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POLITICS FOR NON-HEROES

POLITICS, which gives form to a large area of human experience, inevitably reflects judgments about the nature of man. The really important discussions of politics all devote direct attention to the qualities and potentialities of man's nature, whether it be Plato's *Republic,* Machiavelli's *Prince,* Rousseau's *Social Contract,* or the American Declaration of Independence. The bad or misleading discussions of politics are those which ignore the question of man's nature, or take for granted conclusions about it, failing to justify or look at them critically. The most important criticism of Hegel, for example, is probably that of John McTaggart, who pointed out in his *Studies of Hegelian Cosmology* that Hegel was not interested in individuals and so neglected them in his discussion of history. The problems of politics are practical problems, having to do with the adaptation of social forms to the requirements of the good of man, but if that good is conceived and measured *within* the limits of some political theory, all the issues of good which lie outside the range of politics are ignored. By this means you cannot hope to get a politics which reaches beyond the Aristotelian claim that the good of (the average) man is sufficiently served by political arrangements. Plato escaped from this denigration of human potentiality by totally subordinating politics to the ideal of human good as embodied in his philosopher-kings—which amounted to a utopian redefinition of the nature of the state; or, to look at his view in another way, Plato abolished politics as an independent discipline. As Werner Jaeger observes in his *Aristotle:*

> Plato's demand that philosophers shall be kings, which he maintained unabated right to the end, means that the state is to be rendered ethical through and through. It shows that persons who stood highest in the intellectual scale had already abandoned the actual ship of state, for a state like Plato's could not have come alive in his own time, and perhaps not at any time.

Aristotle, against Plato, contended for a politics freed of obligation to ideal good. He criticized Plato for not admitting that politics has autonomous claims and principles and in his own political theory allows the possibility of conflict between the interests of the state and those of the individual only in the case of extraordinary persons, since, as Werner Jaeger says, for Aristotle "it is only the philosophical ego, . . . that may have interests higher than the state's to represent." From this follows the principle that still pervades a great deal of political thinking, and is the origin of very nearly all the oppressive evils arising from political power: "For the ordinary citizen who is simply the product of the reigning political principles there is no such problem in the ancient world. His membership in the state exhausts his nature."

Thus, at the lower end of the spectrum of political theory, there is this view of man which makes his good dependent upon the power and authority of the state—typified, in fact, by the argument of the Grand Inquisitor in his reproaches to the returned Jesus (in Dostoievsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*). At the other end of the spectrum is the view attributed by the Inquisitor to Jesus, which conceives of man with heroic potentialities, resulting in an attitude toward the state like that found, say, in Henry David Thoreau's Essay on Civil Disobedience. We might take these two views as archetypal polarities of political theory, ranging from the lowest possible estimate of man to the highest. If you adopt the lowest, you have no man at all—in terms of the individual and his heroic potential—and if you adopt the highest, you have no politics at all, or only the most nominal sort.

It follows, then, that any political theory worthy of the name has in it a built-in- schism, representing the indeterminate aspects of human nature. If this schism is lacking, or nullified in practice, it is either degrading to man, like the Grand Inquisitor's scheme, or inapplicable, as Werner Jaeger remarks of Plato's Republic.

The options represented by the schism are the only opportunities for human growth that the society, as society, can provide. If, in the name of security, or by justification of the utilitarian principle of the greatest good of the greatest number, the society closes out these options, it becomes little more than a prison, from the human point of view. In this case, the maintenance of one's humanity requires heroism of the individual. His independence is pitted against the full weight of the social organization. But while the options remain, the non-hero, the ordinary man who nonetheless cherishes an heroic ideal, can choose to be an individual; he can try to grow in the direction of that ideal without suffering the institutionalized disapproval of the political system under which he lives.

In *Liberation* for December, 1965, George Benello provides a concrete illustration of these contrasting situations. His article, "Nonviolence: The Gorilla and the Saint," has for its main drive the idea that the use of nonviolence in conflict resolution is not only for heroes, but for ordinary men as well. However, when the social order shuts out non-violence as unthinkable, the popular impression is that only some kind of "religious extremist" is capable of nonviolent action. (It should be noted here that Mr. Benello is continuing the documentation of Gandhian assumptions from the literature of animal behavior begun by Erik Erikson in his *American Journal of Psychiatry* article, published in the September, 1965 issue [see MANAS for Dec. 8, 1965].) The *Liberation* article begins:

> The appeal of nonviolence to what can best be called the moral imagination lies in its relation to a higher order of moral being. A person faced with the threat of attack can either react on the same level as the threat itself (in which case he has two alternatives), or he can seek to transcend that level and thus not so much react to, as nullify, the threat. On the same level, the choice is essentially between fight or flight. But on the higher level, what is affirmed ultimately is the existence of a realm of value beyond the person, to which the person is so identified that his own physical survival is secondary. Perhaps few nonviolent acts achieve this purity, yet even without it they have power; a recent account by George B. Schaller in *The Year of the Gorilla*, of his unarmed stay in Africa observing gorillas speaks of a pattern curiously similar to the above. When gorillas saw him, they would advance, beating their chests, to scare him. But he did what he had observed other gorillas do in similar circumstances: he looked away pretending to be occupied in something else. The gorilla seeing that he was eliciting no response, would stop advancing and move off. The anthropologist, by not letting himself get involved in the cycle of response and counter-response which either a fight or a flight reaction would have elicited, managed to live nonviolently in continuing association with the gorillas he was studying.

There is the further consideration, noted by Benello, that nearly every previous student of gorillas had gone into the field "armed to the teeth," believing gorillas to be ferocious and liable to attack on sight. The writer comments:

> Here two things are evident: that where danger exists, objective observation itself is difficult if not impossible unless the observer can transcend the flight-or-fight response that is part of his reaction to danger, and secondly, that the capacity to transcend, or at least bypass, the fight-or-flight response is not something that only saints can manage; gorillas can do it too, among themselves, and can respond to a human being when he employs the principle. Thus the present arms race metaphysic, which the major powers claim as essential realism, a realism based on the cycle of threat and counter-threat, arms and more arms, is actually something of which the gorillas could disabuse us. Perhaps we should see nonviolence more in terms of the gorilla and less in terms of the saint, since the purity of the saint is not something we can expect most of society to share in, whereas the wisdom of the gorilla is something that only our peculiarly human idiocy and alienation from our physical selves has made us lose. It should make us realize how besotted our attitudes toward our enemies are when we remember the misinformation that early armed observers brought back about the

> gorilla, and how our own deterrence policy has been worked out to the last decimal of allowable megadeaths while the gorilla's reaction is not even thought of.

Mr. Benello now asks:

> Why is all this so? In my view, it is because our social environment has so distorted our vision and our values that we have lost the capacity to make the necessary switch to another level of response, as needed to get out of the fight-or-flight syndrome. It seems to me that our imagination is dominated compulsively by a class of low-level stereotypes: war on poverty, war on disease, war on everything.

Low-level stereotypes rule other aspects of our lives:

> The æsthetic vision of the pure self-enjoyment of function unrelated to any extrinsic purpose to be fulfilled, is specifically precluded. Nothing can be done for its own sake, since it must first of all fit into the economy of status, power and money by which all things are judged. Thus the major feature of our society, it seems to me, is the corruption of higher purposes by extrinsic purposes. The higher æsthetic, religious, and moral spheres are closed off because the market system finds them irrelevant. The feat of bridging the gap between the imperative claims of anything that is really worth doing for its own sake and the equally imperative claims of the market system is becoming increasingly rare.

Now the peculiar value of the foregoing analysis by Mr. Benello is that it renders unimportant all the ordinary objections to the lessons he drew from the strategy of George B. Schaller in relation to the hostile demonstrations of the gorillas. We shall be told, for example, that armies and bomber flights poised in readiness for acts of mass destruction are not to be deterred by little psychological devices of "looking the other way." This is true enough. The military is trained to wear blinders against all such distractions. The public state of mind, moreover, is fixed in the mood of extreme suspicion. "Peace gestures" are identified in advance, before they happen, as machiavellian gambits to weaken our resolve. The fact is, that by a series of careful preparations, we have *dehumanized* our relations and approaches to "the enemy," for only by this mechanization of the drive to defeat him can we make ourselves invulnerable against his diabolical designs. It is not, simply, that we have "lost" the capacity to respond to hostility or aggression (or even the *supposition* of hostility or aggression) at another level, but that we have systematically institutionalized our responses to one level alone; and having done this, we deduce from the behavioral result some "laws of nature" about human possibility and the necessity of war. It is from this stance—and all that it involves in overlaid cultural correlations—that we argue knowingly about the "impracticality" of the Gandhian approach to conflict resolution. In threatening confrontations, we have not even the intelligence of the gorillas to avoid the pain and destructiveness of violence and war. We have used our capacity to abstract and rationalize to erase this intelligence from our minds—or from, perhaps, our instincts—and then to argue from the data of "observed behavior" that it will not work or does not exist!

But if, it will be asked, that is what we have done, can't we legitimately say that that is the way we *are*, and that we must make our plans accordingly? We can say this, but not legitimately. It begs the question. It denies to human beings precisely those qualities of which we are most proud and proceeds to make a one-dimensional social system out of accumulated denials of the potentialities of mankind.

However, if at the outset we adopt some other view of the nature of man, we may reach a conclusion which does not shut out these high potentialities and at the same time allows us to understand and explain the apparent "certainties" of the negators of human possibility, without granting them any final status as shapers of our destiny. This argument depends upon very simple and familiar ideas. You start with the proposition that in some sense human beings are free to make decisions about what they want and what is good. A corollary of this proposition, if freedom has any real meaning, is that human beings make mistakes.

It follows that there may be both small and large mistakes, casual mistakes, and well developed and thoroughly rationalized mistakes. The greater the minds, as Descartes remarked, the greater the aberrations of which they are capable.

Now, with these few, initial ideas or assumptions in mind, move to the problems of politics. We began this discussion by an attempt to show that the preservation of freedom is the chief problem of politics, although the technicians of politics often fail to recognize this, finding rather that *control* is their major objective. And we concluded that good political systems carefully nurture the built-in schism of freedom versus control, while bad political systems always reduce the schism, as though it were some kind of social disease, and finally eliminate it entirely.

But the schism is the life-principle of a human society, not a disease. It is not an area of disorder but the region of growth. It is the place where, to borrow Mr. Benello's words, the moral imagination finds it possible and desirable to relate to a higher order of moral being.

Let us now jump from these first principles to the situation in a highly technologized and bureaucratized mass society. Here the variety of options preserved by the schism is of necessity much reduced. If the reductions of option are accomplished by conscientious men who are daily engaged in doing what they believe to be good things in the service of all, the loss of the options is largely unnoticed, and the pain which eventually grows out of their loss is a vague psychic effect, an atmospheric malaise, rather than something which can have specific diagnosis. A man, for example, might like to earn his living in a certain setting, or teach in a certain kind of school—careers which, he finds, have become quite impracticable. Choices of this sort, increasingly, are narrowed down by the uniformities imposed by "progress." The requirements of efficient system are less related to authentic human values—as, for example, the publish-or-perish rule of the large universities in relationship to teaching jobs. Publications are objective evidence of ability, despite the fact that there may be only random or poor correlation between teaching ability and the capacity to turn out words that editors will accept. The bureaucratic rule is that a poor criterion for decision becomes the best possible one, if it is the only one which exists.

In circumstances of this sort, arguments for freedom which come into conflict with bureaucratic procedure appear to be "revolutionary" arguments, since they return the problem to fundamental issues which the bureaucratic minds involved have long since forgotten or recast in the terms of their procedures. Since the procedures are now absolute necessities, only an impractical fool would deny that freedom is the observance of these procedures. Mr. Benello turns this analysis around, showing how an environment of mechanistic uniformities affects the feelings of even those who rebel against deprivation:

> Television dramas now deal in the most explicit kinds of violence, and search continuously for new ways to titillate, because the symbolic orders within which moral meanings have inhered, up to now, no longer function. The only way we can grasp the drama of moral choice is in terms of physical conflict, and so our popular drama resounds with the thud of fists and the crack of firearms. Meaning is externalized, and the search for meaning becomes increasingly a search for physical nexus. . . . Just as love in modern literature is reduced to its physical expression, which is then dwelt on lingeringly as if this were an expression of ultimate truth, so conflict, in a society that has lost its capacity to institutionalize it, much less transmute it, becomes synonymous with the thud of fists.
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> . . . in a society where our values have been subverted, violence seems like the most direct way to break out of the web of falsehoods that we have created and to sense the flavor and texture of reality once again. . . . Love, after all, is dangerous because honest love requires openness and vulnerability. But violence is easier and implies less. . . . The indeterminacy of our identity, in a society which is basically phony, can only be cured by acts of destruction which serve to shatter the false persona with which we confront others and ourselves. I think

> J. D. Salinger has put his finger on it: phoniness is rampant because the market system tears us away from the purity of action for its own sake, and imposes its own impure and extrinsic purposes. Thus our investment in violence grows as we feel pressure to accommodate to ends that are extrinsic to our native purposes, and strike out blindly to recover a sense of our own reality.
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> Higher values are suspect, in view of the power of the cash nexus to reduce everything to its own level of motivation. Thus reductivism holds sway: at least the physical is real, and so we pin our faith in the acts of physical union and physical conflict as being incapable of the distortion and ambiguity of our other experiences. Our Western satori is hence strictly physical, and the purest form of enlightenment is to be found in violence: it is a means to nothing, and therefore has the purity of destruction. Thus nihilism becomes the logical philosophy for a society which has managed to subvert all other values.

It would be a mistake, of course, to pin *all* the blame for this state of affairs on the reductionism of politics and the one-dimensionality of political bureaucracy. Yet in a culture in which externalization has become the rule, the only means of discovering and dealing with what is "real," the political model itself becomes increasingly important and ends by assuming more and more of the prerogatives of significant decision. A measure of how large in our lives the importance of the political model looms would be obtained by reading repeatedly, say, such great but ancient literature as the *Bhagavad-Gita,* the *Upanishads,* the *Tao Te King,* and the Sermon on the Mount—all works which take very little notice of political models (except for Lao-tse's philosophical paternalism)—in order to see how much reality we can *feel* in the values which are discussed with no political context at all.

The point to be made, here, is that the political model we have adopted has reduced the possibilities of human growth within its limits to all but heroes, who can grow only by breaking out of those limits. We need, instead, a model of human association and cooperation which gives normal opportunities for freedom, self-reliance, individual choice, and the use of the imagination toward a higher moral order, to *ordinary* men—men who might like to increase their humanity by using, say, at least the options available to gorillas in conflict situations.

It should be obvious that we shall not get such a model of human association by tinkering with the vast and unwieldy political machine, which has become a rigid, paranoiac reflection of one-dimensional man. We need to get going, everywhere we can, small, organically related primary groups, little educational societies which accommodate to the life-needs of people instead of to their death-wishes. These societies can be created—are being created— and we need more of them. The big society is a loose affair, with many discontinuities and broken connections. It has vacancies. A vacancy in the big society can become a home of freedom, a place of nourishment to primary groups. Bureaucratic impossibilities are accomplished every day in experimental schools; at various Synanon houses, new hope and human awareness are born every hour in bureaucratically doomed people. There are social principles and viable dynamics which work in "a higher order of moral being." What for politics is disorderly schism and subversive tendency is (or may be) for education a way of life. Politics does *not* exhaust man's nature, and if you think it does, then politics only mutilates man's nature.

This is no time for political arguments. It is a time for demonstration of the higher potentialities of man. A demonstration, today, which has not this objective, is wheel-spinning, whatever its radical pretensions. An argument, today, which does not concern the promise of uncoerced human possibility is wasted breath.

REVIEW
"THIS LIFE WE TAKE"

DURING the past ten years MANAS has often noted the improving quality and the increasing quantity of books and articles aimed at abolition of the death penalty. Psychiatrists, penologists, prison authorities and even judges have written searchingly on the subject, all agreeing, in conclusion, that the day on which we end all "murders by the state" will mark the beginning of a new epoch of human understanding. There seems little doubt that each year the public temper is shifting more rapidly in this direction and that elimination of capital punishment will soon be the majority position.

This Life We Take—A Case Against the Death Penalty, a 34-page pamphlet just issued by the Northern California Friends Committee on Legislation, contains an excellent summary of these developments and indicates why accelerated education for abolition should become a concern of crucial importance. Trevor Thomas, who put the pamphlet together, speaks of the present as "a time when the failure of politics and the excesses of technology threaten, to turn Camus' phrase, victim and executioner alike," and he sees in this situation the provocatives to fundamental change.

As a stark beginning, Mr. Thomas recalls two grisly occurrences at the beginning of the last century, when the "deterrent" argument for state executions was pressed in England to its moralistic extreme. In 1800, the English courts punished more than two hundred offenses by death: a boy thirteen years old was hanged for stealing a spoon; another aged ten had been earlier sentenced to death and hanged, the reasoning of the judges being that it was proper to execute the child because "the example of this boy's punishment may be a means of deterring other children from the like offenses." Mr. Thomas summarizes subsequent trends in attitudes towards execution:

> The world trend is toward abolition. Seventy-two countries have eliminated executions, either by law or custom, and application in capital punishment countries is declining. A United Nations study reports that "in general, the modern tendency is more and more to drop the mandatory character of the death penalty." Another study for the Council of Europe noted an "undoubted decline in capital punishment" in European Countries.
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> This trend, begun in the last century, was diverted by the fascists and World War II. Italy was abolitionist until 1928 when the death penalty was brought back for crimes against "national security." By 1930, capital punishment was again applied for felonies as well. Germany had the death penalty before the Nazis came to power and made a death-house of Europe. In wartime, even abolitionist countries reintroduced the death penalty on a limited scale. Belgium, the Netherlands, and Norway executed traitors, persons guilty of war crimes, and collaborators with the enemy. After the war, the death penalty was abolished in both Italy and West Germany and other abolition countries returned to their pre-war status. France and Spain still exact the death penalty. The Soviet Union once reserved death for "political crimes," but now the penalty applies to economic crimes as well as murder, spying and sabotage: Economic crimes include money speculation, large-scale embezzlement of state property, and counterfeiting.

During the past year, and for the first time in history, the U.S. Department of Justice adopted a stand in opposition to the death penalty. The opinion of the Department is summarized in a single sentence: "Modern penology with its correctional and rehabilitation skills affords far greater benefits to society than the death penalty which is inconsistent with its goals."

Many newspapers have undertaken to educate a once negatively conditioned public in their editorial columns. For example, the New York *Herald Tribune* recently said:

> These states [with abolition] have not found that the lack of a supreme penalty has affected their crime rate; careful comparisons of states, region by region, show that capital punishment does not have the deterrent effect which is alleged as its principal social excuse. The number of executions, even in states which retain the death penalty, is declining more

rapidly than the homicide rate which indicated a public revulsion which has not yet found expression in statutes.

Over the centuries, society has moved away from the crueler forms of inflicting legal death; it has limited the number of capital crimes; banned public executions; tended to be less ready to carry existing laws to extremes. Evidently, capital punishment itself is becoming outdated . . . as the public conscience becomes more and more aware of the possibilities for fatal error, of the capriciousness, of the relative ineffectuality of the death penalty, its end is inevitable and should be hastened.

Mr. Thomas provides a short bibliography, which we shall later list, adding one book reviewed in MANAS. The most thorough study available, in Trevor Thomas' opinion, is by Hugo Adam Bedau. A single paragraph sums up Bedau's findings:

The whole pattern of treatment of capital convictions by the higher courts seems devoid of rhyme or reason. Thus, a man proven guilty is saved from execution by the striking ingenuity of his counsel on appeal to the Supreme Court. But another man goes to his death purely because his attorney neglected to raise a point of procedure at the trial, thereby barring the higher courts from touching the issue. One man is literally taken from the electric chair, after his counsel had the good luck to find a Supreme Court Justice who would issue a temporary stay of execution; upon re-hearing, the conviction was reversed. But another man is executed because the notice of stay of execution arrived seconds too late to halt the flow of lethal gas into the execution chamber.

Mr. Thomas emphasizes the ethical considerations which have prompted the Friends Committee on Legislation to distribute such pamphlets as *This Life We Take:*

Men in society are responsible for their acts, but the man society executes for a crime is in part society's own child. He has to some degree been reared and nurtured by it, and is conditioned by what that society has done or failed to do for him, sometimes by what it has done to him. He is evidence of the tragic fact that home and school, church and synagogue, social agency and institution have partially failed in their purpose.

Experience so far indicates that through psychiatry, psychotherapy and religious resources, many men who we condemn to death cells, or to slow death for life behind bars can be rehabilitated to life in society.

When there is a public philosophy which values rehabilitation and crime prevention more than revenge or punishment, other new ideas will emerge, and proven experiments thrive and expand.

The death penalty is not consistent with that philosophy; it can no longer be accepted as right punishment. We now understand that it does not prevent crime. Let us abandon the death penalty, and quickly.

Any bibliography of current reading on capital punishment should include the following:

Giles Playfair and Derrick Sington: *The Offenders* (1957)

James Avery Joyce: *Capital Punishment* (1961)

Hugo Adam Bedau (ed.): *The Death Penalty in America: An Anthology* (1946)

Marc Ancel: *Capital Punishment* (United Nations, 1962)

Albert Camus: *Reflections on the Guillotine* (1959)

Arthur Koestler: *Reflections on Hanging* (1957)

Eugene Block: *And May God Have Mercy* (1962)

Thorsten Sellin: *The Death Penalty* (1959)

The price of the pamphlet, *This Life We Take,* is 25 cents. Copies may be ordered from the Friends Committee on Legislation, 2160 Lake Street, San Francisco, California 94121, or from the Pasadena office of the FCL, 984 North Fair Oaks.

COMMENTARY
THE NATURE OF SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY

AN essay by Michael Polanyi, *Science, Faith, and Society*, first published in 1946, with a revised edition made available as a paperback in 1964 (Phoenix, University of Chicago Press, $1.50), provides so fundamental a restoration of science to the Humanist tradition that this book should be carefully studied by all those who are puzzled by conflicting arguments concerning the "authority" of Science and the Humanities. The publisher's announcement is apt summary of the author's thesis:

> Polanyi aims to show that science must be understood as a community of inquirers held together by a common faith; science, he argues, is not the use of "scientific method" but rather consists in a discipline imposed by scientists on themselves in the interests of discovering an objective, impersonal truth. That such truth exists and can be found is part of the scientists' faith. Polanyi maintains that both authoritarianism and scepticism, attacking this faith, are attacking science itself.

The legitimate role of "authority" in science has this perceptive analysis by Mr. Polanyi:

> To understand science is to penetrate to the reality described by science; it represents an intuition of reality, for which the established practice and doctrine of science serve as clues. Apprenticeship in science may be regarded as a much simplified repetition of the whole series of discoveries by which the existing body of science was originally established.
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> Thus the authority to which the student of science submits tends to eliminate its own functions by establishing direct contact between the student and the reality of nature. As he approaches maturity the student will rely for his beliefs less and less on authority and more and more on his own judgment. His own intuition and conscience will take over responsibility in the measure in which authority is eclipsed. This does not mean he will rely no more on the report of other scientists—far from it—but it means that such reliance will henceforth be entirely subject to his own judgment. Submission to authority will henceforth form merely a part of the process of discovery, for which—as for the process as a whole—he will assume full responsibility before his own conscience.

It is the humanistic *morale*, generated by the community of responsible human beings who investigate natural reality, that constitutes authentic science, in Polanyi's view.

His observations on society have an interesting relation to the contentions of this week's lead article. He says in the final chapter:

> I believe to have shown that the continued pursuit of a major intellectual process by men requires a state of social dedication and also that only in a dedicated society can men live an intellectually and morally acceptable life. This cannot fail to suggest that the whole purpose of society lies in enabling its members to pursue their transcendent obligations; particularly to truth, justice, and charity. Society is of course also an economic organization. But the social achievements of ancient Athens compared with those of, say, Stockport—which is about the same size as Athens was—cannot be measured by the differences in the standard of living in the two places. The advancement of well-being therefore seems not to be the real purpose of society, but rather a secondary task. . . .

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
PREJUDICE AND AUTHORITY

THE recent MANAS discussion of Dimensions of Existential Psychology" (in Frontiers, Jan. 26) showed the relationship between the authoritarian-inclined personality and the tendency to moralize—specifically, moralizing by hating and fearing persons, and groups or nations of different ethnic backgrounds. Significant correlations between the development of prejudice in children and the moralistic stances of deficiency-motivated adults were demonstrated some years ago (1948) in *Human Relations,* "A Study of Prejudice in Children" by Else Frenkel-Brunswik. This author summarized the results of research designed to isolate the determinants of susceptibility to racial or ethnic prejudice in children. (This work was done at the Institute of Child Welfare at the University of California.) A total of about 1500 boys and girls of varied socio-economic backgrounds were repeatedly interviewed and tested—with interviews also extending to parents. It was soon found that a number of the "well-behaved" children were singularly uncreative because continued subjection to arbitrary authority in the home had produced in them the tendency to find security in *acceptance* of coercion, this kind of security then becoming a natural matrix of prejudice. For instance:

> The admiration the ethnocentric child tends to have for success, power, and prestige may be assumed to result from submission to authority based on his fear of punishment and retaliation. The originally forced submission to parental authority apparently leads to a continued demand for autocratic leadership, strict discipline and punishment, as exercised not only by parents but also by parent substitutes. Thus ethnocentric children, especially girls, tend to agree more often than liberal ones with the statements: "Teachers should tell children what to do and not try to find out what the children want. . . . It would be better if teachers would be more strict."

This is the "ethnocentric" child and, as Frenkel-Brunswik shows: "The parents of the ethnocentric child are highly concerned with status. They use more harsh and rigid forms of discipline which the child generally submits to rather than accepts or understands. Parents are seen simultaneously as the providers of one's physical needs and as capricious arbiters of punishment. On the surface the ethnocentric child tends, especially in his more general statements, to idealize his parents. There are, however, indications that the parent-child relationship is lacking in genuine affection."

Since about 1948, psychologists such as Erich Fromm have been pointing out that there are many subtle forms of indoctrination which affect people (including children, of course) who do not appear to have been subjected to the classical forms of authoritarian control. In an interview published by *McCall's* (October, 1965) Dr. Fromm remarked:

> It is quite clear that today there is more indoctrination culturally, there are more books and more lectures that tell you what you *ought* to feel than in the past, and therefore people know better what they're *supposed* to feel. If you took a still relatively simple peasant community which doesn't have so much access to all our media of communication, you would find that people are less indoctrinated as to what they are supposed to feel, and therefore many of their feelings are more genuine.

This observation has an obvious bearing on Frenkel-Brunswik's summary of the relationship between the prejudiced child and society. She concludes:

> From the point of view of society as a whole, the most important problem therefore seems to be the child's attitude toward authority. Forced submission to authority produces only surface conformity countermanded by violent underlying destructiveness, dangerous to the very society to which there seems to be conformity. Only a frightened and frustrated child will tend to gain safety and security by oversimplified black-white schematizations and categorizations on the basis of crude, external characteristics.

We are concerned here with the crippling effects of what might be called spurious emotions and attitudes—crippling because they make it impossible for the child to develop an independent ethical sense, without which he can contribute little to a democratic society. As Marshall Windmiller put it in his "Myth Maintenance" paper (MANAS, Dec. 29, 1965), the prevailing myths of our time are prejudicial, fear-

and hate-producing—clear embodiments of the authoritarian concept which the U.S. Constitution was designed to repudiate:

> The central myth of America today is an extension and modernization of the chosen people concept. Briefly stated it is this: the American people have a great mission to save the world from Communism, the modern embodiment of all evil.
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> All societies have their myths and legends. They perform useful functions. They help to unite people and provide the rationale for concerted action. They generally have some basis in fact, but more often they depart from true reality and embrace fantasy. The myth of the chosen people, that is, a nation chosen by God for a divine mission, does not lend itself to factual proof, yet it has been believed by countless peoples throughout history, and is put forth in all seriousness even today by people who should know better.

These attitudes produce, in both children and ourselves what Frenkel-Brunswik calls a "narrow and rigid personality." There are notable differences between the personalities of children who accept externalized social values and those who are encouraged to develop self-knowledge. When the hostile tendencies of a child are integrated with the simplified moralistic views of authoritarian parents, their "instinctual tendencies cannot be utilized for constructive purposes, such as genuine ability for love, or creative activities, for which both more permissiveness and more guidance on the part of the adult would be needed." She continues:

> Since the ethnocentric child often gets neither of these he presents the dual aspects of being too inhibited, on the one hand, and of having the tendency to join wild and rough games, on the other. The gang-oriented child may later conform to an "adult gang" without having acquired an internalized conscience which would control the direct and indirect expressions of aggression.
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> By contrast, the liberal child is more oriented toward love and less toward power than is the ethnocentric child. He is more capable of giving affection since he has received more real affection. He tends to judge people more on the basis of their intrinsic worth than does the ethnocentric child who places more emphasis on conformity to social mores. The liberal child, on the other hand, takes internal values and principles more seriously. Since he fears punishment and retaliation less than does the ethnocentric child, he is more able really to incorporate the values of society imposed upon him. The liberal child employs the help of adults in working out his problems of sex and aggression, and thus can more easily withstand hateful propaganda both in the forms of defamation of minorities and of glorification of war. By virtue of the greater integration of his instinctual life he becomes a more creative and sublimated individual. The unprejudiced child seems to be able to express disagreement with, and resentment against, the parents more openly, resulting in a much greater degree of independence from the parents and from authorities in general. At the same time there is love-orientated dependence on parents and people in general which constitutes an important source of gratification.

A summarizing generalization of many such conclusions is found in Kenneth Keniston's comparison of the immaturity of the moralizer with the creative responsibility of a person concerned with developing an ethical sense. Dr. Keniston writes:

> Morals can be taught and transmitted with minimal loss from generation to generation, but ethics must be re-achieved by each new generation. For this reason, the ethical attainments of one generation often degenerate into the moral homilies of the next.
>
> Like many of the tokens of individuation, the ethical life is often difficult. A moral code provides a rule book for behavior, while an ethical system merely offers ideals without specifying the precise ways to attain them. The ethical man must often hesitate, reflect and ponder, while his moral fellow must merely obey his conscience. And a man who does obey his ingrained sense of morals can usually sleep with a clear conscience; but an ethical man can never be sure that he has chosen ethically. In his pursuit of the good, the ethical man continually risks conflict between his own ethics and the morals of his tribe, province or nation-state. To his moral fellows who consider Right and Duty self-evident, the ethical man will often seem a Hamlet or a traitor, struggling to reconcile action with aspiration while others act.

FRONTIERS

Doctrines of Change

THERE are various ways of thinking of change. Changes in the face of nature are accomplished by the wearing action of the elements, from which rocks are eroded into sand; by sudden release of subterranean pressures, bringing cataclysmic alterations to the earth's surface; and by synthesizing growth-processes which slowly convert barrens into forest canopies and, with the help of man, turn wild meadows into symmetrical patterns of cultivated land.

When it comes to our own affairs, however, we tend to be preoccupied with but a single process of change—the cataclysmic. Seeking objective noticeability and the drama of action which is sudden, and seems complete, we recognize *real* changes in great revolutions. It is possible to generate vulgar popularity for the idea of progress by orgy, and while revolutionary leaders with weak stomachs may be shaken in their resolve by the vulgarity of over-simplified claims, there is always the excuse that the revolution is for *everybody*, which makes vulgarity a necessary condition of success.

Ironically enough, this doctrine of sudden revolutionary change, while often claiming to be based on "science" and on political adaptations of evolutionary theory, was really borrowed from the psychology of Christian belief. The Christian apologists who contested the gradualism of Darwin and Lyell were advocates of progress by cataclysm—in their reading of geology and biology as well as in their contention for the sudden advent of man (by divine creation) and his sudden transformation to fullness of life (by conversion). Sinners were told that they must *believe*, not that they must learn how to grow. Exhortation and denunciation were the transforming principles of religious progress, and party loyalty and liquidation of evil men became the principles of a successful revolution. Externally quite different, and mortally opposed on the field of social action, these two programs for change are almost the same in their psychological dynamics. Both turn the identification of evil into a simple choice between blacks and whites, both ignore the slow, organic processes upon which true growth depends in all human beings, and both fix upon external measures of progress.

This is a lazy man's selection of means to reach the goal. Instead of learning the real principles of human development, which are individual and not collective, you dichotomize the field of experience, declare one part good, the other bad, and then declare war. Since life is indeed a struggle, your declaration alone will attract a number of followers. And since, sometimes, at what are perhaps climactic and completing moments of history, such "wars" (final resolutions) do in fact take place—there *are* cataclysms in nature; even the earth's axis tilts on occasion, making new centers of gravity almost instantaneously—you argue that you know from historical studies how to get quick results from sudden revolutionary action. So you plagiarize nature and, unless you are extraordinarily wise, you publish your revelation at a time when it can do nothing but interrupt normal development and leave behind vast graveyards and a scorched earth.

We have been making notes, lately, of the gradual emergence of another point of view. The expressions of this sort we have for illustration are neither dramatic nor world-shaking, but they have the unmistakable virtue of recognizing growth-processes wherever they appear, and of ignoring the familiar dichotomies. The following, for example, from Cyril Connolly's *The Unquiet Grave* (Harper, 1945), reveals balanced insight into even the State's potentialities for change:

> . . . to live in a decadence need not make us despair, it is but one technical problem the more which an artist has to solve.
>
> Even in the most socialized community, there must always be a few who best serve it by being kept solitary and isolated. The artist, like the mystic, naturalist, mathematician or "leader," makes his

contribution out of his solitude. This solitude the State is now attempting to destroy, and a time may come when it will no more tolerate private inspiration than the Church once tolerated private worship. State Socialism in politics always goes with social realism in the arts, and eventually the position is reached that whatever the common man does not understand is treason. Yet it is a mistake completely to identify the State with a philistine father-figure and so to react blindly against it. For the State includes those who criticize it, and their criticism may lead to change. Today the State shows a benevolent face to Culture-Diffusion, but to those who create no trace of sympathy or indulgence, with the result that we are becoming a nation of commentators, of critics and hack-explainers, most of whom are ex-artists. Everything for the Milk-bar, nothing for the Cow! Patiently and obstinately the artist must convince the State that in the long run it will be judged by its art, and that if the State is to replace the private patron, then it must imitate, and even surpass, that patron's tolerance, humility and liberality. When will the State say, "Here is a thousand pounds young man; go anywhere you like for six months, and bring me back something beautiful"?

Then, in Lyle Stuart's *Independent* for last December, Robert Tabor reports on the response of the American people to the Vietnam war, not in terms of dichotomies, but in terms of the dissolution of familiar divisions of the people. He writes:

Whence, then, the ray of hope?

It arises precisely from the spreading recognition in the United States of the hopelessness of the war, of the fact that we have got ourselves into a bottomless bog in which American technology is of no avail. The industrialists may like the war: it is making them richer, for the moment. But others—men of conscience, people of vision, mothers of sons who must die in an unjust war—increasingly do not like it.

And here, it seems to me, there is promise, relating not so much to the actual conflict, whose outcome is written, as to the American people themselves.

The war in Vietnam is, I think, beginning to have an unusual effect, in *politicalizing* an a-political people. It is raising serious moral and practical questions, it is forcing individuals and groups to question their goals, to ask themselves what sort of a society this is, this Moon-aspiring, on-the-way-to-being Great Society, that must bomb children in wretched Asian villages in order to maintain an illusory "prestige" and to combat a largely mythical enemy. . . .

The atmosphere is thickening: the spilling of sacred American blood inevitably intoxicates. Yet the March on Washington, the declaration of the National Council of Churches the widening *dialogue* about the goals and principles and morality of the war, suggest that the American people are beginning to *think*. The variety of the thinkers, the disparity of their particular interests and even of their basic philosophies suggests something more: that in the absence of political alternatives between the two great political parties . . . the basis of a new political movement may be forming.

A third party, if you like. A peace party. Possibly even, although this is really too much to hope, a people's party.

When the Rev. Eugene Carson Blake can find common cause with, say, Alan Ginsberg and Dr. Eugene Genovese, when James Reston is not entirely out of step with either the *National Guardian* or the *Christian Century*, there may be reason for cautiously tempered optimism.

One more breaker of stereotypes is Richard C. Cornuelle, whose new book, *Reclaiming the American Dream* (Random House, 1965), calls upon American businessmen to accept their responsibilities as shapers of the patterns of the common economic life and to take an independent hand in warding off the last-ditch, low-grade statistical and mass solutions to economic problems provided by the Welfare State. This book deserves more attention than it will probably get from the liberal and radical press.