CHANGING IDEAS OF "REALITY"

SCIENTISTS are map-makers. The charts their labors produce are intended to guide their colleagues and later on, others, in expeditions over a terrain which, by those who are impressed with the apparent accuracy of the maps, is acknowledged to be the world of primary reality. Of course, such "consensus" ideas of external reality become vague reference-points to which most people have recourse only at special times for different reasons. Knowledge of celestial mechanics is not of much use to a man with a toothache or a girl in love. But a dentist equipped with tools designed by other specialists and an anesthetic developed by still others can perform minor miracles in the mouth, while at least an approach to understanding the play of human emotions has been made by explorers of psycho-dynamics. Accordingly, the methods of scientists have branched out in all directions and there are already vast accumulations of (more or less unrelated) maps with ever more meticulous methods of representation. The problem of generalizing all these findings is recognized as acute, and for this and other reasons there is a healthy skepticism among scientists themselves in respect to large philosophical claims such as discovering "reality" or determining "truth." At the same time, men who are engaged in productive scientific work are not especially dismayed by the thought that final truth is not accessible to them. In this scientists are very much like other human beings. Intense and fruitful action is often an effective surrogate for knowing truth, and this has both helping and hindering aspects.

There is nonetheless a common need for some "it's-there-when-you-have-to-have-it" idea of reality. And whenever the world of daily experience begins to contain more threats than promises, or presents more dilemmas than simple challenges to human energy, the vague idea of "reality" which is held in solution by the times is subjected to serious questioning. It is as though solid beliefs long taken for granted have become shaky, and, with a logic based on past attitudes, people begin looking around

for other beliefs which are more reliable, but can also be taken for granted, since that is what we are used to in relation to our thinking about "reality." Having enjoyed an unearned certainty for years, a man may feel justified in supposing that some other brand of unearned certainty is available for borrowing, somewhere.

To speak of "unearned certainty" is manifestly a judgment about some human beings in contrast to others. It implies that there is a fundamental difference in attitude between people who go looking for a map they can rely upon without question, and people who look at maps with considerable interest, but ask, first of all, what do these maps leave out?

This suggests that some men are able to think of themselves as independent of *all* maps—of having in themselves a kind of self-awareness which does not depend upon any map supplied by somebody else. And it means, by implication, that other men are horrified, frightened, and enraged by the prospect of a lonely, mapless existence, even for a single moment. Take away my maps, you take away my life! they say. Their idea of the self is securely imprisoned in some authoritatively charted area of the not-self, and a threat to the authenticity of this area is a threat to their identity.

It is clear that theologians are map-makers, too. Also the political ideologists. Anyone who insists upon framing and identifying human reality with some easy, objectifying doctrine is a map-maker. And history, thus far, is very largely an account of the revisions, expansions, and exchanges of maps.

There is a basic difference, however, between religious and scientific maps. With a good scientific map, and its necessary projections into technology, you can make a turbine that will work, or a hydrogen bomb that will explode. With science you can do a great many constructive things and also a great many terrible things. The religious maps seem less reliable, or, according to the verdict of our own

historical period, not reliable at all. Subjected to various pragmatic judgments, religious maps once held to be true and acceptable by good religious people were found to be filled with error. The world is round, not flat. The earth is not the center of the universe. God did not make the world in seven days. In short, the "science" of the religious maps was not science but nonsense. The scientific maps check out in experience. The religious maps which can be checked by science do not.

But today, a vast reassessment of the religious maps is going on. Everyone now admits that it was a big mistake to allow religious maps to pretend to be scientific. But religious maps were also supposed to chart areas of reality not given attention by science. The claim of science to the effect that those other areas were somehow side-effects of external reality, or simply unreal, was also a big mistake, we now say. Religion erred by trying to be a monopoly, but so has science. So we are looking once again at the old religious maps.

An interesting argument about religious maps is going on right now. There is an extreme school which maintains that no religious maps are any good. They are *traps* which ensnare people through their longing for objective certainty, it is said. One must, through enormous effort, turn away from all maps and seek the unnameable core of reality within oneself. That is one view, and it has an internal logic for subjects which suggests that there is truth in it.

Then there is the view, sanctioned by ages of acceptance, that religious maps are always "symbolic." They are to be read by experts who study such matters and are qualified to give readings to the laity. But this, the rejoinder comes, produces only a specious, second-hand objectivity. These readings soon turn into "authoritative" maps, and once again we are in the hands of the theologians, who are by no means infallible, nor do they agree among themselves. The scientists, whose maps are inadequate for our human purposes, at least agree among themselves. Well, most of the time.

Another view is that there can be no authoritative experts in religion. Religious maps are symbolic and we have to interpret the symbols for ourselves. Here the counsels vary. We have to interpret the symbols partly, mostly, or completely for ourselves. The more philosophical the religion, the more you are expected to do it yourself.

But what does "symbolic" mean? It means that a symbol is *like,* but not the same as, what it represents. The sea is a symbol of all-containing life, but it is not the reality of all-containing life. A historical Savior who knew the truth is like the knowing principle in other human beings, but is not the same as that reality in ourselves—or not until we make it so. All communications which relate to subjective reality are symbolic; they are true in some sense and not true in some sense.

The Holy Grail, the Golden Fleece, the Nibelungen Treasure—these are symbols with undisclosed meanings behind apparent meanings. The myths are symbolic accounts of the quest for certainty, for truth, for salvation.

How will we know when we have read the symbol correctly? Well, some people say, You'll just *know*. Others say, Keep trying. Still others say, Wanting to "know" is a snare, just eat your breakfast.

Now what seems to be necessary, throughout all these encounters, is a kind of patience with uncertainty, and a sense of being able to anticipate and to endure an endless change of maps. So, borrowing a mythic image from the Greeks, you could say that a human being is a kind of Proteus who is forever changing his form. You can't define him in terms of any particular form, in fact you can't define him. Unless to say that form-changer is his definition. Any kind of fixed definition for a human being is an invitation to confinement, even to death as a man. Yet what can you do with an unfixed definition? All you can do is live a life which takes nothing for granted. Who can bear that?

Here, perhaps, we have an explanation of a certain obscurity of the minds of the great. We read what they say, waiting for them to lay out some version of a reality we can take for granted, or in which we can rest easy, but they never do. This feeling they seem to have of being real, or of knowing a reality that escapes us—how can we get a taste of it for ourselves? How can we get the

rewards of daring without *being* daring? How can we throw away all the maps without feeling utterly lost? Is it impossible to have a religion we can *like?*

Ethics offers its solvent at this point. If feeling lost is the human condition when life is faced with total honesty, then we are all lost together, and the fellow feeling of the lost may be the only way of being found—in time. There is a reality in human solidarity that pain and loneliness do not dissolve. To feel one's unity with other lost selves is to unite with the only reality we can know. It is also true that every "something" is "at home" somewhere—for a while. We are not only this lonely self-awareness; we have equipment, and the equipment, at least, can have proper maps. Our trouble comes only from mistaking the equipment for ourselves. Philosophical religion might be called the study of how to distinguish between our equipment and ourselves.

Might science—a new kind of science—have a role in all this? If we are able to go back and find help in the philosophical use of religion, can we go back to science in the same way, and make a different use of scientific method?

Well, if there are regularities in the physical world which can be studied, found out, and mapped, we might study, also, the regularities that show themselves in all the acts of map-making: If, at the end of the line in the philosophy of science, we are obliged to admit that we haven't found any "ultimate truth," but nonetheless have learned a great deal about the behavior of whatever it is that behaves throughout the world of nature, why can't the same general result be obtained through our experience of the world of consciousness? We would have to be careful not to claim definitive finality for our psychological maps. We would have to be sure we were not making men into "things," all over again, since we know that doesn't work. It was done by the theologians, and it didn't work; and it was done by the scientists, and it didn't work. Here we are, surrounded by all those old maps we can't use, that don't apply for human purposes; that make people uneasy and apprehensive because they are getting worn, dirty, and unreliable, yet even in this declining condition still have enough authority to support the hope of many people that human life can be lived without daring, and that a you-can-take-it-for-granted truth exists somewhere and can probably be found if all the bad people who insist upon hiding it are put out of the way.

Could there be a science which starts out with the proposition that Promethean daring is the only way to truth? Which says that if you're not ready to stand alone, mapless and unafraid, you shouldn't expect or pretend to know anything important; and which points out that if you are ready to stand alone, pretending to knowledge will be the last thing you'll think of to do?

This sounds like an open invitation to scientists to become mystics, and the answer to such a comment can only be, Why not? Statistical solutions for human problems don't work, so why should statistical objections (not everybody has mystical inclinations) be given any force? We can't get a workable philosophy from a theory of knowledge which ignores individual inspiration and revelations of meaning. It is a major irony of limiting theories of knowledge that basic discoveries of science are in large part owed to that kind of inner experience, as any thorough study of the origins of scientific theory makes abundantly clear. Quite possibly, more comes through to mystics and enthusiasts about even the physical nature of things, and if the evidence on this score be deemed insufficient, it can still be contended that a civilization which knows so little about human subjectivity, about the formation of hypothesis, and about processes of creativity cannot possibly deny a "mystic" element in all far-reaching discovery. There may be some symbiotic relationship between "spirit" and "matter" of which, as yet, we know nothing at all.

Every theory of knowledge, every doctrine about the nature of man which depends upon authority which is external to individuals has proved to lead to tyrannical social organization and dogmatic subjection of all ideas to a thought-controlling orthodoxy—a ruling consensus established by either a body of theocratic experts or political interpreters of "scientific certainty." It would be completely silly to entrust our future to methods which can have no other social and moral result. While it is true enough

that the democratic or liberal tradition honors the uniqueness and value of the individual, this idea has had little more than lip service for several generations, and an idea that is not practiced eventually dies in its original meaning, to survive only in ritual forms.

There is hardly any point, at this stage, in intellectual rejection of introspective science. While we know a great deal, descriptively and dynamically, about the world of objects, we know almost nothing about the world of subjects. We know something about how subjects look at objects, but almost nothing about how subjects look at subjects. Until there has been thorough investigation of the possibilities of the latter kind of science, a critical stance toward such work is only the bigotry of a sect of mapmakers.

It is important, for one thing, to see how ethical considerations enter into what we suppose to be impartial examination of the behavior of other people. Our feeling of unity with them deeply affects our judgments of what they do. Our own sense of self and of the interests of the self has a far-reaching effect on our reactions to the behavior of others. Subjects are not only psychological units. They are also ethical units, and to be an ethical unit means to have a varying diameter in one's sense of being. An entire dynamics of knowing may be implicit in the idea that we are parts of one another. Apparently, men are able to use these dynamics without needing or perhaps being able to describe how they work. One man, like a mother bent compassionately over her suffering child, feels the pain of other men, and the pervading presence of this pain in his life affects everything he think and does. How will he be understood by men indifferent to all pain but their own? On this basis, it becomes obvious that the problems of conflict resolution are problems of knowing more about the potential diameters of the self. One might argue that while an indeterminate number of physical ills are psycho-somatic, a vast collection of our social ills are psycho-ethical, and we have not even made a beginning at mapping such general possibilities. There are a few scattered studies showing the effect of the idea of the self in criminal behavior, but little

to suggest the general importance of the scientific study of subjects. It must be admitted that study of subjects may be possible only in terms of subtle reflections, as in the "tracks" they leave, or the trails they make on the terrain of the inner life. We may have to devise "cloud chambers" for such study. But conceivably, to know something of these tracks and trails would be to know a great deal more about ourselves than we know now.

It is not too much to say that, from a variety of evidence, the world of scientific inquiry now seems to be preparing itself for brave forays into the world of subjectivity. The main difficulty in this undertaking is in the non-transferable character of subjective experience or knowledge. But this objection always applied to what men term self-knowledge, and to the compelling visions which call some men to live lives which, for the purposes of tradition, are eventually "objectified" into models of heroism and self-sacrifice. Only the jealously guarded security of the old maps, constructed under the direction of a failing theory of reality, stands in the way.

REVIEW
THE AGONY OF THE RACES

HURRY SUNDOWN, a novel by K. B. Gilden (husband and wife, Katya and Bert), is a thousand pages of saturation with the atmosphere of the Deep South, in which five or six plots are threaded together by the pain of a confrontation between the races which has only just begun. The main line of the story concerns two families, one Negro, the other white, living side by side on patches of rich land along a river, and the climax is reached when the two men, both ex-GI's, decide to resume their childhood closeness and work together to make their small farms pay. It is then that the white man, Rad McDowell, is forced to learn what the Negro, Reeve Scott, knew all along—that the anger and suspicion of the whites at this "collaboration" would undercut everything good they tried to do. People who wonder about what Virginia Naeve said (see last week's editorial) concerning the impossibility of friendly Southern whites and Negroes getting together should read *Hurry Sundown.* There is no happy ending, only continuing struggle—all that can be hoped for, these days.

The book has portraits from the life of Southern politicians and of people who still exploit the old Southern idea of "family," and there is scene after scene showing the naïve self-righteousness of men and women for whom what others call "prejudice" is the credo of a way of life. Northern capital has entered the area, bought up a lot of farms, and introduced the bustling spirit of industrialized agriculture in an enormous project complete with a new freezing plant, all under the managership of a tough, arrogant, local citizen determined to rise to economic and political power. The central conflict arises out of this manager's attempts to force Rad McDowell and Reeve Scott to sell their farms to his company, which needs them in order to complete a large irrigation project. They won't sell, and the personal resentment and devious but ruthless efforts of the manager to get their land weave a web of disaster and failure for all.

Something should be said about the skill in characterization of the Gildens. They succeed in making the reader comprehend the psychological strait jacket worn by the prejudiced white Southerner. You don't begin to like the men and women who do such cruel, selfish things, but it becomes possible to understand how they feel and sometimes even to pity them. One begins to recognize that there is probably no human fate worse than being born into a culture in which the dominant caste is absolutely convinced that its narrow, partisan beliefs are *right.* For in such a situation the prevailing *mores* exercise no restraint at all on the amoral conformists of the culture—who do whatever they can get away with to protect their position. There is no wrong seen in the worst of acts, so long as it serves their "cause." This is the explanation for the crimes that keep on occurring in the South.

But the authentic tragedy of the book lies in the struggle of the two men, Reeve and Rad—black and white—to be faithful to their friendship and at the same time not betray others with whom they have alliances of blood. The authors build character and setting for seven hundred pages before they get to the place where Reeve is driven to explain his stand-offishness in relation to Rad's innocent overtures. Rad asks:

> "What makes you so high and mighty? What gives you the right, why am I always the one on the spot?"

> "You come to me," Reeve said, "asking all these questions. What's good? What's bad? What's right and wrong? Why me? Am I different from anybody else? Any wiser or nobler? . . . My strength may be as the strength of ten because my cause is just. But injustice don't necessarily make angels out of people. More like the other thing. We got all the same weakness everybody else has, and with the same right to have it. We have our villains and vandals, our profiteers and parasites, our leeches and larcenists, boasters and beggars, seducers and sodomists, all kinds of phonies and nuts by the dozen. Take off your glasses."

> "What for? I can see just as good."

> "But I can't see you!"

Rad's eyes when he removed his glasses looked so like innocence betrayed that Reeve couldn't help but feel sorry for him and not only sorry but enjoyably so. He had enjoyed belaboring him, and relishing his

enjoyment he was ashamed of it, and being pierced with shame was borne on the wings of an exhilarating satisfaction.

"Here we are two men, friends, huh? That should be the beginning and the end of it. But it's not. There are people Rad, and some of my people, too"—he felt it out carefully, was this the truth of it or was there more and more?—"that would tear apart and undermine anything they can't have and don't believe possible. . . . You mustn't forget that to most of us there's nothing lower than a colored man who runs to the first white man he can attach himself to and runs his mouth off against his own, making an exception of himself. And if that is what I'm doing now! You see how screwed up it gets?"

All the friendly encounters between the races are touched with this kind of irony. But the whites, unlike the Negroes, begin to feel deprived, especially of the thick sentiment which they can no longer indulge, while the Negroes, who know the realities of the situation, have nothing to lose.

Toward the end, when the pretty, emotional woman whose father once owned the land of the big industrial farm—and who married its ambitious manager—is mourning the death of her mentally deficient son, there is a dramatic meeting between her and Reeve. Reeve's mother had been her "mammy," but her husband was conniving to get control of Reeve's land. She says:

"Reeve, answer me! Where has it all gone? Ever since I can remember, when I'd wake up in the morning, all day long, any time, you could hear colored folks singing in the kitchens, out in the yards, in the street. You could always hear colored folk singing. I never hear them singing any more. All this division among us today, all this dissension you're sowing: Where's it all going to end. . . . Something's been lost out of our lives. . . . a quality of feeling, the kind of selfless devotion your mother gave me. . . .

"Oh, I've made my mistakes, I admit that. For whatever harm I've caused you I'm sorry, and I apologize." All the cruelty had gone out of her. She was making her amends and it cost her more effort than she would ever have believed. She was pleading with him.

"But it wasn't all bad, was it? There were good things to it, too, weren't there? Tell me the truth now. The truth. The way it really was."

Did she know what she was asking for, so innocently sitting there in the car in front of all this crowd? A sock in the jaw, a kick in the slats, to be assaulted and beaten and left for dead was nothing, Reeve thought, to this. What she wanted out of him was what he above all need not give her. The one brutality he most mustn't. An honest answer.

"You want it straight?" he said with brutal relief, laying it down, committing himself body and soul.

"Yes. You showed me things, Reeve, remember, when I was a little girl, baby birds blown out of their nest in a storm—"

"My mother never loved you more than she did herself," he said. There it was, on the line. "She didn't work for you. She worked for us."

He started away and she called him back, the peremptory note back in her voice. "Reeve, I'm not through yet." And with a thinly quivering smile she asked, "Do you hate me?"

Hate? . . . . His father crawling under the house with him to share his shame. The plow his mother harnessed to her back after the mule was taken. All the years of invidious comparison. White is right and black is evil. That crept through his own race like an infection. Get white, get right or get out. The second-rate. The back seat. The door shut.

That radiant creature with everything on her side, the world at her command, badgering him with questions. . . .

"I can only answer that," he said enigmatically, and what it cost him to admit it he would never have believed, "like my mamma would. Anybody you know about you can't hate."

Reading this book can't be the same as going down into Mississippi, but it helps. It also helps to frame a book like this one if you recall that the day the bodies of the civil rights workers, Schwerner, Chaney, and Goodman, were found was also the day when the President ordered the bombing of North Vietnam. Any touch with the pain in the South is a touch with the agony of race, and of the world. A woman in Mississippi with whom Virginia Naeve corresponded for months about the distribution of packages, not knowing her race, turned out to be white. She was Rita Schwerner, whose husband was murdered that summer, in Philadelphia, Mississippi.

COMMENTARY
THE "B" LANGUAGE

IN *Taoism—The Parting of the Way* (Beacon), Holmes Welch describes a principle of reconciliation that could have extraordinary importance in both the human and the international relations of our time. For as Lao Tsu says, it is by "believing the truthful man and also believing the liar," that "all become truthful." In these days of over-heated suspicions and propaganda, it is certainly true that "it is by not believing people that you turn them into liars." Initial distrust grows into a vicious circle. If, as Welch points out, "our neighbors distrust us, what is the use of telling them the truth?" They *deserve* to be lied to. "And when we lie to them, they will lie to us in return." The sage, therefore, to make everyone truthful, sees truth in whatever is said. Mr. Welch develops the point:

> [The sage] considers it as impossible for anyone to tell the truth as it is to lie. To tell the truth is impossible because of the semantic problem. When the Southerner says to the Eskimo, "Yesterday was a chilly evening," the words "chilly" and "evening" mean different things to each. All of us are in some degree Southerners and Eskimos to one another. On the other hand, to tell a *lie* is impossible because every statement has a reason. That reason is the truth of the statement. Ask two forty-year-old women their age. The first may answer: "I am forty." She answers this because, in fact, she is forty. The other may answer: "I am thirty-five." The reason she answers this is because she is afraid to lose her looks. From her lips "I am thirty-five" means "I fear old age." The listener who understands the Tao of human nature catches this meaning. Her use of symbols was oblique, but to him she has told the truth. To him meaning is problematical and can be determined neither with certainty nor out of the context of gestures facial expression, and history.

> Now this indifference to our concept of "truth" helps the Sage in practicing his technique of human relations. Because he knows that everyone is telling him the truth—if he can only understand it—he never becomes angry at their lies and he never finds it necessary to correct them. He does not commit aggression because of a difference of opinion—that first great cause of human misery.

To generalize this point in another way, you could say that the Sage learns how to distinguish between statements which express Being—spoken in what Maslow terms the B-language—and those which convey, however obliquely, most of the time, Deficiency needs. No doubt Plato's Guardians, in any modern Utopia (or Eupsychia), would have to submit to tests that would determine how qualified they are to communicate in the B-language. Only those completely free from the compulsion to argue from deficiency needs, whether personal or institutionalized (diplomatic), would be allowed to rule.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

EDUCATION: LIBERATION AND ARTICULATION

[This discussion of education by Christian Bay, who is connected with the Institute of Human Problems at Stanford University, is adapted from a KPFA broadcast given earlier this year. It appears in two parts.]

II

THE school "often fails," writes Jerome Bruner. That is an understatement. It normally fails. Most graduates of American high schools and colleges remain uneducated, the prisoners of the anxieties of the lonely crowd, of the fears and taboos of child-like religions, of the phobias of conventional anti-communism, racial bigotry, or sexual straight-lacedness. This is why on this vast continent, outside a few great universities and great urban centers, only the hardiest and most articulate few dare stand up and be counted even against a moral monstrosity like the American warfare in Vietnam. Most Americans, like most Germans a generation ago, are insufficiently educated to withstand the pseudo-patriotic, hate-the-communists consensus and thus find themselves supporting values which would be anathema to them had they become free as well as articulate individuals; outside the realm of their phobias, most Americans are, after all, generous and basically liberal.

This example introduces well the subject of why our schools don't educate. The most fundamental answer, I believe, is that no political establishment anywhere wants an educated citizenry. What every governmental elite wants is a constant consensus on which it can rely, come what may. Not a Democratic or Republican consensus, in this country, but a consensus favoring not only the flag and the constitution, but private business enterprise, anti-communism at home and abroad, and free speech for all who accept this basic consensus. In the Soviet Union,

correspondingly, the socialization job expected from the schools is that they turn out, not free-swinging intellectuals and mavericks of course, but good marxists who look up to Lenin and believe in collective enterprise, temporary coexistence with capitalism, and in the inevitability of a future communist world. Every ruling hierarchy in its right mind wants its young people trained in useful skills but that they remain intellectually harnessed to the rules of the established order. In our society these rules are glorified as the hallowed Rule of Law. The structure and content of our educational system is geared to the demands of our corporate society; what our social order has wanted, writes John R. Seeley, "was not human beings but skilled ants and institutions appropriate to their production. Our schools and colleges are mostly anthills."

Ants can be governed. So can uneducated men. The trouble with educated men is that they develop a taste for governing themselves. Indeed they develop a tendency to insist on being governed only by rules to which they have freely given their consent. Truly educated individuals will feel free to and indeed compelled to disobey all rules including laws, that they find revoltingly unjust.

American universities, our highest institutions of learning, succeeded until recently in effectively silencing all effective political expression on the part of that minority of students who somehow became educated in spite of the system. At the University of California in Berkeley, where I taught from 1957 to 1962, I saw administrators use every trick in the book to keep the student government safely in the hands of the least intellectual, least educated and most pliable students; there was no inclination even to communicate with and much less to learn from the articulate student liberals and radicals. The current morality play at Berkeley, the first act of which ended with the punishment of over 800 students for civil disobedience—students whose grievances had been upheld as justified by the

Academic Senate—is not over yet, but has already had wide repercussions throughout the country. For one thing, even the once-staid Stanford student body has elected an admirer of Mario Savio its President—a self-confessed radical and conscientious objector to the Vietnam war.

Every established order, including almost every school and university, is fundamentally conservative. Yet every young person, every student, is fundamentally a humanist and a radical, I believe, if he can become educated before it is too late. I don't mean that education must lead to political radicalism in the sense, for example, of a socialist commitment; but it must lead to intellectual radicalism,—to an insistence on asking radical questions about life and about society. How else arrive at views which become truly one's own, be they accepting or rejecting toward particular social institutions?

The potential humanism of human nature is another subject. Here I want to conclude by saying that the prospects for revolutionary changes in our universities and eventually in the rest of our school systems now appear reasonably good, for several reasons. True, some of the gains won by the Free Speech Movement in Berkeley are being eroded, but far from all. And the important point is that the essential principles dramatized so effectively by the FSM—that students have the same rights as other citizens off campus, and that on campus they owe respect only to the rules of conduct which they have enacted or consented to—these principles can no more be opposed effectively in the long run than could the principle of universal suffrage in the age of our grandfathers.

Secondly, the Clark Kerr conception of the multiversity has increasingly lost the respect of thoughtful students and faculty, who want a university that by way of free inquiry and teaching serves the public good, not a knowledge-and-skills factory that appeases the various pressures from the government, from "public opinion," and from the corporate world according to the priorities of unprincipled pragmatism. *Ramparts* magazine's expose of Michigan State University, and a wealth of other recent disclosures about lack of integrity in posts of academic leadership are bound to accelerate support, among students and faculty, for those who demand integrity in research and education.

Thirdly—and if there were time the list could be extended—I believe we live not only in a technologically rapidly changing world, but also in a world with rapidly changing patterns of social organization. The least realistic course a university administration can follow is try to stand pat and refuse to listen to and at least partially accommodate student demands. The forces of change are on the whole better understood, I believe, by the young than by the old. Even that sacred Rule of Law or those sacred "proper channels of democracy," in fact though not in theory reflecting the power of the old over the young, and of the wealthy over the poor in our society, will crumble when the rules coming out of the machinery are unjust and are resisted by a fair number to the point of civil disobedience.

In the 1960's both the young and the poor in this country have for the first time become conscious of their power, or I should say conscious of some of their power. No amount of suppression or of preaching of respect for established democracy will take away from them that consciousness. More likely, demands for justice and freedom for all will continue to grow.

Let me in conclusion mention one practical formula for seeking to change the nature of the university. Last year John R. Seeley with Robert Rosen and others, including myself, attempted to launch a new type of organization at Stanford, named the Stanford Association of University Scholars. "Scholar" here refers to a student, faculty member, or research scholar. The first purpose of SAUS was to represent all the interests students and faculty have in common. But the second and more basic purpose, at least as I saw it, was to build an instrument for transforming a

benevolent academic corporation into a community of scholars, into a university worthy of that name. Students and professors constitute the university, after all, some of us reasoned; it should be for us to determine how the university should be governed. In principle not only should we govern ourselves democratically and as a relatively educated community provide a model for democratic processes to the outside world. Also, we should be the ones to hire the administrators, and to relegate self-appointed trustees to honorific and fund-raising functions.

We envisaged not a revolt but a slow, educationally rewarding process toward a gradual establishment of a new academic democratic order at our university. Time was not ripe yet at Stanford, it turned out, or the dozen or so founding fathers of SAUS have been too busy; the association is now dormant. Yet I believe it is a question of time only before the cause of academic self-government will be taken up with greater success, at Stanford and on other campuses. It is a cause as inherently just, certainly, as was once the cause of "no taxation without representation," or universal suffrage itself. Compared to universal suffrage in our democracy, academic suffrage within our great universities is far more likely to resist rule by corrupt self-seeking demogogues; politically active students and professors would by no means constitute a community of gods in Rousseau's sense (in the *Social Contract*), but would come closer than almost any other community to make real majority rule possible, and compatible with enlightened decisions. To the extent that professors and students actively concerned with the integrity of inquiry and education make a dent in the power of safely conservative and public relation-minded administrators and trustees, even slowly and gradually, we may expect genuine education to reach more and more students now too often busy with make-work (including much cramming that should be superfluous after the invention of the bookshelf) and children's play.

The old ways of sheltering college students are on their way out; they have stunted the growth of vast numbers toward their potential levels of individual freedom and articulation of intellect. These results I judge as personal tragedies. But we are also paying the collective price of this waste by our suffering under the lack of wisdom and foresight and the proneness to paranoia and frightful violence within our political industrial élite.

America and the world can no longer afford to be ruled by fearful, basically uneducated men, woefully lacking in historical and psychological perspective. It is urgently necessary to make education the central task of our colleges. I believe this can be achieved only by a tough struggle in which all concerned students and faculty must work and fight together.

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FRONTIERS
The Students Agree

WHY do we have a regimented, machine-conditioned, compulsive way of life and use of technology? What possibilities do *you* see to unfreeze this and to propose experiments with man-centered ends and means bringing industrial democracy and proper use of technology?

These two unwieldy questions were asked as a take-home exam in a class of eighteen senior undergraduates in a college of business administration. I should like to quote some of the answers to these questions after indicating the kind of material discussed in this class.

For a third of the semester we had already taken a holistic, ecological approach to industrial organizations, guided by A. K. Rice, *The Enterprise and its Environment* (Tavistock Publications, London, 1963) .

Then, in the second part, we started exploring the inner workings of these organizations as they are affected by technology and the prevailing dispositions that make it possible. We read Charles R. Walker's *Modern Technology and Civilization* (McGraw-Hill, 1969) with its great variety of articles. We listened to tapes of Lewis Mumford and Gerard Piel on *Technology and Democracy,* and Aldous Huxley on *The Politics of Ecology* (all edited by The Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions). We saw two movies of the series *The City in History* by Mumford (distributed by Sterling Educational Films) and *The Man on the Assembly Line* (McGraw-Hill, distributors). Finally, reports were presented, mostly by students, on thinking and research in this field.

Throughout, the aim was Socratic exploration, questioning ideology instead of building a new one, welcoming then a state of mind that enjoys its autonomy.

With regard to the first question on the whys of regimentation, I required common

understanding, but from the second I expected great variety. The results were surprising. Here is one example:

> A waste-land culture filled with sterile norms and stagnating predispositions is threatening to steal meaning and dignity from our lives. We are developing a way of life that is certainly nauseating and frightening to those aware of what is happening. But even more frightening is our public stupor—stupor which threatens our very existence—a stupor which threatens to become a philosophic void—a stupor which Huxley sarcastically referred to when he said, "Never in the history of man have so many been so completely at the mercy of so few."

> Compulsion and regimentation are the enemies of all mankind. They are the enemies of freedom and creativity, and decay the very essence of life. Yet, ironically, these villains have seeped into our country under the guise of freedom. It is an American tragedy that equality and democracy have been so perverted, economically and politically, that all they offer are symbolic reassurances. Humanity, liberty and welfare have been replaced by ideology; and the insidious mask of social .

> Darwinism has been used to justify cruel and dehumanizing uses of technology.

> Man has in fact enslaved himself. He himself, not the machine, put himself on the market for sale, and he himself forfeited his dignity, his intrinsic worth, by selling his soul by becoming a commodity called labor—a commodity like any other commodity whose worth is determinable in dollars and cents. But this alone did not lead to our compulsive, driven, hoarding, clinging way of life. Man's becoming a commodity mainly made regimentation and manipulation possible. Fear, distrust, and hate (mainly in the form of prejudices) have been more important contributors to our self-perpetuating stagnant culture. These three in fact are the reason why this negative culture persists. Negative feelings (philosophies) have resulted in negative stimuli (hate and distrust) which have led to negative responses which, of course, reinforce the negative feelings. - The guilt for this insipid and vicious cycle belongs to us all.

Another student writes:

> The curriculum in our universities must change so that the needs of man are considered and discussed; students should learn how to live complete, inwardly rewarding lives rather than how to become

authoritarian, efficient, dissatisfied-manager-machines.

Another says:

This regimented, machine-centered society of ours has not merely "blossomed" overnight. It has followed a very consistent series of events which have taken place for hundreds of years, and it seems to us that just recently it has so acutely "snowballed" into something that has passed us by and left us stumbling in bewilderment. We can easily place the blame on the shoulders of others, executives in higher-up positions and company presidents, but are they not, with careful scrutiny, merely caught in the "snowball" themselves?

Because the job calls for only partial and not complete attention, which increases boredom, some variable must be introduced to take up the slack. This variable is the wage, for as long as people see no disparity between the effort and the resulting wage, they are relatively stable. But does this really act as an adequate substitute? If mere "buying" the workers' satisfaction works, then a temporary solution has been found but where is it taking us? Ford might have been right; finance might be the handmaiden of technology more than we care to think.

As to more specific points of the second question—on the unfreezing of present commitments and suggestions for experiments—one student observes:

Ferry views government control of technology as the answer, but will a capitalist nation such as ours ever let this happen? Especially when the government is in a technological race with the Soviet Union? And for that matter, all nations of the world are in the technological race—so for these reasons I believe Ferry's idea is somewhat utopian.

The only way we may ever have a society which controls technology with man-centered ends in mind, is to start at the bottom. A project of converting industrial production systems in small factories at first into man-centered operations is the first step. Such methods as job enlargement and breaking up large assembly lines could be used. These projects should be carried out in the fashion of the Glacier Factory and Tavistock Institute programs. Success of such projects may show the large corporations, G.M., A.T.&T., etc., that there is a better system of production by which the worker will be more satisfied and do a better job.

Again, another points out:

We must mirror the present problems back to management and managers so they can see that they are generating many of their own problems. This feedback process has to be our first step. Only then will it be possible to get an initial change in values and attitudes. Man must begin to think for himself. He must care about life and have a philosophy. He must break away from the conformity he has known and refuse to accept work as necessarily tedious and meaningless.

Finally, one writes this:

I have already tried this in my social fraternity and have found that even in a short period changes become evident. My first experiment was a change in the traditional handling of pledges in the fraternity. I eliminated all forms of harassment and unpleasantness and have made all activities the responsibility of the group. I set goals in some areas so the pledges would have a framework within which to work. After about one month the group seems happier, more enthusiastic, and each member of the group is now under less stress and social pressure for conformity. I have tried to set the stage for each individual to pursue that which interests him and also have the opportunity to fulfill his needs for belonging to a group which respects his uniqueness. Whether or not this program will achieve its full purpose I don't know and it is too early to tell.

Another possibility I am beginning on now is a change in the social system of my fraternity as a whole. I am now doing some research in an attempt to discover how to rid it of its present problems of a non-functional, traditional type of organization and the apathy which has been present in the system. These experiments will teach me more, I hope, about the unfreezing of regimented compulsive ways of acting. From this I hope to conduct more experiments.

I have tried reflecting people's attitudes and actions back at them and other methods to create open-mindedness. They seem to work but I wonder whether some people really do understand the problem. I used to be a very compulsive and regimented person myself but I don't feel that I am any more. My self-concept has changed and I hope that what I do will change the self-concepts of those with whom I have interactions—even if only a slight change from the present regimented ways of thinking.

While there is a note of hope in most answers that I received, there is also some pessimism about short-range effects. I think this is justified. This approach can not be sold or propagated because the regimentation of our way of life reflects a state of mind. And a change can only come about from within. What we can do is to welcome the moral dialogue through which a renewal at the grass-roots level of our colleges may take place.

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