

## "THE SELF IN TRANSFORMATION"

IN MANAS for Aug. 7, an article intended to survey "New Perspectives in Psychology" became less a survey than a briefly-stated thesis—the proposition that a truly radical view of the nature of man is now being born, either because or in spite of the extraordinary stresses of our time. This view may be termed "radical" since it concerns the root problems of man's nature and potentialities; and radical also in the sense of introducing ideas which are at fundamental variance with the presuppositions of both traditional religion and traditional science. At about the time "New Perspectives" went into type we received from Basic Books a volume called *The Self in Transformation*, by Professor Herbert Fingarette, which bears on the same great questions and merits much more than the usual space accorded a review. Dr. Fingarette's title, *The Self in Transformation*, can hardly be improved upon, and we have borrowed it to suggest a linkage between the development of the individual and the gradual emergence of a philosophic outlook in our psychologically-oriented culture.

The most notable predisposition of recent modern thought looks at the human situation in terms of what may be called a "captive" psychology. By "captive" psychology we mean the fateful opinion that the *conditions* which cause human distress will hold man in inevitable bondage until those conditions are altered. In theological terms, the chief reference-point is the contrast between earth and heaven, between the world of man and the world of God. Heaven is a symbol of transformed conditions, but not transformed by man. The scientific view, popularly speaking, is not much different, because the *summum bonum* is envisioned as possible only when natural hazards, diseases, mental disorders, neuroses, and conflicts of every sort, including fratricidal war, have been eliminated. But it is also possible to hold that man, even in the midst of his involvements with internal psychic suffering, with economic and social dislocations, or with the neuroses of the nations, is only "captive" in one

portion of his total being. He may be, as the Greeks said—and as Viktor Frankl is now saying—the victim of "Nemesis" in his psychic nature. But if man is noëtic as well as psychic—if the "soul" has two dimensions—it may be possible to transform one's life without immediately or observably transforming one's external situation.

The "wise man" in history can, we think, be distinguished by his identification with the noëtic point of view—the view of non-captive spiritual man. There have been attempts to describe the philosophy which provides a natural basis for this conviction as "the perennial philosophy." The trouble with this phrase, however, is that it suggests a static definition of truth, whereas it seems necessary to hold that truth, like freedom, must be won anew each day. The most inspiring insights of philosophy may be in many important respects the same from age to age, but they will have to be perpetually reborn if they are to be fully realized by each generation.

These are explanatory reasons for our feeling that *The Self in Transformation* is a volume of exceptional significance and value. Dr. Fingarette is a professor of both philosophy and psychology at the University of California at Santa Barbara, and it is in the area where the disciplines of philosophy and psychology meet that one might well expect the greatest illumination for our time. The terminology of psychotherapy has already penetrated literature and filtered into popular usage, and it is in the hope that the analysts and therapists can serve as oracles that so many distraught individuals come to them for assistance. Yet reliance on authority, however promising the outlook, has always turned out to be a bad habit. Meanwhile contemporary psychology needs the broader perspective that philosophy can provide.

In his introduction, Dr. Fingarette speaks of the confusions which may result from "the force of psychoanalytic studies bearing upon the life of the

spirit," and, though he later defends what may be identified as the philosophy implicit in psychoanalysis, here he criticizes careless science and religion in relation to "the life of the spirit":

As has many a philosophically minded person, I have been struck by the awkwardness and philosophical naïveté which so often seem to lead psychoanalytic studies down the road to ruin. I have in mind two special evils. One consists in psychologizing the spiritual life ("reducing" it to psychology, with nothing left over). The other evil consists in mistaking widespread, popular perversions of the spiritual life for the real thing, thus often providing incisive analyses of something which is familiar though incorrectly labeled.

The paradigms of the latter evil are Freud's incisive analyses of what he calls religion. In truth, as he himself shows, what he is analyzing is the popular sentiment and illusion which goes under the name of religion. It is as if a psychologist were to study the layman's notions and attitudes in relation to science. These are statistically the most common attitudes and beliefs, and our quite hypothetical psychologist might well argue that therefore they are *the* characteristic scientific attitudes and beliefs. In this hypothetical case, we see the error clearly. Though we might get a penetrating and valuable study of the popular attitudes and beliefs, we would not expect from our psychologist a correct perspective on the psychology of genuine scientific inquiry and creativity. Yet, if he were to study the tiny minority of men who (as we know) are the creative scientists, might not those who are naive about science charge him with overemphasizing esoteric groups and doctrines and introducing unrepresentative population samples?

There is a set of evils complementary to those I have been discussing. The strictures I have presented against psychologizing or misidentifying the spiritual life are easily put to self-serving uses. We teeter here on the brink of mere antiscientific rhetoric, mystification, and politically expedient "dividing up of the pie" of knowledge. The recognition that there are different dimensions of life is often the occasion for shutting off inquiry into the interrelations of those dimensions. The strenuous and reactionary attempts to keep physics out of biology, biology out of psychology, and psychology out of the realm of the spirit are all too familiar in the intellectual history of the West. In truth it is just the discovery of such different dimensions of life that obligates us to study their interrelationships and the import thereof.

If a culture fails to see the need for this sort of synthesis, just as when the individual fails to strive for integration, "noëtic" man suffers starvation, slogan-makers carry the day in politics, and advertising sets the goals of a desire-oriented personal life. In a chapter titled "Insight and Integration," Dr. Fingarette reveals his rapport with the theme of Viktor Frankl's *Man's Search for Meaning*:

Meaning may be used to maximize pleasure and may itself provide gratification (as is especially clear in the arts). Yet the drive toward meaning is autonomous and distinct from the pleasure-aim. It remains a fact that sometimes we can purchase meaning only at the expense of pleasure. This assumption of a drive toward meaning corresponds to the assumption in psychoanalytic theory of the primary autonomy of ego functions, especially of the synthesizing ego functions. For "ego" is the name for this unifying drive toward meaning and the specific forms and outcomes of that drive. The ego's unity, ego-integration as such, is a unity of meaning. Its primary energies are its being.

The world was, after all, not created to please us, nor does successful psychoanalysis guarantee the banishment of suffering. Psychoanalysis can transform the quality of suffering through understanding, through the sublimative magic of meaning, but it cannot guarantee the elimination of suffering.

So rich and varied are Dr. Fingarette's suggestions concerned with integration in thought that one can easily become immersed in any single phase of his book's development—the relationship of art to philosophy and psychoanalysis, the bearing of Eastern thought upon the nature of noëtic man, etc. But it seems best to focus particularly upon the author's interpretation of psychoanalysis as one key, however imperfectly represented, to the eternal drama of "soul." In "Art, Therapy and the External World," he links the ideal role of the analyst—often played as much by instinct as by training—to universal tradition:

Constant at its core, though appearing in varying guises, we find in many cultures the ideal of the enlightened-agonist: he who insistently guides us through the ordeal which liberates, who joins in it though he is above it, who is disinterestedly our burden and our ally.

Socrates, Jesus, Gautama Buddha—each represents a human of unwavering and selfless dedication to individuals in their struggle for spiritual transformation. Each represents the penetrating power of understanding; each, in his relation with men, grasps the Other's human condition in the very act of dialogue with him; each responds *to* the person, not *with* a theory. They have a mediating role: they are midwife, son, or guide rather than primary source of Being, and they emphasize this. Each is dedicated to man's salvation; martyrdom is not sought but is accepted if necessary. The enlightened-agonist moves dramatically among humanity while remaining himself unmoved, autonomous, detached. All persons are treated with equally compassionate objectivity, and there is no special involvement with any. Each of these enlightened-agonists undergoes no sentimental suffering in leaving human beings to their fate when the occasion calls for it. We say that, in the last analysis, each is moved by the Divine, and this is to say that in some sense their impersonality is radical. Yet it is also to say that their acceptance of the other person as a person rather than as an object is profound.

The psychoanalyst responds preponderantly to the psychic integration problem; he responds to the gesture only as an element within the pattern. For all the storm and fury visited upon him, he is, as Greenson suggests, not a friend but a doctor; for all his detachment, he is not an acquaintance but an intimate. I have called him an enlightened-agonist. Socrates would have called him a midwife. He participates in the agony and in the contest of the spirit, helps to bring victory out of defeat, a new birth out of a death. Yet, enlightened, he is somehow above the contest, an unaffected helper.

In Dr. Fingarette's context this is not, we think, so much an apologia for analysis as a way of illustrating that every significant probe for meaning and integration "in the life of the spirit" must take into account two qualitatively different dimensions of man. The "other world" of the religionist is, in true perspective, literally here and now—to the extent that its configurations come clear to the eye. Man is not *one* "self," but the thread of individuality which binds together a collectivity of selves—all himself, but also sharing a participatory relationship with other aspects of culture and other persons of divers orientation. It is in this light that Dr. Fingarette links ancient wisdom to modern psychology, choosing as

introductory text for *The Self in Transformation* a passage from the book of Chuan-tse:

In practicing and cherishing the old  
he attains the new;  
Attaining the new, he reanimates  
the old  
He is indeed a teacher.

Dr. Fingarette continues:

The crust which was forming in the dogmatic 1930's and '40's has begun to break up. The old battle lines and war cries are history. The formulations of empirical philosophy in the first half of the century were penetrating and fertile, they were as understandably and enthusiastically one-sided as the early formulations of Freud. In each case, it has been necessary to amplify and refine, yet without denying the substance or the spirit of the original insights.

If Master K'ung was right, we must indeed all be teachers; we must practice and cherish the old in order to discover the new; and in attaining the new, we indeed reanimate the old.

An outstanding example of Dr. Fingarette's "reanimation of the old" occurs in a seventy-page section titled "Karma and the Inner World"—in many ways the touchstone of his book as a unique contribution. The "doctrines" of karma and reincarnation are here viewed psychologically, in a presentation which hardly needs arguments concerning belief for support. Chapter Five begins:

The doctrine of Karma, whether we accept it or not, poses profound questions about the structure, transformation, and transcendence of the self. It raises in new ways general questions of ontology. We may be parochial and dismiss the doctrine, especially its theses on reincarnation, as obvious superstition. Or we may recall that it was not any self-evident spiritual superficiality but the historical accident of official Christian opposition which stamped it out as an important Greek and Roman doctrine, a doctrine profoundly meaningful to a Plato as well as to the masses. Perhaps more significant, it has remained from the first millennium *b.c.* until the present, an almost universal belief in the East, even among most of the highly trained and Western-educated contemporary thinkers.

The assumption in this chapter is that joining a fresh examination of karmic doctrine to an examination of certain aspects of psychoanalytic therapy will throw a new light on therapy, on the

meaning of the karmic doctrine, and on certain of our major philosophical and cultural commitments. The task of the reader in such a discussion is to see what the evidence and the argument say rather than to read into the words the Westerner's stock interpretation of "esoteric" doctrines.

An illustration of this method is provided in a discussion of the "Intermediate Existence" between lives on earth, in the words of one of the early Indian Sutras:

As the time of [the human being's] death approaches he sees a bright light and being unaccustomed to it at the time of his death he is perplexed and confused. If he is going to be reborn as a man he sees himself making love with his mother and being hindered by his father; or if he is going to be reborn as a woman he sees himself hindered by his mother. It is at that moment that the Intermediate Existence is destroyed and life and consciousness arise and causality begins once more to work. It is like the imprint made by a die; the die is destroyed but the pattern has been imprinted.

Dr. Fingarette continues:

It takes little effort to "transpose" such passages into the analogous psychoanalytic language: indeed they can be read as poetic accounts of the nature and import of the Oedipal phase in individual maturation. It will be no great surprise after this to learn that according to the detailed Tibetan accounts the "Intermediate Existence" before "entering the womb in order to be born" is a complex one, an existence fraught with openly id-like experiences, an existence which has a definite genetic continuity, however, with the eventual "birth" and with the specific spiritual nature of the being which thus comes to life.

In such discussion of birth and rebirth the three driving forces which must be overcome in the inner man are of course, Anger, Lust, and Stupidity. These are mentioned in varying terminologies, but nowhere can we mistake the broad intention. These three "cravings" at the root of all suffering are remarkably reminiscent of certain basic psychoanalytic conceptions.

"Karma," then, in psychological terms, is an awareness of our identity with all phases of selfhood. Dr. Fingarette has a provocative passage on this point:

We become responsible agents when we can face the moral continuity of the familiar, conscious self

with other strange, "alien" psychic entities—our "other selves." We should perhaps speak of an "identity" with other selves rather than a "continuity." For we must accept responsibility for the "acts" of these other selves; we must see these acts as ours. As Freud said of our dream lives, they are not only in me but act "from out of me as well."

Yet identity is, in another way, too strong a term. There is a genuine difference between, say, the infantile, archaic (unconscious) mother-hater and the adult, humane, and filial (conscious) self, between the primitive, fantastic brother-murderer and the sophisticated fair-minded business competitor, between the archaic sun-priest and the teacher. Indeed, it is the assumption that there *is* a *genuinely* civilized self which is the prerequisite for classical psychoanalysis as a therapy. The adult, realistic self is the "therapeutic" *sine qua non* of the therapist. The hope in the psychotherapy of the neurotic is that his neurotic guilt is engendered by a "self" which *is* in a profound sense alien to his adult, civilized, realistic self. "For whosoever has, to him shall be given. . . ." Insight only helps those who already have a realistic ego.

The psychoanalytic quest for autonomy reveals the Self in the greater depth; it reveals it as a *community* of selves. The genuinely startling thing in this quest is not simply the discovery that these other, archaic selves exist, nor even that they have an impact in the present. What startles is the detailed analysis of the peculiarly close, subtle, and complex texture of the threads which weave these other selves and the adult conscious self into a single great pattern.

It is a special, startling kind of intimacy with which we deal. It calls for me to recognize that I suffer, whether I will or no, for the deeds of those other selves. It is an intimacy which, when encountered, makes it self-evident that I must assume responsibility for the acts and thoughts of those other persons as if they were I. Finally and paradoxically, in the morally clear vision which thus occurs, there emerges, as in a montage, a new Self, a Self free of bondage to the old deeds of the old selves. For it is a Self which sees and therefore sees through the old illusions which passed for reality. Yet this Self is the Seer who is not seen, the Hearer not heard.

In an earlier chapter, "Guilt and Responsibility," Dr. Fingarette indicates his reasons for thinking that the "theory" of karma and reincarnation has so much in common with the working hypotheses of the psychoanalysts. Indeed, it might be said that the

limitations of psychoanalysis appear when the "karmic view" is ignored:

If we are to discover the moral viewpoint consistent with psychoanalysis (which is a principal purpose of this study), we must give up the postulate which conflicts with what we know to be psychoanalytic practice. Apparently the patient *must* accept responsibility for traits and actions of his which are the inevitable results of events over which he had no control and of actions which he did not consciously will.

It holds that, paradoxical as it may at first *seem*, this is precisely the case.

As do so many moralists, Hospers looks to the antecedents of the act in order to settle responsibility. The real issue as revealed by our present perspective, however, is that: What is the (moral-therapeutic) *solution* to the present human predicament, granted that what happens now is a consequence of what happened when we could not control what happened?

The solution is, as I have already indicated, that moral man must *accept* responsibility for what he is at some point in his life and go on from there. He must face himself as he *is*, in toto, and as an adult, being able now in some measure to control what happens, he must endeavor so to control things that he is, insofar as possible, guiltless in the future.

The broad philosophical view presented in *The Self in Transformation* seems an articulation of ideas implicit in Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*—the view that man is continually dying and being reborn, psychologically, with each new cycle of metempsychosis leading toward "autonomy":

At first one lives with one vision for years before there is readiness for another. After the accumulation of experience and of acquaintance with more than one of these ways of seeing, the movement from one organizing view to another can come more rapidly. This shifting of visions is not then any the less a matter of genuine and deep commitment. It is not a sampling or tasting, not an eclecticism. For one calls upon a vision with a life, one's own, behind it. One earns a vision by living it, not merely thinking about it. Eventually, however, when several such lives have been lived, one can shift from life to life more often and more easily, from vision to vision more freely.

Here a Buddhist image helps. We are told that there are degrees of enlightenment and, further, that with the higher forms of enlightenment, the

enlightened one can move from realm to realm, from world to world, from dharma to dharma, with ease; yet he is at home in each. The Buddha uses doctrine; he is not a slave to it. Doctrine is the ferry, and the enlightened one knows there are many ferries which travel to the farther shore. But when he is ferrying, he is skillful, wholehearted, and at one with his craft.

We know also that, even in Buddhist terms, the very Buddhas and Bodhisattvas have their special or favorite powers and realms. We must not ignore the fact that in this last analysis, commitment to a specific orientation outweighs catholicity of imagery. One may be a sensitive and seasoned traveler, at ease in many places, but one must have a home. Still, we can be intimate with those we visit, and while we may be only travelers and guests in some domains, there are our hosts who are truly at home. Home is always home for someone; but there is no Absolute Home in general. With all its discovery of relativism, the West has been fundamentally absolutist and therefore parochial: we claim to tolerate other visions than the logical and technological, we explain them praise them, enjoy them; and gently, skillfully, appreciatively, do we not, too often, betray them?

In conclusion, and in partial confirmation of the opinions here expressed, we quote from a reviewer in the *Library Journal* for April 15. Dr. Louis De Rosis, Fellow of the Academy of Psychoanalysis, says of Dr. Fingarette's book:

This approach is not polemical; it is sympathetic and also one which cuts through to the main bases on which psychoanalysis rests. There are areas in the work which can be disputed and others which elaboration would serve to clarify but for the greater part, the volume is a high-powered microscope used by a brilliant philosopher to bring profound illumination into psychoanalysis—not only to its basic theoretical underpinnings but to its relationships in the whole scheme of man's being. This is truly required reading for all psychiatrists, psychoanalysts, and clinical psychologists of any school or persuasion. It should also have more than passing meaning for the informed layman.

*The Self in Transformation* contains 352 pages and is priced at \$8.50. This may seem a considerable expenditure, but in this case, we think, the book will be worth a good deal more than its cost.

## *REVIEW*

### LIBRARIES OF VISION

TWO reading lists that have recently been put into circulation stimulate questions about the causes of radical social change. These lists, published by branches of the peace movement, have a clear revolutionary purpose, although "revolution," in the twentieth century, is beginning to mean something quite different from the angry and bloody revolts of the past. The shorter of the two lists, issued by the War Resisters League in the United States, has the title, *Dissent, Revolution, Freedom, Peace*. Some introductory paragraphs tell why and how it was put together:

In recent years thousands upon thousands of persons in the United States have been drawn to the pacifist movement or influenced by it. Many of these people, particularly the students, have asked us for a list of books which might help them understand more clearly the meaning of non-violence and pacifism in contemporary society. Because the War Resisters League feels that pacifism is fundamentally a radical position, which can only be understood in the context of the radical movement, and in relation to the great social, political, and cultural forces that operate in the world, we found we could not answer the demand for a list of "pacifist books" by simply listing a number of books dealing with peace and disarmament.

Instead, a number of contemporary "dissenting intellectuals" were invited to list for us the ten or fifteen books which each of them felt had had the greatest impact on their lives: moving them toward deeper commitment to democracy, social justice, and a peaceful world. When the final list of more than 200 titles was assembled, a special committee of the War Resisters League trimmed it down to those which follow—books which might be called part of the heritage out of which the pacifist movement has grown. . . . The one basic criterion used by the selection committee was the assumption that the pacifist movement is committed not simply to "peace," but to the liberation of mankind within the framework of a free and healthy sense of community: politics, history, psychology, economics, etc., are therefore directly germane to the pacifist movement.

Users of this list are invited to offer suggestions for changes or additions. The present list is available from the War Resisters League, 5 Beekman Street,

New York 38, N.Y. Readers who until now have been unaware of the existence of this organization may be interested in the comment of Albert Einstein, which appears on the last page:

The War Resisters League is important because, by union, it relieves courageous and resolute individuals of the paralyzing feeling of isolation and loneliness, and in this way gives them moral support in the fulfillment of what they consider their duty. The existence of such a moral elite is indispensable for the preparation of a fundamental change in public opinion, a change which, under present-day circumstances, is absolutely necessary if humanity is to survive.

Under the heading of "Literature," the WRL list includes works from the distant past, such as the *Bhagavad-Gita* and the *Tao Te King*, and writings by contemporaries such as Henry Miller and Kenneth Patchen. There is a study of Randolph Bourne, an unfortunately almost forgotten radical of the time of World War I, and books by Herman Hesse and Erich Kahler. Among present-day social critics and essayists are listed James Baldwin, Paul Goodman, C. Wright Mills, Lewis Mumford, and A. S. Neill. Sections are devoted to the history of the radical movement and socialism, including some classical analyses of modern society such as R. H. Tawney's *The Acquisitive Society*. Under "Pacifism" are works by Camus, Gandhi, Gregg, Huxley, Thoreau, Tolstoy, and Simone Weil. Critical studies of totalitarian society include books by Hannah Arendt, Constantin Georghiu, Arthur Koestler, and Czeslaw Milosz. In other sections are found Dwight Macdonald's *The Root Is Man*, the *Autobiography* of Lincoln Steffens, and George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*. Various periodicals are recommended.

The WRL reading list is short enough to be used for a reading program by individuals, imaginative enough to be an introduction to very nearly every line of significant contemporary thought, and complete enough to give adequate background in the historical foundations of modern radical or revolutionary thinking.

The second list we have for review is titled *Nonviolence and Peacemaking*, published by The Commonweal Trust (LLWYN-Y-GWCW, Merthyr

Tydfil, South Wales, England). It is a bibliography comprised of books in the Commonweal Collection, which are available for loan by mail (in the British Isles only) without charge other than the postage needed to return them. This list is introduced with a few words by Devi Prasad, secretary of the War Resisters International:

With the growing peace movement it is but natural that the need for more extensive and serious study of the subjects involved also grows. This is evident from the numerous efforts being made in many countries to compile bibliographies in different languages. Some very useful ones have already been produced during the past few years.

The peace movement has reached the stage when it becomes necessary to reinstate the fundamental principles involved, to modify them, or draw up new policies and codes of action. It is therefore all the more important that literature giving philosophical, historical and technical information on peacemaking and nonviolence be made available.

This bibliography has been prepared by David Hoggett and most of the books listed are available from the Commonweal Collection of which he is Librarian.

The books in this list fall into thirty categories and are generalized under the following headings: (a) Nonviolent Social Order, (b) Nonviolent Resistance, (c) Pioneers of Nonviolence, (d) International Problems, (e) Background Reading. (Some periodicals are also listed.) While the selections, as David Hoggett points out, are largely determined by the books which have been acquired by the Commonweal Collection, the list is remarkably complete and should prove a useful reference for anyone planning reading in the fields named. One way of distinguishing this list from the one compiled in New York would be to note the numerous works by Indian authors, reflecting Gandhian thinking and influence, included in the Commonweal Collection.

We began this brief review by saying that these reading lists stir questions about the causes of radical change—a comment provoked by a recent rereading of an obscure book, *Secret Societies and the French Revolution*, by Una Birch (London: John Lane, 1911) In the title essay, Miss Birch put together a

fascinating study of the metabolism of revolutionary action. During the middle years of the eighteenth century, France, she shows, was honeycombed with secret societies of masonic and mystical origin, brought into being by tireless workers for the ideal of an emancipated mankind. "At the great Revolution," she says in summary, "the doctrines of the lodges were at last translated from the silent world of secrecy to the common world of practice; a few months sufficed to depose ecclesiasticism from its pedestal and monarchy from its throne; to make the army republican and the word of Rousseau law." In the present, however, the "secrecy" of the revolutionary spirit is due not so much to the suppressions of tyrannical rulers as to the mindless monopoly of technology, with its overwhelming flow of empty words that fill the media of common communication. The obstacles to the spirit of freedom are no doubt as great, today, as in the eighteenth century, but they have changed in character: now the barriers to understanding are not political, but psychological and impersonal. The enemy is not a king and his oppressive laws, but false popular images of the good life and contemporary myths of "progress." Miss Birch closes her essay with these words:

The true history of the eighteenth century is the history of the aspiration of the human race. In France it was epitomized. The spiritual life of that nation, which was to lift the weight of material oppression from the shoulders of multitudes, had been cherished through dark years by the preachers of Freedom, Equality, and Brotherhood. From the Swedenborgian stronghold of Avignon, from Martinist Lyons, from Narbonne, from Munich, and many another citadel of freedom, there flashed in the grey night of feudalism, unseen but to initiates, the watch-fires of great hope tended by those priests of progress who, though unable to lift the veil that shrouds the destiny of man and the end of worlds, by faith were empowered to dedicate the future to the Unknown God.

What will be the verdict of similar chroniclers of the "revolution" of the twentieth century, yet to come?

## *COMMENTARY* SAVIORS OF THE SOUTH

AS sometimes happens in reviewing a magazine article (see *Frontiers*), after finishing the discussion of James A. Wechsler's account of the perversion of news, we wanted to go on and talk about the next item in the August *Progressive*—but it was another subject and we had no more space. However, Margaret Long's musings about the civil rights struggle in the South cannot pass unnoticed. Her article, titled "All God's Chillun," is one of the finest brief appreciations of the American Negro that has ever appeared, anywhere, any time. The essential conclusion is put in a few words:

It is not the Negroes, it seems to me, who are crippled, confused, and frightened by a system of oppression. They are, rather, toughened, enlarged, and infinitely sophisticated by it—those who weathered it. And today, we see them all over the South, literate, illiterate, well-to-do, and poor, demanding with wisdom and grace the rights which many whites are still resisting with idiot shibboleths and crazy fears which are the wonder of the rational world. And when the white barriers topple and the astonished masters regard Negroes stepping over the broken barricades, it is the Negroes whose wise, generous, and graceful demeanor soothes the trembling whites. Their aplomb handles the confrontation on busses or at polling places, softly meets the gauche and fascinated stares of diners in an integrated restaurant, and gently and adamantly explains Negro requirements to the city politician who is suddenly astute enough to learn a fast lesson in manners and democracy.

I think it is the old love, irony, and patience which is at work on childlike and bewildered white neighbors clinging senselessly to an ancient stance once held sacred, and slowly yielding it with naïve elation over the new and natural freedom between two peoples who belonged together all the time.

One quotation cannot convey the textured variety of Miss Long's experiences during her life as a reporter on Southern newspapers, nor can it show the balanced wisdom of her reactions in widely differing circumstances. The article deserves reading in full. Its quality obliges us to

say, once again, that the thoughtful individual of this generation can hardly do without a subscription to the *Progressive*.

The impressive thing about Miss Long's article is that she creates the feeling that the Negroes will eventually triumph, not by giving examples of recent civil-rights "victories" in the South, but by illustrating the attitudes of mind with which so many Negroes are conducting their part in the struggle. The means they embody—with, of course, some exceptions—are the very stuff of the goals they seek, and this gives power which the politics of prejudice can hardly resist.



## CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

### NOTES IN PASSING

THE tone of a recent *Peace News* (Aug. 2) comment on British primary school education serves as a reminder that the "peace people" present a different image from that of the dour missionaries of yesteryear; living with strong conviction and in continual protest against the things that make for war does not necessarily negativize the psyche. Among the *Peace News* reflections on the then forthcoming summer vacation interval are the following:

Soon we "break up." This phrase conveys more than its originator intended, I feel sure. Nerves begin to get a bit frayed at this time of the year. Six weeks' recuperation. "Are you on holiday *again*?" people will ask in my local—then back to the same problems. And pleasures, too, because I know from experience that I'll miss the little blighters before the holiday is over, however much I grumble at them in the last few days.

However well one understands that all that really matters is each child's rate of development within his own limits of ability, in the context of overcrowded classrooms and "selection" things like the syllabus and timetable begin to make sense—no matter how much one admires the work of people like A. S. Neill. One even gets cynical and wonders how Summerhill would cope with a cross-section of the *total* population (and a forty to one child-teacher ratio) and not fairly small groups from progressive and "intelligent" homes. (Here one concedes that some wonderful work has been done by Neill with "difficult" children too.)

So much for a healthy, down-to-earth outlook on the part of a pacifist teacher; and when she gets down to that part of her work which is working for peace, the tone is the same:

The educational establishment would probably raise its eyebrows over what follows, but it must be said. As teaching involves personal relationships, there must always be personal problems, both child's and teacher's. In my own case the difficulty has always been the one pin-pointed so accurately by Richard Hogart: coming from a working-class

background, going to an Emergency Training College, and adjusting to a middle-class profession (or rather failing to). It's a "nonpolitical" profession, too: that is, one which enjoys reading William Hickey and Peter Simple—all good clean stuff. Being non-political, it also approves of my marching on Whitehall to make a fuss about salary differentials, but mutters under its breath about people who march from Aldermaston on account of irrelevant things like moral convictions.

As I have never mentioned horrid words like "peace" or "disarmament" in front of the children, I used to worry a bit about the future. I love to hear them singing, for instance, and found it difficult at one time to discount the military metaphors of some of our hymns. I suppose I needn't have bothered really. I listened closely the other morning, and heard some of the boys singing their own revised version of one of our favourites. It cheered me up immensely:

Fight the Good Fight with all your Might.  
Sit on a stick of dynamite . . .  
Just light the fuse and you will see  
The quickest way to Eternity.

\* \* \*

As to the relationship between the peace movement and formal education, we would like to share a note on the attitude which accounted for the termination of military research at the University of Chicago. The *New York Times* for June 6 contains the story, which incidentally recalls the fact that the University of Chicago has often been called "the birthplace of the atomic bomb":

The head of the University of Chicago's military research laboratory disclosed today that the laboratory would be closed Sept. 1. He attributed its closing to the university faculty's moral pangs over pioneering the development of the atomic bomb.

The scientist, Lucien M. Biberian, 44 years old is associate director of the university's Laboratories of Applied Science and head of the classified military unit in the Museum of Science. The work of this unit, one of three university research laboratories, includes research on ballistic missiles and antisubmarine warfare.

University representatives refused to comment on the matter other than to say that an official statement would be made later.

"I think the school's involvement in the development of atomic energy and the bomb left a deep scar on the moral fiber of this place from which it has not really recovered," Mr. Biberman said. "I do not believe they wish to become involved in developments which are for the military."

"I suggested," he said, "that, since the school has no interest in military research, it refuse to accept funds for such work and close the laboratory. My suggestion was accepted in a letter sent to faculty members May 16 by Dr. A. Adrian Albert Dean of the Physical Sciences."

\* \* \*

The *Peace News* reference to Summerhill leads naturally to quotation from a brochure on its new American counterpart, Summerlane School, now located at Milesees, N.Y. The Summerlane approach to peace, of course, is that peace is a condition of balance which results from a free environment—an environment which children badly need to experience during their earliest years. Rigidity of curriculum, competitive examinations, and a system loaded with status and security symbols are all part of a conditioning process which is not only dubious but obviously bad. To the question, "What is curriculum?" Summerlane answers:

To tell you the truth, we don't know. Such things as curriculum coordinators, curriculum surveys, curriculum guides, et cetera, seem to us so much momentous itchiness.

Experience cannot be programmed. It can be prepared for by creating a rich environment where the interests of children are enthusiastically developed by adults richly prepared to fill the child's lust for knowledge. Unexpected events march daily at any school or camp. The function of the Summerlane staff is to make electric these moments of contact between the child and the reality around him.

At Summerlane, curriculum is life. The day to day excitement of living is filled with events that need math, reading, language, social information to make them more rich, more enjoyable, more manageable. Children are not abandoned to "experience." They

are surrounded by a culture rich in skills and knowledge that makes no external demands but allows them to choose as and if they will.

A child could be abandoned on a desert island and be "free," but his life would be shallow beyond tolerance. The teachers at Summerlane provide the rich ground in which the children grow. They do not abdicate authority, but share it naturally.

Events have their own authority, and the child learns much more crisply from them. The child who has badly built a bench has learned more than the child who has been used as the motor for tools carefully guided by the controlling adult.

The Summerlane brochure may be obtained on request by writing Summerlane, Milesees, N.Y.

## *FRONTIERS* The Side-Takers

OUR title is supposed to reflect the increasing dilemma of one who has read the liberal press for, say, the past twenty years and, as a result, is sure of only one thing: the critics who fill the pages of these magazines will never run out of material! In saying this, we mean no derogation of the liberal press. The liberal (and radical) press is after all the only press worth reading for information and views which relate to the general good. Our question has to do rather with the situation of the reader.

Take for example an article in the August *Progressive*, "Propaganda in the Press," by James A. Wechsler. Everyone who reads the newspapers ought to know what is in this article, since everyone who reads the newspapers is affected, more or less, by the sort of propaganda which, as Mr. Wechsler shows, may appear in the papers without even their editors knowing it, although they may have casual suspicions.

The transmission belt of distorted fact and biased opinion works as follows:

Public relations firms and public relations departments in large advertising agencies have foreign nations as clients. These concerns prepare articles favorable to their clients and feed them to syndicates which supply the papers with news-stories and "editorials." The foreign countries pay the public relations experts large fees. The public relations experts pay the syndicates small fees for sending out their stories. The newspapers get the stories free, and print them as supposedly "impartial" news or honest editorial opinion. The reader is left defenseless. In his opening paragraphs, Mr. Wechsler gives his sources:

. . . most of the material is drawn from transcripts of the Fulbright committee hearings published by the U. S. Government Printing Office. The hearings were held as part of the Fulbright inquiry into "Activities of Nondiplomatic Representatives of Foreign Principals in the United States." Some aspects of those hearings, especially

those dealing with former government attorneys engaged in lucrative service as lobbyists to the sugar interests, among others, received reasonably wide notice. But the story concerning the involvement of the press itself failed to stop the presses in most places.

Yet for those who believe that Upton Sinclair's *The Brass Check* is obsolete, there is almost a book of revelations in these transcripts. For the hearings revealed nothing less than the purchase of favorable editorial comment in American newspapers by totalitarian foreign governments and special American interests, sometimes operating through their own agencies but more generally using large public relations firms as their intermediaries. The story involves not only the editorial pages of many rural weeklies but the Hearst International News Service and, on a somewhat different but still serious level some strange and dubious relationships between business concerns and the present United Press-International, born of the merger between INS and UP.

The facts, as assembled by Mr. Wechsler, are considerably more horrifying than this summary suggests. When you learn, for example, that a well known correspondent for INS did special "jobs" for former dictator Trujillo of the Dominican Republic, through a division of INS which made the services of INS writers available to public relations agencies, even to the extent of composing speeches for the Latin American dictator, you wonder if there is any conceivable limit to the misuse of the public prints. Reading further, you find that such wonderment is wholly justified:

In 1956, INS began producing a monthly column "On Your Guard," written in New York by Hearst foreign editor John Martin. This so-called journalistic service, ostensibly exposing "Communist" activities in Latin America, was directly subsidized by Trujillo's New York "Information Center" which paid \$2,000 a month for the product. Since Trujillo's definition of "Communist" was a broad one, embracing all shades of criticism of Trujilloism, the scope of the service must have been almost unlimited.

While Earl Johnson, vice president and editor of UPI, in his testimony before the investigating committee, attempted to minimize the importance

of the UPI's Special Services unit, Sen. Fulbright elicited from him some revealing responses and admissions. At one point the Senator said:

You are representing to perform very unique services for a fee, and then when I ask you what you do you say it doesn't amount to much, you just gather together old stories and put them together and send them to them. This would seem to me to be a fraud on your clients.

Johnson replied with a soft answer. "Well, I don't know whether under the general moral standards of advertising we would regard it as a fraud. In my opinion, some of these things are overstated and some of the public relations firms have been given an exaggerated idea of the importance of what is done for them."

Johnson further noted that the Special Services Bureau constituted only a small fragment—"perhaps one tenth of one per cent"—of what the UPI does. If the enterprise is that small, one parenthetically wonders why UPI should risk its reputation by these involvements. For, as Mr. Fulbright summed up the matter:

"In effect, you are offering them (the public relations firms) the services of the UPI worldwide organization for a fee?"

"True," replied Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Wechsler's point, in unveiling these machinations, is not so much to view with alarm the curious editorial morality of a news service, as it is to point out that very little of this information reached the general reader. The Fulbright Committee's findings were reported hardly at all, except for material in *Editor and Publisher* and some "quiet coverage" by the *New York Times* and a Chicago news service. "The blackout," notes Mr. Wechsler, "was remarkably widespread."

So there you are. You pick up the paper to see what is going on, but you can never be sure of getting straight news. In the commercial press, there is the problem of guessing what has been whitewashed or cleaned up. You can't tell what is "all wrong" behind what the editor intends you to regard as "all right." And from the radical press, you find that there are so many things wrong—so

much deception, distortion, propaganda, and outright lies—that the problem seems totally hopeless. This situation, as Mr. Wechsler shows by quoting from Upton Sinclair's *The Brass Check* (published in 1919), is not a recent development.

What shall we do about all this? Stop *reading* the papers which simply "merchandise" news? That would be a basic step forward, which, in practical terms, would mean reading only papers which make some effort at conscientious publishing and which would, if widely supported, undoubtedly get better.

But it seems even more important to think through to some fundamental conclusion the hope or claim that developing reputable institutions—such as wholly responsible, honestly public-serving newspapers—is the key to what we need. Obviously, such institutions are desirable, but the question that ought to be asked is whether our feeling of *needing* them so much may be the real source of their vulnerability to corruption.

The commercial press lives by playing with the anxieties and insecurities of people whose sense of being and identity is deeply involved in externalities and the daily passage of events. Frequent "exposés" in the liberal press are not going to change this situation. Neither is the "total revolution" of indignant and endlessly angry political thinkers going to alter the fundamental psychological or moral predicament. Today, in the last half of the twentieth century, we can look back on a long history of such exposés and we can examine the fruits of at least two massively "total" revolutions (intended to change entirely the institutional framework of human experience) and see that these "activist" undertakings, whether reformist or radically revolutionary, have not really made the people "free." The institutional changes may be beneficent in some respects, but no revision in the institutional environment can enrich the inner lives of human beings unless the people have already determined to make themselves *independent* of institutions in the important part of their daily existence. This is

something of a paradox. It might be stated as the fact that proper social institutions can be obtained only by insisting upon their comparative unimportance. And this insistence, in order to have the necessary effect, has to come before and during the processes of institutional reform—not afterward.

For some readers, the intent of these musings will seem to be to blur the distinction between the "good guys" and the "bad guys." This is not really our point. What we are trying to suggest is a twofold proposition. First, that the analysis of the problem wholly in terms of good-guy, bad-guy polarities makes for a self-righteous, unending-emergency sort of campaign which exhausts its supporters and tends to produce fanatics who lose touch with the substance of authentic human good; and that, in the long run, the efforts founded on this analysis produce no lasting change. Second, there is a sense in which the good guys are subject to the same delusion as the bad guys: They think that rearranging *things* is the answer to basic human problems. The good guys who spend their energies working for ideal arrangements of *things* are only setting up conditions for the bad guys to exploit. In the long run, the percentages are always against this kind of project. Even after the best of revolutions, there comes a time when you can't really tell the good guys from the bad guys, because the institutions on which people depend haven't reached maturity in either good or evil tendencies. In such circumstances, you have to wait until conditions are obviously terrible before you can arouse the people to struggle for change. The basic defect of this approach to human problems is that all the signs and symptoms deemed important are *outside* of individuals—in relationships and institutional patterns. People who insist upon this approach are not living their own lives—they are waiting until they are able to take sides.