VOLUME XXXVIII, NO. 45
NOVEMBER 6, 1985

THOSE WHO END WAR

NOW and then someone comes along who says simple things about the prospect of nuclear war—things which interrupt and in effect silence all the talk about "arms control." This talk is largely senseless because it accomplishes nothing. The "simple things" need to be said, that is all. For example, in his Pugwash address in 1984, Hannes Alfvén, the eminent Swedish physicist, declared that scientists, whatever else they do, should tell the public the truth. This means to stop using euphemisms. As he put it,

> An important euphemism is "nuclear arms." It gives the impression that these are similar to old-fashioned arms. At the back of their minds, people may associate them with brave knights who fight in shining armor. But the criminal pressing of a button which will kill millions, if not billions of civilians including women and children, or rather torture them to death, has nothing to do with heroism. I think that "annihilation" is a more precise definition. . . . Similarly, money for developing and manufacturing annihilators should not come from defense funds, but from funds for "mass murder of civilians." . . .
>
> Planet Earth cannot accommodate both life and nuclear technology. One of us—life or nuclear technology—has to be buried forever. We have to choose.

One can hardly ask more of a scientist than a forthright statement such as this. He leaves nothing more to say, which is as it should be. If the press of the world had picked up his statement and put it on page one, all around the world, when it was made, the editors and publishers of newspapers might have had a problem of filling all the space usually devoted to "arms control," but there are, after all, other things much more worth writing about. But the talk about arms control is what they want, and what they print.

To print Alfvén would be to press their readers to moral decision, and they are not ready to do that. Neither the writers nor the readers are ready to do that. But since, if war comes, it will come whether we are ready or not, it makes equal or far more sense to propose the need for moral decision. A few men and women have already done so. Unfortunately, they are largely ignored. Yet they have their effect.

This way of thinking about the prospect of war is suggested by a book that came out a little earlier this year—*Plowing My Own Furrow*, by Howard W. Moore. It was issued by Norton, a publisher responsible for other important works. (This book is $12.95.) Moore is a man—he is still alive, at ninety-five—who at the outbreak of World War I decided he could not be a soldier. After the Conscription Act was passed in May, 1917, when Moore was twenty-eight, he decided to register. He explains:

> The question of voluntary registration for conscription was a hard one over which I pondered long. Draft evasion was much in the news; it was later estimated that over 125,000 "slackers" had failed to register. I didn't want to evade anything; I wanted to oppose war openly and take the consequences.

He turned in a protest to his draft board when he registered. At the end of the year he sent a formal deposition to his board:

> I am not a member of any religious sect or organization whose creed forbids me to participate in war, but the convictions of my own conscience as an expression of my social principles forbid me from so doing. I hold that all war is morally wrong and its prosecution a crime. I hold life as a sacred thing and cannot bring myself to join in the slaughter of my fellowmen. Moreover, I claim the same rights and considerations as are accorded under the law to members of a well-recognized religious sect or organization whose principles forbid their members to take part in war.

He did not conceal his ideas from others and he soon lost his job—a good one—with the

telephone company. Then, when the draft board ordered him to report for duty, he wrote:

> In acknowledgement of the receipt of your communication ordering me to appear for military service on April 29, I wish to advise you that I shall report in compliance with the law but again wish to emphasize the fact that as a conscientious objector, I shall refuse to accept either combatant or noncombatant service.

He was sent to Camp Upton on Long Island, where he refused to put on the uniform issued him. This brought a storm of abuse, the beginning of systematic mistreatment.

> Returning to the barracks, I sat on my bunk, ignoring the whistles and shouts to line up for reveille and retreat. These ceremonies over, an officer with two sergeants appeared in the barracks. The sergeants grabbed me and threw me out of the second-story window. I landed on the cinders of the company street with the window sash around my neck.
>
> Aside from some bruises, I was unhurt and at once demanded to see the captain of the company. He was a former Episcopal minister who was teaching bomb throwing. We got into a great argument about that, and he finally shouted at me, "I won't have a man like you in my company!"
>
> The company to which he had me transferred was composed of men with venereal diseases. Petty officers constantly threatened me with infection.

After a week had passed all the COs in Upton were put in one barracks, about fifty of them. Some were religious objectors, many of whom were discharged for "inadequate personality."

> The rest were radicals of one sort or another. They included a few who became my lifelong friends, Evan Thomas Roderick Seidenberg, and Julius Eichel among them. We exchanged ideas and experiences and had lectures every night, largely autobiographical talks so that we would know each other's background and reasons for opposing the war.

These men often turned out to be distinguished citizens in the years to come. Evan Thomas, Norman's brother, became Professor of Clinical Medicine (assigned to syphilis) of the New York University College of Medicine and a visiting physician at Bellevue Hospital. Seidenberg became a distinguished architect and author (he wrote *Post-Historic Man*). All these men were segregated at Upton:

> Uniformed men were forbidden to talk with us, under threat of court martial. Nevertheless we heard ugly rumors. One concerned Ernest Gellert, brother of a well-known artist on the *Masses* magazine. For no obvious reason, he and another CO had been taken to the outskirts of the camp where a squadron of soldiers ordered them to dig what they thought were to be their graves. They refused and were knocked unconscious. When they came to, they were made to stand in holes the soldiers had dug. If they leaned against the sides, they were prodded with bayonets. It was winter, and water collecting in the holes froze around their feet. At the end of the day the second man was returned to his barracks. The next morning Gellert was found dead. According to the report, he had *borrowed* a rifle from his guard and shot himself, as a means of publicizing the CO problem.
>
> Another CO, named Clody, was said to have had his jaw nose, and frontal bone crushed by repeated blows from the butt of a rifle for refusing to clean the floor in a guardhouse cell. His face was restored to some semblance of the original by plastic surgery using a silver plate. I believe the records of the American Civil Liberties Union can verify the essential facts of these two cases.

All these men were eventually sent to the military prison at Leavenworth, Kansas, where the noncooperators were shackled to the bars of their cells and made to stand for nine hours a day. Nearly all of them had been sentenced to twenty-five years in military prison, and four of them given death sentences, later commuted to the penalty given the other men. Moore's book, and other accounts by Evan Thomas and Harold Grey tell the same story. At Leavenworth Moore learned about what was done to the Hutterite objectors from the man in the next cell, Jacob Wipf.

> In the wartime drive to sell Liberty Bonds, the Hutterites in their community near Alexandria, South Dakota, refused to buy the bonds but offered to contribute to the Red Cross instead. This did not satisfy their patriotic neighbors, who rounded up the Hutterites' cattle, sold them at auction, bought Liberty bonds with the proceeds, and threw the bonds into the Hutterite church building.

> Then the local draft board decided that since the Hutterites farmed communally, the women and old men could harvest the crops and the young men would be subject to the draft rather than having the usual farm exemption. Jacob Wipf, a blacksmith, and four brothers in the Hofer family were taken forcibly from their homes. Refusing to put on uniforms, they were sent to Alcatraz Prison, where they were forced to stand in the dungeon clothed only in their underwear. The dungeon hadn't been used since the Spanish-American War. Sea water seeped through its walls and stood on the floor.
>
> An alert reporter for the Hearst papers discovered their plight, and the resulting publicity forced the government to do something; the men were transferred from Alcatraz to solitary confinement in Fort Leavenworth. The Hofer brothers contracted pneumonia, and two of them died at Leavenworth. One of the bodies was returned to the Hutterite community dressed in the uniform which the men had refused to wear.

Moore and other absolutist COs had refused to eat because the Army would not prepare their meals. When these men were asked if they were willing to work, they refused, and in consequence were sentenced to "two more weeks in solitary, shackled as before for nine hours daily."

> But this time we were to receive full diet. I looked forward to my first meal in two weeks. It consisted of a plate of soupy beans, which the guard shoved under the cell gate and then deliberately spit into. If this was intended to curb my appetite, it was successful. I continued to live on breadcrusts, the *pièce de résistance* of the various garbage that was offered to us. . . .
>
> One day Jane Addams of Hull House in Chicago, accompanied by two other ladies, one of whom I think was Emily Green Balch, author of *Approaches to the Great Settlement* visited our wing of the prison and talked with each of the thirty manacled COs about conditions there and especially about our health. As a result of this visit we were given wooden pallets to lie on and one army blanket apiece.

Where did these men get their determination and courage? They were men from various walks of life, with different backgrounds and beliefs. Yet no one of them was willing to enter the Army and be trained to kill other men. If there is ever to be real peace in the world, it will be because there are more men like that—men who refuse to harm other human beings. Moore gives a clue:

> Now, half dozing on my manacled arms, I heard the voice of Arthur Denham, a religious objector who had shared our tent at Fort Riley during my hunger strike, asking, "If you don't believe in God, what sustains you?" and I answered him again, "My own sense of moral responsibility. To accept an authority outside oneself is to deny oneself the right to make an ultimate decision. Understanding that and the consequences likely to follow is to know freedom in the deepest sense."
>
> Freedom! Can there be any freedom under military authoritarianism? Emphatically, yes. Though brutally confident, I can still fight for the ideals in which I believe.

Howard Moore, still a farmer in Cherry Valley, New York, ends his book:

> Now, at ninety-five, I have not changed my mind. I believe the present generation is witnessing the twilight of the nation-state. Unless the human species arrives at a spiritual and intellectual awareness of our interdependence and establishes a world community using the earth's resources for the benefit of all, we are headed for extinction.

Louis C. Jones says in his introduction to *Plowing My Own Furrow: .*

> As World War I approached this side of the Atlantic, Moore gave increasing thought to the whole question of war itself. It was more than a moral aversion to killing another man caught in the same trap he was, rather it came down to a "deep philosophical and political conviction that war was futile and its use as an instrument of national policy a confession of moral bankruptcy." The starting place for his revolt was conscription and a refusal to obey any military order. The price Moore paid over the next three years, until Thanksgiving 1920, was paid in guard houses, isolated barracks, and prisons of varied horrors. His treatment and that of other conscientious objectors is a disgraceful chapter in our military and political history and one that needs to be understood.
>
> The confusion, puzzlement, and frustration this man created in the military authorities, to whom obedience was unquestionable, can only be imagined. Neither violence nor sweet reasonings would move

him from his obdurate refusal to recognize the right of the military principle to control the nation's life.

Who are these men who have personally solved the problem of war, who know what to do and what not to do? They are men with the conviction to stand against the weight of the world, for whom the highest authority is their own sense of responsibility. What is it in a man that gives this strength, this conviction and enduring courage? If we want peace, we need to find an answer to this question. All the rest is no more than talk.

It happens that there are other books like Moore's, two of them made up of letters by absolutist COs—*Character "Bad,"* by Harold Gray (issued by Harper in 1934) and *The Radical "No"* by Evan Thomas (published by Garland, 1974), both men who were at Leavenworth with Moore. These books say the same thing. Moore, you could say, was an agnostic, Gray a devout Christian, and Thomas a Christian who became almost a freethinker, yet all three must be recognized as profoundly religious in the sense that counts.

In 1915 Evan Thomas was a young man who had gone to Scotland to complete his religious education. But he had questions and doubts. He wrote to his brother Norman in November:

> Personally I am up against it to know how to make my own life count for anything in this world. I don't know what work I can do. There is always the question of after this year, then what? . . .
>
> I believe more every day that President Wilson's speeches about America's opportunity to serve humanity contain a tremendously real fact; and it is such things as your Parish that are going to help most. Unless Christianity can bring about far greater brotherhood and cooperation than is at present apparently dreamed of by the Church at large, it is the biggest fake on earth because it claims so much when one reads the gospels, or Paul either for that matter. What has the Church at large to offer in the way of plans for permanent peace—a thing which Jesus insisted upon—what has it to offer for the poor and outcasts and those without a fair chance in life—and it was such people which attracted Jesus' sympathy almost entirely. . . . from the practical point of view what is the practical thing for me, an individual, to do to stop war? . . . I am ready to say, "refuse to fight." Only when some people have made a start by refusing to fight and going the limit will the nations begin to take practical steps for stopping war. What has the Church to suggest for stopping war? Nothing. The Church has no vision. It is dreary business listening to a lot of the arguments put forth against the non-resistants by the Church. . . .

In another 1915 letter:

> Just let me say one more word about this war question, and that is that I base my non-resistance not on any single passage or group of texts in the New Testament but on the entire spirit of Jesus' life and teachings and the appeal it makes to *me*. A man who goes to war owns no more his own soul. He has sold it for the time being to the state, which may or may not be standing for a noble cause. But in any case it is wrong. I am an individualist, I admit. So was Jesus and so was Paul. The holy spirit is within you and me, not in society or the state except as it is in each individual. Each individual must obey the spirit within him regardless of what others say. . . . I simply say each individual must follow the light as he sees it regardless of what the state or church may say. If he honestly believes a certain course of action is right, he must go ahead with it. The state is justified no doubt in locking him up, since the rest of mankind doesn't see as he does, but the man must obey the spirit within him. . . . The Bible doesn't make Jesus divine for me nor the church, it is the spirit within *me* alone that can make Jesus divine. . . . It is the reaction the picture of Christ's life makes on me, the fact that inside I know what Christ taught is true, that alone matters. To accept it on any other authority is unchristian. *There is no such thing as an external authority.*

Harold Gray tells in *Character "Bad"* (the title taken from the comment written on his Dishonorable Discharge from the Army) how he and Thomas and Moore interviewed an officer at Leavenworth.

> Evan came away from the interview feeling strongly that the government did not want to raise the conscription issue if it could possibly avoid it and also that the government would eventually give in to men who preferred to starve and be taken to the hospital rather than be treated like pigs. I guess the major saw clearly that a few of us were dead in earnest and

> meant business. This is not a negative but a positive position which we hold. We are out to break conscription; this is the very first move in preventing future wars.

What hope for the future did these men have? Something Evan Thomas wrote during the second world war deals with this question:

> What, then, can pacifists expect to accomplish in the midst of the totalitarianism of war? They can keep alive the spark of freedom and bear witness to truth in the sense of truthfulness. Of what social value is this? It represents the only way I can find of attempting to leaven and soften the collective lump which is crystallizing or has crystallized into totalitarian molds. There are in general two ways by which pacifists hope to accomplish this. One is the refusal to cooperate with the worst evils of governmental tyranny and the other, which necessarily involves the former, is to set an example of a freer and better way of life. . . . Even in the midst of totalitarianism, pacifists by their belief in truth as truthfulness and love as brotherhood, at whatever cost to themselves, can act as a ferment within the body politic and thereby soften the inhumanity of governmental bureaucracy and even change its forms.

This is the stance of those who know how—in a future however distant—to put an end to war.

REVIEW
POETRY AND PROSE

WENDELL BERRY is a poet, essayist, novelist, and a farmer who lives in Port Royal, Kentucky, beside the Kentucky River. He has been, and is, a teacher. He has written a number of books. MANAS first came across his work in 1968. He contributed to the quarterly, *Religious Humanism*, an essay, "The Loss of the Future," and after a few negotiations we secured permission to reprint it, in two parts, in the issues of Nov. 13 and 20, 1968. We reprinted it because the essay said a great many things that we agreed with—he was, you could say, "on our side"—but at the same time was so entirely himself in what he said that it was for us thrilling to read him. The taking of "sides" was for him only an accidental thing, without partisanship. This makes him worth reading.

What is he writing now? He is writing poetry, but he has always been writing poetry. In the past we have barely mentioned his poems, although quoting one or two of them. We have never felt competent to review poetry. We don't really know how. And we don't like most of modern poetry and don't understand why others do. Our first love and our last in poetry was Percy Shelley. But to tell the truth, Berry has got us to reading poetry again—his poetry. His book—*Collected Poems 1957-1982*—came out this year (North Point Press, $16.50), providing nearly 200 poems from eight previous books of verse. It contains, he says, "all of my poems, so far published in books, that I care to have reread." He has made a few changes, a few omissions, and shortened some poems. We have read through the book, discovering that what we like about his poetry is what we like about his prose. Here is a portion of one of the longer poems, "From the Crest":

> Going into the city, coming
> home again, I keep you
> always in mind.
> Who knows me who does not
> know you? The crowds of the streets
> do not know that you
> are passing among them with me.
> They think I am simply a man
> made of a job and clothes
> and education. They do not
> see who is with me,
> or know the resurrection
> by which we have come
> from the dead. In the city
> we must be seemly and quiet
> as becomes those who travel
> among strangers. But do not
> on that account believe
> that I am ashamed
> to acknowledge you, my friend.
> We will write them a poem
> to tell them of the great
> membership, the mystic order,
> to which both of us belong.

Readers of Berry may have noticed what some might call a preoccupation with death, but it would be better to say that for him death is an essential part of life and by no means an unpleasant thing. He has a friendly embrace for both. Here is the opening part of a poem called "Testament":

> Dear relatives and friends, when my last breath
> Grows large and free in air, don't call it death—
> A word to enrich the undertaker and inspire
> His surly art of imitating life; conspire
> Against him. Say that my body cannot now
> Be improved upon; it has no fault to show
> To the sly cosmetician. Say that my flesh
> Has a perfection in compliance with the grass
> Truer than any it could have striven for.
> You will recognize the earth in me, as before
> I wished to know it in myself: my earth
> That has been in my care and faithful charge from birth
> And toward which all my sorrows were surely bound,
> And all my hopes. Say that I have found
> A good solution, and am on my way
> To the roots. And say I have left my native clay
> At last, to be a traveler; that too will be so.
> Traveler to where? Say you don't know.

If poetry is good, then samples or examples are far better than attempts at characterization by a reviewer. Better for us, that is.

* * *

A book we have read twice, trying to understand what it is about, is *Deep Ecology* (Gibbs Smith, Salt Lake City, 1985, $15.95) by George Sessions and Bill Devall. Both are teachers at the college or university level, and both have apparently done a large amount of reading. Most of our reading

in the book and in related materials has been in an effort to find out why their idea of ecology should be called "deep." In a report of an interview with Arne Naess, the Swedish philosopher who originated the term, we found that he has said: "The essence of deep ecology is to ask deeper questions. . . . What we need today is a tremendous expansion of ecological thinking in what I call ecosophy. . . . deep ecology, then, involves a shift from science to wisdom."

At the beginning of the book the authors say:

> Deep ecology is emerging as a way of developing a new balance and harmony between individuals, communities and all of Nature. It can potentially satisfy our deepest yearnings: faith and trust in our most basic intuitions; courage to take direct action; joyous confidence to dance with the sensuous harmonies discovered through spontaneous, playful intercourse with the rhythms of our bodies, the rhythms of flowing water, changes in the weather and seasons, and the overall processes of life on Earth. We invite you to explore the vision that deep ecology offers. . . .
>
> Deep ecology is a process of ever-deeper questioning of ourselves, the assumptions of the dominant worldview in our culture, and the meaning and truth of our reality. We cannot change consciousness by only listening to others, we must involve ourselves. We must take direct action.

After going through the pages of this book one has the feeling that it was written for people who think they need direction. The reader is led by the authors through the highways and byways of environmental and ecological action, showing all the things that can be done in behalf of the democracy of life. Man, one gathers, has no more importance than any other form of being, and it is arrogance to assume that the world was "made for us." No one will quarrel with the choice of Aldo Leopold and Rachel Carson as the pioneers of the deep ecological outlook, since these two had more to do with the present awakening than any other naturalist. The authors say:

> Deep ecology goes beyond a limited piecemeal shallow approach to environmental problems and attempts to articulate a comprehensive religious and philosophical worldview The foundations of deep ecology are the basic intuitions and experiencing of ourselves and Nature which comprise ecological consciousness. Certain outlooks on politics and public policy flow naturally from this consciousness. And in the context of this book, we discuss the minority tradition as the type of community most conducive both to cultivating ecological consciousness and to asking the basic questions of values and ethics addressed in these pages.
>
> Many of these questions are perennial philosophical and religious questions faced by humans in all cultures over the ages. What does it mean to be a unique human individual? How can the individual self maintain and increase its uniqueness while also being an inseparable aspect of the whole system wherein there are no sharp breaks between self and the *other?* . . .

What, then, one might ask, is the *role* of humans in the cosmos? In Buddhism, for example, there is a hint of this role in the teaching that eventually, through evolution, every blade of grass will become a Buddha. Becoming human could be regarded as the first great step in this direction, and that we seem to begin by falling prey to the "heresy of separateness" and seeking domination instead of mutual support and collaboration. Yet ideally, humans might be regarded as the stage managers of universal evolution, representatives of the class of life that is able not only to understand itself but also the entire interrelated network of all existence, and to have the obligation of serving the development of all. This is the role of Prometheus, in whom Greek thinkers saw the archetype of man. The work of Aldo Leopold and Rachel Carson may be understood as representing the stage of comprehension of what humans are able to do in behalf of the rest of life. Something of this idea seems suggested by Devall and Sessions when they say:

> Our vital material needs are probably more simple than many realize. In technocratic-industrial societies there is overwhelming propaganda and advertising which encourages false needs and destructive desires designed to foster increased production and consumption of goods. Most of this actually diverts us from facing reality in an objective way and from beginning the "real work" of spiritual growth and maturity.

A book of this sort, while needlessly elaborate and "academic," nonetheless stands for an assimilation in the world of a deeper understanding of what we are here to do. The time may come when this will no longer be a "minority" outlook, whatever the struggles and disasters we must go through along the way.

COMMENTARY
THE DIRECTION OF HISTORY

SINCE some of the MANAS staff were conscientious objectors to World War II, we have a particular interest in books dealing with what happened to COs during World War I, as in the case of Howard Moore's *Plowing My Own Furrow,* considered in this week's lead article. Actually, the men who endured this incredible mistreatment and later told about it became by their remarkable courage and determination the pioneers whose indomitable spirit was the essential reason why, in World War II, conscientious objectors were much more decently treated. They were sent to work camps organized by the peace churches—the camps administered by religious pacifists, the work done by the men supervised by government organizations such as the U.S. Forest Service. The only major flaw in this arrangement lay in the fact that the men were not paid, and the fact that some of them were already married with children made the "slave labor" required extremely oppressive. Many of the men objected to this condition in the camps, and either walked out or refused to work, being sent to prison as a result. Often, after serving some time, they would be paroled back to the camps.

It seemed a serious mistake for the peace churches to administer conscription for the government, although some of the men welcomed having this intermediate bureaucratic layer between them and government officials. Today conscientious objection is a recognized alternative to military service, and there seems little likelihood that the churches will ever again assume such morally contradictory responsibility.

War as a national policy now makes practically no sense at all, and the number of conscientious objectors seems sure to grow. Refusing to fight is one way of disarming the national state, and a disarmed state is hardly a state any longer. If we think about the future in ecological terms, instead of as members of a political unit which functions in disregard of the welfare of both the planet and its inhabitants, there is at least the possibility of there being a future for humans and other forms of life. Nation-states must eventually be replaced by the natural units of bioregions.

The acquisitive way of life can never satisfy our real hungers—we always want *more*—and in the long run produces nothing but trouble. This is now close to being self-evident. As communities arise, created by people who want to live another sort of life, new patterns will appear and begin to be copied by the growing number of those who are weary of the "rat race." Men like Gandhi, like Schweitzer, indeed like Erwin Chargaff and Hannes Alvén, will begin to be the heroes of the next cycle of history—if not in the twenty-first century, then in the one after. But the longer we wait the more it will cost.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
OUTLAWING IMAGINATION

IN *The Devil* in *the Classroom* (Schocken, 1985, $15.95), James Marshall tells what children bring to school and what the school does to them in response. There is conflict, not collaboration, and hostility is the result. Schools, in short, are filled with devils, offspring of the master sinner of bureaucracy. Mr. Marshall gives dozens of cases in which hostility is spawned. We repeat one of them:

> An example of how the weight of bureaucracy may pound on independent thought is the case of Martin Woodhams, a thirteen-year-old boy in a British school. He wrote an essay on his family life and his expectations to be a bank clerk, play football, fish, find a girlfriend, make money, go to the continent, live in the jungle like Tarzan, bring back animals, kill lions, buy a cruiser, and live in England with his trophies. "But also this is a dream, a dream world, just a dream world. So as I have had my dreams, I shall go back to work as a public lavatory cleaner."
>
> He and several other children who had turned in essays were picked out by the headmaster for criticism as "obscene, flippant and derisory." He ordered them, five girls included, to come in and be caned. Martin refused. He said he thought the words "public lavatory cleaner" seemed rude to the headmaster but were not so to him.
>
> So Martin was suspended. He stayed home for a month. The school's board of governors considered his case and a majority voted to uphold the headmaster and insist that Martin accept punishment or move to another school. He stayed home.
>
> Of course Martin's reference to work as a public lavatory cleaner was not rude or flippant. It was a poignant expression of the dreams and hopelessness of a working-class English boy. It was his imagination more than his body that was flogged and he courageously defied the authorities for the sake of his imagination.

The author comments:

> When an adult is not aware that such dream lives exist and fails to understand the general differences in symbolic comprehension, a child must feel misjudged and rejected. It is disturbing that although the whole business of teaching is In terms of symbols—words, pictures, numbers, formulas, musical notation—teachers have so little awareness of the symbolic meaning to the students of the substance of learning or, if aware, so little capacity or available energy to pursue the comparative meanings of the symbols to themselves and their students. What opportunities there are in such comparisons to illustrate how misunderstandings occur and how awareness can lead to conflict resolution.

Why, really, was Martin threatened with punishment and ostracized? He had done something which bureaucracy finds unforgivable: he had violated the pretense by which the organization managed by the bureaucracy maintains its existence. Upward mobility is the belief, and Martin knew better. The author-notes that seeing this opens the way to "conflict resolution," but where, in a bureaucracy, will you *find* people who want to resolve such conflicts? If they have the awareness he speaks of, they will seek other ways than a bureaucracy for making a living. Yet the last chapter of this book, "Participation and Hostility Reduction," is devoted to methods of teaching which reflect this understanding. Mr. Marshall is well aware of the limits to what can be done. He says:

> It would be unrealistic to set as a goal the elimination of all aggression and hostility from schools. There is no cure, of course, for hostility, no sure cure for social and economic conditions that affect schools. Repeatedly, there may be unstable teachers and sociopathic students. It is apparent, however, that much of the aggression and hostility can be reduced and must be for effective wholesome education. The style of administration and its effects on the school, the atmosphere it establishes, is most important to teaching and learning. And we have ample evidence that administrative style can reduce hostility in spite of social and economic problems. In the long run it will prove more effective for quality education than emphasis on "basics," for it affects the needs, the satisfactions, and the life space of the classroom.
>
> The business of schools is children. It is to educate them so as to encourage their imaginations, inquisitiveness, and thus to develop their discrimination, judgment, and power to evaluate. Today, more than ever before, there is need to inquire, discriminate, and evaluate in order to recognize and understand the merchandising gloss put on products as well as officeholders who are sold by mass media, frequently doctored for the market like a car, a cleaning lotion, or a cathartic. If they are not to be the dupes of salesmen or demagogues, the graduates of our schools must have capacity to distinguish among the choices offered them. Hostility vitiates the power to evaluate, seeds counterattack, or leaves docility, dependence, and distrust.

It is true enough that the schools can be improved. It is indeed possible for good teachers to have a say in how they work and for students to be free to respond in natural and imaginative ways. There are a few "studies" which demonstrate this and Mr. Marshall assembles and quotes from them. But much of what he has to report points in the opposite direction. The trend is down, not up, these days. Why does he stick at it—why does he work so hard at what is, by any realistic standard, no more than a forlorn hope?

Such questions about people are almost impossible to answer, but we kept wondering, throughout reading his book, about what kept him going. One answer—no more than a guess—is that he is a lawyer, a man, that is, who is trained to deal with things and people as they are. After all, somebody has to do this. The transformation of the schools is not likely to be accomplished within the next hundred years or so, if ever, and teachers who have become convinced of this have turned to other ways than "schooling" for working with the young. The late John Holt for example.

But James Marshall has devoted his life to trying to improve the schools. He begins his preface:

> For seventeen years I was a member of the New York City Board of Education, president for four years. There I had the opportunity of watching, and sometimes participating in, the administration of a school system. . . . I witnessed the differences in the atmosphere of school districts and schools resulting from the style of administration of superintendents and principals. Such differences are often observed but the lessons to be drawn from them are infrequently utilized.

He cites the studies which inspired him to write this book—research which made it crystal clear that administrators and teachers who share in planning and who encourage students to take similar part in the work of the schools produce the best results. Then he says:

> However, it has not permeated educational administration or methods to any considerable degree, partly because of the sluggishness and self-defensiveness of bureaucracies partly because of the common habit of thought that effective administration must be autocratic, and partly because schools of education have not emphasized the lesson of that study.

What he hopes for, it seems to us, is that the schools—or at least some of them—will become centers of counter-cultural energy that will oppose virtually all the major tendencies of modern society. But this is really the work of individuals, not organizations. Organizations can to some extent reflect and further the efforts of individuals, but the very grain of social life is against any such development in the present. Yet the integrity of the writer brings to his work anecdotes and insights that are worth remembering. We conclude with one of them:

> In the course of a sixth-grade class in arithmetic the teacher asked what "infinity" was. Billy replied, "I think it is like a box of Cream of Wheat." The teacher: "Billy don't be silly." Later he said to a psychiatrist, in explanation of why he thought infinity was like a box of Cream of Wheat, "Well . . . think of a box of Cream of Wheat. It shows a man holding a box of Cream of Wheat. Right? And that box shows the same man holding the same box. Right? And that box . . . You can't see them all, but you can't see infinity. You just know they're all there, going on forever and ever."
>
> It is often difficult for a teacher, or any adult, to distinguish between silliness and imagination. But if the first reaction is to dismiss any unexpected response as silly, this is a lesson in outlawing imagination and with it creativity. The story of Billy is an example of failure to meet a child on his own ground, to communicate with him in his own idiom.

FRONTIERS

A Not-Quite-Lost Art

IN an article on the small community (in the *Community Service Newsletter* for May-June), Griscom Morgan quotes from some research at Yale University to the effect that the small community is, "with the family, one of the two universal forms of human societies throughout history." Then he says:

> We are forced to question where is the *small* community in modern society if it is a universal of human societies? Five years after the Yale study was published, Zimmerman and Cervantes published findings of the study by the Harvard Laboratory of Social Relations of the characteristics of urban families that had not fallen subject to pathology and social breakdown, entitled, *Successful American Families.* Fifty-four thousand families in 20 cities were the base of evidence. And there was found only one common ground or universal among the successful families: they had associated themselves with about five other families with—more or less—common values, ways of life and loyalty to each other such as shared child care, mutual aid, and common worship. Moreover, each smaller group of something like five families in turn had association with other groups and their members with similar standards and values. They observe that "there is an astonishing similarity of basic values in the friend groups and the friends-friend groups. This makes for an extensive social system of about twenty-five families which bulwarks and stands by this intensive family system of five or six families." It was just such an intimate group as the Yale study had found to be one of the two universals of human societies. No utopia had pictured this pattern of association, nor had it been part of religious ideology. This successful pattern of living had become established among poor, wealthy, and diverse cultural backgrounds.

The research showed that these "community" combinations of families did not lead to the isolation of the members. "Rather than being centered upon itself, it opens up an outreach to a larger world of people and resources because each family has other contacts and associations that can be shared with members of the group by virtue of their intimacy, mutual trust and common ground of values."

The actual form of this association seems to have a power of its own. Griscom Morgan relates:

> After the second world war, El Paso, Texas, could not build schoolhouses fast enough to accommodate the incoming children. So, at the builders' suggestion, as a temporary expedient, houses were designed to accommodate two-teacher neighborhood schools. They became centers for small-community life and association and were loved by teachers, parents and children—especially when the children grew up and they could be converted into homes. In contrast, a Washington state study found that, the larger the school, the fewer were the children's friends and the less their contact with the teacher. Small community functions tend to die under these circumstances and the social health of their families also declines.

Another observation:

> The small community as a fundamental of human society has suffered over the world because of a simple condition of our economy that has afflicted peoples, markets, and technologies where it has prevailed. Where society uses money as a medium of exchange, deficient circulation of money is as degenerative to society as is deficient circulation of blood in the human body. Mutual aid pervaded the life of the American Indian, as well as the pre-Roman society of northern Europe and Asia, as Kropotkin discovered and reported in his *Mutual Aid.* He also wrote of the high quality of community life during the guild-Gothic era of Europe, but he was unaware of the role of unhoardable money from its annual loss in face value forcing its circulation throughout society. Economic historian Brooks Adams, in his *Law of Civilization and Decay* found in this era freedom from the usual character of a monetary economy and wrote that it "was an interval of almost unparalleled commercial prosperity." It ended after the discontinuance of the tax on currency.

Speaking of the community life of the American Indians, John Collier said that "They had what the world has lost," what "the world must have again, lest it die." If the modern world, he said, could regain community relationships, it would realize "true democracy, founded in neighborhoods and reaching over the world."

> D. H. Lawrence, who similarly discovered this heritage in the Pueblos, wrote of it: "It was a vast and

> pure religion, a cosmic religion the same for all peoples." Collier was able to identify a major cause of its destruction as observed by Dutch social scientists in Indonesia: when the scarce "money economy enters the village community, the genius of the community starts to die. The complexly organized unity falls apart, intra-village rivalry takes the place of mutual aid social value perishes." The native money (that preceded the scarce system based on precious metals) could not be hoarded and land could not be held by the wealthy; so they had not usury, chronic unemployment or concentration of population in large cities which are intrinsic to the economics of the world today.

With the loss of community a transformation in human relations results, as well described by Richard Goodwin in *The American Condition:*

> The new class and urban life developed together, but surplus wealth in the form of money began to corrode the medieval structure far beyond the ports and centers of manufacture. As money took on independent value, personal obligations could be fulfilled through payment—cash instead of services, gold instead of horses and bowmen. Deeply personal ties, which had extruded the consciousness of the age, a mode of thought, and a structure of values and perceptions, metamorphosed into commercial bonds. You no longer owed yourself; you owed money. The spirit of commerce gradually infiltrated extensive regions of social life. . . . Once obligations had value, once they could be priced then the fact of payment overshadowed, and ultimately displaced, the identity of the debtor. The new kind of debt was impersonal, even transferable. Lordship over the land was no longer one of mingled strands in a web of personal obligations but something of calculable value whose earning, in short, could be used to pay taxes rather than homage.

We know all these things—or there are those among us who know them—but they are not taken seriously. When will the importance of living like human beings dawn upon those who devise the rules by which we live, or try to live? When, we suspect, enough of the rest of us begin to form and live in community with one another, no matter what the rest of the world decides. How is that possible? Such questions must be asked of men like Blake, Tolstoy, and Gandhi.