VOLUME XXV, NO. 9
MARCH 1, 1972

PHILOSOPHY IN ACTION

SINCE the intervention of India has brought an end to the horrors suffered by the people of East Bengal, now Bangladesh, an interlude of peace and reconstruction may be hoped for in that pain-wracked land. Yet it was only a little more than twenty-five years ago that "the Great Calcutta Killing" broke out, in 1946, and spread soon thereafter to the Noakhali district in East Bengal. The grim story of these crimes of communalism is told in detail in Pyarelal's book, *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* together with a moving account of Gandhi's personal efforts, as an emissary of brotherhood and non-violence, to establish trust by living alone for six weeks in a Noakhali village, and by making a tour of the entire region. Gandhi seemed to take upon himself full responsibility for finding a solution. He avoided police protection as much as he could. The villages had failed to get such protection, and he would not have it. Moreover:

> He [Gandhi] was positive that India would not truly come into her own unless every Indian, man or woman, learnt to become his or her own policeman and "every home its own castle, not in the sense of the ages known as dark but in the very ancient true sense that everyone has learnt the art of dying without ill will, or even wishing that since he cannot someone else will do away with the would-be assassin. . . . If unfortunately the politically minded will not or cannot go as far as suggested here, he must at least shed all fear and resolutely deny himself all protection whether from the military or the police."

One thing comes out very clearly in Pyarelal's books. Gandhi set for himself absolutely heroic standards of behavior, and he held out those standards to all who said they wanted to work closely with him. On the other hand, he would never try to compel anyone to live by his rules. He walked a very fine line of principle, sometimes difficult to follow, as in the case of his willingness to regard the failure of the people of India to be nonviolent as *his* failure. How could this be *his* failure? Perhaps his reasoning was that he identified himself with the people so completely that he would not separate their weaknesses from himself, but accepted them as his own shortcomings. He might have argued that if everyone were willing to attempt this, the country would soon become a paradise of fellowship, cooperation, and mutual forbearance.

Where does thinking of this sort carry us? If we take Gandhi seriously, it becomes evident that for him the inner development of human beings counted for far more than external victories or events. The besetting problem is no longer that of having to face one emergency after another, but turns, rather, on the need for continuous moral striving on the part of all. For the emergencies, as we know, keep on emerging, and the makeshift solutions men find do not last. One might turn from the communal conflicts of India to the riots in the crowded urban centers of the United States with little sense of change. Long-nurtured resentments and dissatisfactions wear away at restraint, and finally an outburst of violence and looting provides temporary relief. Mobs spurred by demagogues are as old as civilization itself; at any rate, they seem to go with the sort of civilization that has the support of military power and is represented by the symbols of coercive action and material wealth.

So long as such outbreaks are only sporadic, and can be suppressed by conventional means, the population as a whole sees little reason to wonder about them, but when they become almost epidemic, sometimes going far out of control, or when the police stand by and watch, or even take part, then the process of moral decay can no longer be ignored. The solution of martial law may then be the only alternative to chaos, and this amounts to a confession of social failure, most of

all for a society making pretensions to be a democratic community.

What has the wisdom of the human race to say about such collective breakdowns? Surprisingly little. By "wisdom" we mean the resources of the established civilization, for it is hardly the custom of nations and the custodians of political power to turn to men like Gandhi for advice when they have trouble such as race or communal riots, or, one might add, wars which have grown into unwanted conflicts.

Philosophers are supposed to be men schooled in the wisdom of mankind, but if a troubled statesman, mayor, or even a chief of police were to go to the head of the department of philosophy in an American university, asking for counsel concerning the practical problems before him, he would almost certainly be regarded as a most unusual, and perhaps naïve, man, even to *expect* help from that quarter. A passage in Herbert Kohl's *The Age of Complexity* offers a brief survey of the state of "philosophy" in the universities of this country:

> Most contemporary American philosophers may be suffering from an unconscious dose of pragmatism—from which they suffer more in the form of an attitude than a doctrine. They read and glean all they can from foreign sources and then see what they can "use"—what they can criticize or develop. They pick up vocabularies and concepts already highly developed and natural to other quarters. They are interested in small areas, single arguments, and journal-sized debates. There are usually no overall principles that govern their digestion of foreign matter, just as there are no overall values that are to be imposed on experience in pragmatic philosophy. Everything must emerge from the matter at hand—but how can anything but specifics emerge in this manner? Just as pragmatic philosophy is ultimately empty and meaningless, philosophy governed by unconscious pragmatism has no overall coherence or motivation. There is no point to it, finally, other than whatever simple analytic tasks individual philosophers choose.
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> Hand in hand with a lack of motivation in philosophizing goes an equal lack of concern for the lives of individual men. American philosophy usually abandons concern for individual lives to psychology. Whenever this happens philosophy itself ceases to be important.

We have quoted this, not to make a whipping boy of academic philosophy, but to suggest simply that the "approved" sources of knowledge or wisdom in a civilization based on power and wealth are unlikely to have anything to say of importance concerning the real remedy for its troubles, when these begin to appear and to multiply. How, by contrast, did Gandhi gain so wide an audience in India, and finally throughout the world, even though few seem ready to listen carefully and to apply what he had to say? His primary concern was with the lives of human beings—with the pain and the injustice that they endure. As with the Buddha before him, the welfare of people came first. This was the root consideration in his philosophy. The depth and breadth of his thinking are due to this foundation or inspiration. This was also a major consideration in the basic ideas of Socrates, and it was of course central to the teachings of Jesus. There are no doubt differences between philosophy and religion, yet the unifying ground of motive in both must surely be devotion to the amelioration of the human condition, if they are to have universal appeal.

Curiously, philosophy which originates in this concern is frequently neglected or disposed of as "other-worldly." Such judgments tend toward the conclusion that any view of the meaning of life which does not place a high value on material things is of little importance. But what if the Buddha was *right*—and the pursuit of material things and the cravings which identify reality with material existence are indeed the principal source of human suffering? What if Tolstoy and Gandhi saw the truth of the matter in declaring that the real progress of growth of human beings is an inward thing, a matter of the qualities of mind and heart? These attitudes have to do with behavior *in the world;* they relate to the kind of a life that is least likely to make a man a prisoner and victim of

mundane conditions. How is this "other-worldly"?

Very few men, it may be said, have been persuaded of these ideas. That is perhaps true, but it is also true, as Simone Weil has remarked, that "History is a tissue of base and cruel lies in the midst of which a few drops of purity sparkle at long intervals." The record of the human race, taken in the mass, is not particularly good. There has been more injustice than justice, and more suffering than joy. Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* comes closer to the realities of human life as it has been lived in the past than do a great many of the books which celebrate the progress and achievements of modern civilization. Let us return to Gandhi and his point of view concerning the communal riots and murders in East Bengal. Pyarelal devotes much space to Gandhi's thinking:

> Noakhali thus became to Gandhi the model point governing the future course of events for the whole of India. Political slavery of India, he felt certain, was going to end soon, but would the removal of that foreign yoke necessarily bring to the people freedom in the real sense of the term? To Gandhiji it seemed as daylight that the answer would depend upon how the change came. And that in its turn would depend upon the account that his Ahimsa could give in meeting the challenge of Noakhali.
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> Supposing India produced sufficient arms and ammunition and knew the art of war, what part or lot would those who could not bear arms have in the struggle for independence? Would replacement of the British army of occupation by a national army bring freedom to the masses? "No" was Gandhiji's reply. "A country that is governed by even its national army can never be morally free and, therefore, its so-called weakest member can never rise to his full moral height." He wanted Swaraj in which the fruits of freedom would be shared equally by all. But unless the weakest were able to contribute in the winning and defending of it an equal share with physically the strongest, this could not be. "That can be under Ahimsa only. I would, therefore, stand for Ahimsa as the only means for obtaining India's freedom even if I were alone."
>
> India was at the cross-roads. Non-violence had brought her to the gate of independence. Would she renounce it after entering that gate? It did not need much imagination to see that India would have to wait long before she could become a first-class military power. "And for that she would have to go under the tutelage of some Western power." The vital question was whether . . . India, attempting to become a military power, would be content to become at least for some years "a fifth-rate power in the world without a message" or whether "by further refining and continuing her non-violent policy prove herself worthy of being the first nation in the world using her hard-won freedom for the delivery of the earth from the burden which is crushing her in spite of the so-called victory."

Gandhi continues at length along these lines. There is indeed a sense in which he was very much alone in such contentions, and remains almost so today. Couldn't he *see* how remote was the possibility of persuading anyone of his basic position—if, indeed, he could find any allies at all?

As we said, Gandhi adopted and advocated a heroic stance. He would not compromise on his conviction that, in the long run, only the non-violence of the strong would bring peace to India and the world. He would not compromise, but he would withdraw from leadership if the views of others prevailed.

It seems crucially important to recognize why Gandhi maintained this position so strongly, since leaders who deal with masses of people are accustomed to take into account the limitations of mass behavior and to adjust their sights accordingly. But Gandhi, although a national leader, did not think in terms of mass behavior. He regarded every human being as possessed of moral intelligence and innately capable of the highest forms of moral action. He was unalterably opposed to war and exploitation, but he did not believe that they would ever come to an end save by the moral development of individuals. To compromise on this was to work against his own ends, and he simply could not do it. Others might, and if the people followed them, he would be sorry, but he would not oppose. Personally, he was determined to keep the fire of his own vision and idealism alive and visible for as long as he could. This vision was based on his deepest

convictions concerning the nature of man and of human possibility, according to the law of man's development as he understood it, from India's ancestral religious philosophy. His impact on the world, and what success he had as an influence for peace and truth, grew out of his unbreakable will to follow these convictions, aided by his enormously acute intelligence in illustrating and explaining what he thought, and why.

Is this "philosophy"? Was his capacity to reach into the hearts of India's unlettered millions, as well as to touch and inspire some of her scholars and learned men, a philosophic art?

Why not? Philosophy has too long been identified with a de-moralized secularism, a half-consciously reductive intellectual specialty which has abandoned "concern for individual lives."

Pyarelal's book—we have been quoting from *The Last Phase* throughout—is a good one to read to see how a thinker like Gandhi argues and meets objections, how he lifts his antagonists to another plateau or outlook, because this work is the day-to-day story of Gandhi's last years, from his release from prison during the war to almost the time of his death. It is filled with dialogue with both friends and opponents, showing his reasoning and his methods of persuasion in detail. The reader can judge for himself whether it is proper to call Gandhi a philosopher, for if Socrates was a philosopher, Gandhi was too. Both were thinkers spontaneously as well as deliberately concerned with their fellow men. Both were teachers. Both lost their lives from service to a high cause.

What leads a man to become such a philosopher? What can we say except that it must be an irrepressible need, a demanding hunger to understand? One looks at the course of human experience—at, say, the *monotonous* repetition of events which seem totally unnecessary, such as the communal riots and killings in East Bengal—and asks, why do such things happen, not once or twice, but again and again? What lies beneath the surface of human behavior, which brings such things about? And why does philosophy, which starts out with such questions, so often end up with indifference to the lives of individuals and become "unimportant"?

Why do new and fresh ideas eventually crystalize into "systems" and "mind-sets," becoming finally barriers to original thinking, turning into orthodoxies which resist change to the extreme of ruthless exclusion, ostracism, and persecution?

Why are men with both the inventiveness and the strength needed to break out of these confinements so few in number? And why, since they bring new life to thought, are they so unpopular?

Gandhi is an especially interesting figure in relation to such questions, since he by no means "broke" with the past. That is, he found great inspiration in the traditional sources of Indian religion—in Upanishadic Hinduism, in the *Bhagavad-Gita,* and in the teachings of the Buddha. The significant thing to notice, perhaps, is that he did not really *inherit* these ideas, but was obliged to rediscover them for himself.

This may be a large part of the difficulty men find with the "traditional wisdom" of their time. Either they follow it without rediscovering its inner meaning, or they reject it because it is "old," a collection of verbal forms and external observances. But Gandhi was unable either to accept or reject at second hand. This is what he said in 1924 after one of the many terms he served in a British prison:

> I am more than most people endeavoring to popularize the truth for which Gotama Buddha lived and died. . . . I would like to tell the meeting what I believe about Buddhism. To me it is a part of Hinduism. Buddha did not give the world a new religion; he gave it a new interpretation. He taught Hinduism not to take but to give life. True sacrifice was not of others but of self. Hinduism resents any attack on the Vedas. It regarded the new interpretation as an attack. Whilst, therefore, it accepted the central truth of Buddha's teaching, it

> fought against Buddhism regarded as a new and anti-Vedic cult.
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> It has become the fashion nowadays in some quarters to say that India's downfall dates from her acceptance of Buddha's teachings. It is tantamount to saying that love and pity, if sufficiently practiced, will degrade the world. In other words, according to the critics, evil should triumph in the end. It is my unalterable belief that India has fallen not because it accepted Gotama's teaching but because it failed to live up to it. The priest has ever sacrificed the prophet. Vedas to be divine must be a living word, ever growing, ever expanding and ever responding to new forces. The priest dung to the letter and missed the spirit.
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> But we need not despair. The reformation that Buddha attempted has never had a fair trial. Twenty-five hundred years are nothing in the life of the world. If the evolution of form takes æons, why should we expect miracles in the evolution of thought and conduct? And yet the age of miracles is not gone. As with individuals, so with nations. I hold it to be perfectly possible for masses to be suddenly converted and uplifted. Suddenness is only seeming. No one can say how far the leaven has been working. The most potent forces are unseen, even unfelt, for long. But they are working nonetheless surely. Religion is to me a living faith in the supreme Unseen Force. That Force has confounded mankind before and it is bound to confound us again. Buddha taught us to defy appearances and trust in the final triumph of Truth and Love. This was his matchless gift to Hinduism and to the world.
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> He taught us how to do it, because he lived what he taught. The best propaganda is not pamphleteering, but for each one of us to try to live the life we would have the world live.

Gandhi, too, lived what he taught. He certainly responded to "new forces." And he set going in the world a new kind of social thinking which is neither religiously sectarian nor scientifically reductive, yet has the experimental quality of science and the devotional ardor of religion, with an unostentatious regard for all human welfare and growth at its root.

REVIEW

A LIFE AND AN EPOCH

SCOTT NEARING is a very untypical sort of "radical." While he had a good education, an enriching family background, and was born into the essential grain of American life in a beautiful forested region of Pennsylvania, these several advantages did not interfere in the least with his becoming entirely a "self-made man." Everything about him is original—that is, decided for by himself. Today, in his eighty-ninth year, he still lives an active, productive life. Toward the end of his just-published autobiography, *The Making of a Radical* (Harper & Row, Colophon paperback, $2.45), he says:

> I do a great deal of physical work by hand. This morning I was stripping off sods with a mattock and piling them with a fork on a sod pile, then removing the underlying clay with a shovel and wheelbarrow. A bulldozer would have done the same thing in one-fiftieth of the time, and I might have stood and watched, if I could have endured the noise and stench. But this morning I enjoyed every minute of the work, listened to the robins and the seagulls calling, and felt deprived when I was called in to breakfast.

He and his wife Helen now live on an isolated farm on the coast of Maine, where they raise most of what they eat and have remained "as free as possible from the market and from wagery." Before moving to Maine, the Nearings spent nineteen years on a farm in Vermont, restoring the land to fertility by organic gardening, harvesting maple sugar from their trees to produce what income they needed, and devoting the rest of their time to educational work.

Scott Nearing calls this book the story of how a man becomes a radical, and if "radical" means one who determines the pattern and moral qualities of his own life through firm resolve, integrity, and the application of intelligence and ceaseless work, then the title is accurate enough. It is true that he has been an articulate advocate of socialism for nearly his whole life. But many men do things of this sort, or something like it, without coming anywhere near to setting the example that Nearing has made of his career. Scott Nearing is probably one of the most uncompromising human beings alive today. That alone makes his book well worth reading. His "radicalism" is far more manifest in his daily application of principles than in the social doctrines he espouses, although this is not to suggest that these are not well argued in his writings. Actually, he regards the social revolutions of the twentieth century as the doorway to a new epoch of history, but as yet only the doorway. That is, he believes that socialism is "unfinished business rather than accomplished fact," and he is not uncritical of existing societies. He sees the present socialist nations as working toward a stabilized "welfare state," and finds this an inadequate goal: "Beyond physical gratification lies the entire range of man's urge to know, to aspire, to participate, to create. It is in these realms and in these realms only that the great satisfactions and the real fulfillments are to be found." Education is the key to achievement here:

> Socrates and other Greek thinkers believed that human beings who can distinguish between the good and the evil will deliberately choose the good. Before the choice is made, however, four conditions must be present. First, through his years of immaturity, the individual must be carefully and sympathetically informed of the nature of good and evil; second, he must be trained in the techniques of living the good personal life; third, as he grows toward maturity, he should be inspired, prompted, guided, and directed in the ways of a good social life, and finally, the adults with whom he comes in contact, including his teachers, must provide examples of the good life that will be an inspiration to unfolding, maturing youth.
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> Each person who is born and trained by his peers should be under constant pressure of both precept and example to direct his energies toward the good rather than the evil and to use his talents to achieve good results rather than evil results. This, in a sentence, means to set an example of good living and help others to do likewise.

Scott Nearing's life, one could say, has been a long and consistent example of this sort of influence.

He began early. For a man who was trained as an economist, wrote texts on economics, and was aroused to social action by concrete evidence of economic injustice, Nearing exhibited a strange personal indifference to money:

> . . . even during my student days I became aware of the menace of riches, which corrupt by pandering to body appetites and are financed by exploiting the poor and the helpless. . . . In the 1920's I encountered a real threat of riches. Harriet G. Flagg, a New Yorker of means, wanted to make me sole beneficiary under her will. I begged off. She rewrote the will, leaving her property to three of us, Oswald Garrison Villard, Roger Baldwin, and me. Roger and I declined. Oswald Villard, accustomed to living comfortably with riches, accepted. The value of the estate was about a hundred thousand dollars.
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> There was another such occasion, during the German inflation, after the 1914-18 war, Louis Mayer, a Milwaukee socialist and sculptor, and I had bought some German municipal bonds. After the post-war rehabilitation of Germany these bonds, for which I had paid $800, were worth some $60,000. I pondered the situation. Here were war profits on a fantastic scale that must be paid out of the exploited labor of the German people. I put the bonds into the fireplace and reduced them to ashes. Once again I had escaped the menace of riches.

Nearing has several pages of accounts of narrow escapes from belonging, even for a time, to the moneyed class. He even decided that it was useless to try to administer for good other people's money. For years he was a trustee of the Garland Fund, established by a wealthy man for use in the promotion of "left-wing causes." In those prosperous days, the money multiplied faster than the trustees could give it away. Nearing came to believe that subsidy was mainly a weakening influence:

> The Garland Fund episode was a wonderful object lesson in the futility and iniquity of private giving. If someone is hungry, you can satisfy him with a square meal. Such giving takes care of the hunger temporarily but it is no answer to the problem of poverty. At the same time, the recipient has been taught to live parasitically and to return for a second hand-out and a third. Beggary is institutionalized, poverty made tolerable. . . . The Garland Fund aimed to put left-of-center institutions "on their feet." What the grants did was make them permanent beggars from the Garland Fund and other foundations.
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> When I resigned from the Garland Board after a decade of service I posed a serious question to the Board: having given away millions, have we not done more harm than good? My own feeling was that the harm predominated. Senator William Fulbright, who has had years of experience with international handouts, reaches a similar conclusion in his book *The Arrogance of Power.* Bilateral foreign aid, he says, "is run as a kind of charity demeaning to both recipient and donor."

What about Nearing's actual life? His account of his childhood is mainly to show whom he learned from—first of all, from his mother, who was the sort of person who said: "I always thought of the children as individuals, not possessions." His grandfather was a coal-mine superintendent and Scott became a "troubleshooter" around the yard in his early teens. The Nearing family read and talked a lot, and when Scott was old enough they moved to Philadelphia so he could go to high school. Holidays were spent in the mining town, on the farm, where the boy learned to be skillful with tools. He went a year to law school, but changed to economics as his field. Economic forces were shaping history, he believed, and he didn't want to become a "corporation lawyer." He was inspired by a remarkable teacher at the Wharton School of Business Administration and after graduating remained there to teach. Meanwhile he read Tolstoy and began to form decisive social opinions.

His teaching career began in 1903, when he was still an undergraduate, and he taught his first course at Wharton in 1906. By this time he had developed an enduring interest in the problem of child labor. With other young men on the Wharton faculty, he formed a group which gave lectures on topics related to social reform. They spoke everywhere. This brought in a little money, which Nearing needed, since professors were very poorly paid in those days. Facing his lean income as a teacher, he decided to cut his wants to a minimum, develop off-campus sources of money,

and plan for his old age or retirement out of what he was making. These were his principles:

> Since I did not intend to be and never was a status-seeker, I must reduce wants and even needs to a minimum; wherever possible serve myself, raise and prepare my own food, wash my own clothing, do my own building and repairing; maintain the best of health to avoid the heavy costs involved in sickness, keep down such fixed costs as rent, interest, and taxes, never borrow and take on interest slavery, but always pay cash; build up a capital reserve sufficient to cover a full year of possible unemployment, and be prepared for emergencies.

He put this program into effect, although he now had a wife and two small sons. In 1908 he wrote a text on economics and between 1911 and 1915 he published six more books, with an emphasis on child labor. He was becoming an accomplished lecturer and the child-labor issue was now before the state legislature. Nearing was warned by the Wharton dean to slow down on public speaking on the subject, but instead he spoke more and more. So, in June, 1915, he learned that his appointment as assistant professor of economics at Wharton would not be renewed. This was after nine years of teaching. Nearing's dismissal became an academic *cause célèbre,* with even conservative teachers rallying to his support, but the University (Wharton is a part of the University of Pennsylvania) stood firm, and Nearing was welcomed to a job with the University of Toledo. Meanwhile America was swinging toward entry into World War I. Nearing was a pacifist, a Tolstoyan, and a vegetarian, and he did not swing with the country. Being an outspoken man, he was soon fired by Toledo University, and permanently ousted from the conventional teaching profession. He was then thirty-four years old. He couldn't even continue teaching at the Chautauqua School, as had been his custom for some years. In 1917 he joined the staff of the Rand School in New York, where he had before given occasional lectures. There he wrote pamphlets on militarism which the School published and sold in its book store, and in 1918 he was indicted on a federal charge of conspiring to incite mutiny and oppose recruitment for the armed forces because of a pamphlet, *The Great Madness,* he had written and Rand had published. The trial lasted thirteen days. Nearing defended himself and was found not guilty, although Rand was convicted and fined for circulating what he had written!

Now Nearing, in middle life from one point of view, was really just beginning an entirely new cycle or "incarnation." The achievements of the years since 1917 include the writing of many books—he published nearly fifty during his life, and many more pamphlets—countless lecture tours, visits to Russia, to China, and other countries, and the fruitful period of homesteading described in *The Maple Sugar Book* and *Living the Good Life.* We conclude with Nearing's defense of homesteading:

> It is quite possible to argue that homesteading is not an ideal way of life because it lays too much emphasis on the individual family and overlooks the large social groups. Granted that isolation from larger social bodies is one of the penalties paid for homesteading in a major social changeover from western civilization to a workable alternative, homesteading may provide a practical means of getting its votaries through the transition period.

COMMENTARY
HUMAN DIVERSITY

THE articles in this issue all seem "strong" in their illustrations of the capacity and staying power to act constructively. Something of this sort might be said of each contribution, but equally noticeable are the great differences among the individuals involved. Gandhi and Scott Nearing have things in common, but there are also differences in their fields of work. The same applies to Ernest Bader. Mr. Mayeroff has written a rare and beneficent book which will almost certainly be found illuminating by many people.

All these men are useful members of the human race, yet no "model" having greater detail than the broad generalization of, say, Kant's categorical imperative—So act that what you do may serve as a rule or example to all the world—could be made to apply to them all. These men consulted themselves, not the plans of other men, in deciding what to do with their lives. That, surely, is the most important thing about their achievement, at least to start with.

They all are concerned with unsolved problems. Models are good only for problems which have already been solved and for which there are unequivocal answers. Models, it is true, can be endlessly useful for help in little things; they are like good habits, which release the individual to work on matters to which no habits apply.

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Not long ago we had a letter from India in which the writer wondered what MANAS might have to say about India's short war with Pakistan to liberate Bangladesh. We replied that we did not feel able to comment. Yet we do have a comment, in the form of a quotation from Ivan Illich's book, *Celebration of Awareness.* Illich is speaking of outbreaks of violence which result from demands for conformity:

> Francisco Juliao, the peasant leader from Northeast Brazil who now lives in exile in Cuernavaca, recently made a statement which clarifies these principles. "Never," he said, "but never put weapons into the hands of the people. Whosoever puts weapons into the hands of the people destroys. Weapons put into the hands of the people will always be used against them. Weapons always defeat the poor who receive them. Only the brick and the stick a man picks up in anger will not defile him as a man."

Some day it will be evident that "national morality" hardly exists. There is only the morality of human beings. Whoever puts arms into the hands of the people arms qualities that would be better left without the power to kill. Who, then, must answer for the fact that many men, women, and children are now dead?

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
"ON CARING"

IT seems a pity that the language of tenderness has been so sentimentalized that few of the words characteristically a part of it can be used without danger of being misunderstood. This is the vulgarization of speech, and it also occurs at the other end, in the identification of strength with mere toughness; and in another way by the close association of morality with self-righteousness. These degradations of meaning are all related, it seems. Carl Jung, as we recall, said that sentimentality is repressed brutality, and self-righteousness fits in with these qualities, too.

A great deal of careful authenticity in human expression is going to be needed to free the language of these associations. The restoration is of some importance, since the repeated misuse of certain words tends to make one avoid them altogether, and if they are essentially good words, like, say, "creativity," the deprivation can be serious.

Here, for example, we almost passed by a really fine book, *On Caring* (Harper & Row, 1971), by Milton Mayeroff, due to a prejudice toward the title. Now, having read this slight but richly rewarding volume, we can't think of a better title, although the prejudice lingers on. Only a strong recommendation by John Holt jolted us into reading it. The book goes a long way to giving the word "caring" a profound and elevating content.

Dr. Mayeroff is apparently a teacher, since he acknowledges help from the research foundation of a university in New York. At any rate, what he has to say concerns the art of teaching, conceived at a high level. By "caring" he means to help another to grow, to gain fulfillment. One who cares does not use, dominate or lean upon another. To care for, whether another human being or an idea, will never diminish the one who cares. "When I dogmatically cling to a belief, I am so attached to it that I am unable to experience it as separate from me, and I cannot examine the belief and find out what it means, let alone determine whether it is true or false." One thinks, here, of the difference between this book and Eric Hoffer's *The True Believer.* Dr. Mayeroff makes the same point as Hoffer, but that is only half of what he says. He makes this point in order to clear the way for considering the right sort of caring, whereas Hoffer is content with some very effective jeering at human weakness.

In true caring there is, Dr. Mayeroff says, a convergence of "want" and "ought." This seems a most felicitous way of putting it. Usually, in human life, there is tension between what we want to do and what we feel we ought to do. Happy the person who is able to get rid of that tension without any blindness or self-deceit!

Caring is much more than having "outgoing feeling" for another:

> To care for someone, I must *know* many things. I must know, for example, who the other is, what his powers and limitations are, what his needs are, and what is conducive to his growth; I must know how to respond to his needs, and what my own powers and limitations are.

There is, one could say, a Blakean demand for definition in this writer's insistence on a substantial content of knowledge behind the feeling of caring. Take for example the following illuminating discussion of "hope":

> There is hope that the other will grow through my caring which is more general than hope as a specific expectation; it is akin, in some ways, to the hope that accompanies the coming of a spring. It is not to be confused with wishful thinking and unfounded expectations. Such hope is not an expression of the insufficiency of the present in comparison with the sufficiency of a hoped-for future, it is rather an expression of the plenitude of the present, a present alive with a sense of the possible. . .
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> Hope's reference to the future in caring enlarges the significance of the present; it does not subordinate the present to something lying beyond it and turn it into a mere means. The father who is unable to trust his child as someone in his own right may have great "hopes" for the child, but they have little to do with the awareness of *this* child now. Such hopes actually impoverish the present by making it largely a postponement for a "more real" future when the child will really "amount" to something.

From this it follows, as is said later on, that one who cares is more interested in the process than the "products" of growth. Finite goals are a distraction, when made too important. Maturity, one could say, has been reached when goals are no longer sought as the fulfillment of meaning in life. When goals are everything, life is made flat and empty by reaching them.

Probably the greatest value of this book lies in its provocation to the associating capacity or tendency in the reader. The writer's generalizations *need* illustrations to be supplied by the reader, and these are bound to be more useful than any Dr. Mayeroff might have suggested. Another thing that occurs is that all the attitudes under examination are delicate subjective relationships which depend absolutely on an atmosphere of trust. Militants and angry "revolutionary" people too easily forget how blighting to all educational processes the adversary psychology must be. The angry parent's curious mix of anger and tenderness, sensed by the young, must be bewildering to them. People who are teachers cannot afford to have "enemies." This is not to deny the presence of a great deal of evil in the world, but rather a question of the best means to make it less. This is an aspect of the Gandhian outlook that is much neglected.

Caring involves self-criticism:

> However much the parent provides for the child, if his primary concern is to mold the child into what he thinks the child ought to be, or if he is more interested in having the child remain fundamentally dependent upon him than in the child's becoming independent and self-determining, he does not care. In such cases the child with good reason, feels basically uncared for because he realizes he is not perceived as an individual in his own right. The writer who puts down everything interesting even though he thereby clouds the main theme and makes its development impossible, whatever else he may be doing, is not caring for the idea. Again, if I evince little desire or ability to modify my behavior in the light of what actually helps and does not help the other to grow, I am not caring.

There is a basic reciprocity in understanding:

> To care for another person, I must be able to understand him and his world as if I were inside it. . . But only because I understand and respond to my own needs to grow can I understand his striving to grow; I can understand in another only what I can understand in myself. . . .
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> I can only fulfill myself by serving someone or something apart from myself, and if I am unable to care for anyone or anything separate from me, I am unable to care for myself.

This seems a reason for never allowing oneself to become totally absorbed in any limited activity, calling, or role. The individual should always have a reserve of independent beinghood—the endless potentiality of his humanness, one could say—which remains apart from all specific activities. In *The Bhagavad-Gita,* Krishna tells Arjuna, "I established this whole universe with a single portion of myself, and remain separate." This is no doubt the basis of the wisdom of the wise, for they can always have recourse to that uninvolved portion of themselves in order to see clearly. To be totally involved in anything is to shut out everything else.

Toward the end of the book Dr. Mayeroff speaks of what might be called the "ordering effect" of the life of caring. Being attentive to human needs creates priorities and gives direction. A kind of harmony with the world may result—the only kind that is possible if growth is the basic intent or expression of meaning. From caring, a person gains a sense of being "in-place" in the world. He sees what his work is, where he is needed, and has some experience in knowing how to learn what he needs to know The feeling of being in-place is the mark of the true adult of the person who has grown up, who has maturity. Kenneth Keniston, in his study of what "youth" means, suggested that a youth is one who, regardless of age, has not yet decided how he will relate to the world and society. He is still uncommitted. As he learns to care, or if he chooses to care, he finds his way to a calling, which becomes more or less clearly defined. This is the realization of meaning:

> No one else can give me the meaning of my life, it is something I alone can make. The meaning is not something predetermined which simply unfolds; I help both to create it and to discover it, and this is a continuing process, not a once-and-for-all.

FRONTIERS

A "Model" for Industrial Democracy

IN a time of social change, the question of "models" on which to base the changes often comes up, but there is seldom a satisfactory model recognized in the experience of the past. For one thing, the longing for change works on the imagination, which leads to dreams which go far beyond anything that human communities have been able to achieve. Further, most utopian visions are of conditions which represent ideal goals, giving little attention to the intricate growth-processes by means of which all goals are reached. This adds a mirage-like wonder to the vision, while actual models always are more practical affairs, characterized by the qualities and imperfections of real people. Since such elements have been left out of the dream, the model does not seem satisfactory as a goal. Finally, a model represents something that has already been done, and the hope of men is concerned with a future that will outreach the past.

Yet people determined to seek new patterns of life in one dimension are usually bound by the past in many other relationships. It took the European settlers who came to North America at least a generation to find out that conditions of soil and climate were *different* here, and that other methods of farming needed to be applied. And today, Eastern urbanites who come to California often fail to shed habits of life which were developed in crowded cities but make little sense in spread-out, open regions. Really far-reaching changes in peoples' lives, even on a conscious, intentional basis, involve years of gradual reeducation. Only from one point of view is a man an "individual"; he is also a loosely-knit community of lesser intelligences, all with habitual bents and reflexes that have been acquired over the years. Social change requires the same sort of extensive re-education; even with the best will in the world, the processes of change require time.

No one knows this better than Ernest Bader, a man who began in 1920 by making some quite ordinary changes in his own life, and then, as what he undertook proved reasonably successful, decided to initiate similar changes on a social scale. The result, in the present, is a substantial manufacturing business located in a rural area in England, which is now completely owned by the employees.

The Scott Bader Company, Ltd., manufactures synthetic resins and related materials for use in paint, plastics, fiber-glass boats, toys, and other articles. In 1920 the founder, Ernest Bader, began in London as a distributor for European manufacturers of plastic materials. Advancing technology made this business increasingly important and the war obliged the Bader Company to start manufacturing itself, as well as to move away from London because of the bombings. Mr. Bader started with an office boy and a typist. Today the business occupies a forty-five-acre estate in Wollaston, Northamptonshire, on which are chemical plants and laboratories where a total of 379 people work in an industrial enterprise that grosses more than $12 million a year.

Mr. Bader tells the story of this enterprise in common ownership in the *Journal* for the Winter of 1971-72 (Todd Hill Road, Lakeside, Conn. 06758). The change he began in his own life in 1920 was to go into business for himself, since he was tired of being an "employee." As a Christian, a man of principle, and a pacifist, he wanted to share the advantages of this sort of independence with others. His company began by sharing its profits with the workers, but in time it seemed a far better idea "to raise employees to the status of responsible owners; or, in other words, to liberate them from the wage nexus, as I had already liberated myself." The transition from private to common ownership took twenty years, being completed in 1970. It was accomplished through a second company, which is a trust, which owns the operating company. The trust or holding

company, called the Scott Bader Commonwealth, is controlled by the Association of Employees, and through it the employees hold all the shares in the operating company in common. As Mr. Bader puts it:

> Private individual capital interests and the problem of personal inheritance being eliminated, the capital or shares are owned by the business itself. All the members together enjoy the privilege of ownership. The result is that the Company is on a permanent footing. The employees and workers know that the business cannot be disposed of or sold over their heads or come under a different management overnight. The business is theirs and it is their responsibility. They have every incentive to cooperate with the management to the fullest possible extent.

In this article the writer quotes from a study by Roger Hadley dealing with "Problems of the Pioneer in Industrial Democracy," to indicate the obstacles which had to be overcome in arriving at this arrangement:

> The enterprise which is conceived out of a rejection of the values of the surrounding society and aims to develop and live by rival standards of the kind outlined above is faced by the problem that the character of its major "inputs"—personnel, technology, and market—is largely determined by the surrounding society, and is likely to be antipathetic to the aims of the enterprise. Most of the workers and managers are likely to accept the values of the outside world. Normally, their conceptions of their work roles will have been shaped by traditional divisions of labor and authority. Typically, workers will assume passive or defensive roles and managers will adopt active, authoritative roles. The goals of industrial democracy will be hard to understand for both. . . . The pressures of the market economy, in particular the constant challenge of competition and the fight for financial security, will make heavy demands on the time and energy of the business leaders in the firm and will constantly intrude the values of the hostile environment into the organization.
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> The only "input" which can be regarded as working for the realization of the goals of the pioneer firm is the presence of the group of committed members who founded the venture or were afterwards attracted to it. . . . The hostile forces arrayed against the pioneer firm, therefore, are formidable. The success or failure of the firm will depend entirely on its capacity to devise *internal* structures and processes which are strong enough to neutralize them.

It is this sort of understanding of the necessities of change which constitutes the most important "model" for those who would be pioneers in any sort of community life. Resources and conceptions of the good life vary widely, even within basically similar thinking concerning the qualities and relationships that are sought. Even so, there are likely to be readers who would like to know more about the evolution of the Scott Bader Commonwealth and how its realization of common ownership works in practice. Literature is available from the Commonwealth offices. Naturally, the "committed members" are pleased by an interest in what they are working to achieve.