must know how to be impartial, as well as want to be, in order to practice the scientific method with good result.

To argue that human beings are born under the limitations of time and place and that they cannot, therefore, be wholly "impartial" is to beg the question. The scientific method is a method of overcoming the "particularism" of individual observers. A man's senses may be "partisan" witnesses, but his mind has the quality of universality, by means of which he reaches to the formulation of general laws which comprehend and give orderly relation to particular and isolated happenings. To believe in the scientific method, therefore, is to believe in the *possibility* of impartial observation and impartial explanation in terms of cause and effect, and to believe that this possibility is sometimes realized.

What, then, about the "rules" for applying scientific method to particular problems? This, apart from purely technical considerations, seems to be largely a philosophical question—at least, it is a philosophical question whenever a moral or philosophical judgment is expected to result as part of the conclusion of the research.

Take for example an investigation into the relative power of biological and cultural influences on human behavior, carried on some years ago by Dr. Gordon Willard Allport of Harvard University. Dr. Allport asked 310 Harvard and Radcliffe students to arrange eight possible reasons for homicide, in order, from what seemed to them the most, to the least, justifiable motive. The answers led to this tabulation:

Defense of Self
Defense of Family
Defense of Another
Defense of Country
Defense of Honor of Family
Defense of Honor of Self
Defense of Property against Burglars
Defense of Property against Trespassers

The following interpretation of these "data" is made by Dr. Allport:

> To express the matter in the language of William James, the Self is first and foremost a physical self. . . . The more primitive the situation in the biological sense, the more intense and less variable the attitude. . . . The *origin* of attitudes, in a functional sense, then, is always biological. The model on which they are fashioned, is often, though not always, cultural.

It seems to us that this sort of approach to the problem of the self and of human motivation is not only futile, but actually mischievous. The results of this questionnaire have no more significance—possibly less—than would a similar series of answers, obtained, say, from 310 followers of Gandhi, to questions relating to the order of justifiable reasons for self-sacrifice. The Gandhians, however, would probably regard such a questionnaire as a ridiculously crude method of pursuing the subtleties of moral choice and refuse to answer at all.

Although Dr. Allport does not say so, his conclusion implies a purely mechanistic theory of human behavior—there are the reflexes of instinct and the reflexes of culture, and nothing more.

This is not a matter of arguing against the fact of biological responses to extreme situations, nor of denying that the role of instinct is modified by attitudes stamped upon human beings by their cultural environment. It is the swift flight to the monolithic conclusion that the self is first and foremost *physical* that offends. The evidence presented may have an entirely different meaning.

One justifiable conclusion would be that large numbers of people—doubtless the great majority—behave *as if* they are first and foremost physical beings. This conclusion, in what some might regard as the much more "scientific" research of Gautama Buddha, became an explanation of the cause of human suffering. Now if the Buddha's doctrine should happen to prove correct, most of modern psychology, by contrast, would seem pitifully shallow and irrelevant. The problem, of course, is to decide whether or not this doctrine, or some aspect or portion of it, *is* correct. And thus the question of method arises: Is it possible for modern man—even a modern scientist—to take seriously the method pursued by Gautama Buddha? We think it is, although conceding at once that the "cultural influences" which Dr. Allport believes are so important present serious obstacles to the undertaking.

The modern scientist has not the habit of making an hypothesis which leads to self-search and self-discovery. He has a "cultural" distrust of the idea of subjective realization of truth. Even if he found out some ultimate secret, who would publish it? How would he prove its "scientific" validity? He couldn't, but that might not make his discovery any the less true.

Turning to a technical area of subjective inquiry, a happening in the recent history of psychic research bears on this point. About fifteen years ago, Dr. Bernard F. Reiss, then assistant professor of psychology at Hunter College, New York City, heard an address on telepathy by Dr. J. B. Rhine of Duke University. Dr. Reiss afterward candidly expressed his skepticism to the speaker. Dr. Rhine replied to the effect that the question of telepathy is one of finding out for oneself, and not wasting time in theoretical debate. Dr. Reiss, being an unusual scientist, took the suggestion, and published his results in the *Journal of Parapsychology* for December, 1937. He reported that a young woman subject "guessed" 18 out of 25 ESP cards for 74 consecutive runs of the cards. Later, Dr. Reiss commented on this result:

> "I do not know the explanation. I don't try to explain. I am presenting the facts. There is no possibility of error, unless the investigator himself was dishonest, and I don't think I am."

But even this is not genuine self-search. A man who could be finally satisfied of the reality of telepathy without having any experience of it himself would be a curious sort of scientist—a man who is willing to accept an account of subjective reality from someone else.

It is the notion of "truth" generated by conventional applications of scientific method that seems at fault, and not the spirit of tireless and uncompromising research which was the origin of scientific method. It is the "rules" for using the method that mislead a physiologist, for example, to suppose that because he has dissected numerous brains, he is therefore competent to make declarations concerning the existence of the soul; or a psychologist like Dr. Allport to think that a few collected opinions of what is justifiable homicide may be made into a generalized conclusion about the "self."