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ECONOMIC GROWTH AND HUMAN WELL-BEING

IN its basic assumptions, its models, and its techniques, economic thought reflects a one-sided evaluation of man and of human needs. Current economic terminology makes it almost impossible to penetrate to the heart of the problem of well-being. Certain concepts have been used and repeated so often that they have assumed the character of myths. These will have to be re-examined and partly discarded by radical criticism.

This applies also to *liberal* economic thinking. Ever since Marx, radical economic criticism has shared the basic assumptions of its opponents. Marx learned economics from Ricardo, and modern liberals, relying on Keynes, have taken over most of the traditional "box of tools." If "radicalism . . . is the elaboration of a moral critique of society which strikes to the existential root of the human condition" (John P. Roche), the use of traditional economic techniques has prevented liberal economists from being real radicals.

The goal accepted by conventional and liberal economists alike is full utilization of resources, leading to ever-rising standards of living for all. The ends of full employment and continuous growth are projections of the acquisitive attitude, of the individual striving for more and more into the social and national sphere. Bertrand de Jouvenel has called this system the Civilization of *Toujours Plus*—"Always More." This attitude was a mainspring of early capitalism and it pervades the nations and national economies of today. Even the most liberal economic advisers who may not sympathize with individual acquisitiveness recommend it as the exclusive basis of national economic policies. The ideal of an ever-increasing Gross National Product has become a shibboleth in economic reasoning and a golden calf of economic worship. I submit that these goals were appropriate in the early stages of economic development, when scarcity still existed, but that they are causes of disorder in the present stage of affluence of the *American* economy. We cling to them because of their traditional emotional connotations and because of a misinterpretation of human needs and human welfare.

Economists like to believe that the modern economy serves the satisfaction of human needs. The concept of needs has a history. In the eighteenth century one used the term "happiness"; in the early nineteenth, the term "pleasure." These terms became denuded of content and were replaced by "wants" and "utility," and today we talk about "desires" and "tastes" to avoid any implication as to their value-content. Whereas "need" means something that the human being can hardly do without, the term "tastes" reduces the goal of economic activity to a game with sensual experiences. This reflects, of course, the abundant productivity of the age; but it also renders meaningless the claim of satisfying "human needs" as a justification for the gigantic apparatus of the modern economy.

Only a small part of the modern economy serves the satisfaction of such biological needs. By far the larger proportion of present-day economic activity is directed towards very different goals. It produces an immense surplus over and above the biologically determined needs. Since the beginning of human society such surplus has been allocated for social purposes by ruling groups on the basis of non-economic motives. Kings, princes, nobles, priests, warriors appropriated this surplus and used it in accordance with the basic values of their age. This is also the case in our present industrial society. But in the economic interpretation of our society, this allocation is misconceived as "need satisfaction" of a quasi-biological nature, while in fact the bulk

of modern production has nothing to do with biological needs. It has to do with "wealth" which is channelled into the possession of the masses. In past societies wealth was the privilege of a restricted group, but modern society has brought wealth to the masses or to the majority. It is notable that questions that were raised in the past as to the "goodness" or the "value" of wealth are bypassed today. We act as if the solution has been simply to convey the wealth of the nation from the very few to the very many. Although this problem is not completely solved, we are already confronted by the question: How much does wealth contribute to the welfare of the many? Doubts about the beneficence of wealth were raised in the past when the wealthy were few, but it is virtually ignored today when the masses are wealthy.

Meanwhile, the modern social sciences abound with findings about the bad effects of modern industrial society. It is enough to mention the lack of community and solidarity, the impersonality of human relations, the other-directed conformism of man in the "lonely crowd," the anomie or rulelessness caused by modern rationalism, the estrangement of modern urban man from nature, his alienation from himself through his subjection to the market, his becoming an annex to the machine, his loss of individuality in the gigantic establishments of production and consumption. What is important to understand is that modern sociology and social psychology are actually criticizing *the detrimental effects of our economic system, regardless of the wealth it has given to the masses.* Yet because, for Adam Smith, this wealth was an unquestionable goal, economists, still making the same assumptions, have bypassed this criticism instead of assimilating it into their thought.

One of the reasons for this attitude is a misunderstood individualism. It is assumed that needs, wants, desires, tastes, originate in the free choices of the individual. Any criticism of his desires is considered as authoritarian interference with freedom. The individual is supposedly autonomous in determining his own needs and discussion of the legitimacy of such needs is often considered as an attack on this autonomy.

This approach overlooks the fact that wants are determined by custom, *mores,* public opinion, and by the pressure for conformity. It is psychologically naive to assume that people are completely aware of their wants and that these wants are unequivocally selected; there are conscious and unconscious conflicts between wants and ideals, there is ignorance, and there are self-destructive tendencies within individuals. Such can be uncovered by psychological analysis and people can be advised as to what are healthy and unhealthy desires. Nobody openly rejects medical advice on the ground that it is an undue interference with "liberty." Modern psychology, in spite of its many uncertainties and viewpoints, has made some progress in outlining an image of man which can serve as a framework for detecting elements of health and sickness in the individual and society. It has become possible to criticize the modern economy insofar as it is actually detrimental for man, in spite of its creation of wealth for the masses.

A new "science" of human well-being is needed. Such a discipline may examine the possibility that a person, a family, a group, a nation can have too much wealth and income, too much economic growth and productivity. It may consider that the way in which wealth is produced, distributed, and consumed can, in itself, be destructive. We will have to develop a new discipline of human well-being which will help people to learn how to resist the temptations of modern mass production and consumption, should physical and mental health require it.

Such a science of human well-being should start with simple assumptions like those of welfare economics. They can be listed as follows:

(1) The principle of balance.

(2) The principle of real costs.

(3) The principle of direct negative effects.

(4) The principle of balance between means and ends.

All these principles have to be considered whenever a question of economic policy arises.

The *principles of balance* and *of real costs* are closely interrelated. Real costs arise from all human endeavors because human time and energy are limited—because man is a finite being. Our life on earth lasts only a limited time and we are not omnipotent; therefore, everything we do accomplish implies the sacrifice of something we give up by allocating our limited time and energy in a specific way. This is a broader version of the scarcity concept used in economic reasoning; it could also be called the principle of sacrificed alternatives.

In economic reasoning, only those costs are considered which consist of the sacrifice of alternative goods and services that cannot be produced for the market under existing conditions. However, there are human potentialities and needs which are not related to the procurement of goods and services and cannot be satisfied by producing for, and buying and selling in, the market. Love, friendship, close and affectionate human relations, the experience of beauty, and the pursuit of truth are of this kind. It is often reasoned by economists that these aspects of human existence are covered by "leisure," but the mere absence of work does not imply automatic fulfillment of these non-economic needs.

Non-economic needs which cannot be satisfied by more production for the market are the real costs of the "always more" sort of economic growth. A society which allocates most of the activity of its members to the production of goods will starve the fulfillment of other needs and aspirations. Parents, peer groups, authorities, educational media, etc., instill the idea that whatever has no market value has hardly any value at all. This leads to ignorance of the real costs of economic growth.

These sacrificed ways of life, however, may be required to balance and equilibrate human existence. The principle of *balance* is derived from biology. It refers to an ecological situation in which various organisms and species keep each other in a situation of equilibrium. Rachel Carson, in *The Silent Spring*, has recently popularized this concept. The concept of balance broadly implies that human well-being requires an equilibrium of forces. Our over-emphasis on economic growth and acquisition leads to a disturbance of the balance of our existence. Too much time and energy used for the procurement of goods and services for the market must, by necessity, lead to a neglect of other modes of life. Our excessive economic orientation sharpens all those value-attitudes which are necessary for economic growth. There is an over-emphasis on intellectual reasoning, on manipulation and control of the outer world, and a compulsive activism. We are sacrificing alternative faculties and attitudes which cannot contribute to an increase in wealth, resulting in an atrophy of emotions and feelings, a neglect of the inner world, and in a deterioration of our capacity for a receptive orientation towards the universe, towards nature, and our human environment, and thereby, of our æsthetic and religious faculties. Too much economic growth tends to destroy the balance between activist effort and receptivity, doing and being, grasping and receiving, between conscious intentional effort and inner awareness, between reason and feeling. This destructive effect is wrought by excessive *individual* striving for acquisition as well as by the exclusive emphasis on *national* economic growth.

Economists usually assume that wants are unlimited and that, therefore, there is no upper limit to consumption. This runs counter to the wisdom of all time before the Industrial Revolution. In antiquity and in the Middle Ages the expansion of "needs" was considered as

unhealthy and "bad." The principle of balance requires the conception of a measured supply of goods and services. This idea seems to have been completely abandoned in economic reasoning, although lip-service is paid in theory to the concept of consumers' equilibrium. Introspection and observation indicate that people may be surfeited with goods.

Less than fifty years ago, a person could reach the economic goals of his life when he married, bought and furnished a house, educated his children, and accumulated some savings for his old age. Today he is lured farther and farther away from rest and satisfaction by more and more new goods and gadgets; they keep him tied to work and acquisition until he is buried without ever having reached a moment of peace where he could look back to his work and say: It is good. If ours is an "achieving society," it must give room, at least once in a while, for the feeling of having achieved. An economy bent on continuous individual and social growth and expansion makes the experience of achieving a goal difficult if not impossible. The neuroses of the "status-seekers" and of the "pyramid-climbers" are symptoms of this disequilibrium.

The principle of balance can also be applied to the *rate* of growth and economic change. The market economy has been compared to a gale of creative destruction. Is there a limit beyond which economic change, even if desirable in terms of more output, becomes intolerable for individuals and detrimental to well-being? A quantitative answer to this question may not be possible, but it should be clear that change is not always a gain but can inflict discomfort and suffering.

If modern industrial man manages to send down roots in a stable environment, economic change may uproot him again. The general feeling of insecurity and lack of community that pervades our society may arise from the continuous changes which threaten physical and mental stability. The modern economy forces man into a pattern of extreme flexibility and detachment. He has to be continuously on the *qui vive* and to adjust himself to the changing frontiers of production, jobs and consumption. This has made him into a lonely member of a crowd. Economic change may sever the ties to habitat and neighborhood, it may cut apart the bonds of friendship and human relations. The great attention paid to "human relations" in industry is a consequence of the lack of attachment and involvement that continuous change requires.

The *direct negative effects* of economic growth must also be recognized. It is hardly an exaggeration to assume that almost any increase in production brings about a decrease in well-being in some other direction. Air and water pollution, smoke, smog, poisoning of crops, noise, dirt, ugliness of cities, destruction of the landscape, the strains of rush-hour traffic, are examples. These negative effects are an essential characteristic of our production methods and should be taken into account when we plan for economic growth. It is characteristic of our attitudes that measures of national income do not include these effects. An additional chemical plant will increase the GNP, but the water pollution caused by the same plant will not be set against the gain. This is more than a faulty accounting method; it is a basic flaw in our attitudes towards economic progress and human well-being.

The *principle of balance between means and ends* is disturbed by the utilitarianism of our economic reasoning and attitudes; in technology and in business, only the end counts. In technology the so-called economic principle requires that the maximum effect is accomplished with the minimum effort; in business it requires that the greatest total revenue is produced with the minimum costs. The means and the way to the goal are irrelevant. The opposite spirit is expressed in Matthew, 16, 26: "For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his soul?" The benefits of a goal can be vitiated by the bad effects of the means of reaching it.

Our economy has become an impersonal master; the slavery imposed by men has been replaced by the slavery imposed by machines and by the organization of labor. There is little pleasure and well-being connected with the work of the great majority of our employees and workers. Its only subjective *raison d'être* is the earning of an income and its only rationale is the increase in the GNP. This means that the bulk of our waking hours is spent in an activity abhorrent to us and detrimental to our well-being.

But even if work in the modern economy were more pleasant and satisfying, the utilitarian attitude which extols *future* ends above the presently used means would prevent us from enjoying it now. We spend the hours in which we are most energetic and wakeful on the disagreeable and burdensome tasks of mechanical, routinized, monotonous labor which becomes meaningful only in the hours after work, in the future; but human well-being requires the experience of the here and now as something meaningful. This has become almost impossible for us and has ruined our ability for enjoyment even in those hours which are not devoted to work. The often decried passivity and lethargy of the leisure pursuits of mass culture is the consequence of this situation. *We have forgotten how to he satisfied with any goal, even when we reach it,* because of the utilitarian attitude which insists upon further goals.

One of the reasons why economists consider growth of the GNP as a desirable policy goal is that it seems to provide a quantitative yardstick for policy decisions. Here, as so often in the modern sciences, the method determines not only the object but also the goal. The disadvantages of using the GNP in policy decisions lie precisely in its purely quantitative character. Well-being depends not merely and predominantly on quantity, but on quality. In respect to the GNP this means that *its composition matters more than its size or its growth rate.* Any measures to increase the GNP should be examined as to their possible negative effects. We should reject the assumption that an increase in national income is always desirable, regardless of its costs.

If more attention were paid to the qualitative aspects and to the composition of the GNP, economists might turn again to the problem of *income distribution.* Galbraith has pointed out that we are escaping into the relatively simple policy of advocating growth to solve the problems of stability, security and of a more equal distribution. Our GNP does not necessarily have to be larger but it should be more justly and more equally distributed. It seems that the trend towards greater equality of distribution came to a halt in the 1940's. We have to work actively towards this goal.

The reason for preoccupation with size and growth is not hard to find. It is much easier and requires less revolutionary changes if one confines oneself to the stimulation of the aggregate income than to advocate policies for re-allocation and re-distribution. Here the congenital conservatism of economic reasoning comes to the fore. To bring about a re-allocation of resources seems to require such stringent governmental activity, taxing and spending that few economists would dare to advocate it under the present political conditions. However, the method of consumers' education and organization has hardly been tried. Beginnings are being made right now in the field of race relations. It seems to me that this may be an appropriate means in a democratic society.

However, a higher GNP and a faster rate of growth are also advocated to bring about *full employment.* Yet to justify a higher GNP and a higher growth rate by the necessity of full employment implies a radical reversal of economic reasoning. Economics started with the assumption that need satisfaction is the goa1 of the economy and that employment and utilization of resources are necessary because we need more goods and services. There is nothing inherently desirable in the full utilization of resources unless it serves to produce needed goods and services. If

one demands a higher GNP to accomplish full employment, production and resource utilization become the end and consumption the means. More goods have to be produced in order to employ more people. More people can only be employed if more goods are consumed. Thus the natural relation between production and consumption is reversed. Unless the unemployed can be used to produce needed goods, it does not make sense to employ them by over-stimulating the entire economy and putting an additional strain on *all* members of society through a faster rate of growth. This is like giving benzedrine to an already overactive person.

This way of dealing with unemployment, however, is rooted in our attitude towards income. It is due to the subliminal remnants of the labor ethic, according to which those who do not work should not eat. Although we have consciously abandoned this idea in our social legislation, we still adhere to the belief that income should only be a reward for production.

Serious students of automation predict that in the near future only a minority will find work in our economy. If this should prove correct we will have to change traditional attitudes towards work. This may not require that people will have to do entirely without work; but new types of activity and new wants and ways of life will have to develop.

Someone may raise the question: do you want to dictate to people what they are supposed to want? No, I do not; but I reserve the right to express an opinion on what is good or bad in production and consumption and on what is more and what is less important. Consumers' education in terms of health, well-being and taste is a legitimate activity. I would not wish to compel consumers to buy or not to buy certain goods; but one could try to spread a certain climate of opinion which would make it at least difficult to waste effort on unimportant things and neglect the higher things in life. This is a long-term goal for the new science of human well-being.

No society can exist without a certain degree of consensus on its ultimate goals. The fact that there seems to exist at present such an agreement on the importance of GNP and its growth is the reason for this essay; it is proposed to establish—by education and persuasion—an agreement that we have been wrong in this respect and that we should modify our concepts and policies accordingly.

No doubt the question will be asked: can people be reeducated to demand less gadgets and to pursue more non-economic values. I do not know the answer to this question. However, I could imagine that in the Union League clubs of a future society those members will be ostracized who earn their income by producing socially undesirable goods, just as the members of the crime syndicate are excluded from these clubs right now. If this seems far-fetched, one has only to remember that what is commonplace today seemed impossible only thirty years ago. Whether such a new orientation is possible, will never be known unless we try to bring it about.

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REVIEW
COMMON SENSE AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

JEROME D. FRANK'S *Persuasion and Healing* (Johns Hopkins Press, 1961) is an excellent demonstration that the problems of psychology cannot be separated from those of religion, politics, medicine or education. And Dr. Frank serves another cause in this book: The many schools and sub-schools of psychotherapy, with their differences of emphasis and opinion, are united by discussion and correlation. Dr. Frank here recommends, in other words, the same attitude of nonsectarianism which is of increasing importance in the field of religion. The opening chapter of *Persuasion and Healing* has the following paragraph:

> In the present state of ignorance, the most reasonable assumption is that all forms of psychotherapy that persist must do some good, otherwise they would disappear. Furthermore, it is likely that the similarity of improvement rate reported from different forms of psychotherapy results from features common to them all. The improvement rate for each form, then, would be composed of patients who respond to the features it shares with other forms and therefore would have improved with any type of psychotherapy, plus, perhaps, some patients who would have responded favorably only to the particular type of psychotherapy under consideration. If this were so, it would be hard to tease out the unique contributions of different forms of treatment until the features they share—and the attributes of patients that cause them to respond favorably to these features—were better understood.

The problems of the contemporary political scene are explored suggestively in a chapter titled "Religious Revivalism and Thought Reform." Dr. Frank writes:

> It may seem odd that attempts by Communist governments to produce confessions could aid understanding of either religious revivalism or psychotherapy. Certainly, thought reform or brain-washing differs strikingly from each of them in many respects. Yet certain similarities of aims and methods are also marked and have considerable theoretical interest. The relevance for psychotherapy of both evangelical Christianity and communism lies in their heroic efforts to win converts, since these activities cast light on ways of inducing attitude changes. Proselytizing in both is motivated and guided by a systematic, comprehensive world view, which purports to govern every aspect of the thinking and behavior of its disciples. Though the Communist assumptive world has no place for supernatural powers, it incorporates a suprapersonal one that has many of the attributes Christianity invests in God. This is the Party, to which all Communists are expected to submit themselves willingly, absolutely, and unquestioningly. Through being the obedient instrument of this power, the individual gains a feeling of value in his own eyes and in those of his compatriots.

A further note on the "conversion experience" applies to both religious groups and sectarian politics:

> As with miracle cures, the passionate skeptic may be quite susceptible. Many persons seem to have become suddenly converted at revival meetings while in a state of high indignation at the proceedings. Only the emotionally detached are immune. In short, confusion, guilt, or frustration springing from personal characteristics or social conditions seem to heighten the attractiveness or revivalistic religions and enhance their effectiveness. This suggests that these feelings may increase a person's susceptibility to emotionally charged methods of influence that offer detailed guides to behavior, based on an inclusive, infallible assumptive world, which also strongly arouses hope.

Many psychiatrists like to think of themselves as a space-age ahead of the rule-of-thumb family physician. Yet in dealing with people, and not simply diagnostic abstractions, the psychotherapist is actually treading the same puzzling terrain. He becomes something of a "faith healer," perhaps, something of a religionist. Evidence continues to mount that the psychiatrist may not consider himself to be simply an impersonal practitioner of objective science. Dr. Frank's closing chapter is concerned with the human elements in the relationship between patient and therapist:

> At a symbolic level, it is important to mobilize the patient's expectancy for help, or at least to do nothing to counteract it. The psychiatrist should therefore be prepared to modify his approach, within limits possible for him, to meet his patients'

> conceptions of therapy, insofar as he can discern them. For patients who cannot conceive of a treatment that does not involve getting a pill or injection, it may be advisable to offer a prescription as a means of establishing and solidifying a therapeutic relationship. Once this has occurred, it is often possible to help the patient modify his expectations and the medication is dispensed with.
>
> The question of how far a physician should go to meet a patient's expectations is a thorny one. Obviously he cannot use methods in which he himself does not believe. Moreover reliance on the healing powers of faith, if it led to neglect of proper diagnostic or treatment procedures, would clearly be irresponsible. On the other hand, faith may be a specific antidote for certain emotions such as fear or discouragement which may constitute the essence of a patient's illness. For such patients, the mobilization of expectant trust by whatever means may be as much an etiological remedy as penicillin for pneumonia.

We find it of extraordinary interest that this distinguished psychiatrist thus creates a natural bridge between the most significant science of the twentieth century and the many varieties of sincerely-intended "faith healing." It is also possible to wonder, on this basis, if the healing powers of "faith" do not reach beyond the expectations of the patient—and include some of the expectations of the "healer," based on a corresponding faith that each man has untapped resources for self-recovery.

COMMENTARY
THE NEW SPIRIT

WALTER WEISSKOPF'S attempt to relate the science of economics to conceptions of human well-being which originate outside of economic thinking may not win immediate acceptance from his professional colleagues—what practitioner of science, after all, likes to have his special preserve invaded by ethical incommensurables?—but he is certain to gain a large audience of enthusiastic supporters in other areas. What good is a science concerned with human behavior if it totally neglects the relation of that behavior to the best ends of human life?

There is something encouraging in the fact that it is possible for pioneers of this sort to appear in recognized institutions of learning in the United States. Dr. Weisskopf is head of the department of economics at Roosevelt University. Dr. Jerome D. Frank (see Review) is associate professor of psychiatry at Johns Hopkins University Medical School. Dr. A. H. Maslow is head of the department of psychology at Brandeis University. The presence of such men in such posts is evidence that the universities of the twentieth century, whatever their shortcomings, are still able to perform their function of sheltering and fostering independent thought—even thought which is in radical contrast to prevailing academic opinion.

What have these three men in common? The question is not difficult to answer. Their interest is in the primary ethical values of human life. You could say that they are restoring Philosophy to its position of ruling authority in the practice of science. You could say that they are making the question of Values paramount in their pursuit of scientific truth.

Science is practiced in the service of man. It seems a simple enough truism to say that for science to serve man, there must be some intelligible measure of man's interest—of what is good for him, and what is not. Yet the sciences have been extremely laggard in accepting this responsibility. Since the good of man is a philosophical problem, involving all the uncertainties of both philosophy and religion, the scientists have preferred to restrict their practice to finite or "controllable" situations. But these three distinguished professional men are saying, in effect, that workers in the fields of human science can no longer enjoy the comforts of remaining specialists. They must now look at the problems of man with the eyes of human beings and philosophers as well.

These men, and others like them, we predict, *are going to get the students*—the *good* students—during the remaining years of the twentieth century. For they are speaking directly to the hungers of the human heart, and to the aspirations, too long neglected, of the mind.

Something like this happened long ago, in the twelfth century. When, at the cathedral school of Notre Dame, Peter Abelard began asking the questions that needed asking in his time, *he got the students.* Abelard demonstrated the capacity of the rational spirit to triumph over the odds of traditionalism, through its own internal strength. A similar contest is going on today. All that these educational reformers have on their side is the inherent validity of their thinking. They are appealing to the best in human beings, and if there is any hope for the future, the best in human beings will respond.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
CORPORAL PUNISHMENT—SOME ARGUMENTS

WE have a letter which takes strong exception to Adah Maurer's rejection of corporal punishment in MANAS for July 3. Incidentally, it seems that most arguments on this question fail to distinguish between the use of physical force as a corrective measure in the home and corporal punishment administered at school. Mrs. Maurer was primarily concerned with the school situation, while Mr. Bowden is contending for a proper place for spankings, etc., during early stages of childhood—and in behalf of the community. Here is his letter:

> I would like to protest most vigorously the corporal punishment article in the July 3 MANAS.
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> I shall not analyze the article point by point, but simply state that while the case against overpunishment is well made (it brutalizes and defeats its purpose), it does not follow that no punishment is justified.
>
> It may be instructive to consider the converse: underpunishment. What are its effects?
>
> An organism builds a character to deal with a particular environment. It happens that conditions on the planet Earth are tough. In order to eat, it is necessary to grow, or kill, food. To have shelter, it is necessary to reconstruct the environment. To enjoy the benefits of community, one must forego selfishness. To maintain the dominance of reason over passion, one must be prepared to undergo physical and psychic pain. An organism which is protected in its early years from unpleasant experiences will not be equipped to handle them in later years.
>
> Man certainly did not evolve by being protected from the natural consequences of his actions, but rather by being exposed to them. The sooner an organism learns this, the better for it. If human societies did not exercise physical coercions and restraints, Nature soon would. If men were allowed to destroy as they choose, or allowed to refuse to contribute to the constructive processes which maintain the community, there soon would be no community.
>
> There is a natural tendency, as every good psychologist should know, for an organism to follow the path of least resistance, in terms of biological and instinctual drives. Somehow, this tendency must be overcome if the social conditions for optimum survival are to be realized. Man has exceeded other species in this respect, through expanded logical faculties and organized methods of artificial motivation. Certain standards of behavior which are far from the path of least resistance, have come to be recognized as beneficial. It is the function of social organization to impress these standards upon its members.
>
> No highly organized society has been able to exist without any physical coercive power over its individuals. This should not be considered evil or unnatural. A deliberate, planned, set of physical restraints and motivations has been substituted for the blind, raw, statistical reactions of Nature.
>
> I could let my child run in the street until he got hit by a car, and got taught a lesson. Instead, I explain why he is not to play in the street. If my explanation or his understanding are deficient, and he goes into the street, I spank him severely. The next time he is tempted, he has an artificial but powerful motivation for overcoming his temptation. Incidentally, he has also learned that he need not be a slave to his impulses: by the imposition of external discipline, I have taught him the possibility of self-discipline—after all, I am not there in person, restraining him physically: he is deliberately and reflectively controlling his own behavior.
>
> I think that this last is the most important point to be made, and it hinges on our conception of the nature of the human being. My theory is that the dominance of the rational mind over the instinctual is not inherent: inherently, "the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak." In a free state, the instinctual mind would simply make use of the rational, in furthering its own biologically-satisfying ends. If a child finds that it will be fed whenever it cries, it will cry, and go on crying, for whatever it wants, through the years, as long as the stimulus brings about the response. It will moreover consider itself incapable of getting its own food.
>
> The rational mind will only exercise effective control over the organism when it has been shown (1) that it can; (2) that it must. Strong medicine, used throughout civilized history, is necessary to bring

about this radical metamorphosis in the growing human organism. It is called corporal punishment.

It is not our intention, just now, to add to this argument, but it is of interest to recall some sidelights on the controversy caused years ago by a British psychologist employed by the turbulent Indian city of Madras as an adviser on juvenile delinquents. (MANAS, Jan. 4 and March 8, 1950.) This psychologist, Col. Ford-Thompson, stirred up disapproval on many grounds, one of which was his advocacy of corporal punishment in a home for delinquents. His methods, however, proved successful, and he finally earned the respect and affection of his often apparently incorrigible charges. Eventually his help was sought by other communities in India. Our 1950 article said:

> Col. Ford-Thompson had long been exploring a line of psychological investigation somewhat at odds with the modern no-physical-punishment trend of educational theory. He became convinced that one's love or concern for children is by no means accurately reflected in a decision "to never lay hand upon a child." To some educators, he may sound reactionary on the subject of discipline, but his record with children does not correspond in any way with the sort of record one would expect a reactionary teacher to make.
>
> Whenever it becomes popular to handle discipline problems in some particular way, we must remember that the person using this method with the child may be influenced considerably by the desire to have others think well of him. If a parent wishes to be "modern" and "progressive," and *for this reason* disparages all physical punishment as an a priori evil he must be sure that when he nobly refrains from physical chastisement, he harbors no persisting internal annoyances or accusations against the child.
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> The hidden and real reason for a child's preference for physical over mental punishment may be that he at least becomes a party to—and in that sense participates in—physical punishment, whereas "mental punishment" still leaves him the equivocal *object* of disapproval. Col. Ford-Thompson is an outspoken opponent of "mental punishment." He feels that the child may be precipitated into an unhealthy psychological condition if his minor wrongdoings make him feel separate—regarded as morally inferior by parents or teachers. Physical punishment, on the other hand, he contends, *can* and should be accomplished without infringing upon the psychological security of the child.

These considerations, we feel, open up the subject for further reflection. On the basis of what she wrote, we would certainly agree with Mrs. Maurer as to the damaging effects of a punitive attitude, in the school or at home. And it is in respect to *attitude* that so much confusion exists. The Buddhists, for example, seem far ahead of Christian culture in being able to free "punishment" from any persisting stigma. In his book, *The Soul of a People* (1898), Fielding Hall points out that the man who served a sentence for a crime in Burma was not ostracized thereafter. This was apparently due to Buddhist influence. The Buddhist believes that man rewards and punishes himself, and that legal penalties are of secondary or minimum importance. In the Christian tradition, however, it is but two logical steps from a belief in God's wrathful and righteous punishment of humans to the punishments inflicted by Church or State. So, this issue is a complicated one, involving much more than whether physical punishment is "better" than mental punishment. Children will often prefer physical punishment *if* they are able to believe that suffering it reinstates them in the family or social group. But if the worst punishment is psychological—based on a punitive attitude—then there is hardly any point to a physical *addition* to the psychological punishment they must expect to encounter in any case.

FRONTIERS

A Question about "Compromise"

IN a *Nation* article earlier this year (April 27), Lionel Abel remarked that American Negroes are acquiring "the consciousness of the forum" in their struggle for civil rights. They are, he said, "having to act upon the whites and on themselves." We have a letter which illustrates some of the questions and problems which are thrown up by this turn of history:

> As a Negro in a small California town, I read the varied and detailed accounts of racial protests which are sweeping, not just the U.S., but the world. From many of these activities I see emerging two points of view—a militant demand that full equality be granted here and now, and another view suggesting that the attitude of no-compromise should not necessarily apply in all situations, or that at least some compromise should be made, as a step along the way to full equality. Civil rights groups are beginning to differ openly on this question. This is not to say that the moderates are "Uncle Toms," but to note as their view that each area or circumstance should be considered on its own merits, instead of applying the same rule of protest everywhere, on the theory that each section of the country is the same.
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> In San Francisco, recently, a newly appointed Negro judge of the Municipal Court was charged by some members of the San Francisco chapter of the NAACP with becoming a part of the "enemy" by accepting this appointment; that is, because his view of the Negro struggle differed materially from that of the chapter, he should resign from his office in the chapter.
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> This raises the personal question of what one ought to do. Suppose I am offered an appointment to a public body: Should I confer with the local civil rights groups to get their approval? What are my rights? My family has to live also. I too am striving for adequate income.
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> Aside from these considerations, what about my point of view? Will those who harbor moderate or less militant attitudes become suspect, within their minority, as some people were suspect during the witch-hunts of the McCarthy era? Is not the over-simplified good-guy, bad-guy analysis being used here? We are seeing attacks upon reputable, well-meaning citizens who have a right to their views. Am I attaching too much importance to the booing of Mayor Daley of Chicago, and of James Meredith, the leader of the Baptist group, at the NAACP convention?
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> [During this convention (July 1-6), youthful demonstrators prevented Mayor Richard Daley from speaking by filling the center aisle of the hall and shouting, "Down with ghettos." (In his welcoming remarks on the first day of the convention, Mayor Daley claimed that Chicago had no ghetto.) James Meredith, Negro student at the University of Mississippi, was also a target of demonstrations because he criticized the leadership of Negro youth and called their activities "childish."]
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> Dare I seek to inject a voice of reason? Or will I risk an accusation of being soft on what's-its-name?
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> So far, I have not seen any challenge to this with-me-or-against-me view. Obviously, I have been victimized at various times by prejudice, too. I have been outraged and frustrated by subtle practices of discrimination. But does that mean I must damn everybody who does not see this thing as I do? Must I demand all-out militancy from everyone involved in the struggle? Perhaps I have grown old and no longer feel the impatience of youth in wanting to get things done.
>
> READER

This is not an easy letter to answer or comment upon. In the first place, no one who lives in a white skin has any right to ask his Negro countrymen to "moderate" the struggle for their rights. The Negroes have already waited a hundred years for a proper administration of the Constitution. A white man who counsels Negroes to be "patient" should recognize that this is morally the same as asking for suspension of his own rights as a citizen for an indefinite period into the future. He must be ready to take a job far below his capacity or educational qualifications, accept a lower rate of pay, live in a segregated part of town, avoid eating in many restaurants, and adapt to the pain of seeing his children discriminated against in schools, at lunch counters, and at various recreational facilities. If he can "patiently" accept this mode of life, then, perhaps, his advocacy of further waiting on the part of Negroes has some theoretical standing, but he still has no *practical* justification, since he will not in fact be subjected to these conditions.

How, then, can we discuss at all the problems raised by our correspondent? We are able to do it

only by transferring the issue to a context of general considerations Under what circumstances might a minority group decide to allow some "compromise" in its efforts to obtain what all mature and impartial men admit are rights which cannot be denied on either legal or moral grounds?

In a proper political community, "compromise" is by definition a bad thing. Compromise weakens the foundations of the political community. It opens the way to injustice by destroying the authority of principle or, in political terms, law. A compromise puts the rights of future generations in jeopardy, by encouraging the members of the community to disregard the provisions of the social contract.

This being the case, there is, it seems to us, only one possible justification for compromise: the service of the weak. Parents, for example, make certain rules regarding order in the home. Yet there may be times when a young child is emotionally unable to conform. In this case, a mechanical enforcement of the rule will fail of its purpose, which is to create the conditions of a harmonious family life and make the home a matrix for growth. The parents may then relax the rule and improvise with other measures until the child gains more maturity. The idea is to seek some partial fulfillment of the rule's *intent*, by means which do not negate it, but temper its application. This is educational compromise in the service of the weak. If its purpose is understood, indifference toward the family "social compact" should not result.

The larger social community recognizes this principle. There are special courts for juvenile delinquents and a suspension or revision of penalties for psychotic criminals. We may not do very well in administering these provisions but we are working at the problem. (See the "Children" article in MANAS for Aug. 7, on adolescents as a minority group before the law.)

Now, how might the principle apply to the efforts of a minority group to obtain full political rights? The leaders of the minority might argue that the most blindly determined of their opponents are "sick," and therefore deserving of special consideration. It is certain that the inability to recognize the equal rights of all men under the Constitution of the United States is a moral as well as a political sickness. (James Baldwin sees this clearly.) The leaders might decide that the common goal of a healthy social community is best served by an occasional "compromise." This would be a compromise made out of generosity and strength, not from fear or weakness.

Here, however, the issue becomes one of motive, and in a political movement uniformity of motive is difficult to get. To avoid the loss of unity in subjective differences, political movements tend to establish objective criteria of morality and righteousness. As a result, individuals who try to maintain independent feelings of right and wrong in social action are sorely tried by politics.

Gandhi found a way to resolve this dilemma. He made a political instrument out of the moral principle of *ahimsa* or harmlessness. Ahimsa preserves the ideal of good for the social whole during the struggle for the rights of a dispossessed portion of the whole. Gandhian nonviolence does not compromise, but it rejects the partisan spirit. By nonviolence, the Gandhian seeks to heal the sickness of his opponent as well as to establish justice. This is a high view of the goal of social action. For this reason, the entire social community of the United States owes a great debt to Martin Luther King and his associates, who have begun to put the principle of individual, subjective morality into operation in the struggle for civil rights.

Our space has run out, and we have not even touched the surface of the problems raised by our reader. But this, perhaps, is as it should be. The distinctive role of the individual during a historical crisis remains the same as it is at other times: to be as much of an individual as he can in his decisions, except for those compromises which are in the service of the weak.