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THE POSSIBILITY OF RECONCILIATION

TODAY, full preparation for instant, conclusive atomic war is the first "duty" of the military regimes of America and of Russia. Each is poised, ready to strike. Should either misjudge the other's intent, atomic war would be on.

If the probability of atomic war seems at the moment to grow less it is because each regime realizes that victor and vanquished probably would suffer somewhat equally. America, for instance, even if victor, might lose half its population, with the remainder genetically harmed for many centuries. So long as enmity is irreconcilable it is only the strategy of fear, which feels that this is not the propitious moment to strike, that insures against atomic war.

There are but two reasonably dependable alternatives: Russia and America will achieve reconciliation, or there will be atomic war. Any other alternatives are speculative and uncertain.

The Russian regime counts heavily on a third alternative—that American capitalism will soon break down. America counts heavily on a third alternative—that Communism will break down. But capitalism and communism are human institutions, capable of adapting to changing conditions. To rely on either assumption as alternative to reconciliation is to take the chance of desperate gamblers.

Wars are made in the hearts of men. They do not suddenly become inevitable; but as fear, contempt and hatred are met by fear, contempt and hatred, reconciliation becomes increasingly difficult. Gradually each nation builds its own myth of moral superiority, until even to suggest reconciliation in either country implies moral turpitude, perhaps treason.

America and Russia are building toward such a state. Suggest reconciliation with Russia and you meet a hot blast of righteous indignation. Yet our indignation is adjustable. We embrace, as among "freedom-loving nations," Franco's bloody Spain; that vilest of Western Hemisphere tyrannies, Trujillo's Santo Domingo; South Africa with its "apartheid" evils and its flouting of the U. N. as to Southwest Africa. We need their votes in the United Nations.

A "holier-than-thou" feeling toward Russia is nurtured in America. How can we maintain our self-respect if we do not express scorn and contempt of so "evil" a regime? If Americans should be aware of the ways of our own government with some of our minorities, especially the American Indians, we should lose some of our feeling of moral superiority. For there is scarcely any barbarity charged against Russia of which our government has not been guilty on a smaller scale in our Indian relations.

Communism began as rebellion against exploitation and indignity. There is nothing a people will cling to more stubbornly than dignity and self-respect. Treat a government with scorn, derision and contempt, and reconciliation is impossible. Seldom does an American public man, in the U.N., in Congress, or in public, speak of Russia in other terms, except in warning America of Russia's rapid advancement. Wars are made in the hearts of men, by gradual accumulation of humiliation, hatred, scorn, contempt and fear. The alternative is the course of reconciliation.

What is reconciliation? It is not compromise, or shutting our eyes to wrongs that exist. It is not condoning tyranny, as with Franco, Trujillo or South Africa. It is not making light of injustice.

Reconciliation begins with searching for and sharing the truth, both good and bad, about ourselves and about the "enemy." If persistently and habitually we believe no ill falsely about the

enemy, and no good falsely about ourselves, we shall be far on the way to reconciliation. If we say nothing in scorn, in contempt, in hatred, our honest disapproval will carry more weight, without transmitting bitterness.

Is such an attitude too much to ask of the leaders of a nation? Is hatred so sweet, and owning to our faults so bitter, that we prefer atomic war?

Reconciliation—The Way of a Good Community

If we can see how reconciliation grows in a good community, or between communities, we may see what the process would be like between nations. There are few real communities. Most old-world village populations have been mutilated and debased through centuries of tyranny and exploitation of empire. Most American towns and neighborhoods are not yet communities; they are only localities in which people live near each other, with but beginnings of community. A true community is a living social and spiritual organism, growing out of a living past.

To have lived in a mature, good community is one of the great and moving experiences of a lifetime, one which tends to change one's life outlook. To observe how peace and good will grow in such a community, is perhaps the best lesson in international relations.

In a good community there is deep regard for human dignity and self-respect. No one, no matter how delinquent, is treated to scorn or humiliation. I have observed a young, "right-minded" person, not yet matured in the community spirit, burst out in righteous indignation at some flagrant wrong-doing, perhaps by a newcomer. Anything less than public condemnation, in his mind, would reflect timidity or cowardice. Such a course would be disapproved by the spirit of the community, possibly with a comment that public humiliation would be less likely to remake the offender's attitude than would confidential, friendly communication with him. There is no surer way to make a man an enemy of society than to treat him with scorn and give him the status of an outcast. Nor is there a surer way to mend his attitude than to assume that he has underlying normal human motives, and that persistent good will and fair play may be reciprocated.

In a good community, strategy and shrewdness are no more highly regarded than theft. For a person to overstate his own case or to understate the case of another would leave him feeling that he was a liar. In a good community there is neither self-depreciation or self-promotion. I have seen economic transactions in which one could not tell from the evaluation taking place which was buyer and which the seller. There was simply a mutual effort to find the truth about value.

When a family with a very different culture would move into such a community its members sometimes would violate community ways. Respect for human dignity on the part of the old community members, expressed as friendly good will, often brought about marked improvement. Sometimes this was a slow process requiring generations. I have heard the comment concerning a child or grandchild of such newcomers: "You can not tell one of these young people from the children of the old community members."

Let us picture, in fancy, Russia and America as two adjoining communities, and try to see how reconciliation might develop.

East Town / West Town Relations

West Town, a wealthy, fairly well mannered community on the high west bank of the river, had looked down on East Town on the plain across the river, and let that attitude be known. This attitude seemed natural, for the East Side people were poor and their government crude, and sometimes they treated families outrageously. West Side people had quite put out of their minds their own early, crude days. Only a few older

people and some who had looked up old newspapers knew these facts of their history.

The rank and file on both sides of the river were much alike in their desire for security and peace. The government of the East Side had been ruthless. It had abused its big business men and had driven them out. Businessmen on the West Side had a secret fear that they might some time be treated similarly, and were vitriolic in any reference to the East Side. Feeling between the towns had become bitter, and the tension great.

At this point some of the quiet and friendly citizens of the West Side bestirred themselves. They proposed that West Siders act toward East Siders as members of a good family and as self-respecting neighbors would act toward people who had not yet caught the spirit of the community. After consideration, West Siders undertook to follow such a course.

First, they ceased calling the East Siders evil names. In the County Council in which their representatives sometimes met face to face it had become the usual practice for each side to berate the other. The West Siders, realizing that strife begins in the hearts of men, began to follow the course of never saying anything hateful or humiliating about the people across the river. This made the none-too-secure leaders of the East Siders even more virulent than ever for a time, but gradually the habit of vilification came to seem crude and out-of-date. The West Siders found occasion to compliment the East Siders for some worthwhile things they had done, such as building a new high school, and often expressed their appreciation for the good will and desire for harmony of most of the East Side people. The East Side politicians raved at this, for by keeping hate alive they could better draw attention away from their own crude methods; but the rank-and-file East Siders appreciated this friendship.

The most difficult barrier for West Siders to overcome was the cold brutality of the East Side government. Was it not condoning evil to admit any fellowship with such people? Then some West Siders, hoping to remove such barriers, drew the attention of their fellow townsmen to similar black spots in their own background. At first their statements were denied, then minimized as unimportant lapses in an otherwise glorious past. The dark spots related to the fact that when West Siders first came to their townsite it was occupied by people living in crude simplicity and poverty. The West Siders had pushed these "natives" off the good land over to some seemingly worthless gravel hills at the edge of town, trying to pacify them by giving them permanent title to the worthless hills.

When the "natives" protested, bitter conflict had ensued, and it became a West Side slogan that "the only good native is a dead native." The atrocities practiced were similar in kind and severity to those for which the East Siders were now being condemned. Then the gravel in the rough hills which had been given in perpetuity to the "natives" was found good for road building, so the natives were pushed off onto the worthless swamp lands farther down the river.

The objection to making public this aspect of West Side history was that it was dead past, and that now West Side was a different kind of place; also that it would give aid and comfort to "evil" East Side people. Then it was pointed out that such mistreatment had not ceased. The natives even now were being crowded off their river-bottom swamps, while their unoffending children were being seized and kept in West Side institutions, their parents being allowed to see them only fifteen minutes once a month in the presence of West Side supervisors.

Publicity for these facts was a shock to West Siders, for no more bitter medicine can be given to any people than to bring their superiority into question. When the issue had been fully faced, however, there developed an attitude of humility and understanding. The feeling of self-satisfied superiority was what the East Siders had hated most, and as it disappeared friendship became possible.

West Side businessmen had pointed with contempt at East Side business incompetence. As East Siders, beginning in poverty, began to make headway in business, West Side contempt changed to fear and hatred. Dealing with this economic fear and hatred was one of the most difficult problems of those West Siders who were seeking to end old-time hard feeling.

As East Side people saw West Siders becoming honest about their own past, losing their holier-than-thou attitude, and honestly trying to find what they could learn from the East Side, they began to have faith in gestures of friendship. A general attitude began to develop which was expressed by an East Side citizen in disapproving hostile remarks by an East Side official. He said:

> The time is past for us to seek dominance over each other. We are not different species of animal. We have learned to respect each other as persons, and to see the need to clear away obstacles to friendship. Honest criticism of each other is good. We have grave faults to overcome, as do the people across the river. Neither side should pretend there are none such. If we can face our faults as friends, barriers will melt, and we can have peace. Our East Side politicians may put me in jail for what I have said, but I believe that the hearts of the East Side people are with me. The course I have outlined is better than for us to destroy each other with cynicism, hatred and conflict.

This East Side man *was* put in jail by the East Side government, but he spoke in the spirit of the people, and in the end he won.

When several years had passed with no expression of contempt or fear or hatred from any responsible West Side people, with no enlarging on their virtues by West Siders nor any depreciation of their neighbors, the climate changed. The East Side government gradually came to represent the people.

There never was any ceremony of reconciliation, but some new bridges were built across the river, the people on the two sides traded in each other's stores, and joined in celebrating each other's holidays. They married each other's sons and daughters. When now and then one of the elderly politicians spoke with suspicion and bitterness it did little harm, for such people were recognized as being out-of-date.

It is such a process we have in mind when we speak of reconciliation. It has no relation to compromise, or cowardice, or disregard for injustice. Anger, rage and scorn are states which may help timidity or cowardice to meet sudden emergency. The glandular secretions which bring them about are common to all mammals. While sometimes helpful on the animal level in emergency, they are inappropriate and ill adapted for controlling international relations in an atomic age.

Communists boast the inevitability of communism. Americans hold that capitalism and communism cannot permanently coexist, and that it is America's place to make the world safe for democracy (American style). Such positions make reconciliation more difficult, but are not as absolute as they sometimes appear.

The reasonably certain alternatives, not resting on speculative possibilities, are two: America and Russia will become reconciled, or there will be atomic war.

What if reconciliation does not prevail in time to prevent atomic war? Then such fragments of society as are left will face the same, or similar alternatives. People still must face reconciliation or deadly strife. For war is made in the hearts of men, and only in men's hearts will it be removed.

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REVIEW
SYMPOSIUM ON "THE SELF"

THE new thinking in psychological circles about the idea of the self receives impressive attention in a new book edited by Prof. Clark E. Moustakas, and published by Harper. Titled, *The Self-Explorations in Personal Growth,* this volume assembles articles and previously published papers by such thinkers as Gordon Allport, Erich Fromm, Karen Horney, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Andras Angyal, A. H. Maslow, Carl Rogers and Rabindranath Tagore. Prof. Moustakas contributes brief introductory and concluding articles, also supplying a prefatory note which begins with the following explanatory paragraphs:

> Concern for the self with all its contributing attributes and potentials is rapidly becoming a central focus of contemporary psychological inquiry. More and more the interest is in the understanding of health and creativity as the exploration, expression, and realization of human talents. There is a gradual but definite movement throughout the world to understand individual well-being more fully.
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> Until recently study of abnormality, deviation, and illness have dominated psychological and psychiatric investigations. But conventional Freudian concepts, evocative as they are in attempting to explain hidden dynamics, have proved less than totally effective in application to healthy behavior, and frequently fail to correspond to actual behavioral patterns as seen in reality.
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> The selection of recent writings in this book portrays the fundamental unity of personality and presents a framework for understanding healthy behavior. The emphasis is on knowing, exploring, and actualizing the self. The various papers represent unique theories of personality. The fact that so many people in different fields are arriving independently at the same theoretical conclusions proves their significance more effectively than any argument could. In these papers are referented many disciplines, arts, and schools of psychiatric, psychological, and philosophic thought which seem to be converging (and all at one point in time) upon an understanding of the self which is essentially the same in all cases. The approaches and vocabularies are different, yet a clear and fresh kernel of common awareness and positive insight into the self is coming to characterize current knowledge of the human individual.

Since we have given recent attention to A. H. Maslow's conception of the "self-actualizing person," and to Carl Rogers' similar investigations, we will select quotations from other contributors to this book. But all the essays in this collection strike a common note—the need for man to become himself, to develop the capacity for being "autonomous," to become "self-actualizing." Erich Fromm, in his discussion titled "Selfishness, Self-Love, and Self-Interest," explains why it is so difficult for a man to "become himself." We live in a culture dominated by the psychology of the market on all outer planes of living, yet are still influenced, if only subconsciously, by a Calvinistic insistence that every form of "self-interest" is inspired by the forces of evil. This makes a strange combination of attitudes, with far-reaching results. To quote Dr. Fromm:

> The modern concept of self-interest is a strange blend of two contradictory concepts: that of Calvin and Luther on the one hand, and on the other, that of the progressive thinkers since Spinoza. Calvin and Luther had taught that man must suppress his self-interest and consider himself only an instrument for God's purposes. Progressive thinkers, on the contrary, have taught that man ought to be only an end for himself and not a means for any purpose transcending him. What happened was that man has accepted the contents of the Calvinistic doctrine while rejecting its religious formulation. He has made himself an instrument not of God's will but of the economic machine or the state. He has accepted the role of a tool not for God but for industrial progress; he has worked and amassed money but essentially not for the pleasure of spending it and of enjoying life but in order to save, to invest, to be successful. Monastic asceticism has been, as Max Weber has pointed out, replaced by an inner-worldly asceticism where personal happiness and enjoyment are no longer the real aims of life. But this attitude was increasingly divorced from the one expressed in Calvin's concept and blended with that expressed in the progressive concept of self-interest, which taught that man had the right—and the obligation—to make the pursuit of his self-interest the supreme norm of life. The result is that modern man lives according to the principles of self-denial and thinks in terms of self-interest. He believes that he is acting in behalf of his interest when actually his paramount concern is money and success; he deceives himself about the fact that his

most important human potentialities remain unfulfilled and that he loses himself in the process of seeking what is supposed to be best for him.

The failure of modern culture lies not in its principle of individualism, of self-interest, but in the deterioration of the meaning of self-interest; not in the fact that people are too much concerned with their self-interest, but that they are not concerned enough with the interest of their real self; not in the fact that they are too selfish, but that they do not love themselves.

It argues well for the balance of Prof. Moustakas' additional selections that two sections of the book are authored by Indian philosophers. In Tagore's "The World of Personality" for example, we find a means of relating Hindu metaphysics with Karen Horney's conception of a "Self" beyond the apparent or "social" self—a self which is indestructible, no matter what the changes of circumstances. Tagore writes:

The mind has its limitations, the sense organs are severally occupied with things that are before them, but there is a spirit of oneness in us which goes beyond the thoughts of its mind, the movements of its bodily organs, which carries whole eternity in its present moment, while through its presence the life inspiration ever urges the life forces onward. Because we are conscious of this One in us which is more than all its belongings, which outlives the death of its moments, we cannot believe that it can die. Because it is one, because it is more than its parts, because it is continual survival, perpetual overflow, we feel it beyond all boundaries of death.

This consciousness of oneness beyond all boundaries is the consciousness of soul. And of this soul Isha Upanishad has said: "It moves. It moves not. It is in the distant. It is in the near. It is within all. It is outside all."

Prof. Moustakas provides an interesting paragraph in an essay entitled, "True Experience and the Self":

There is a tendency among analytic people to see an individual in terms of someone else—his father, mother, or siblings. This approach distorts the real nature of the person and interferes with valid understanding of him. One does not recognize the otherness of a person as a reality by projecting into him someone else or by abstracting out of him transferred feelings and attitudes. And when one sees in a person his father or mother or anyone else, one ignores the person as he really is. Angyal regards this as a fundamental disregard for and destructive attitude toward the other person. He points out that real understanding of the other person is not some sort of shrewd analysis which has a keen eye for the weaknesses of people but a deep perception of the core, of the essential nature of the other person as he is.

Prof. Moustakas lists what he regards as basic "dogmas" for a man concerned with explorations of the self:

The individual knows himself better than anyone else.

Only the individual himself can develop his potentialities.

Behavior can best be understood from the individual's own point of view.

The individual's perception of himself determines how he will behave.

As long as the individual accepts himself, he will continue to grow and develop his potentialities. When he does not accept himself, much of his energies will be used to defend rather than explore and to actualize himself.

We cannot teach another person directly and we cannot facilitate real learning in the sense of making it easier. We can make learning for another person possible by providing information, the setting, atmosphere, materials, resources, and by *being* there. The learning process itself is a unique individualistic experience. It may be a difficult experience for the individual person even if it has significance for the enhancement of self.

Under threat the self is less open to spontaneous expression; that is, is more passive and controlled. When free from threat the self is more open, that is, free to be and to strive for actualization.

If any apology is needed for a review that is practically all quotation, we can only plead that a book as important as this one deserves more exacting notice than the loose generalizations of a reviewer. This book represents a new sort of thinking for our time, and we have chosen to present this thinking with the undiminished impact of its original vigor, as providing the best evidence of the values it affords.

COMMENTARY
THE ONLY COURSE OF ACTION

THE persuasiveness of Arthur Morgan's writing lies in the force of his ideas, which are presented without rhetoric or embellishment.

MANAS readers will have no difficulty in understanding and agreeing with what Arthur Morgan has to say. The only troubling thought that comes while reading him is the realization that millions of people *ought* to be reading him, yet are not. Nor if millions could be persuaded to read this article, and others with a similar content, would the problem of reconciliation immediately become easy to solve. The maturity represented by this discussion is not easy to come by. But a great advance might be made by giving such analysis wide circulation.

But what else may be done? The key to the only course of action may lie in Dr. Morgan's early paragraphs. Today, he makes clear, the behavior of the great powers is largely controlled by anticipations of what the "other fellow" will do. In general, he is expected to do his worst. Our only real hope seems to be that he will be overtaken by some kind of disaster outside his control.

This means, in practical terms, that fear and desperation have the initiative in the modern world. The only thing that men can do, then, is to take the initiative away from fear and desperation. And since men never—or almost never—do this collectively, it must be done by individuals.

It is by reason of this necessity that MANAS often speaks in respectful terms of the anarchists. Whatever you may say of the anarchists, they possess the all-important virtue of refusing to give the initiative to fear and desperation. As human beings, they will not submit to this indignity. And wherever you find men who take some individual stand against submission to fear and desperation, you find people who represent the only decent future mankind can look forward to.

Are we willing to go on living in a world in which finally, as Camus said, all men will become either victims or executioners?

Every act of principle, every rejection of the mob spirit is a defiance of fear and desperation, and therefore strengthening to the human spirit.

But what about "the masses"? The masses, as Dr. Morgan points out, are moved by what other men do. They can be moved, also, by individual men who act with courage and on principle. What other force for good is there in the world?

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

THE 1956-57 Winter-Spring issue of *Autonomous Groups* is devoted to a study of "delinquent gangs, viewed as autonomous groups." Social workers with affiliated interests sent in reports to this bulletin on the value of studying teenage gangs as reflecting a peculiar sort of "autonomy." Dr. Dorothy Blitsten explains:

> There is general consensus that gangs represent a variation of the characteristic tendency in adolescents to form peer groups. Like all peer groups, delinquent gangs provide adolescents with opportunities to emancipate themselves from adults, to begin to work out things for themselves, to establish relationships with members of the opposite sex, to share information and validate experience, to exercise abilities common to their age category, to augment self-respect.
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> Delinquent gangs seem to be distinguished from others by the fact that their members have almost no meaningful associations with people outside the group. Their reaction to others, especially to elders, is hostile. They reject them as inadequate or dangerous and reject their rules and techniques for living as well. The causes of these particular characteristics are variously identified. It seems justifiable to conclude that most of the causal factors suggested by different observers, and summarized above, are operative. But what is of particular relevance here is the fact that because of their isolation, and because they set up standards and pursue ends that conflict with those of the people among whom they live, these gangs are remarkably autonomous. They are uninfluenced by reference to general patterns for living that most autonomous groups automatically include in their undertakings. Therefore, members of delinquent gangs are even more dependent on each other for a wide variety of satisfactions than other people are on their groups.
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> The development of a technique for correction that attempts to influence the activities of the gang as such, in contrast to treating individuals, seems to have grown out of the discovery that gang members live almost exclusively within the orbit of their group and that as a group they are almost impervious to outside influences. Because gang members would not go to agencies that sought to provide them with what the agencies considered help and opportunity for a better life, some of the workers in the field concluded that they would have to go to the gangs. And so the "detached worker" evolved.
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> Now it is of the essence of autonomous groups that they are the outcome of the spontaneous, self-directed impulses of their members. This technique for dealing with delinquent gangs is, in the last analysis, an attempt by an outsider to regulate the spontaneity of the members and to introduce planning and foresight into activities that have been chiefly characterized by improvisation. There is a paradox at the core of this method. How it is applied and with what effect is the subject of this issue of the Bulletin.

Apparently, the only way to reach a rebellious gang—which is also the only way to reach a rebellious individual child—is to "bore from within." The same issue of the bulletin contains a report by Kenneth Marshall, a Street Club Worker, who succeeded in re-directing the energies of a teenage gang by first gaining the confidence of the boys through friendship. The special secret of Mr. Marshall's success lay in the fact that he restrained from pressing any point, no matter how great the need for correction of certain attitudes and practices. He was simply "always there," offering a different pattern of thought and action for the few who were interested; and so, one large gang finally renounced street "warfare."

It seems fairly obvious that the youth of America are less exposed to discipline than the youth of any other land. Actually, a boy without experience of discipline is the loneliest boy of all, whether or not he belongs to a "gang." And while the youth of Russia may grow up to be extremely short on self-reliance, the "lonely crowd" cliques in America don't have much self-reliance, either—for they, too, depend on outside influences for the direction of their energies, one simply does what the other boys do, and this is essentially aimless behavior.

Markoosha Fisher, in *The Right to Love*, gives sympathetic treatment to the state of mind of young Communists who grew up in the 1920's with a strange combination of mistaken beliefs and heart-warming zeal. The mother of one of the

principal characters of the novel, set in post World War II time, recalls the drive and enthusiasm of her early life:

> She had not been more than fifteen when she first heard, and accepted, that it was wrong to live in luxury when so many were poor, that there should not be in the world very rich and very poor, that possessions should be equally divided among all people. Accepting, she began to rebel against her protected, privileged life and at the first rumblings of the Revolution she responded with her whole heart and soul. Young as she had been in 1917—no older than the century—she had joined the party. Her enthusiasm knew no boundaries. Down with luxury, down with private wealth, down with three people living in one big house, down with one human being serving another, down with inequality, with injustice, with poverty. Down with everything that was of the past! Long live everything that was of the glorious, the perfect future!
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> Natasha was not daydreaming in her bed now. She had returned to the present, to the soiled walls and to the drab room, but her thoughts continued to wander in the past. Had it all been foolish and wrong? Maybe. It certainly had not seemed foolish and wrong then. "Down with the past!" had been a burning faith. Only by wiping out the past could the future be brought to life, and with exhilaration she had watched the luxury of Grandfather's house melt away. Priceless rugs, precious woods, irreplaceable treasured family albums, heavy damasks, paintings, china, crystal, rich plants nursed for decades—each of these stolen, destroyed, burned, turned into rags was a step toward the wonderful new life. Chaos, noise, stench, filth, lice, bedbugs—unpleasant? Maybe. But in her enthusiasm she had suppressed the feeling of unpleasantness.
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> To be hungry and cold in those days had not mattered. They had passionate faith and sublime hopes, and these had been enough to still hunger and to warm chilled bones. Was it madness? Maybe. But it had been a marvelous, ecstatic madness.

Again and again, we find evidence that William James deserved the title of "America's First Psychologist." In his famous essay, "A Moral Equivalent of War," he shows that youth *has* to strive, to venture, to dare—and even to sacrifice—in order to emerge into manhood. All of the primitive tribes have realized this elemental fact much more than we. David Riesman's description of the transitions which have taken place between the original "tradition-directed society" and our presently amorphous "other-directed society" is only another way of calling attention to the lack of driving goals in the lives of pampered young. We don't want to live as a primitive tribe, nor can we adopt the stern physical disciplines which the primitives endured, nor do we really wish to return to a "tradition-directed society." But we are pampered, we are soft, emotionally as well as physically. The fact that we have sense enough, perhaps, not to dedicate ourselves to a destructive cause does not mean we have achieved a constructive substitute. It is possible that many of the young Communists of the world—at least in Asia and Russia—lived a more vital life than our own youth, regardless of political delusions. And this, perhaps, is the most important thing we can learn from Communism—not how bad its "ideology" may be.

FRONTIERS

Some Philosophical Borrowings

ONE of the several important realizations of our times is that an age of criticism and analysis can ride along for a while, on the momentum of the past, but that the day comes when the work of criticism is complete and there is very little left to talk about, and even less to think about.

The gross, vulgar form of this realization manifests in the happy heralds of the "return to religion." The proud Renaissance, we are told, has run its course. "Scientism" has proved its follies with the detonation of the atom bomb. The emptiness of a Godless culture is the theme of critics who are propagandists and organization men rather than moralists with a sense of history.

There is of course *some* truth in the diagnosis, if none in the prescription. No pulpit polemics are needed to declare the emptiness of modern culture or to indict the atom bomb. The signs of decadence are so prevalent that, for some years now, lists of the things wrong with our society have been tiresome cliches of criticism. For criticism to have much more than anarchist value, alternatives must be proposed.

But what "alternatives" are there to discuss? We live in a time of political disenchantment, at the close of a period in which serious thought was almost entirely politicalized. So it is that when political discussion loses all fruitfulness, discussion itself seems exhausted. There seems to be absolutely nothing to do.

Our proposition, here, is that there *is* something to do. That political discussion was fruitful only so long as men had genuine philosophical convictions on which their political views were based, and that a restoration of politics (assuming this to be important) is possible only from a prior restoration of philosophical conviction. Why should you defend the political institutions which are supposed to protect the dignity of man, if you don't really believe in the dignity of man? Why worry about the loss of human freedom if you don't see anything of importance to do with your freedom, supposing you could have it?

Our proposition, then, is that it is time to shift gears in the labors of affirmation and criticism, if political thinkers and "activists" are to have anything to think and talk about especially, if they are to have *leverage* in their relations with the great mass of mankind. The moral capital of our age, we submit, is just about gone. The condition of apathy Ignazio Silone wrote about in *Fontamara*, *Bread and Wine*, and *Seed Beneath the Snow* is not limited to Italy. It has affected the entire world.

Where should you begin, in philosophical thought of an affirmative character? You can begin almost anywhere, but a quotation from Spinoza will quickly launch the project:

> I take a totally different view of God and Nature from that which the later Christians usually entertain, for I hold that God is the immanent, and not the extraneous, cause of all things. I say, All is in God; all lives and moves in God. And this I maintain with the Apostle Paul, and perhaps with every one of the philosophers of antiquity, although in a way other than theirs. I might even venture to say that my view is the same as that entertained by the Hebrews of old, if so much may be inferred from certain traditions, greatly altered or falsified though they be. It is however a complete mistake on the part of those who say that my purpose . . . is to show that God and Nature, under which last term they understand a mass of corporeal matter, are one and the same. I had no such intention.

Endless ethical and metaphysical difficulties are eliminated by adopting the pantheistic position at the outset. The advantages are manifest. The intuitive and creative powers of the human being gain a logical foundation from the deific essence which is now *within.* The ethical ideal of brotherhood has support from the idea of the underlying unity of all things.

The pantheism of Spinoza, however, creates certain difficulties. If all are one, do "individuals" have any reality? And if all is Deity, what is the explanation of evil?

Since we are not adopting Spinoza entire, but only his leading idea and chief inspiration, we are free to seek elsewhere for solution to the problem of individuality. This we find in the monads of Leibniz.

It was the doctrine of Leibniz that the world is made of monads—units of life—in various stages of progression or development. What is a monad? A simple, uncompounded center of consciousness.

This is an extremely abstract idea, but it is not so far from our immediate experience as we might suppose. What are *we?* This is a question to be answered, not according to some textbook on anthropology, but from our own powers of observation. The most self-evident fact a man has in regard to himself is that he is a center of consciousness. He knows this, even if he knows nothing else. If that is delusion, then *all* is delusion. Thus the decision of Leibniz to construct the universe of units comparable to the primary reality we find in ourselves was as close as anyone could come to "empiricism" in philosophy.

Organized bodies, according to Leibniz, are made up of constellations of monads, and those monads which enjoy consciousness he terms *souls.* According to a summary of Leibnizian theory, by Herbert Wildon Carr:

> Each state of a monad expresses and represents the relations between it and the rest of the monads. These states are the monad's perceptions and each perception is representative. As there is no limit to the representation, every perception represents in its way the actual state of the universe and as every state has its position in a succession, the one perception represents past, present and future. Each monad, however, only represents the universe from its own viewpoint and in its own manner and not by leaps and bounds. That is why the monad perceives the universe only through the body of which it is the dominant monad. We must think of the universe as an infinity of bodies. . . .
>
> There is nothing dead in nature. Everything in it is sentient, animated. Every bit of matter is a world of creatures, souls, entelechies [monads without clear perception], of an infinity of kinds.
>
> There is neither birth nor death in the absolute meaning. There are only metamorphoses and transformations.

The idea of the monads is a starkly naked notion which needs some sort of "flesh-and-blood" development to give it the warmth and expressiveness of life. As a purely abstract conception, the monad is both the principle of individuality and the common ground of "spiritual" substance drawn from the one, universal principle. It is an eternally evolving and undying unit; or, one might say, it is unchangeable in essence or potentiality, but infinitely various in development. It is the Self as a part of the larger unity and it is the self as active individuality. In a brilliant analysis of Leibniz' theory, John Theodore Merz writes:

> Assuming that inner existence, such as that of the human mind, is a new dimension . . . having reduced the geometrical extension of the atoms to nothing, Leibniz endowed them with an infinite extension in the direction of their metaphysical dimension. After having lost sight of them in the world of space, the mind has, as it were, to dive into a metaphysical world to find and grasp the real essence of what appears in space merely as a mathematical point. . . . As a cone stands on its point, or a perpendicular straight line cuts a horizontal plane only in one mathematical point, but may extend infinitely in height and depth, so the essences *of things real* have only a punctual existence in this physical world of space; but have an infinite depth of inner life in the metaphysical world of thought. *(Leibniz,* Lippincott, 1884.)

In some such manner as this, Leibniz helps us to understand how man, both mortal and divine, both mundane and transcendent, may have the ground of his being in the radical reality of spirit, or Deity, yet participate in the finite existence of earthly life.

Recent discoveries in the field of psychic research have led to a revival of interest in Leibniz. Prof. H. H. Price, of Oxford University, for one, wonders if the bewildering facts of telepathy and clairvoyance may not become more comprehensible when regarded from the viewpoint of Leibniz' metaphysics. He writes:

> For example, in the *Monadology* of Leibniz every monad has clairvoyant and telepathic powers, not occasionally and exceptionally, but always, as part of its essential nature. Every monad represents the entire Universe from its own point of view (Clairvoyance) and the perceptions of each are correlated with the perceptions of all the rest (Telepathy). In fact, what Leibniz calls "perception" is always both clairvoyant and telepathic. Moreover, he tells us that this perception is to a greater or lesser degree unconscious. I do not say that the system of

> Leibniz is workable as it stands. But I do suggest that we may gather useful hints from it. . . . we could suppose with Leibniz that every mind clairvoyantly perceives or represents the world from its own proper point of view, and that each is telepathically correlated with all other minds. We should then have to explain why there *seems* to be so little clairvoyance, and why the vast bulk of our perceptions or representations remain unconscious.

Thus, a combination of Spinoza and Leibniz satisfies the principal requirements of a rational and ethical philosophy of man, while equating with reasonable promise with such advanced scientific investigations as those of modern psychic research. But what about the problem of evil? The solution commonly resorted to by religionists who accept the idea of a personal God is to devise an opposing or rival deity who presides over evil. With a pantheistic conception, however, this is not possible. The pantheists prefer to say that evil is the privation of good. That if the primeval unity of all be taken as the standard of the "Good," then all separation involves evil, and the greater the separation, the greater the evil. This analysis, speaking ethically, generates the notion of the Moral Law, for in a world of diversity and a multiplicity of units, unity is no longer represented by an absolute and impartite Whole, but by a unity of units. The practical unity of a multiplicity of units is established by orderly relations, and all we know of orderly relations is expressed in our knowledge of *law.* Law, then, in the manifested universe, is the principle of unity. It declares the connectedness of all the separated parts of the universe. The evil of separation is transcended by knowledge of and obedience to law. Good and evil, for man, are determined by the relationship of the individual to the natural order, and the natural order includes moral relationships as well as physical relationships.

Appropriately to the Leibnizian conception, each individual (or monad) has his own understanding of the universe around him and his own measure of understanding of the governing laws of life. When his understanding is less than adequate, he experiences pain; conversely, when some new discovery brings him into closer relationship with the rest of life, he feels the joy of having become a more universal being. But since man is a being of partial ignorance; he may be deluded as to what is a desirable form of unity, and may seek those partisan combinations which bring a fleeting pleasure, followed by dissatisfaction and pain. Here, plainly, is an abstract account of good and evil which supports both the Buddhist and the Socratic conceptions of morality.

What of "evolution"?

Again, according to Leibniz, the degree of each monad is measured by its capacity to reflect in true symmetry its surrounding environment. A monad with "blind spots," or low reflecting capacity, has need of wider experience to bring it into harmony with the rest of life, until, finally, its view of the universe is a faithful portrait of "things as they are." This, then, is the course of evolution for the monads—to become accurate mirrors of the world and collaborators in the cosmic process. Conceivably, the soul which reaches what might be termed "perfection" for any given system of relationships—such as, for example, a Buddha, or a Christ—might then enter upon another cycle of experiences, encompassing a wider radius, or a larger portion of the cosmos as the field for evolution. Or such a being might undertake the educational work for which, indeed, both Christ and Buddha are remembered by mankind, with reverence and respect.

So far as we can see, there is nothing incompatible with scientific fact, whether of physics or biology, in this view of man and of nature. It fits with ease into the philosophic aspects of the great religions of the world and it brings a transcendental dimension to those social conceptions and ideals which base their principles upon the inviolability of the individual and the importance of human freedom. It removes, at least theoretically, the terrors of death, and it makes "sin" little more than a species of ignorance.

Nor is there anything "new" in this account, which is rather pieced together from both ancient and modern religions and philosophies. At any rate, it attempts a start in the direction of an affirmative philosophy.