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SHAKEN ALLEGIANCES

A GREAT deal is being said, these days, about the "revolutionary" character of the times, about the reshuffling of power among the nations, and the emergence to self-determination and freedom of hitherto colonial peoples. We hear about our transition from the machine age to the power age, and from the power age to the atomic age, and of the unimagined transformations which all this "progress" is working in our lives. Essayists recall the predictions of Edward Bellamy (in *Looking Backward),* observing that Bellamy, while a remarkable prophet, did not go far enough in anticipating the wonders to be performed by modern technology, which have already left Bellamy's dream far behind.

This self-consciousness, so far as it goes, contributes to our understanding of the present, but what seems to be largely neglected, except for occasional hints thrown out by neo-Freudian writers, is the radical transition we are also undergoing in moral attitudes. Again and again, correspondence from MANAS readers suggests a widespread ambivalence and consequent confusion concerning the nature of moral responsibility during this epoch. We get letters which pass swiftly from a reproach to MANAS writers for their apparent indifference to "social" issues, to a wondering if mystical inquiry will not offer basic illumination of human problems. Some readers confess to an awakening curiosity about the bearing of metaphysics on questions which once claimed only a scientific or "mechanistic" approach from modern man, yet the same readers display, also, a conscientious anxiety in relation to matters which, twenty-five years ago, were never considered without expression of reforming zeal and moral indignation.

It is plain, in short, that a somewhat shadowy dilemma, but by no means an artificial one, haunts many of those who, in years past, subscribed with considerable earnestness to what are known as "liberal opinions." A leading economist, John Kenneth Galbraith, writes a book about the stabilized prosperity of the economic system of the United States, calling attention to certain of its anti-human aspects which have virtually nothing to do with the old-time capital-vs.-labor struggle. His argument is directed at the unimaginative uniformities of technological culture and its tendency to erase the qualities and distinctions of individuality. The argument appeals, in part because of the savorlessness of the prosperity we are all supposed to be enjoying; further, we seem somehow prepared, or hungry for, the moral basis of Mr. Galbraith's criticism; but then, with his book barely published, a series of lay-offs in the aircraft industry, along with other economic dislocations, throws the nation into a "recession," unemployment figures arc swiftly upward, and men go about looking for work with the pressures of deep anxiety written on their faces.

It would be manifestly wrong to suggest that the economic inequalities which a generation ago supplied the liberal movement with its major causes have disappeared; but it is manifestly right to say that the growth of the unions and federal recognition of collective bargaining have changed the face of the struggle between capital and labor. It is now a contest of wits, strategy and tactics between the giants of industry and of organized labor. But no sooner have we made this observation, in a mood of withdrawal to the state of witness rather than participant in the contest, than a rash of "right-to-work" bills breaks out all over the country at election time, with the obvious purpose of disarming the unions of their power to bargain. And if satisfaction is derived from minimum wage laws and scales of wages in the major industries, which, despite mounting prices, provide the American worker with a standard of

living far higher than the workers of other industrialized countries, attention must be called to marginal groups such as migrant farm workers, who lack the protection won through many years of conflict by the men in the factories and the mines.

It is fair to say, however, that while the issues which engrossed the full attention of the liberals during the thirties are still with us, they are no longer "big" issues, and, whether for this reason or for some other, that they no longer command the interest of the younger generation. This is dramatically illustrated by the lack of radical thinking on the campuses of American colleges and universities. When men who were themselves rebels at school twenty and thirty years ago return as lecturers, expecting to meet counterparts of their own youth, they find that there has been a clean break with the radical attitudes of the past. There are no campus firebrands at all, and even the memory of the revolutionary spirit of the twenties and thirties has disappeared. It is as if the radical movement of the nineteenth century never occurred. This change in the temper of student bodies has been so noticeable that writers in the liberal magazines have been calling them the "quiet" or "silent" generation, and a year or so ago the *Nation* opened its pages to some college student contributors who were invited to defend themselves. As we recall, nothing was said by these youthful writers that seemed worth repeating.

A number of explanations have been made for the apathy of youth. First, there is no longer a living radical tradition to inherit from their elders. In the representatives of the previous generation, they see only bewilderment, disillusionment, frustration, and compromise. The issues are no longer clear. It is no longer the righteous David against the monstrous Goliath. Both the nations and the classes are all Goliaths or would-be Goliaths, these days. There are now reasons to suspect that the lines of political good and evil are no longer good mass politics and bad mass politics, but between mass politics of any kind and the unorganized individual. This formulation, however, seems to embrace impotence, for how can you defend the rights, hopes, and freedom of the unorganized individual without *organizing* him?

It is a question, evidently, of transferring our attention from the morality of ends to the morality of means, and, for a culture which has been willing to use almost any means, so long as they are necessary or "practical," this often seems to indicate a departure from the scene of the *real* struggle to the refuge of ivory towers. Yet the attractions and the logic of the study of means become more difficult to resist with each passing year. Hence our ambivalence, our oscillation between the two moralities.

In a way, the situation in respect to social or political right and wrong is very much like the situation in respect to our theory of knowledge or truth. We want the certainty provided by the objective data and the objective methods of examining the data that comprise the field and the tools of the sciences. Yet we are beginning to suspect the entire concept of "objectivity" when it comes to the questions that matter to us the most. But how can we let go of the honorable, open, and tested techniques of science, in order to enter the cloudy regions of metaphysics, the fourth dimension of mystical inquiry?

The matter is one for the searching of souls. It is not just a question of making the correct alliances. If you could solve the problem by joining some existing party, adding your strength to some established institution, there would be no uncertainty, no feeling of guilt. But the problem is precisely that no existing institution or party seems to be making actual *contact* with the issues confronting modern man. In fact, the issues are all obscure, except for the ones which are old, familiar, and increasingly unimportant. An example of an old familiar issue is national security. Hardly anyone, of course, will admit that national security is "unimportant"; what we mean

to suggest is that the familiar way of setting and dealing with this problem seems to create other problems which are worse, and an even greater threat to national security. There is the possibility, therefore, that what we call "national security" is a condition which exists only in fancy, in some non-existent political utopia, and that the values this expression represents will have to be sought in very different ways, if they are ever to be realized.

So it is natural that there should be a slow withdrawal from "pragmatic" or mechanistic approaches to the obvious issues, and a turning to some of the unorthodoxies of the time. There is a new interest, for example, in psychical research. It is no longer remarkable when a biologist, after a long career in research, begins to exhibit in public his interest in extra-sensory perception. Men who for years have prided themselves on their hard-headed skepticism may suddenly show curiosity about Spiritualist communications. The sharp edge which separates the formal psychological sciences from fringe researches in the psychic is slowly becoming blurred. An astonishing number of people of otherwise sharp critical faculties were taken in by the Tibetan lame hoax in the form of a book called *The Third Eye*, published by Secker & Warburg in England, and by Doubleday in the United States. The book is sheer nonsense, setting forth the proposition that spiritual vision may be had by drilling a hole in one's forehead with a brace and bit, yet ten thousand copies were bought by Americans. The churches are participating in this general current of interest through a revival of a well-bred sort of Spiritualism, while at a more popular level magazines like *Fate* are growing in circulation. It is evident from all these developments that the bars of unbelief are slowly going down and that bizarre creeds are claiming more and more adherents.

It would be extravagant to conclude, however, that the famous "materialism" of the twentieth century is on the way out at last. To borrow from a nineteenth-century wit, in many cases there has been no more than an exchange of worldliness for other-worldliness. The man who gives up the mechanistic hypothesis for some over-simplified "psychic" credo does not stop being a superficial thinker; instead, the heterodox belief he takes up is a measure of how heavily he had previously relied upon the conventional assumptions of his generation. He has no real intellectual discipline of his own, so he is vulnerable to the appeal of the fantastic, in much the same way that eminent scientists fell prey to the mediums of the nineteenth century, once their denials had been silenced by dramatic demonstrations.

The mournful aspect of this change or transition is that it is taking place in an atmosphere of crisis. Men who are afraid are in no condition to pick a philosophy of life. Too often, the attempts at synthesis between science and religion are "quickie" affairs which pretend to "take something from both," but instead only weaken the values of each. If something fundamental is going on—if on a large cultural scale men are reviewing their assumptions and finding them wanting—much of the good that may be emerging is masked by the frothy fakery which gets into print. But nothing can be done about this except, perhaps, to wait it out.

The question that needs verification, that will have to be met openly and explicitly, before the keynote of a new morality can be heard, is whether or not moral values have a tangible reality of their own. For this question to be understood, it will be useful to look at some cases or illustrations of what it may mean.

Take the idea of a volunteer army for a modern nation—a proposal which is usually jeered at by practical people. What do you get from this idea? First of all, you get an army made up of men who for one reason or another choose to be in it. You eliminate the evil of conscription. You set the potential of national defense at the level of popular support of national defense. Presumably, you greatly reduce the belligerence of the national

government, which will now be lacking in the man-power that is said to be necessary for victory in war. You slash taxes, since a voluntary army would probably have only about ten per cent of the present total of military personnel.

There would be other, far-reaching psychological consequences, such as a fresh sense of freedom on the part of people who have for years lived under the shadow of a virtually totalitarian military organization.

The obvious objection to a volunteer army is the risk of being attacked and defeated, perhaps "enslaved," by an aggressive military power which is unwilling to follow our example.

Such an attack is not *certain,* of course, but it must be acknowledged as a possibility.

It is here that the question of the tangibility of moral values becomes urgent. The qualities of a population that resolves to live without the burden of a heavy and menacing military apparatus are not morally negligible. These people would exhibit a spirit of independence, a fearless mood, a confidence in the basic humanity of other peoples which would be salutary in their effect upon every one. It is even a question whether such people could be successfully enslaved. We are not suggesting that the people of the United States are ready for so decisive a step, but only that they may be ready to think about such questions. And to think about the idea that some nation, some day, will have to take this step, if there is to be an end to war. The voluntary army, with what it implies for the nation adopting this policy, would be a long step toward acceptance of the Gandhian principle that the fearless and harmless man acquires a certain invulnerability. It would not be a full embodiment of Gandhi's ideal program, but it would involve the essentials, since the people would be doing what they are morally prepared to do, and doing it willingly. This basic honesty and absence of constraint would itself constitute a great moral strength. It is impossible to anticipate the moral inspiration such a decision would afford to the rest of the tired, war-torn world.

Another question that might be raised would concern the comparison of dollar values with human values. There are a lot of people who are doing work which brings them much less money than they could earn in some other way. They do this work because they like doing it, because it seems important to them. The work is, you could say, their idea of "truth," and they won't be bought off. You can hardly incorporate this principle into an economic "system," but what you can do is give it full recognition in education and in the home. You can refuse to let dollar volume ever stand for the volume of human benefits and values.

We habitually look upon the old fairy tales filled with magical happenings as poetic vehicles of superstition. It is possible that *we* are the superstitious ones, in our assumption that the guarantees of the welfare state to provide a minimum of income and other benefits to all are the practical assurance of a good life. Conceivably, the magic ring which makes wishes come true, the blessing of the fairy godmother, the spell of the wicked wizard, the formula for the cord that binds the Fenris Wolf—all these elements of folk tale and myth could very easily be symbols of the reality and continuity of moral influence in human life. The superstitious element in our own lives would then be the product of neglect of the reality of moral influence—of our habit of measuring the good almost wholly in terms of either dollars or mechanical and military power.

There is a ruthless, almost rapist passion in the way modern man attacks the raw materials of his existence. He has no reverence for nature, no respect for helpless and defenseless beauty. He leaves a track of mutilation and desolation behind him and accumulates great stores of rubbish and trash which deface the landscape even close to where he lives. He pollutes the air with smog and fall-out, the sea with sewage, adulterates his own food and will not reform until he is battered into submission by a rising death rate.

His humanitarian enterprises are almost all massive undertakings governed by statistics, administered by a distinct class of social workers who are supported either by taxes or by professional fund-raisers. The net of philanthropy drops in random throws in our society, bringing up only objects which can be served by money. The role of foundations appears in their financial statements, which is practically the only place that they justify their existence by reporting how they have spent their money.

We have somehow gotten out of touch with ourselves, lost contact, become estranged. The enormous system of mechanistic processes now grows by itself, animated by some kind of Frankenstein obsession, and its operations are beyond our control. The rules it imposes upon us are perversions of the laws of nature, but nonetheless laws, and we are beginning to hate the tribute they exact, the obedience they demand. It is this feeling of having become captives of compulsions which are no longer rational, except in the sense that they seem inescapable, which makes men wonder about the reality of moral values, and whether or not they would respond to a loyalty such as we now give our cash-and-machine system.

These are days of limbo for our allegiances. We do not know what or whom to trust. Is there a moral law? If there is, we may be sure that it has almost nothing in common with the calculations and projections of our present system. The moral life is an organic life. It recognizes no discontinuities, no breaks in the chain of relationships or in the web of interdependence. What we are, in moral terms, is the fruition of our intentions. What we will become is inseparable from what we are, since the future is but an unrolled present, and the present an unrolled past.

REVIEW
SOCIAL SCIENCE REPORT

NOW and then we come across someone who wants to be told what is so very wrong with our society—with our schools, our business enterprise, our conceptions of the good life and what we do about realizing them. "After all," the questioner says, "we do have a lot of freedom; a man can go into almost any field he chooses; education is accessible to many more people than it was a generation ago, and our standard of living is better than ever."

An inquiry of this sort is difficult to answer for the reason that it arises in a context of acceptance or unawareness of a wide range of situations in which the issue is one of attitudes rather than obvious "evil-doing" or calculated injustice. There aren't what you could call specific "offenders." It is rather a matter of what people are willing to settle for, of what they regard as necessary or the "thing to do." And they are such *nice* people, too.

For those who want to pursue this question further—and no one is entirely immune to the deceptions involved in prevailing cultural attitudes, so that we all need to pursue it further—an article by Bernard Rosenberg, "The University and the Corporation," in *Liberation* for April, is recommended reading. Mr. Rosenberg's cup is filled with bitterness. He is a social scientist who recently exchanged a job of teaching in an upstate New York liberal arts college for a job with a business organization in the city. The point of his article is that he found no real difference between the two activities, except that the job in business pays a lot better. In both places his function was essentially the same, although the window-dressing varied considerably. In the college, the faculty was loaded with non-academic duties. "The committee system, teamwork, and collective decision-making (or a vast pretense thereof) have triumphed in Moscow and Washington. There is no reason why Siwash should be governed by any other principle." Author of *The Values of Veblen,* Mr. Rosenberg found himself in complete agreement with Veblen, who "wanted to call his book about the higher learning in America *"A Study in Total Depravity."* In relation to the practice of education in his own field, he has this to say:

> There is a fearful trend in the American college which reached a kind of apogee for us during our isolation upstate, but which can be seen in less developed forms elsewhere. Its name is general education. Its instrument is the survey course.
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> In our college twenty-one men—who met every week to enlarge their opportunities for back-biting and infighting and who were penalized if they failed to appear—joined with each other to convey the burden of social science to the freshman class. The term "social science" was liberally interpreted. Among the fields represented were accountancy (whose spokesman was our group leader), geology and geography (for rocks and pressure areas certainly affect the human condition) and the conventional historians, economists, jurists and sociologists.
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> There was a colossal text for this colossal course, the several editors of which had their own idiosyncratic preferences, including orthodox psychoanalysis, liberal theology, Keynsian and Chamberlinian economics. As things worked out, the instructor found himself stocking minds with tags (that they later obnoxiously displayed) for ideas which could never be treated in depth, since there were always more ideas at hand that had to be given the same breathless treatment. One day Freud. Next day Marx. Day after St. Thomas. The Id. The Ego. Dialectical Materialism. Divine Providence. Transcendentalism. All transmitted by people who knew only a fragment of what they were talking about to others who would probably not even learn that fragment. It is no consolation that there were only a few impressionable minds among the hundreds of freshmen taking the course.

Mr. Rosenberg found college life not unlike life in a corporation. "The culture, viewed from any possible angle, is simply being homogenized. . . . The amorality of the marketplace is becoming the morality of the colleges." He concedes that the distinction between town and gown may still survive at Cambridge and New Haven, but it is fast disappearing in the smaller colleges. He writes:

> Ask a random sample of students why they are in college, and the response will be overwhelming: They are there, virtually without a touch of the admirable old self-deception, to carve a larger share of prosperity for themselves. A college degree spells greater earning power, and it is best secured in any of

> the exotic "disciplines" (hotel management, public relations, advertising, ship tanker operation) currently burgeoning around Schools of Business Administration. I speak only of the colleges, not of the professional schools—into which uneducated young men have been flocking for a long time. Whoever still believes there is a great distance from the ivy-covered building to BBD & O should look at some statistics on the curricular distribution of American students—or the lists of commencement speakers.

With the abandonment of "the admirable old self-deception"—the idea that a youth seeks and gets an education in order to establish in his mind and his feelings the sense and meaning of enduring human values—things, money-wise, on the campus are looking up. Colleges are becoming an annex to business, and it is now possible to relate earning power statistically to the number of years spent in college by a man, or to the number of degrees acquired. Already, says Mr. Rosenberg, there are signs of higher salaries for professors, due to this new cooperative spirit. He comments: "Since the corruption is so little short of universal, we are close to the point where all that matters is the form of corruption which pays the most—and to hell with the psychic income."

Following is Rosenberg's account of his "business" experience:

> The transition to the world of Mammon was not difficult and—as expected—produced little improvement. The sense of reality persisted and grew. Some of the shapes had changed but the same illusions persisted. The illusion of democracy takes on different forms in business. In Academe the pre-decided decision had to be democratically voted on. In the Corporation the decision has to be delayed until all angles have been studied; in the end some far removed vice-president makes the decision, or the decision becomes obsolete because of changes in the market place. Frantic activity to prepare a report for a deadline, and then the executive decides he's too busy to read it or have it presented to him.
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> The academicians and semi-academicians on the operations research or market-research team may take months of study to find out why the consumer isn't buying, or what the production-scheduling system should be. The studies are sometimes even good, and if similar time and money had been devoted to academic study the reputations of the researchers would have been made. To the businessman the study is a piece of goods. The part that reinforces his prejudices will be adopted enthusiastically as good research, the part that disagrees with his views will be ignored or sent back for "further study." The professor must counsel students on subjects in which he is incompetent. The business-academician must counsel on subjects of his specialty to people who are incompetent to judge.
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> As the academician must justify his existence and presence to the administration through attendance at faculty meetings and participation on general education committees, so the academician in business must justify his existence by showing up every day from eight to five—no matter how productive the day is to be, he must be at his desk—and by "selling" his projects. If you're going to be paid all this money, then you have to think of what it is you should be doing, why you should be doing it, how much money the company will make, and why you should do it rather than someone in engineering, finance, or marketing. For the scholarly academician who is trying to get money out of a Fund, the key words are "integration of the social sciences," "validation of hypotheses relating to inter-disciplinary subjects." For the corporate academician, the key words are: "practical, not theoretical study"; "mathematical (or psychoanalytical) in nature"; "new techniques recently discovered and recently covered in an article in the *Harvard Business Review."*

As we noted at the outset, Mr. Rosenberg is in a somewhat embattled mood. But who would argue that he has not had ample provocation? For a touch of optimism on the subject of higher education, one ought, perhaps, to read the several articles printed recently in "Children. . . and Ourselves" about "New College," which shows that a new spirit is at work in education, in some areas, at least, although we suspect that the Rosenberg diagnosis would fit many more colleges than a bill of good health for American education in general would permit. Anyhow, the *degree* of fit is not important—even a slight tendency to having it fit should be held intolerable, and there is certainly more than that.

COMMENTARY
REBIRTH OF AN IDEA

THE question of the reality of moral values—their functional continuity, that is, in effect on human life—is not one that can be disposed of briefly. Some weeks ago we printed a quotation from Robert Redfield concerning the dying out of the idea of "immanent justice" in the modern world. Disbelief in immanent justice, he pointed out, was a leading characteristic of modernity.

This means, also, disbelief, substantially, in the reality of moral values as *natural* forces affecting human beings.

Now if belief in moral law or reality is desirable, and if modern man finds such belief either difficult or impossible, we need some explanation of his alienation from this intuitive reading of the meaning of existence. It can't be only that he has had poor instructors in religion. It can't be only that he has been misled by scientists.

Nor can it be simply that we are bad people whose sins are finding them out.

We have a theory, for what it is worth. It is, that part of the work of living on this planet is learning all about it—*completing* our embodiment in it. Every task we undertake is a kind of "incarnation," and every incarnation is a limitation of vision, for a time. Until quite recently, we have been almost totally engaged in exhausting a new kind of experience—the discovery, mastery, and exploitation of the forces of nature. This experience, like all intense experiences, has brought us a kind of intoxication.

We have found no morality in external nature because there isn't any morality there: the morality is in us, and wherever there is subjective being—being that has awareness of itself and its relations with others.

Our attention is now turning to ourselves, after the grand tour of the planet, since the time of Columbus. We are getting back to thinking of ourselves—and this means thinking of ourselves as *real*—and this means thinking about subjective reality, or moral reality.

So, we may be returning to ideas of immanent justice after a long adventure in a world where there is no immanent justice. We find we can't live so well in that world.

Our journey in the outside world has given us a new conception of knowledge which unfits us for believing in the old ideas about immanent justice. Or perhaps it is the forms of the old ideas which bother us. Now we need a new moral vocabulary and grammar. There are signs that we are at the threshold of a new epoch—a time of rebirth of the idea of moral law.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

[It is practically a truism that a teacher may after many years retire from his job, but he can never retire from his work—stop teaching, that is. In illustration of this we have a manuscript from a friend reader, and correspondent of MANAS, Prof. Thomas D. Eliot, Emeritus, who is still very much engaged in the educator's role of bringing people into contact with ideas. It would be impossible to measure the help that Prof. Eliot has afforded to MANAS and to this Department in particular, through his activity as a "broker of ideas." We print the manuscript below, and invite the comment and further suggestions of readers.—Editors.]

OPERATION SWITCHBOARD

AN *emeritus* professor learns, from time to time, how expendable he always was, and how anonymous he has become. He also discovers how many young teachers, researchers, writers, are rediscovering the ideas he thought he had pioneered thirty years ago; and, gradually, he realizes that the *emeriti* of thirty years ago probably felt similarly about his own "original" ventures, and is glad that the generations rise and pass away, each being "about its Father's Business."

If an old-timer merely reminds a youngster that others thought of his idea first, that there is "nothing new under the sun," that this generation of scholars doesn't bother to "command the literature" before it barges out with something "new"—then he is also discouraging the spontaneities of up-coming talents. He is taking the joy out of life for those who are confirming the pioneers and who might themselves pioneer. And such an old-timer is not going to be better appreciated for his pains.

But there are other ways of keeping alive the stimuli of innovation and the channels of communication between *emeriti* and neophytes. The old Prof. can, for example, send his old reports to *corroborate* and *congratulate* those whose minds are now running in the same channel, and he can at least be glad if his early "original" ideas are not now *rejected.*

Some fertile minds have during all their active lives made a profession and an avocation of disseminating seminal ideas from a multitude of sources, and to a multitude of fellow thinkers and workers. They do not themselves launch organizations, laws, programs, campaigns. They are "brokers of ideas." But when such persons "retire" they do not stop thinking. A dedicated teacher may be retired, but he cannot stop teaching. Even if he no longer has classes to meet, the in-take and out-put of intellectual metabolism persist. If he has an associative mind,—absorptive and communicative,—each of the teacher's exploratory interests continues, like a spiritual antenna or magnetic field, to select and draw in new items. He is *contact-minded.* Each new item flashes a spark on contact with relevant complexes and channels in his associative memories. His mind then seeks contact with the personages, the former students, the communication media, the specialists, etc., who, out in the world of the still un-retired, might effectively use the new items and their relevances.

The "broker of ideas" may take in large consignments of organized thought or historical events, but he breaks them down into independently fertile fragments, not quantitatively big but qualitatively *great* in value-potency; and then he undertakes to share them at strategic-points where they may impregnate, nourish and become again fruitful. By intent he is not a mere kibitzer, but a broker of the bread of life, an incarnation of intelligent love.

As a "broker of ideas" a college teacher may receive from countless sources (of past periods and present), ideas and facts, in many of which he senses potential significance and power, and for which he sees the current relevances and the social need. He may have dispensed and dispersed such germinal thoughts with prodigal generosity and fantastic versatility for decades. He may even have the occasional satisfaction of seeing one of the scattered seeds sprouting, perhaps oblivious of its origins. A private idea,—one of a thousand that bided its time or that floated until it found its fertility—may suddenly become somebody else's great "Cause." Or, a Cause already in momentum may seize the free

floating idea as its own, and germinate it into a full-fledged program.

We have unblushingly mixed the metaphors of the broker, of the magnetic field, of metabolism and of cross-fertilization! To shift the metaphor once more, the retired teacher who is contact-minded may become a *switch-board:* He receives messages from dozens of lines of information—whether personal or published, present or past; from worldwide media (such as *Time* or *Life), f*rom minority vehicles (such as *Reporter, Progressive, Humanist., Register)* or from the smaller periodicals which (Thank God!) America can still support (such as *Manas, Between the Lines, Carolina Israelite).*

The items are cut and clipped—perhaps one or two per week—and forwarded or passed, each to some party who might not otherwise read it, but who "ought to see it." For example, what? Well, take one week's grist:

(1) A highly appreciative response from a top-quality broadcaster of school programs to whom I had sent a thoughtful review of her book by a keen magazine which she had not seen.

(2) An unusual psychiatrist had sent me a reprint expounding his therapeutic principles. A three-page singlespace elite-type response with two more reprints and a manuscript evidenced obvious appreciation of my detailed commentary, accepted several of my criticisms and thoughtfully explained other points.

(3) From a graduate Dean, an acknowledgement of A. H. Maslcw's impressive lecture "A Philosophy of Psychology," sent to the Dean *apropos* a lecture series in psychology and education which (as announced) threatened to go sterile with statistical measurements, pedaguese gobbledygook, and/or automation. The Dean is liberal but wants to keep science and values apart—never the twain can meet. I send him now Oppenheimer's address on "Analogy in Science.

(4) From an F.M. lecturer on American Indians, a response to an inquiry on the present role and status of two organizations purporting to help the Indians. Sent a bulletin on Indian-White cooperation in Nebraska, pictures of cottages built by "acculturated" Indians, and the address for a recent study of Indian health services.

(5) To a physics Prof. and a newspaper editor: news of the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy.

(6) To a travelling lecturer from Africa, interested in the human effects of automation when modern industrialism takes over: introductions to a personnel worker and sociologist in a supercorporation—and four Quaker items on race relations in Africa. This lecturer provided potentially important race relations contact at Capetown, to be sent to an outstanding Quaker leader whose concern will take her to South Africa for two years. I met the latter in Oslo where she had lived many years.

(7) To a Southern colleague: clippings evidencing northern reactions to southern events in race relations.

(8) To a minister: items on ethical issues of nuclear testing, race relations, civil liberties, dogmatism, suburban church youth work.

(9) To an expert management consultant: items on communication in small groups and on semantics. Also *Parkinson's Law!*

(10) To a Norwegian-born fellow-parishioner: News of Norway bulletins.

(11) To a science teacher: pamphlets presenting fundamental principles of teaching math. advanced in the nineties by the great British mathematician-psychologists George and Mary Boole.

(12) To a grass roots politics public leader of Montana, recent materials on Wilderness Conservation.

Fresh examples this week: Highly appreciative acknowledgements from

(1) A researcher on contraception in a physiology department.

(2) A teacher of race relations (material from a South African).

(3) A student of perception-projection in musical sound (contacts with the literature of

perception and projection in visual illusion, Ames, etc.).

Etc., etc., etc. . . the connections are made, and (click!) the "switchboard" has brokered another idea, often acknowledged with enthusiasm. The ideas have cross-fertilized, and the teacher is still teaching and learning.

"Who dares to teach must never cease to learn," but also, "who still dares to learn can never cease to teach."

A few of the increasing host of oldsters in our explosive culture are *not* ex-farmers, nor ex-tradesmen, nor ex-executives. They happen to be alert egg-heads whose unpredictably centrifugal (not to say ubiquitous) range of current reading still stirs or startles their sober thinking. But these eggheads as *emeriti* no longer have career roles which organize their lives inextricably in institutional duties. Undeterred by retirement there persists in college teachers their life-habit of transmuting and transmitting the stimuli from their current reading of and about current thinkers and about the incredibly kaleidoscopic events in this cumulative, accelerative phantasmagoria we call the World.

Does the typical pattern just suggested happen to describe your own situation? I think I am defining the situation in a way that offers for us who are educated *emeriti* one autonomous role of a sort which conserves individuality and initiative but perpetuates a rationally responsible usefulness and reasonable self-respect:

Be a liaison or middleman for ideas and facts between pioneers and specialists in your divergent fields of interest who might otherwise be (or as of now are) unaware of the existence or reciprocal significance of each other's respective formulations or discoveries or activities or needs.

This role needs no institutional job, no office machinery, but is a guarantee against loneliness. It calls merely for an omnivorous and versatile appetite for unusual reading, an associative mind, a will to share or contribute, and a good memory for other alert or responsibly placed persons active in the several fields of special interest corresponding to your own.

It is, to be sure, quite likely that most emeritus "eggheads" are spontaneously doing this sort of thing. If this little paper does anything, therefore, it is to focus attention on the switchboard *pattern*, on the unmeasured and perhaps immeasurable aggregate value and usefulness of numberless apparently casual little contacts; and to add to some readers' motivation a conscious satisfaction and a deliberate intent and hope, from pursuing this role when at least contractually " unemployed."

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FRONTIERS

Cultural Criticism

FRIENDS of MANAS often send in material offering effective "cultural criticism." This is particularly appreciated when the treatment to which attention is called suggests a fresh form of analysis.

Apropos our May 20 review of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World Revisited*, we note a passage in a contemporary novel, *The Success* by Helen Howe (Simon & Schuster and Permabook). Miss Howe spends her 337 pages in developing the personality of a career-woman who in early youth sets her sights upon one guiding star—"success," in any field, and at almost any price. Even if the plot and the theme are somewhat worn, Miss Howe enlivens the story with moments of clarity. For instance, toward the end, the woman Margot, who by now has become what she thought she wanted to be, is confronted by her father, who says:

> "I now have the nasty feeling that perhaps you've been shoved off into the jungle of the twentieth century without the proper weapons in your hands."
>
> "What kind of weapons, Father?"
>
> "Discipline, for one thing. We've been too easy on you.
>
> I was reacting so violently against the Calvinistic repressions of my own childhood that I was determined that freedom should be the order of the day for my own children."
>
> "But I would have grabbed it if you hadn't given it to me!"
>
> Maggie looked him brazenly in the eyes.
>
> "And yet I don't think you've had the real thing. Perhaps if one's economic, social and even religious—" he hesitated for the word—"pattern is fixed, it's easier for the mind and spirit to soar off on their own. By hitting against the bars of my cage—my father's standards—in a sense I knew not only where I was but who I was, and knew what I didn't like about either. With you, we simply opened the door of your cage and said, 'Fly!' leaving both goal and direction to you."

As we often find reason to observe, Joseph Campbell has a great deal to say on this subject in his *Hero With a Thousand Faces.* The "rite of passage" in many ancient societies, marking the transition from childhood to adulthood, involved mastery of certain stringent disciplines. Finally, the man cast in the heroic mold breaks beyond the confines of the external regulations governing his behavior—but, after the "break-through," he nonetheless makes use of all he had learned from the rigors along the way. Then, as Miss Howe indicates, an oppressed people, or a too rigidly routinized individual may actually have some advantage when it comes to gaining self-discipline. "By hitting against the bars of the closed cage," some sort of point of departure for philosophy, both personal and social, is presented. Perhaps the strange fate of twentieth-century man is to be strangled by an ease of living in which no struggle is necessary, and concerning which no principles for reform or improvement can be easily formulated.

An article by Adlai Stevenson in the March *Progressive* applies a somewhat similar evaluation to the obvious decline of principled ardor in politics. Mr. Stevenson writes:

> I sometimes think there is a danger of this element of vision vanishing almost wholly from our political life. In the main we are so comfortable; so many evils of the past have shrunk in size and almost out of sight. At the same time, people marry much younger, have larger families, and are profoundly involved in earning a living, making careers and safeguarding the future of their children. It is more difficult, they say, to give time to public affairs when private life is so urgent and absorbing.
>
> Yet is it, I wonder, more urgent and absorbing than a hundred years ago when young men not only married young, had large families and built up careers, but also opened up the new frontiers, created new cities from the wilderness, and gave to new states and communities the framework of active political life?
>
> If one reads the life of young Abe Lincoln, it is hard to believe that his struggles as a young lawyer and his difficulties as a young parent were less than those of young men today. Yet there was no time when the deepest issues of the day did not occupy his mind or the call of statecraft make itself heard above the claims and clamor of everyday life. Nor was he alone or exceptional. Stephen A. Douglas' life was no different. The prairie towns were filled with earnest, active citizens deeply, profoundly concerned with the great issues of a nation "half-slave, half-free." When

> the multitudes gathered, a hundred years ago, to listen in rapt attention for hours to the Lincoln-Douglas debates, had they fewer responsibilities and duties than the citizens of today to many of whom the great issues of politics seem to be most usefully conveyed in 15-second television flashes of subliminal advertising?

A study of either cultural or personal psychology suggests the substantial accuracy of Mr. Stevenson's contention. Thousands of university students have discovered that they do their best work when they are carrying a heavy program, and that when the challenges are too few there is a general let-down in vitality, a blurring of mental acuity. The best letter-writers are usually those who have a heavy correspondence. It is also apparent to those who have engaged in rigorous manual labor that only a half-day of hard work seems much more difficult than eight hours every day for an extended period of time. All the way from the problems of juvenile delinquency to those of administration in college or business, we have ground for believing that those who have the least to do are the most easily sidetracked from pursuit of a goal which brings satisfaction.

An AP story (Los Angeles *Mirror-News*, April 10) reveals some frightening results of a research project undertaken in Michigan State University concerning the "principles" in which most business executives believe. A pilot study involved the interviewing of 162 executives "in every echelon of the management hierarchy." Commenting, the director of the project, Dr. Eugene E. Jennings of Michigan's Business Administration College, said:

> The study indicates ambitious business executives do not regard as success-contributing those practices ordinarily regarded as good human relations. Human relations may be considered as an important adjunct of success by the executive, but not basic to it. A majority of the men we interviewed admitted they believe self-interest is the basis of all human nature, that it is safer to be suspicious of men and assume their nature is more bad than good.

Some "majority reactions in four human relations areas" are summarized as follows:

> Friendship: Loyal subordinates are the mark of a competent executive, but he risks a loss of flexibility by making close friends in areas crucial to his interests.
>
> Agreement: Agreements should commit the other person past promises need not stand in the way of success.
>
> Decision-Making: An executive should not allow free participation in decisions crucial to his own interests; a decision once made should not be open to doubt.
>
> Communication: The executive should not expose his hand; superior information is an advantage; never tell all you know and give out information sparingly; don't take advice you didn't ask for.

An ingenious twist in the MSU research program brought questionnaires to a number of clergymen, asking them to anticipate executive reactions to the queries. According to Dr. Jennings, "the clergymen were generally way off in their judgments. The majority underestimated how distrustful the executive is and how difficult it may be for him to accept the brotherhood of man concept."

Lest this be taken as an indictment applying only to the business community, it should be added that the same views are doubtless typical of all who share the goals of acquisitive enterprise and set their sights no higher. It takes an entirely different view of the meaning and purpose of life to encourage the use of freedom for more than egocentric purposes. You can't invent stringent discipline nor deliberately design oppressive conditions to assure that men will think of something besides their own comfort; and even if this were possible it would constitute a Machiavellian betrayal.