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MAN SPEAKS FOR THE WORLD

THERE are books about the things that must be done, and of the making of them there is no end. Other books—a few—deal with the confusions and follies which seem to result from all this doing; and there are still others—even fewer—books which ask what, indeed, is accomplished by this furious response to imagined or actual necessity—which do not reject the reasoned requirements yet wonder, because of the passion attending the doing and the partisan darkness it produces in the name of light, why the necessities of man should involve him in so much obvious self-defeat.

Yet doing is surely a part of man's existence. Simply to be born is a denunciation of repose. To draw breath is a conquest of opposition. A man cannot live without some credo of intentions, some science of needs. And at every point he is pressed upon by the otherness of life. His place on earth is not given, but made. His practical education is from a manual of arms. His combinations for survival are bastions of defense and many of his acts of being leave tracks of desolation. Even his gestures of understanding make waves of ignorance, preoccupying him with selections from the visible at the neglect of the unseen. Nor can any "thing" in the world he inspects with the searchlight of his intelligence be made to stand still thereafter, so that all the objects located and defined in terms of time and place will acquire new relationships, and knowledge of their meaning, if meaning has been assigned to them, will have to be renewed.

It is natural to wonder, now and then, if we shall ever be diplomaed out of all this—which is a way of asking what the human condition *means.* The question is hardly serious unless it comes in the spirit of an amateur, asked by a would-be lover of life. Expecting to "do something" with the answer would make it into a philosophical betrayal, or one more theological hoax. It would then amount only to another set of rules for getting to heaven, or the first draft of a Perfect Constitution to end all constitutions, and we have surely had enough of all such answers, by now. We are at last beginning to recognize that if the answers we get about "meaning" are in the same terms as questions which *drive* us to look for them, they will almost certainly be frauds.

But how could we compile a primer that would instruct men in the groundlessness of projects proposed by those who promise to settle the issue of "truth" for coming generations? One needs a strong sense of *déjà vu* to detect the elements of self-deception, not to speak of pretense or fraud, in proposals addressed mainly to human longing.

What it is possible to teach can be said plainly enough, but what cannot be taught, yet must be learned, calls for the practice of obscure Socratic arts. It is one thing to demonstrate that the myth of Sisyphus is peculiarly appealing to modern man, but quite another to explain why this paean to hopelessness brings a certain serenity to men who find ways of reading it backwards. All that it says, perhaps, is that the Tao that can be named is not the Eternal Tao.

Suppose that much that a man needs to know is locked in such enigmatic sayings and is learned mainly from secret intimations. Can we imagine a world in which people in general were somehow persuaded of this? What would they believe? Would they have a "religion"? We ought to do some theorizing about the everyday converse of a society of people who have become thoroughly aware of the difference between what they believe and what they know, and who school themselves in the avoidance of self-deception. The children brought up in such a society would not feel

prompted to take flight from "mysteries" as some sort of evil. Learning how to relate to "mysteries" is, after all, a prerequisite of maturity. In our society, we relate to them mainly by default, pretending they have no importance, and by failing to tell the young that it is natural for mysteries to be all about. Our children, alas, are not born to reverence for the unknown, save for those who somehow bring it with them. How, one wonders, are mystery and superstition related? Is the inseparable ally of superstition a cocksure certainty? Perhaps we should say that a superstitious man is only a man who has no way of discovering what he does not know.

Is there a knowledge which does not grow insecure in the presence of mysteries? A review-essay on Giovanni Battista Vico by Isaiah Berlin in the April 24 *New York Review of Books* suggests that there is. Prof. Berlin finds in Vico a rebirth of the idea of self-knowledge. Progress, for Vico, meant growth in conscious awareness of the field of one's relationships in and with the world. This was one of the great beginnings, in the West, of the rediscovery of the nature of man. Psychologists have begun to give attention to this crucial area of philosophical investigation only since the pioneering work of A. H. Maslow. Following is Prof. Berlin's account of Vico's discovery:

> He uncovered a sense of knowing which is basic to all humane studies: the sense in which I know what it is to be poor, to fight for a cause, to belong to a nation, to join or abandon the Communist party, to feel nostalgia, terror, intimacy, the omnipresence of a god, to understand a gesture, a work of art, a joke, a man's character, that one is lying to one's self.
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> How does one know these things? In the first place, no doubt by personal experience; in the second place because the experience of others is sufficiently woven into one's own to be seized quasi-directly, as part of constant intimate communication; and in the third place by the working (sometimes by a conscious effort) of the imagination. If a man claims to know what it is like to lose one's religious faith—in what way it transforms the shape of one's world—his claim may or may not be valid; he may be lying or deceiving himself, or misidentifying his experience. But the sense in which he claims to know this is quite different from that in which I know that this tree is taller than that, or that Caesar was assassinated on the Ides of March, or that seventeen is a prime number, or that vermilion cannot be defined, or that the king in chess can move only one square at a time. In other words, it is not a form of "knowing that." Nor is it knowing how to ride a bicycle or to win a battle, or what to do in case of fire, or knowing a man's name, or a poem by heart.

Why should we call this "knowing" at all, since it is so lacking in measurable certainty? It may indeed be an uncertain knowledge, yet it is the ground of all our important decisions, determining where, in an infinite universe, we look for what is relevant to our lives. Out of it come conceptions of value and interest, and the sense of what we ought to do next. And it is, as Prof. Berlin shows, an intensely inward thing:

> What then is it like? It is a species of its own. It is a knowing founded on memory or imagination. It is not analyzable except in terms of itself, nor can it be identified, save by examples, such as those adduced above. This is the sort of knowing which participants in an activity claim to possess as against mere observers: the knowledge of the actors, as against that of the audience, of the "inside" story as opposed to that obtained from some "outside" vantage point; knowledge by "direct acquaintance" with my "inner" states or by sympathetic insight into those of others, which may be obtained by a high degree of imaginative power; the knowledge that is involved when a work of the imagination or of social diagnosis or a work of criticism or scholarship or history is described not as correct or incorrect, skillful or inept, a success or a failure but as profound or shallow, realistic or unrealistic, perceptive or stupid, alive or dead.

It is not that there are no treatises concerned with this sort of knowledge. They exist, but their idiom belongs to other times. When, in the *Chhandogya Upanishad*, the father addresses his son—"Shvetaketu, you are conceited, vain of your learning, and proud, dear; but have you asked for that teaching through which the unheard is heard, the unthought thought, the unknown is known?"—the discourse is concerned with a mode of knowing which Prof. Berlin says cannot

be identified "save by examples." And when examples are converted into abstractions, the paradoxes with which Eastern metaphysical systems are filled become necessary, and treatises concerned with such knowledge are composed in the ciphers of mysticism. We cannot deny that such knowledge exists, yet it is plainly "a species of its own," one which does not submit to scientific taxonomy or the Dewey decimal system. In the presence of ordinary canons of learning, it does not seem real at all. Yet it determines whether a work of the mind is shallow or profound, alive or dead.

Our idioms denoting progress in this region have all been blanched by pretentious theological usage, and it is necessary, now, to start from scratch. The rule of "open field" teaching doubtless applies here. ("If the concept comes *first*, the students will apply it like a 'title' to their experience without ever letting the experience itself emerge—and their knowledge will tend to remain 'abstract,' without roots in their personal experience.") In other words, a man may need to become a Thoreau before he can enroll as a follower of Plotinus.

There is some evidence, in the United States at least, that the Western world is beginning to grow up to Thoreau. And what does *that* mean? How shall we understand a maturity which seems to ripen in doing absolutely nothing? These words "doing" and "nothing" are of course ambiguous, just as the man who finds himself at home in the "universe" has no home of his own, and probably needs none. So, in a literal sense, doing and knowing turn out to be polarities. As Aldo Leopold understood it:

> To the laborer in the sweat of his labor, the raw stuff on his anvil is an adversary to be conquered. . . . But to the laborer in repose, that same raw stuff is something to be loved and cherished, because it gives definition and meaning to his life.

Not inconceivably, it is possible to do both at once—to labor and to know—which doubles the paradox. For this the formal instruction is given by Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita:*

> The man who only taketh delight in the Self within, is satisfied with that and content with that alone, hath no selfish interest in action. He hath no interest either in that which is done or that which is not done; and there is not, in all things which have been created, any object on which he may place dependence. Therefore perform thou that which thou hast to do, at all times unmindful of the event; for the man who doeth that which he hath to do, without attachment to the result, obtaineth the Supreme. Even by action Janaka and others attained perfection. Even if the good of mankind only is considered by thee, the performance of thy duty will be plain; for whatever is practiced by the most excellent men, that is also practiced by others. The world follows whatever example they set. There is nothing, O son of Pritha, in the three regions of the universe which it is necessary for me to perform, nor anything possible to obtain which I have not obtained, and yet I am constantly in action. If I were not indefatigable in action, all men would presently follow my example.

Here psychological and metaphysical conceptions unite in mutual reinforcement to produce a strengthened logic, yet the necessary stipulations may be, for the modern reader, something of a strain. Krishna's declarations must be taken in a pantheist mood if theistic confusions are to be avoided, and the Eastern conception of *avatars* needs to reappear in the promise of the potentialities of all men. Arjuna, to whom Krishna speaks, is himself a nascent god. There is a sense in which all such expressions of philosophic religion must be taken to speak with the voice of Nature—for Nature becomes self-conscious and articulate in the highest evolutions of man. There is dissolution of personality rather than personification in these utterances. Great writers and thinkers are sometimes embarrassed by this ambiguity—Emerson is an illustration. He puzzled over his irrepressible need to be spokesman of the world.

It seems evident that a man in whom this inspiration grows—or spirit moves—has little choice. He *has* to speak for the world. If the world were part of him, and he an essence of it,

what else could he do? A book just out, *The Long-Legged House* (Harcourt, Brace & World, $5.95), by Wendell Berry, has in it some enchantments of this sort, in which the mantic finds the theme and tempo of the world. Their reliability, let us say, is in the utterly original expression of the man who finds himself able or obliged to embody them. In the following passage of the title essay, Mr. Berry tells of a river country he had known and grown into since boyhood:

> What has interested me in telling the history of the Camp is the possibility of showing how a place and a person can come to belong to each other—or, rather, how a person can come to belong to a place, for places really belong to nobody. There is a startling reversal of our ordinary sense of things in the recognition that we are the belongings of the world, not its owners. The social convention of ownership must be qualified by this stern fact, and by the humility it implies, if we are not to be blinded altogether as to where we are. We may deeply affect a place we own for good or ill, but our lives are nevertheless included in its life; it will survive us, bearing the results. Each of us is a part of a succession. I have come here following Curran Mathews [who built the Camp]. Who was here or what was done before he came, I do not know. I know that he had predecessors. It is certain that at some time the virgin timber that once stood here was cut down, and no doubt somebody then planted corn among the stumps, and so wore out the ground and allowed the trees to return. Before the white men were the Indians, who generation after generation bequeathed the country to their children, whole, as they received it. The history is largely conjecture. The future is mystery altogether: I do not know who will follow me. These realizations are both aesthetic and moral, they dear the eyes and prescribe an obligation.

It is not our intention to review this book, but only to say that it belongs on the shelf with Thoreau and Aldo Leopold. Ostensibly about Kentucky—and it *is* about Kentucky—it explores and extends the diameters of human awareness, passing from the regional to the universal, from object to subject, with the subtle grace of a mind that philosophizes naturally. The ethical symmetries become slowly paramount, appealing to the reader's roots in his own connections with the world and mother earth. This author, still a young man, seems root and branch of America, and he is a wonderful encouragement to readers who long for Stoic virtues and Athenian capacities for vision. There are many passages- which begin as rural simplicities and end in freshly made majesties.

Well, such excellences should not be pressed to the point of extravagance, but in these days of gross indifference to their importance we may not have said more than we should. Mr. Berry continues, about the Camp on the Kentucky River:

> I began to think of myself as living within rather than upon the life of the place. I began to think of my life as one among many, and one kind among many kinds. I began to see how little of the beauty and the richness of the world is of human origin, and how superficial and crude and destructive—even self-destructive—is man's conception of himself as the owner of the land and the master of nature and the center of the universe. The Camp with its strip of riverbank woods, like all other places of the earth, stood under its own widening column of infinity, in the neighborhood of the stars, lighted a little, with them, within the element of darkness. It was more unknown than known. It was populated by creatures whose ancestors were here long before my ancestors came, and who had been more faithful to it than I had been, and who would live as well the day after my death as the day before.
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> Seen as belonging there with other native things, my own nativeness began a renewal of meaning. The sense of belonging began to turn around. I saw that if I belonged here, which I felt I did, it was not because anything here belonged to me. A man might own a whole county and be a stranger in it. If I belonged *in* this place it was because I belonged to it. And I began to understand that so long as I did not know the place fully, or even adequately, I belonged *to* it only partially. That summer I began to see, however dimly, that one of my ambitions, perhaps my governing ambition, was to belong fully to this place, to belong as the thrushes and the herons and the muskrats belonged, to be altogether at home here. That is still my ambition. I have made myself willing to be entirely governed by it. But now I have come to see that it proposes an enormous labor. It is a spiritual ambition, like goodness. The wild creatures belong to the place by

> nature, but as a man I can belong to it only by understanding and by virtue. It is an ambition I cannot hope to succeed in wholly, but I have come to believe that it is the most worthy of all.

Wendell Berry's essays on conservation, on war, on poverty and human need, and his passages on teaching—along with a searching comment on the embarrassments of religion—are all pervaded by the same questions and shaped by the same dramatic unities. The book is never didactic, never learned, always direct. A theme that often returns, fugue-like, not in urgent moral-making, but as spontaneous truth, is this:

> There appears to be a law that when creatures have reached the level of consciousness, as men have, they must become conscious of the creation; they must learn how they fit into it and what its needs are and what it requires of them, or else pay a terrible penalty: the spirit of creation will go out of them, and they will become destructive, the very earth will depart from them and go where they cannot follow.

REVIEW
DESPAIR INTO TRIUMPH

A CONCLUSION often reached by readers of the new books (the good ones) by psychologists and psychiatrists is that the root of the art of healing lies in compassion. The man who is *only* an expert technician can make an impressive showing, and perhaps a lot of money, but does he really *help* people? This idea is a clear *volte-face* in respect to the once ruling conception of scientific method in psychology, yet those who study Fromm, Maslow, Rogers, and Frankl may find it inescapable. Quite possibly, it is in some basic way the most important discovery of the centuty, so far as the nature of man is concerned. For what is true in healing is true also in education, and in all other human pursuits where interdependence is involved.

But one must then immediately ask, *what else* is it? Healing may begin with compassion, but a love which at the same time comprehends—involving both science and art—is surely more than love alone. Or is it that our understanding of love is vulgarized, sentimentalized, or generally impoverished? Has the departmentalization of the modern mind so neglected the indefinable implications of words like love and compassion that, for at least a time, we must prop them up with various orthopedic devices to make them stand for something? Has the externalizing plenty of the age of science so stripped away the content of a purely human language that its highest—and most general—terms of value are the emptiest of meaning?

We may be wrestling, here, with the old Socratic contention that virtue is knowledge, and but repeating the old Socratic wondering if virtue can be taught. Such questions cannot be irrelevant to the reviewer of the excellent books by psychologists which come out with increasing frequency. At present we have for attention Viktor Frankl's latest book, *The Will to Meaning* (World Publishing Co., 1969, $4.95). As many readers know, Dr. Frankl is the Viennese psychiatrist who survived confinement in four Nazi concentration and death camps, and who has made the fruit of these extreme experiences into a testament of faith in man. His earlier work, *Man's Search for Meaning* (first published as *From Death-Camp to Existentialism*), sold more than half a million copies—evidence of longings that have independent significance.

The Will to Meaning is subtitled "Foundations and Applications of Logotherapy," and seems to be just that. What will the general reader most appreciate? The answer must be, Dr. Frankl's climactic generalizations about human beings, which arise, not from psychiatric method or technique, not from the study of other books (although he has obviously done much reading), but from the grain of his own life. A generalization which bears the marks of experienced particulars, not made out of the particulars yet confirmed and illustrated by them, is a generalization with the ring of indisputable truth.

But how soon the generalizations fade to echoes when they are repeated by themselves! This is a phenomenon of the intellectual faculty, which enables a man to know something without really *knowing* it. One recognizes the truth by its symmetries, but it does not become an experienced reality. We learn to admire the poetry but seldom touch the verity of the Sermon on the Mount. We learn how to manipulate the symmetries of truth, and after a season of pride discover that we can write only notes from the underground. No wonder Socrates wondered if virtue can be taught.

What then does Dr. Frankl do for his readers? He gives evidence that a man who has lived on the inverted heights of our times—having gone there by a strange, sacrificial inclination—could find in this abyssal experience a restored sense of reality for high humanist principles. ("Humanist" seems a weak word, here, but we can think of no other.) Following are some quotations to illustrate the simplicity of what he says:

> What I term the existential vacuum constitutes a challenge to psychiatry today. Ever more patients complain of a feeling of emptiness and meaninglessness, which seems to me to derive from two facts. Unlike an animal, man is not told by his instincts what he *must* do. And unlike man in former times, he is no longer told by tradition what he *should* do. Often he does not even know what he basically wishes to do. . . .

> I hope that I shall be successful in conveying to the reader my conviction that, despite the crumbling of traditions, life holds a meaning for each and every individual, and even more, it retains this meaning literally to his last breath. . . . As logotherapy teaches, even the tragic and negative aspects of life, such as unavoidable suffering, can be turned into human achievement by the attitude a man adopts toward his predicament. In contrast to most of the existentialist schools of thought, logotherapy is in no way pessimistic; but it is realistic in that it faces the tragic triad of human existence: pain, death, and guilt. Logotherapy may justly be called optimistic, because it shows the patient how to transform despair into triumph.

An explanation of Dr. Frankl's meaning here is given later in the book:

> An example of meaningful suffering drawn from my own practice is the story of the old general practitioner who consulted me because of his depression after his wife had died. Using the form of a Socratic dialogue, I asked him what would have happened if he rather than his wife had died first. "How she would have suffered," he said. I replied, "Don't you see, Doctor, that great suffering has been spared her, and it is you who have spared her this suffering; but now, you have to pay for it by surviving and mourning her." Our dialogue induced him to discover a meaning in his suffering, the meaning of a sacrifice for the sake of his wife.

A further use of this material adds a critical dimension:

> I told the story before a group in America and an American psychoanalyst made a comment that illustrated the reductionist approach to meaning and values. Here it is: "I understand your point, Dr. Frankl; however, if we start from the fact that obviously your patient had only suffered so deeply from the death of his wife because unconsciously he had hated her all along. . . ." Whereupon I said. "It may well be that after having the patient lie down on your analytical couch for, say, five hundred hours, you might have succeeded in bringing him to the point where, like the Communists behind the Iron Curtain in the course of what they call self-criticism, he confesses: 'Yes Doctor, you are right, I have hated my wife all along. . . .' But then you also would have deprived the patient of the only treasure he possessed, namely, the awareness of the unique love and marital life he and his wife had built up. . . ."

Is this "psychotherapy"? It sounds like uninhibited, sanctified common sense. This, indeed, may be what is happening to the study of the *psyche* and the mind through the work of the new psychologists. Its failure to remain obscurely difficult and complicated is the noticeable result of the rehumanization of a specialty. Yet no one should suppose that healers like Dr. Frankl are merely extremely intelligent "laymen." Seeing through the preconceptions of an age, recognizing the distortions they produce in life, and learning how to help people recover from them becomes a profound and engrossing study—with all the difficulties involved in living a high and consecrated life. There is also the fact that any exhaustive application of basic principles becomes a complex discipline, mastered only through experience and long years of practice. Yet its peak observations become luminously clear.

And that, perhaps, is the difficulty with reading good books by psychologists. We tend to skim the cream—to respond with fervor to generalizations like "Man is not a thing"—neglecting to realize how much hard work goes into making discoveries which were against the grain of the times.

Yet Dr. Frankl's generalizations are landmarks of understanding, and we may profit by them:

> Logotherapy's concept of man is based on three pillars, the freedom of will, the will to meaning, and the meaning of life. . . . The logotherapeutic techniques . . . rest on two essential qualities of human existence, namely, man's capacities of self-transcendence and self-detachment. . . .
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> In an age of the existential vacuum, . . . education must not confine itself to, and content itself with, transmitting traditions and knowledge, but rather it must refine man's capacity to find those unique meanings which are not effected by the crumbling of universal values. . . .
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> Taking religion seriously allows for drawing upon the spiritual resources of the patient. In this context spiritual means uniquely and truly human. And in this sense medical ministry is a legitimate task of the doctor.

COMMENTARY
BEYOND TOLERANCE

THE events of the times put a heavy strain on the tightlipped tolerance which refuses to investigate "mistaken" views. It is quite possible to declare a philosophy based on principle, yet remain weak in theory about good and evil. Embracing principle can make a man feel so righteous that he sees no need to comprehend the reasoning of people who are plainly doing wrong. Eventually, it seems, unless principles are elevated to a height which is in some sense beyond good and evil, they submit to the demands of moral passion. How can we explain the terrible political hatreds of the present, except by the fact that angry righteousness cannot afford rational inquiry into the behavior of the "enemy"? Doubtless the origin of all the anxious contention about "survival" lies here. In terms of enough food and shelter for everybody in the world, survival is a technological cinch.

The intelligentsia of the eighteenth century saw this truth, but read it righteously. That is, the revolutionary materialists of that and a later time were confident that they could put an end to war and oppression by putting an end to righteousness, and to create a weaponry for this high purpose they laid the foundations of "value-free" science. The logic of their case was clear, but they failed to realize that this clarity was achieved by ignoring the nature of man. Good and evil are not qualities out in the world, but the primal forms used in the definition of human ends.

Could there be a more terrible self-deception than a disguised righteousness which denounces morality as wishful thinking and then mistakes itself for the inescapable scientific truth from which all moral consequences must flow?

Men who see this know the time has come for another look at the nature of man—which includes, inevitably, fresh questioning of the meaning of religion. Dr. Frankl (see Review) is pursuing this quest with care and circumspection. He recognizes that a tight-lipped tolerance of "religion" is not enough. As he says:

> Certainly we can manage without it and still be doctors but—to allude to a *bon mot* made by Paul Dubois—we should realize that then the only thing which makes us different from the veterinarians is the clientele.

The Will to Meaning is a book rich in valuable asides, as in Frankl's account of phenomenology, which he defines as "an attempt to describe the way in which man understands himself, in which he interprets his own existence, far from preconceived patterns of interpretation and explanations such are furnished by psychodynamic or socioeconomic hypotheses." It is also rich in humor.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
SIX DAYS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

[This is an account of student action of which all may be proud and from which, apparently, everyone benefited. It is written by Jean Crockett, of the School in Rose Valley Moylan, Pennsylvania. It first appeared in the School's *Parents' Bulletin* for May 15.]

THE sit-in at the University of Pennsylvania began on Tuesday, February 28, as an entirely spontaneous aftermath of a planned march protesting war-related research at the University City Science Center, an organization which owes its inception in very substantial degree to the efforts of the University and in which the University remains the major stockholder. The demonstration ended six days later with a remarkable settlement in which the University, through its Trustees, acknowledged its responsibility toward the surrounding community, accepted the principle of participation by both community and students in future decisions relating to University expansion, and set up and funded an operational procedure for implementing this participation. These were six days not to be forgotten by those who experienced them—for the genuine idealism which motivated many of those involved, for the intense community feeling that was sometimes generated, for the learning and growth which occurred under fire, especially among the student leaders, for the tolerance that the various protagonists developed of each other's very different life styles, for the awakening of conscience in all parts of the University, and for the extraordinary performances of a number of extraordinary individuals.

The original demands of the students related to the cessation of secret military research at the Science Center, the return of Science Center land to be used for low-rent housing to replace dwelling units which had been demolished, and the financing of the new housing by those corporations whose officers serve on the University's Board of Trustees—apparently because it was (mistakenly) believed that these corporations had made large profits from the redevelopment associated with the Science Center.

Eventually the students were made aware of (and came to accept) the fact that secret military research is not currently carried on at the Science Center and that the University, with the cooperation of other stockholding institutions, had recently acted to ensure that no contracts "whose purpose is the destruction of human life or the incapacitation of human beings" can be accepted by the Science Center in the future. An advisory Committee, consisting of faculty members of the stockholding institutions (or non-administrative professionals in the case of hospitals), is to be set up with the function, among others, of examining all new research contracts for conformity to this standard. The person primarily responsible for this breakthrough in communications was Dr. Robert E. Davies, a distinguished biologist who is chairman of the University Council's Committee on Research, which proposed the standards for Science Center contracts and the creation of the Advisory Committee. Dr. Davies made himself available on a 24-hour basis as a walking repository of documented information on all aspects of the Science Center and in this capacity was invaluable both to the students and to the Trustees in their negotiating sessions and in their caucuses. In the end the students accepted the University's previous action as meeting their concerns and asked only that students be added to the Advisory Committee. Dr. Davies undertook to propose this change to the University Council (which subsequently concurred), and the thrust of the negotiations then centered entirely on the University's responsibility for the impact of its expansion, past and planned, on the surrounding community.

A number of factors contributed to the unique flavor of the sit-in, to its peaceful conduct, and to

an outcome judged by all parties to be successful. First was the emphasis on participatory democracy. Joe Mikuliak, a leader of the Penn SDS, set the keynote by insisting that Students for a Democratic Society really meant what it said and that democratic principles must be adhered to scrupulously.

The business of the demonstration was carried out by the plenary, which was open to everyone who came Penn students or alumni, students at other colleges holding stock in the Science Center, members of the black community, even faculty members. All were free to speak and to vote. The obvious danger—that the meeting could be packed by any group eager to control the vote—never materialized, though at some points there was reason to fear that this might occur. When the plenary was in session (as it was for many hours of each day and night), 600 to 800 people were sometimes jammed into an auditorium meant to accommodate 200 to 300 people. Overheard on one such occasion: "After this 'bodily contact' won't mean sex anymore." The chairing of the plenary was an exhausting job, calling for almost inhuman patience, to maintain order through reason and cajolery when passions ran high, to call on speakers in some equitable order when many wished to be heard simultaneously, to make procedural rulings and defend them in the face of frequent protests. Much of the time that I was present, the chairman was John Benditt, a Swarthmore student and a member of the minority Labor Committee of the SDS, whose proposals were eventually roundly defeated. He served, even to the point of utter exhaustion, with good humor and scrupulous fairness.

The second factor of basic significance was the general acceptance that the demonstration must remain non-violent and orderly. This was due in part to John Russell, the Vice-Provost for Student Affairs, who of all the heroes of the sit-in, I think must be ranked first, and who did more than any other single person to make the students and the Trustees understandable to each other. I can remember his transmitting to the Trustees a missive from the students, with the introductory phrase, "I bring you a request, couched in the form of a demand." He began with the students' trust and at every step he justified it. An even more important element was the passionate dedication to non-violence of a large segment of the demonstrators, possibly reflecting the strength of the Quaker tradition at Penn or perhaps quite personal and fortuitous. Over and over I heard from the floor of the plenary some version of the theme that this must not become another Columbia.

Throughout the six days no one was manhandled, no property was damaged, no classes or administrative activities were disrupted, no passageways were obstructed. One small group which attempted briefly to "occupy" a room of College Hall was promptly ejected by order of the Student Steering Committee. Some classes were rescheduled by the administration, at the request of the students, so that the College Hall auditorium could continue to be available for the plenary sessions, but other classes continued to meet in the building and—except for the Vice Provost's office, which went on a 24-hour schedule—the administrative offices continued to function normally. Many students left to attend their own classes and then returned. The demonstrators organized clean-up details several times a day to keep rooms and hallways neat.

Much of the drama of the six days lay in the struggle between the more moderate student leaders and the Labor Committee for control of the plenary. The Labor Committee wished to restrict the financing arrangements for the proposed replacement housing so as to rule out the use of any funds derived from taxation at any governmental level. Since there is no other feasible source of financing—the Trustees cannot seriously be expected to expropriate for this purpose the stockholders of the corporations in which they serve as officers—the effect of the

Labor Committee position would be to make a settlement impossible. Eventually this point became clear to the plenary, which acted to force the resignation from the negotiating team of anyone who refused to accept the plenary's decision that Federal funding would be acceptable. Only then was it possible for the negotiating team to act with some unity and to progress toward the final settlement.

A third factor of importance to the outcome was that lines of communication with the faculty were kept open. The morning after the sit-in began, a meeting of the faculties was called by the Provost to report what had occurred and to permit the student leaders, as well as representatives of the community (speaking on behalf of the displaced families), to present their case. A number of faculty members spoke in support of the general goals of the demonstrators, though not of their specific demands which were quite unreasonable. That afternoon, fourteen members of the Senate Advisory Committee (the steering committee of the Senate) met to acknowledge the responsible conduct of the demonstrators and to support the need for joint consideration by the University and community groups of the problems of housing and community development in the surrounding area.

One of the striking elements in the situation was the appalling lack of information upon which the students were frequently operating, but they were not generally contemptuous of information and were willing to accept it from a source they considered reliable.

On the second day a group of faculty members formed in support of the demonstrators and thereafter representatives of this group served with the students on the demonstrators' negotiating team. Those faculty negotiators performed an extremely valuable service in facilitating communication between the Trustees and the students.

A fourth factor of considerable importance was the students' eminently sensible decision to consult the black community as to what their needs and wishes actually were, instead of attempting to bargain in their behalf without benefit of such knowledge. This resulted in some delay while the various community groups worked out an agreement among themselves; and the demands presented by the community, which became the demonstrators' final set of demands, were again quite unreasonable, including, among other things, the return to the community of all the land in Redevelopment Area 3, even though most of this land was not even remotely under the control of the University and never had been. However, the community leaders clearly understood these demands to be negotiable (though it is not certain that the students were always equally clear on this) and in all probability their impact was to tilt the scales against confrontation and in favor of a useful settlement.

The final factor in the successful outcome was the almost incredible patience and effort at understanding of the Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees, who by a lucky coincidence had arranged to be on campus for other reasons at the time of the sit-in and who were willing to rearrange their busy schedules to carry on daily negotiations with the demonstrators thereafter, in spite of the unreasonable and sometimes escalating nature of the demands and frequently exasperating behavior of the students. The Trustees were repeatedly kept waiting for periods up to an hour after a negotiating session was scheduled to begin. This was not out of intentional incivility on the part of the students, but because the basic split in the negotiating team prevented agreement on a set of demands until the last minute and these demands then had to be discussed by the plenary, at whatever length it saw fit. Initially any counterproposal by the Trustees had to be brought back to the plenary for action, but eventually some freedom to negotiate was entrusted to the demonstrators' team, with the understanding that any agreement reached was, of course, subject to ratification by the plenary.

The settlement was worked out Sunday afternoon and evening. The Trustees agreed to set up a quadropartite commission financed by the University and composed of community leaders, faculty, students, and administration. This commission is empowered to review and approve all existing University plans for land acquisition or development and must be informed of future plans. The Trustees further agreed that in future University expansion which involved demolition of existing housing units, the University will undertake to guarantee the provision of an equivalent number of housing units at equitable prices and rentals; and they committed themselves to develop financing sources for a $10,000,000 community development fund.

This settlement was approved by the plenary after a spirited last stand by the Labor Committee, and a little before midnight Sunday the demonstrators marched out of College Hall. Left behind on the blackboard of a small room: "Agenda—peace, love, harmony, brotherhood."

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FRONTIERS

Diminishing Returns

THE enormous emphasis on the political process in both the commercial press and the serious magazines has one effect that may not be widely noticed. It establishes as beyond question the view that nothing important in human life happens except through the manipulations of power. The skills of modern writers on these subjects are obvious enough; they bring much sophistication, sagacity, and even occasional insight to the tasks of analysis. These people seem to know so much that the reader, being overwhelmingly impressed, tends to ignore his own impotence and his passivity in respect to what is going on. There is even a parallel between commentaries of this sort and expert popular science writing—in both you get lucid, colorful description, a kind of drama, sometimes some explanation, and there is virtually nothing at all for the reader to do except to admit that he has been properly informed.

In this connection, one could examine the insensitive sluggishness of the democratic process, well known to the few who try to participate as active citizens; go on to speak admiringly of the dedication of those who defend civil liberties, who unceasingly work at various levels for peace, and of those who maintain enlightening dialogue in the liberal magazines concerning the issues in education. Others campaign for conservation; actually, the discovery of worthy causes could be a profession in itself, since every decade discloses neglected excesses and anti-human trends. We need not one Ralph Nader but an entire Nader tribe, if not an army of such men, simply to publicize what is going wrong.

Yet, at the same time, there seems an almost total neglect of activities of both personal and social fulfillment which have no need for power in what they accomplish. One would think men were nothing at all unless busy passing laws or repealing them. It is as though the occupations of being human, which power is supposed to secure, had never been more than decorative niceties, hobbies for spare time, and subject to casual suspension whenever the real business of getting or spending power claims attention.

The very impoverishment of our civilization in this area is taken as evidence that people generally must be jacked up to a higher level of civilized values by a benign application of political power. While there is a lot of talk about the potentials of enriched subjectivity, of individual invention, and of the fruitfulness of an active imagination, it still remains to be recognized that the scornful rejection of any means of human improvement except political power literally *smothers* the true resources of human beings. And it well may be that this extreme imbalance between what we expect from power and what we expect of ourselves is what has finally made power itself so ineffectual, so barren of the satisfactions promised in its name. Could there be a more reasonable explanation, short of political diabolism, of the nihilism of the times?

It is difficult but it is not impossible to imagine a press given over to the pursuit of humane studies, of the arts, the crafts, and of the sciences, too, conceived on a human scale, with power having no more importance than it has in normal family life. Even if such a reform were limited to the elimination of the unimportant political news—the endless "biographies" and sententious "think pieces"—and the space thus made available devoted to things that men do or could do of their own motion—things which are worth doing as ends in themselves—there might be a renaissance of unprecedented proportions. We don't *have* to call such undertakings "therapy"! The discovery of the wholesome, the normal, and the constructive as something extraordinary and "far-out," and the attempt to package these "values" for weekend seminar consumption, is itself a symptom of the "objective" approach such activities mean to remedy.

The full scope of this attitude of reliance on specialists needs further attention. We come upon and acknowledge its effects only in the most gross examples—such as the mindless advocacy of violence by certain groups. And here violence is praised almost as a sanctifying principle. This curious devotion is being adopted regardless of political coloring; it is in the air. Expectations of extreme violence are no longer voiced apologetically. Recently a member of the United States Senate, arguing for the Army's Anti-Ballistic Missile System, said that if only one man and one woman are to be left on earth, it was his deep desire that they be Americans. John Kenneth Galbraith recalls this piety in an article in *Harper's* for June. He also reminds us: "It was part of the case for the Manned Orbiting Laboratory that it would maintain the national position in the event of extensive destruction down below."

Mr. Galbraith's article is devoted to the rise of military power in the United States in recent years. In one place he shows that the civilian agency for formulation of U.S. foreign policy—the State Department—has been largely penetrated by military thinking. A former ambassador (to Chile), Ralph Dungan, is quoted as saying that the country desks at the State Department are often "in the hip pocket of the Pentagon—lock, stock, and barrel, ideologically owned by the Pentagon." Mr. Galbraith adds:

> The appearance of the State Department as a full-scale participant in the military power may have been the hopefully temporary achievement of Secretary Rusk. Apart from a high respect for military acumen and need, he in some degree regarded diplomacy as subordinate to military purpose. In time such attitudes penetrate deeply into organization.

The important consideration, in examining this trend, is not to identify the guilty parties, but to recognize the growing prestige of power as the slow filling of a vacuum in the life of all the people. Even the individuals who condemn the role of the military with the greatest vigor may themselves have an indirect part in elevating "final solution" enthusiasts to authority, simply by believing so exclusively in the political approach to human welfare, and in the necessity of power for "right-thinking" men.

It seems quite possible that the indifference of the young to "national affairs" comes basically from an intuitive perception of the futility of the pursuit of power. This might explain the extravagant improvisations of some of this generation of "rejectors." After all, they are right in claiming that their education has dealt with unrealities.

The true revolution of the twentieth-century—if it takes place at all—will not really begin until many more people begin to realize that the authentic realities of human beings have always to be generated from within themselves, and that only as this happens can the manipulation of power become a diminishing factor in human affairs.