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READY OR NOT

IT is natural that, with the decline of familiar assumptions and securities, individuals everywhere should begin to work on new philosophies of life for themselves, and perhaps for others—at least, there is often an inclination to share what one produces in this way. While the results of such efforts are seldom worth publishing—not many personal formulations present the human situation with the freshness and the depth needed to excite the imagination of others—the frequency of these attempts is a fact of some importance. If the undertaking is serious, it represents new buds and branches on the tree of life for that individual.

In a park or a forest, each spring the trees put forth new shoots. This has been going on for millions of years. There is nothing new about it, you could say. But if you live or work near a living tree, and in the spring look out of the window at a delicate little branch bearing bright blooms—a branch that the year before did not exist at all—the millions of other new twigs on other trees do not diminish in the least the splendor of the achievement. The branch you admire has its own unique distinction and self-justifying reality. It has life, being, and the quiver of growth into the future. The principle of existence is announced by the branch without notice of other, similar announcements, without any sense of dull repetition. The new twig with its blossom is as original as the first true smile of a child. You, who watch the child's glee, and the child who feels it, cannot do without that smile. It has the same affirmative reality as the sun in the heavens.

So with the individual who begins to make his own philosophy. It is his birth into the world of human being. He may feel the inadequacy of his thoughts, be embarrassed by their lack of completion, but the bud with the germ of life in it is not ashamed of its small diameter. Any man thinking has the symmetry of Man Thinking, and the growth he produces has the germ of meaning in it. The germ lives so long as the growth continues.

Obviously, any philosophy of life, in order to survive and grow, needs some kind of negotiated peace with its own imperfection—some sort of synthesis between content and discontent. A twig or a plant is but a fragment of the totality of life, but somehow it gains the balance of the part with the whole. Yet the balance is constantly changing, since the drive of the growing process never dies, although it may find new embodiments. Form is created by the rhythms of growth, producing the appearance of rest and permanence, even while unborn changes are swelling to burst the matrices of form left from the past.

What is a philosophy of life? It is a statement about the interrelated meanings of the part and the whole. In human life, the part feels itself and it sees the whole. A man, that is, has feelings of wholeness as an individual, yet is confronted by unmistakable evidence that he is only a part. Philosophy is an attempt to rationalize this contradiction, to gain, through the mind, in terms of the idea of meaning, the kind of balance which the plant or twig achieves in its living relation to the total environment or whole.

A philosophy of life has certain indispensable elements. These elements have the form of ideas and include: (1) an idea of the self, (2) an idea of the world, and (3) an idea of the basis of relationships between the self and the world.

In general, there have been three ways in which men have manipulated these ideas in order to reach a conclusion which adds meaning to the experience of life. The first may be called the theological approach. In it, the self, the world, and the order of relationships between them are conceived of as the productions of God. In this approach, the self is created by God, the world is created by God, and the relationships between them are ordained by the will of God. There have been many interpretations of this system. Historically speaking, the application of the reasoning faculty to these interpretations has led to

an undermining of the premises on which they were based. In other words, rational explanation of diverse experience in terms of a single power or reality (God) is finally found to be a kind of fraud, a betrayal of the human capacity to philosophize.

The second way men have manipulated these ideas is suggested by the term "science." In the thinking which takes its categories of reality from the methods of scientific investigation, only the world is real. The self is a product of the world. All accounts of the nature of the self must be manufactured from what can be deduced from the behavior of the world as observed by science. For science, the idea of an autonomous self has no meaning. Hence, in the final analysis, this scientific way of thinking is also a fraud upon the human capacity to philosophize. In this system, there is no recognition of an entity which thinks.

These two ways of using the elements of a philosophy of life have in common the fact that they are both completed systems of judgment about the nature of things. Both refer you to the experts for the final answers. Both deprive you of the right and capacity to make your own philosophy of life. In the one case you are accused of ignoring the explanations and instructions of the Creator; in the other, of refusing to admit the authority of Scientific Fact.

Having come this far in the analysis, one could now, with a show of triumph over obstacles, go on to say that there is a *third* way of arranging the elements of a philosophy of life which avoids the consequences of fraud and wears away at the inconsistencies of human experience. We could do this, and perhaps make a little sense in this direction, but it seems more important to take note of the fact that people who use the first two systems of analysis usually create little pockets of autonomy for themselves, regardless of whether or not it is "logical" to do so. It is said, for example, by all but strict Augustinians or Calvinists in the theological sector of thought that man is free to obey or disobey the mandates of the Deity. The Deity, they say, created man with this capacity. Then there is the heresy of the Quakers, who propose a limited pantheism by asserting that there is that of God in every man. To the extent that autonomy is made possible by the idea of man, or the self, to that extent philosophy becomes possible.

The scientific thinker employs similar devices to retain autonomy. The absolute necessity for some autonomy, if there is to be any philosophizing, is made clear by Carl Rogers in his paper, "A Changed View of Science," which appears in his recent book, *On Becoming a Person.* Dr. Rogers says:

> If we choose to utilize our scientific knowledge to free men, then it will demand that we live openly and frankly with the great paradox of the behavioral sciences. We will recognize that behavior, when examined scientifically, is surely best understood as determined by prior causation. This is the great fact of science. But responsible personal choice, which is the most essential element in being a person, which is the core experience in psychotherapy, which exists prior to any scientific endeavor, is an equally prominent fact in our lives. We will have to live with the realization that to deny the reality of the experience of responsible personal choice is as stultifying, as closed-minded, as to deny the possibility of a behavioral science. That these two important elements of our experience appear to be in contradiction has perhaps the same significance as the contradiction between the wave theory and the corpuscular theory of light, both of which can be shown to be true, even though incompatible. We cannot profitably deny our subjective life any more than we can deny the objective description of that life.

We started this discussion by remarking that many people are trying to work out their own philosophy of life, these days, the reason for this attempt being the breakdown of familiar beliefs. We also said that few of these efforts seem worth publishing. What is the element in a philosophy of life which makes it important and publishable? It is, we think, the clear recognition of paradox, or the necessity of paradox, in any account of the human situation. A philosopher, you could say, is known by the way in which he deals with the essential paradoxes of human life.

Acceptance of paradox keeps the system of explanation open for autonomous human beings.

The nature of the paradoxes with which philosophizing people must come to terms varies

with the idea of the self. Take for example the problem of the man who thinks of himself as a being with both creative and moral potentialities. He wants to live a life of self-expression, but he also wants to fulfill what he conceives to be his social obligations. He may be able to chart out in his mind a model for a constructive personal life, but his conscience won't let him think only of himself. Not for hundreds of years has the normally endowed, intelligent individual been able to think only of himself. There remains the problem of the world. He can—or thinks he can—change himself, but how can he change the world?

If Christ couldn't change the world, if Gandhi couldn't, if Schweitzer can't, how can he?

Of course, you can resolve such questions by playing the part of a moral cavalier; you can say that it is not necessary to succeed in order to try. And there is no doubt a great truth in this. But you want to know something about the situation and its possibilities. You want to know a little more about where the Christs and the Gandhis get their courage to go on.

Then there is the matter of the over-simplification of focusing the question in the lives of people like Buddha and Christ. What about Bach and Leonardo da Vinci? Since people are different, there must be a number of archetypal models of the good life. At any rate, it would be an obvious mistake to have a single formula for the resolution of the paradox. It would probably be a mistake to have *any* formula for its resolution, and yet you need some kind of hypothesis about the good life to get the self-reproductive power of thought going on the question.

What are the variables in the formula for the good life? Well, it is very difficult not to feel admiration for the Founding Fathers of the United States. These men elaborated a new conception of the association of human beings under law. It gave order to the new ideas of the self that emerged in the eighteenth century. It gave form to freedom. Now, after nearly two hundred years of experience of the relationships established by the forms so created, we have other problems. We do not throw out the idea of the self which inspired those forms, but the pressure in our lives lies elsewhere. The complexities of the kind of civilization which has developed since the eighteenth century are very nearly too much for us. Not too much, perhaps, for thee and me, but obviously too much for the people "out there." And we feel a responsibility to all those people.

The face of our civilization has become ugly, its morals indifferent, its mindless intentions immeasurably destructive. You can't isolate yourself from it. Even if you could, there you would sit, with the sour taste of self-righteousness in your mouth. Even if you succeed in giving your life the private beauty of a flower in a crannied wall, how will you feel when you discover that the wall is a prison with people locked up behind it?

What is a philosophy of life supposed to do for you? Make you feel good? This is a question that needs some reflection.

You could also ask what is really going on in the world. Are the people building something, and did they get hold of the wrong set of plans? Or is all the building only a mask for some inner process of self-discovery that, one way or another, must take place?

The problem comes into focus with a study of the institutions which both shield and shape men's lives. It is a truism that people are, on the whole, better than their institutions. That is, they will support or justify acts dictated by institutions that they would never perform as individuals. Men mild and harmless in private life will kill in war. Having gloried in their institutions—and with some justification—they now fail to question them. Are they not, as our traditions tell us, modelled on the natural law? But institutions, however excellent, are not endowed with the infinite adaptability of human beings. They are not gods, or even half-gods; yet—and here is another paradox—our institutions are supposed to hold us to the mark in our weak moments; and, what usually seems more important, they are supposed to hold those *other* people to the mark.

One of the most noticeable aspects of present-day existence is the apparent need—felt more by some than by others—to experiment with the idea of

doing without certain institutions that now guide and direct human behavior. This is the plain implication of the anti-state movement—or, more accurately, the anti-national-military-power-state movement. It may be said that world government or world federation is offered as a substitute for the national institution, but for many people this is like delegating the authority and responsibility of a father in relation to his family to a distant town council which has no intimate knowledge of the family's interests and problems and may be expected to perform its obligations perfunctorily. World government may not mean this, but undoubtedly many people *feel* this way about it.

On the other hand, it is quite clear wars are contests, not between peoples, but between rival or opposing sovereignties of institutions, since today, even while the wars are going on, we speak of the "good little people" who have been coerced and cajoled by their evil governments to go to war against us. Yet the people fight the wars and are killed by them.

So, if you regard the problem of making a philosophy of life in the context of the present emergency, you are bound to give some attention to the relationships of human beings to their institutions. How can institutions be made to perform their restraining function without periodically turning into irrational juggernauts of destruction?

How much of the role of restraint can be turned back to individuals, in order to lessen the authority of institutions? What sort of an idea of the self is needed to support a philosophy of self-restraint, in behalf of a society that is not armed for total coercion?

After you come to some conclusion on these questions, you have then to decide what you will do to spread this enlarging, self-reliance-inspiring idea of the self around. It is the old problem Socrates faced so persistently, even to the point of losing his life. How do you teach virtue?

What rate of progress can be expected of people who need to emancipate themselves from the grip of outworn institutions? Can it be hastened by desperate measures? Some people, it is said, are not yet ready for democratic institutions. But what of people who need to practice self-restraint, yet do not feel themselves ready to survive in a world which has no coercive institutions?

In these questions we are confronted by the shifting identity of the Enemy, and the ubiquitous mystery of the origin of Evil—some old but neglected friends in any making of philosophy. The social conscience of modern man is a millstone around his neck, so far as private salvation is concerned. He is like the great warrior of the Mahabharata who, when it came time for him to go to Moksha, or Heaven, found that he was incapable of passing the pearly gates because the guardians of paradise refused to admit his dog. The man of social conscience is unable to turn his back on the evil in the world. He has to act against it, which means that he has first to learn what it is and how to act against it. Here is the real puzzle of the twentieth century. Anybody can call a boy or a man—or a nation—bad. The problem is to understand why he is bad, and how he became bad, and then to find out what if anything can be done about it.

The depressing fact is that not very many people want to know the answer to these last questions. They know in their hearts that it will cost them something to find out.

Meanwhile, the pressure grows. On the one side, the anxiety and sense of unfulfillment grow in the great mass of men, while on the other the daring of experiments in the teaching of virtue grows among the few. One day the two developments will strike a balance, and a great historical paradox will be resolved. It will be good to have a balance, once again, and good to have a basis for new, less rigid, less habit-forming, institutions; but best of all, perhaps, will be the deeper insight gained into the causal relationships between the individual and society, between the one and the many, or between man and the world.

REVIEW

AN UNUSUAL MOVIE AND A GOOD-TRY BOOK

IN our opinion, you may recommend the movie, *Paris Blues,* to all your friends, and the novel, *Peaceable Lane,* to at least a few. Both ring some changes on the "improve understanding of the American Negro problems" theme, and the nuances are important, too.

Paris Blues is outstanding in many respects, and while both dialogue and action creak in the white-skinned romance (of Paul Newman, Blues King, and his temporary inamorata, Joan Woodward), the story is a natural vehicle for the rare talents of Sidney Poitier and Diahann Carroll. "Eddie," played by Poitier, is a skilled musician who plans to stay away from the United States and its "second-class" citizenship for Negroes. In France he can live a fairly idyllic existence which knows no ethnic or color prejudice. The girl who changes his mind is a school teacher on vacation from America. Though in love with Eddie, she refuses to accept convenient isolation from the problems of integration still to be worked out in America. The discussions between the two, especially on race problems, are believable and excellently conceived. When Eddie first tries to explain why it just won't do for him to go back to America after a long stay in Paris—"I just don't *push* easily any more"—one has a poignant glimpse of the double role that many intelligent American Negroes play. Belligerence helps neither themselves nor their people, yet they are able to think and feel subtleties of discrimination about which comment or protest is impractical.

Paris Blues has some good music, realistic views of French cafe society and Paris scenery, and took both courage and imagination to make. (Pennebaker and Diane Production, novel by Harold Flender, featuring Diahann Carroll and Serge Reggiani, Newman and Woodward, and produced by Sam Shaw.)

Among other things, Keith Wheeler's 1960 novel, *Peaceable Lane* (a Book-of-the-Month now a Signet paperback at 75 cents), explains the psychology of occasional American Negro aggressiveness. Lamar Winter is a talented commercial artist whose work commands top fees. He refuses to accept "second-class citizenship" at any level and finally resolves to buy a home in an exclusive suburban (white) community. Peaceable Lane becomes the scene of both psychological and physical violence, at times reminding the reader of Sinclair Lewis' too-little appreciated novel, *Kingsblood Royal.* Finally, after the needless sacrifice of two lives, the Lane learns what it was supposed to know in the first place—the meaning of "equal justice for all." But we are here especially interested in the insights supplied regarding a Negro who is obnoxiously bellicose until, by patience, his white-skinned friend demonstrates the meaning of integrity in a friendship which reaches beyond the color line. But at the beginning, the relationship between the leading character, Matthew Jones, and Lamar, the Negro, is a difficult one. Wheeler gives the history of the relationship:

> When Matt had first begun to work with the artist six—no by now it must be seven—years ago, it had been difficult. Nearly impossible. Then, as now, Winter had carried a chip on his shoulder as visible as a cord of firewood. Aggressive, quick to scorn or mockery, alert for slight and forever ready to strike back at it, Winter had been a hard man to like, and at first Matt had not liked him.
>
> Their relationship had begun warily. It was a brittle professional partnership, held together at first only by Matt's respect for the artist's talent and by Winter's acknowledgement of Matt's abilities. That might have been enough for two men of equal capacity and the same color, but it was not enough between Winter and a white man with whom he had to work closely. Some devilish compulsion drove Winter on to test the bond to its breaking point and once, early in their association, he had gone too far.
>
> Some drawled, studied insult, now forgotten, had jerked too hard on the taut reins of Matt's patience and he had rounded on the Negro.

"You're over your quota with that 'white man' stuff," he said, facing the artist, his eyes coldly hostile. "Let's drop it."

"Surely you ain't against being white," the artist said mockingly, his eyes bright with cold glee at the success of his goading.

"Just against your implying it automatically makes me a slave-whoppin' sonofabitch. I didn't make me white, or you black. I'm fed up with being hit below the belt."

"You could hit back," Winter said softly, tauntingly.

"I could. But for what?"

"Maybe you haven't got the guts."

"Maybe. On the other hand, unlike you, I'm not trying to kick the world in the belly, either."

"I won't argue that. You don't need to." . . . .

"Look, Winter, this is the generation we have to live in—you and I. You have a beef all right—anyhow, your people have—though I can't say you seem to be suffering much yourself. But your people have—a big one. But the beef is bigger and older than either of us. You let it lie and I'll let it lie. We've got work to do; let's try to get along."

The Negro's stare was level, calculating, probing into Matt's eyes, searching beyond them. At last some of the hard glitter faded.

"Okay, white man," Winter said, but now he was smiling. "Maybe you mean it. I guess you probably do."

It had begun there, Matt remembered. Somehow after that so imperceptibly that its passing could not be measured, the undertone of hostility had faded from their working partnership. . . . He trusted Lamar Winter, and if Winter still kept some part of himself in reserve, Matt was not aware of it.

But deep within himself, Matt knew, there remained some instinctive residue of guilt. The guilt was his only by inheritance, through the color of his skin, but nonetheless he felt its weight. And gradually he came to feel that he could understand, though he wished it otherwise, how the extension of that guilt had forged the anger and the uncompromising arrogance of this proud man, Lamar Winter. He never voiced any of this, for he felt instinctively that any overt effort of his to atone for the poisoned legacy of the white man's way with the black would invite Winter's cold rejection. Winter, he knew, would accept patronage from no man, not even a friend.

And so they let it lie. Winter kept the chip on his shoulder for most of the world. Matt thought he no longer wore it for him.

Mr. Wheeler is particularly effective in portraying Matthew Jones as a slightly above-average American who finally reaches social maturity concerning "social" and "racial" issues when personal circumstances force the problem upon him. Of course, if everyone's response was as good as Matthew Jones's, we would now be far ahead of our present state of enlightenment.

There must come, sooner or later, the recognition that ethnic, color, and temperamental differences are interesting, rather than frightening, and that by awareness of and sympathy for those differences we can come closer to the ideal of universal brotherhood.

A passage in a novel by Merle Miller, called *Reunion* (Popular Library, 1961), provides some parallel insights by way of an intelligent Jew's reflections on his cultural and ethnic heritage:

Saul put the book aside; it was really too heavy and should have been published in two volumes. He took another sip of the drink.

He did not at the moment want to think about the Jewish problem in the Middle Ages or, for that matter, in the twentieth century. There were worthy and helpful and even necessary people who spent all their time thinking and writing and talking about the Jewish problem, and they surely did a lot of good; but Saul did not want to be one of them. Some were so anxious to demonstrate that the Jews were as good as anyone else, which they were, that they refused to admit that Jews could be as bad as anyone else, which they could. Someone was always trying to prove that the Jews were the same as anyone else, which, of course, they were not. People were different; races were different; nationalities were different; and religions were different. Trying to ignore those sometimes painful facts helped no one and might do considerable harm.

COMMENTARY
WHAT DO PEOPLE LEARN FROM?

MANAS has published little on the Eichmann Trial. Our first notice of the case was a quotation from Hans Zeisel in MANAS for June 21. Then there was a quotation from Edmond Beaujon's article in the *Journal de Geneve* (MANAS, Aug. 16, 1961), then Harvey Wheeler's article, "Eichmann and Totalitarianism" (MANAS, Sept. 27, 1961), finally Anna Vakar's luminous allegory, "Where Be I?" (MANAS, Nov. 1, 1961). The feeling of withdrawal felt by so many in relation to the prosecution of Eichmann is by no means evidence of mere squeamishness or moral weakness. The trial has seemed to many an ignominious extension of the horror of the Nazi crimes. It was not a purifying event but something done out of scale. Yet one hesitated to make a big point of this; the sufferings of the Jews were immeasurable and to argue the matter heavily seemed ungracious.

What was printed in MANAS was in furtherance of a reflective consideration of the values missed or ignored by the trial. The nub of the pertinent criticism was well put, it seemed to us, by Mr. Zeisel, when he said (in the *Saturday Review):*

> The trial of Adolf Eichmann is likely to make all the wrong points because neither the procedure nor the substance of our criminal law fits such a case. Our criminal law has meaning only for crimes that lie within the range of human understanding . . . . but this crime lies too far beyond ordinary human experience to make such a recognition possible. . . . Eichmann's trial will keep us from seeing our share in this catastrophe because, by comparison, our share must seem infinitesimal. And yet, what ought to matter is not the absolute comparison but the relative comparison with our respective consciences.

We now have for review a somewhat condensed version of a paper prepared by Yosal Rogat, a specialist in constitutional law, which has the title: "The Measures Taken: The Eichmann Trial and the Rule of Law." This paper will appear as a pamphlet issued by the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions (Santa Barbara, Calif.), and is presently available as the lead article in the March, 1962, number of *The Second Coming*, a new bimonthly magazine published in New York (single copy, fifty cents, address: 200 West 107th St., New York 25, N.Y.).

This article is important for a number of reasons. First, it assists the reader to overcome his reluctance to weigh the issues of the Eichmann Trial—a value which should be deliberately recognized, since it is so easy to ignore a repugnant question when one is quite sure that he is "right." The discipline of Mr. Rogat's training in the law contributes an impressive impartiality which may be learned from, almost apart from the content of the discussion.

Second, Mr. Rogat's paper is most suggestive in its evaluation of what may be hoped for from the use of a criminal prosecution as an educational instrument. Taking Ben-Gurion at his word—to the effect that "the trial is to show . . . people here and . . . throughout the world the danger of authoritarian society"—Rogat devotes the bulk of his investigation to seeing whether this aim is served by the prosecution of Eichmann. He asks:

> Exactly how did Israel affect our perception of Eichmann and of the Nazi phenomenon by casting the problems in a legal context? Did the trial actually further the understanding of the historical events in question and reduce the likelihood of their recurrence?

Its measured investigation, point by point, of the factors affecting the answer to this question makes Mr. Rogat's article essential reading. We can only briefly illustrate his method, here. In one place he says:

> Reducing the unique historical events at issue in the trial to legally manageable proportions risks leaving out too much that is vital. In a courtroom we document, prove, describe; we can easily acquire a spacious sense of comprehension. Legal processes are not necessarily appropriate for the solution of all problems; perhaps events that transcend all of our categories of judgment should not be thrust into categories of law. The integrity of the law need not be offended by the admission that it has some limits,

> that it cannot always deal with the most significant dimensions of every problem.

Here Mr. Rogat makes an introduction to what may be the most important consideration of all. He takes a close look at what seems to us a prime defect—or illusion—of Western civilization—the assumption that there are political or legal solutions for our major problems. Manifestly, the producing and surrounding circumstances of the Eichmann Trial represent an extreme cultural and moral bankruptcy. The West sought a remedy for its impoverishment in politics and in trial by combat, and Israel can hardly be denied its day in court, but Mr. Rogat is not content to let the matter rest. It would be a disaster, he implies. if the failure of a legal device to exhibit the true elements of this bankruptcy were to pass unnoticed.

The law, he points out, cannot deal with ambiguities, "It must," he points out, "hold individuals responsible for what may indeed be the product of broader social circumstances; it is often forced to make a relatively crude judgment which leaves more complicated and refined perceptions to the area of conscience." The obvious response to this is that the Israeli leaders have not been satisfied with the response of the conscience of the modern world; in this they are certainly right, since the failure of the Western conscience is the most horrifying thing about the present time; but is the Eichmann Trial a proper remedy, or will it, possibly, work in reverse? Mr. Rogat writes:

> We are not implying that a full and balanced understanding would exculpate Eichmann in any way, but rather that a radically over-simplified story which rests on designating Eichmann a monster may absolve, by implication, those who are not monsters but are equally guilty.
>
> In addition to emphasizing his responsibility in a way that relieves us of our own, there is also a sense in which as a "monster" or psychopath even Eichmann ceases to be responsible. That is, Eichmann is a monster not because of any personal characteristics (he hardly seems to possess any), but because of what we are told he did. If he did these things, he must be a monster, and we cannot apply categories of accountability to him for they presuppose "human" perceptions, feelings, and commitments. But this is just to say that we do not understand; that no one could have responsibly committed those crimes.

The insight and intelligence of this discussion of the Eichmann Trial triumph completely over the distasteful aspect of the subject. We strongly recommend a reading of Mr. Rogat's paper, either in *Second Coming* or in the more complete pamphlet form.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
ACTS FOR PEACE

THERE can hardly be any doubt that Robert Pickus, who was the moving spirit of the Berkeley (Calif.) "Acts for Peace," and is chief founder of the "Turn toward Peace" movement, is better able to communicate the logic and appeal of non-violence than almost anyone else who has come along. The *Mademoiselle* interview with Pickus, reprinted in last week's MANAS, shows why the editors of that sprightly monthly regarded both Pickus and Turn Toward Peace as stimulating news. For college students, the interview is an incomparably effective introduction to pacifist values in the context of the present world situation; it generates an *esprit de corps* for those who are seeking alternatives to war, as though they were members of a natural fraternity worth joining.

A leaflet recently distributed by Pacific Nonviolent Action indicates that in modern "pacifism" one encounters a good deal of psychological knowledge and only a modicum of emotion and sentimentalism. This particular release, distributed to stimulate support for an Easter "Peace Walk" and rally in Los Angeles, makes the following critique of our present foreign policy:

> The United States must present a clear image of what it believes in and be willing to take the initiative for peace. At the present time we seem to respond only to Soviet initiatives, and we present a vague image to the world. What do we believe in? What is our value system? Actually we seem to believe mainly in the H-bomb. We are taking away our freedom by becoming a warfare and garrison state—we are becoming totalitarian in order to defeat totalitarianism. Our means must be consistent with our ends, which means that we must begin a *process* of unilateral disarmament. By beginning to disarm unilaterally, and taking other tension-reducing steps, multilateral disarmament will be made more probable, even if not certain. In any case, the risks involved in unilaterally disarming are less than the risks involved in the continuing arms race, and they permit us to act as morally civilized human beings.

As to the idea of launching a peace offensive:

> We cannot disarm in a vacuum, but must have a constructive program in which we—
>
> (1) Divert our military defense expenditures into peacetime production which we can increasingly share with the rest of the world;
>
> (2) Change germ warfare centers into medical research centers;
>
> (3) Promote genuine social revolution and land reform in South America and other countries;
>
> (4) Support world law and world government—immediately by the repeal of the Connelly Amendment. Realize that national boundaries are artificial and men are fellow human beings wherever they happen to have been born and whatever their physical differences;
>
> (5) Support an unarmed international peace brigade prepared to enter future conflict areas (such as future Congo situations);
>
> (6) Develop peace research centers for study of the economics of disarmament, full employment, and the problems of transition to a more productive society. These centers will also explore more creative ways for men to release and resolve aggressiveness and frustration.

Readers may also be interested in such independent efforts as the typescript handed out as an occasional accompaniment to the distribution of the leaflet quoted above. The writer, a young man named Jerry Wheeler, has previously contributed to MANAS. The first of his "personal notes" reads as follows:

> Some of you have wondered why we make little overt effort to give you our leaflets or engage you in conversation. We feel that unless an individual initiates his own interest in the idea of what nonviolence is, nothing we can do will actually generate this interest in him. At the same time we wish these ideas exposed to the public by being here, we do not wish to force a man to study ideas in which he is not interested. The attached leaflet is the most cursory attempt to "point a finger" in the direction of nonviolence so you might intelligently engage in further study if you so desire. Just as the "art of killing" called "soldiery" or "militarism" takes

training, study and practice to the point of sacrificing one's life, so the art of nonviolence takes training, study and practice to the point of sacrificing one's life if the situation demands it.

We fully agree with "violence-oriented persons" that defense is needed but we feel their method of revenge, eye-for-an-eye, or returning evil for evil is hopelessly bankrupt. We make this judgment not on moral or religious ground but in the light of history—in the light of 6,000 years of dead armies which did not protect nor defend nor preserve those values, nations, and persons they were meant to defend and preserve. The "doubled fist" of individuals as well as the hydrogen-bomb fist of nations is equally weak and unworkable as a means of solving conflict.

We agree that passive surrender to evil is cowardly as well as useless, just as militarism is a dishonorable and unworkable form of defense. Of your three choices—Nonviolence, Militarism, and Surrender—Surrender should receive no consideration as it is badly motivated (from fear) as well as being degrading and unworkable. Militarism, at its best, has honorable motivations but is degrading and unworkable in practice. Of the three we feel Nonviolence to be the only choice which is honorably motivated as well as workable in actual practice.

Wheeler's Note No. 2 is titled "I've Had Enough!" It serves to introduce the point of view of those who are currently marching up and down in a picket line in front of the Atomic Energy Commission offices in Los Angeles:

Some of you have wondered why we are picketing this particular building. The Atomic Energy Commission has offices in this building. However, we are picketing more than just the AEC offices; we are protesting our country's drift into thermonuclear violence. We are not mad at the government nor do we have any particular breed of politics to push. We are ordinary humans like yourself who are fed up with militarism. We are, in short, very cynical regarding the benefits of violence either for defense or offense.

As we understand the situation, thermonuclear weapons systems are social insanity with no defense value. They create a deepening spiral of fear which will make the eventual war more deadly when it actually begins. We are asking you to live in such a way that you can be proud to be alive. If you really wish to preserve democracy and the values to which this country is dedicated, then let us live them in our daily lives and be willing to sacrifice ourselves if necessary in order to preserve our society in a free and noble state. We cannot do this by succumbing to the siren call of the hydrogen bomb—that is only suicide for both ourselves and our enemy. To kill all life is not a defense of democracy, it is suicide.

We can refuse to be beasts no matter what another country might be. We can transform our enemy by being so pure and powerful in our example that he is changed not by our ability to equal his insanity, but by our health, by our basic humanity.

We, as Americans, will improve this planet by being an example to it, not by hydrogen bombs. We should forsake a method which has shown itself to be a total failure for 6000 long years of soldiers who have died in war laying the seeds for another war that their sons might die after them. Somebody must have the bravery and guts to say, "I've had enough!" Somebody must be brave enough to love his fellow human no matter who he is or what he might do.

If the power of Love is ever to be demonstrated upon this planet, individual humans like you and me must do it. As we learn to non-cooperate with evil no matter where we find it, we will come to a deeper understanding of the power and defense in *what we are as human beings* and NOT in how big our bombs happen to be.

Jerry Wheeler is but one of a number of young men who are intelligent, dedicated and adventurous in their relationship with a new sort of peace movement. Mr. Wheeler is also but one of many young men who will spend periods of varying length in jail or prison for picketing or protesting where they are not supposed to picket or protest. But such young men are beginning to get their point of view over, and we submit that the story of the contemporary "peace movement" poses one of the most fascinating challenges of all history for the college student of today, and for "youth" in general.

FRONTIERS

Another Conversation

A READER with an interest in continuing the dialogue begun—or resumed—in MANAS for Jan. 10, by means of discussion of Ralph Borsodi's "Fourteen Questions," has written to extend consideration of the twelfth question: "What is the nature of human nature?" He takes his reply from A1fred Korzybski, founder of the general semantics movement, as embodied in a Phi Beta Kappa address of forty years ago by Cassius Jackson Keyser, on "The Nature of Man." Keyser wrote in elaboration of Korzybski's idea that "Man is the time-binding form of life."

Plants, Keyser suggests, are "chemistry-binders." That is, the living plant performs a work of synthesis, drawing up into its organism in the needed proportions minerals and water, and with the aid of sunlight transforms these raw materials into tissues which have enduring form and specialized function. As our correspondent, Dr. J. Samuel Bois, suggests: "Left to itself, the soil does not bind its chemicals in such a fashion. So, the term chemistry-binders is a good description of what plants are and do. It puts them in a class by themselves. The term applies equally to the least conspicuous moss as to the most majestic tree." The animal—pursuing the logic of this approach—is a space-binder. He ranges far for his nourishment, bringing to the synthesis of his organism elements gathered from distant places. Dr. Bois continues:

> We come now to man. He, of course, is capable of doing what plants do as chemistry-binders and animals do as space-binders. But he is not limited to these activities. He has a characteristic that is distinctly human, and that neither plants nor animals can share with him. [For collateral reading, see Julian Huxley's book, *Man Stands Alone*.] He is a time-binder: selects, gathers together, and combines into something new elements that belong to different periods of time. He combines them, assimilates them, and makes of them something that did not exist before. He can repeat the operation as often as he wishes, each time creating a modification, an enlargement, a complexification of the world in which he lives. Time-binding means producing civilization. To quote Cassius J. Keyser: "We have observed that each generation of (say) beavers and bees begins where the preceding one began and ends where it ended; that is a law for animals, for mere space-binders there is no advancement, no time-binding—a beaver dam is a beaver dam—a honeycomb is a honeycomb. We know that, in sharp contrast therewith, man invents, discovers, creates. We know that inventions lead to new inventions, discoveries to new discoveries, creations to new creations, we know that, by such progressive breeding, the children of knowledge and art not only produce their kind in larger and larger families but engender new and higher kinds endlessly; we know that this time-binding process, by which *past time* embodied as co-factor of toil in enduring achievements thus survives the dead and works as living capital . . . is the secret of progressive civilization-building."

To the foregoing, we should like to append a quotation from Ortega y Gasset's *Toward a Philosophy of History* (1941), not because it changes or qualifies Korzybski's perspective in any important way, but because it presents the same insight in quite different words and, in Ortega's case, moves to a critical conclusion. Ortega turns the time-binding capacity, which is *memory*, into the basis of a philosophy of history, which he calls "historic reason":

> [Historic Reason] shows us the futility of all general revolutions, of all attempts—such as that of the Confusionists of '89—to bring about a sudden change of society and begin history anew. It opposes to the method of revolution the only method worthy of the long experience that lies behind the European of today. Revolutions, so incontinent in their hypocritically generous haste to proclaim the rights of man, have always violated, trampled upon, and broken man's most fundamental right, so fundamental that it may stand as the definition of his being: the right to continuity. The only radical difference between human history and "natural history" is that the former can never begin again. Koehler and others have shown that the chimpanzee and the orangutan are distinguished from man not by what is known strictly speaking as intelligence, but because they have far less memory. Every morning the poor beasts have to face almost total oblivion of what they have lived through the day before, and their intellect has to

> work with a minimum fund of experience. Similarly, the tiger of today is identical with that of six thousand years ago, each one having to begin as if none had ever existed before him. But man, thanks to his power of memory, accumulates his past; he possesses it and can make use of it. Man is never the first man but begins his life on a certain level of accumulated past. That is his single treasure, his mark and privilege. And the important part of this treasure is not what seems to us correct and worth preserving, but the memory of mistakes, allowing us not to repeat the same ones forever. Man's real treasure is the treasure of his mistakes piled up stone by stone through thousands of years. It is because of this that Nietzsche defined man as the being "with the longest memory." Breaking the continuity with the past, wanting to begin again, is a lowering of man and a plagiarism of the orangutan. It was a Frenchman, Dupont-White, who around 1860 had the courage to exclaim: "Continuity is one of the rights of man; it is a homage of everything that distinguishes him from the beast."

With all this distinction, then, why do we human beings have such dreadful problems? Our correspondent suggests, after Korzybski, that the achievements of human creativity and invention are allowed to lapse into traditional forms of human expression and organization, which become stultifying confinements of the time-binding capacity. Dr. Bois writes: "If we accept time-binding as a law of human nature, this continuing attempt at self-renewal is the normal expression of human nature in action, of human nature in the characteristic functioning that differentiates it from lower forms of life. Clinging to tradition, whether centuries old or of recent vintage, is the negation of that distinctive human characteristic. It brings man down to the level of animal life, where generations after generations keep repeating the same patterns of activity. We thus copy animals in our nervous systems, as Korzybski used to repeat."

Again, we have a parallel analysis, although moving from somewhat different assumptions, in Roderick Seidenberg's recent books, *Posthistoric Man* (Chapel Hill, 1950) and *Anatomy of the Future* (Chapel Hill, 1961). Mr. Seidenberg, you could say, uses "time-binding" in a fearful sense, anticipating that the progressive application of rational or scientific systems to the regulation and control of human life will eventually remove the opportunity for innovation or even deviation from well-established norms. He asks if the planning and predicting capacities of human beings may not have built into them a pattern of self-defeat. The question is whether or not man can elaborate and build without becoming the captive of his creations. Mr. Seidenberg finds no reassuring answer. It is, we think, the same question that troubled the Buddha, although in a historical framework of very different circumstances. And the solution, we think further, will come only from a fresh consideration of human ends, which are the ground of the motivations behind all human undertakings, giving the latter the character of either a closed system of relationships (becoming finally the prison of rationalized processes Mr. Seidenberg sees all around us), or the reference-points of free behavior.

What we are trying to suggest is that it is the moral quality of what a man does which determines the effect it will have upon his life, and that this is true of societies as of individuals. "Moral" is not, of course, quite the right word here. Another way of putting it would be to say that a man who identifies the good life with any kind of "system" will inevitably find himself imprisoned by it. He must build, in short, without identification—become, that is, an "unattached" man. This is the paradox which the Zen philosophers never tire of repeating—expressing the need to do without *wanting* to do in a self-identifying way.