

THEORY ABOUT MAN

A PHILOSOPHICAL essay differs from a scientific paper in that a scientific paper proposes a theory or hypothesis, then presents supporting evidence, while a philosophical discussion may intimate evidence for its contentions, or give illustrations of what the writer regards as evidence, yet leaves the actual *gathering* of evidence and its ultimate interpretation to the reader. This, at any rate, seems a useful distinction between scientific and philosophical considerations, growing out of the fact that science deals with what are said to be "public" truths or facts, in contrast to philosophy, which requires some inner alchemy for its truths to be recognized or deemed important.

Accordingly, we have a philosophical theory about man to present, and will do so, after arranging this justification for what may be termed a lack of evidence in its behalf.

The theory is that man, like other natural beings, is involved in a process of evolution or development; and that man, like other natural beings, gradually unfolds his potentialities under the guidance of some inner rule or law, which may be termed his "destiny."

A number of analogies suggest themselves. In the development of a single plant from a seed, the proliferation of cells proceeds according to an invisible yet all-controlling pattern which governs the elaboration of structure, dictates the axes of growth, establishes the rhythms and coordination of the maturing processes, and, in the end, is responsible for the fact that an acorn grows into an oak, and not into a white birch or a maple tree. Some biologists call this "governor" of organic development the real "I" within the organism, the "invisible architect," and various similar names. While the process is undoubtedly surrounded by many mysteries, the presence in the organism of a ruling principle of this sort, which draws the plant or animal body on to the fulfillment of its organic maturity, is an unmistakable fact in nature. Aristotle named this intelligent force in the organism the *entelechy*, and modern biologists speak of the morphogenetic field. That Aristotle's

term had a metaphysical background, while the scientific label has resulted from empirical research, makes little difference as to the fact, and it is the fact in which we are here interested.

But what of man? If we acknowledge that man's organism, in common with the rest of animate nature, develops in conformity with some master pattern, there is still the question of man's intellectual and moral life. Is there some transcendental "beam" for the developing man to follow in his higher relationships and forms of growth?

The only safe answer is "yes and no." Yes, for the reason that we can hardly admit that man is an exception to the rest of nature—that his higher life in no way parallels the order which obviously affects all vital phenomena. No, for the reason that a "dictator" of moral and mental development, issuing decrees as mandatory as those which rule biological growth in the individual, would be the negation of both mind and morals. The leading characteristic of intellectual and moral action is its originality—originality in the sense that creative acts, or morally free acts, are somehow "uncaused" because they are "uncompelled" by external pressures. To the organism, nature presents a blueprint to be carried out—a plan more or less complete in details. But to the moral and intellectual agent in human beings, the environment presents alternatives of decision—sometimes many alternatives, sometimes few, but always alternatives. We might say that acts undertaken without an alternative are not human acts, even though human beings sometimes perform them. Such acts are either the response of an organism to the limited but relatively perfect intelligence of instinct, or the compulsive behavior of a psychotic, or the unerring decision of a "god."

Is there, then, a "beam" for beings who require alternatives in the fulfillment of their destiny—whose destiny, that is, involves choosing between alternatives?

It was Pico della Mirandola, a genius of the Florentine Renaissance, who actually proposed a conception of this sort as his definition of man. Man, he said, is the being who is obliged to choose. Touched by a divine restlessness, man can never seek some static goal of formal perfection, but must always be recreating his ends, redefining his purposes, in the light of a new inspiration.

This seems a vastly illuminating comment on the nature of man. It would explain so many things. If, by definition, man is a being who is obliged to choose, it follows that his course will be marked by numerous errors and delusions. This is certainly true of the human race. Yet, in the midst of our mistakes and confusions, we often feel the pressure of some inner drive which insists that we go on—break out of the limiting situation in which we find ourselves, and create a new framework of conditions for our activities.

Not long ago, a young artist remarked in conversation that among his acquaintances were those who had given little thought to the ultimate questions commonly thought of as religious. These individuals, he said, being intense in feeling, seemed to try to make a religion of their art, or their craft or specialty. And, he said, "This *never* works!" The fields of the arts are limiting fields. The artist deals with the plastic forms of matter. An art may serve a higher inspiration, but the art is not itself the *same* as that inspiration.

Yet the void of a philosophically faithless life is felt by the artist, and he is driven to fill his emptiness by giving to his form of expression the devotion and high resolve that belong to the religious aspect of life. So he becomes like the man of ancient fable who endlessly looks outside for the treasure which lies hidden in his heart.

Here, perhaps, is a commentary which deserves wider application. Is not modern civilization pressed forward by the fiends of inner, psychological compulsion—the compulsion which is typical of businessmen who work at their businesses with the desperate intensity of fanatical priests; the compulsion of every sort of specialist who makes his particular skill or discovery into some sort of

"shrine," before which he worships and offers up all his life's energies? Would this be, perhaps, part of the explanation of the "neurotic personality of our time"?

These people are giving religious devotion to matters which are not worthy of such commitment. They are trying to fill an inner void with materials that do not belong to the inner life.

When the human longing for the heroic can find no outlet suitable for the quality of genuine heroism, contradictory and misshapen substitutes appear. War, for example, gives a channel for one kind of ultimate experience—ultimate giving of oneself, which civilian society affords only to the most imaginative of men. An acquisitive society is not a good environment for awakening the heroic impulse, which is rather stultified by the endless money-grubbing and painfully trivial objectives in which the young are continually instructed, by both precept and example. Not unnaturally, we find our prisons filled with "rebels without causes." We find ourselves impressed by the cynical "wisdom" of the hucksters—"What's not worth doing at all is not worth doing well."

Again, not unnaturally, we find our society filled with "salesmen" of religion, charlatans of the so-called "spiritual" on every hand, until the unbeliever feels considerable virtue in insisting that he has faith in nothing at all.

It is a simple thing—too simple, perhaps—to set against all this the uncomplicated proposition of Pico: that man must learn to recognize himself as a chooser, as a being whose role lies in making original decisions, in thinking for himself about the final questions of life. But this, as we understand it, is the foundation of all religion. It is the attitude which must be adopted before there can be any true religion, and is therefore the heart of religion itself, in human terms.

Having these views, we naturally look with great respect upon the works of Plato. Plato dedicated all his efforts to the asking and discussing of philosophical questions. Such men, it seems to us, have given what evidence is available in learning and tradition of the "beam" that needs to be followed

by human beings. It is a "beam" represented in the myths and hero legends of the past, in the allegories of gods and warriors, the tales of King Arthur and his knights, the epic of the Ramayana, the ordeal of Arjuna, the labors of Hercules, and the quest for the Golden Fleece.

Such tradition, it seems to us, affords a mystic kind of guidance to humanity. The guidance is never direct, but has to do with a choice among alternatives. As Socrates said in one of the dialogues, after discoursing about the future of the human soul after the death of the body: "I do not say that it is precisely this that happens to the soul, but that something *like* this may occur." Or as Plato, whenever he reaches some ultimate and transcendental consideration, lapses into myth to prevent any *literal* reading of what he has to say.

Thus we conclude that, in keeping with our hypothesis, Plato was one who knew how to practice education as a *science*—the science of presenting, not conclusions, but alternatives.

A discussion of this sort is necessarily vague not simply because we, like Plato, wish to guard against materializing transcendental ideas, but because, unlike Plato, we feel a considerable ignorance in this uncharted field. Yet the matters under discussion seem of the utmost importance.

Actually, the supporting evidence for a theory of this sort lies with each individual—in his own ponderings and reminiscing moods, his secret speculations and insistent intuitions. Evidence, in relation to these considerations, can only deal with the rather obvious fact that we—the civilization of our time—are pretty far *off* the beam, and suffering well-definable consequences of missing our vocation, evading our destiny, resulting in all the frustrations and maladjustments which belong to modern life.

Yet if there is a quality in human beings which feels the mistakes which are made—call it conscience, or whatever—then we might expect that during intervals of extreme cultural malaise, an increasing number of individuals would give evidence of a new spirit of seeking and a new quality of revolt. Our Review section has often taken note

of this tendency, which we offer in evidence of the possibility that these writers are trying—somewhat feverishly, perhaps, on occasion—to find the "beam" for human beings.

A book recently issued in low-priced format seems a good illustration. It is the story, *And Ride a Tiger*, by Robert Wilder. This is no world-shaking book, yet the reader is bound to notice that nearly every important character in the story is reaching strenuously after personal honesty in coming to terms with life. A feeling of free air is created by a story of this sort. It is as though a new kind of compulsion has overtaken all these characters, who literally *give* something to their fellows by this unostentatious yet determined drive to be honest.

We should like to think that such books are straws in the wind—that they represent a stirring of the human spirit, a movement of man toward his destiny.

Letter from CENTRAL EUROPE

SALZBURG.—A while ago I met a professor from the United States who had been touring Austria and Southern Germany for a year or so. A lecturer on sociology, he aimed at thorough research with regard to the relations between Austria and Germany.

He was, of course, informed about the history of both countries. It was known to him that, since Charlemagne, the German Emperors had lived at Aachen or some other castle in the northern parts of the Reich. When a new Kaiser, after a painful interregnum, was elected in consequence of the extension of his properties, the Hapsburgers, who were at home in regions of the present Austria, rose to power. Thus Vienna, in course of the centuries, became the centre of gravity for the monarchs of Germany. The Empire itself consisted of numerous countries, duchies and arch-bishoprics.

Brandenburg, one of the counties situated in the northeastern part of the Reich, and ruled by the Markgrafen von Hohenzollern, developed so rapidly that it became a kingdom, accepted the name of Prussia and in the middle of the eighteenth century attacked the realm of the Empress Maria Theresa, who (living in Vienna), took little interest in these developments in the north. The Empress lost the war and part of her territories and the nineteenth century saw the king of Prussia, reigning in Berlin with support from most of the German princes, becoming Emperor of Germany, while the Hapsburgers of Vienna called themselves Kaisers of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

This federal union, organically grown, was destroyed by the Entente in 1918 and only a tiny Austria, populated by German-speaking people with their capital of Vienna, was left. It was a question, right from the beginning, whether this truncated economic torso could survive at all. The Austrian government tried several times to unite with Germany, but the Western Allies refused permission, until Hitler declared Austria (his native land) a part of the German Empire, obtaining "permission" from the Westerners afterward.

The fact that the Soviets, after 1945, forced Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and other small states to turn communist was in part a consequence of the destruction of the old Austro-Hungarian hegemony. Meanwhile the situation for Austria became even worse, as the Iron Curtain now separated her from her natural purveyors, so far as agrarian products were concerned. Adding the fact that this small country is now occupied by the four "Allies"—the three Western Powers still rule the country in common with the Soviet High Commissioner—and that a peace treaty is still withheld, there is no doubt left that her position is a most difficult one.

The professor from America has interviewed a number of people in regard to the relations between Germany and Austria, asking what they would like best. The answer of most of the Germans was that any decision about that problem should be made by the Austrians, while most of the Austrians declared that their desire was for much closer economic bonds with Western Germany.

A short while ago, and for the first time after World War II, the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Gruber, went to Bonn to pay a state-visit to the German Government. The Chancellor of the West-German Federal Republic, Dr. Adenauer, and the Austrian statesmen seem to have understood the hopes of the average Austrian. They spoke little about politics, concluding only that both Germany and Austria will progress when a United Europe becomes a fact, and that both will be lost if that unification is not realized.

There is one great drawback, however: the "Allies," ostensibly desiring a United Europe, still refuse to permit the resumption of diplomatic connections between the two countries.

CENTRAL EUROPEAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW

MORE INSIGHTS FROM NOVELISTS

ONE result of excessive thought-systemization, in either religion or science, is that thinkers of scholarly background and reputation find it difficult to say much that is original. The many expected qualifications of opinion and the cautions of careful phrasing make simple and bold expression of new views scarce.

Our continued interest in unusual fiction is connected, we feel, with these limitations. The novelist, at least at times, approaches the "write as you please and feel" ideal of spontaneity. And it seems evident, too, that an unexpectedly high proportion of novelists are now saying some important things. Even motion pictures occasionally indicate that script writers have serious ideas to impart, and vital ways of attempting to impart them.

Both these tendencies appear in *The Producer*, a 1951 novel by Richard Brooks. Deviating from the pattern of sensational exposes of "behind the scenes" Hollywood amorality, Mr. Brooks deals with the central psychological problems of our time and the cultural contradictions which augment them. The motion picture industry is simply a background. The central character of the story, as a producer, is always on a fence, having to choose between playing it safe and giving work to young writers and directors who have fresh ideas and are comparatively unafraid of tackling controversial issues. "Matt" reflects upon the insistent "new blood" entering the industry in the post-war period, especially in respect to a youthful assistant director called MacDonald, who both intrigues and frightens him. MacDonald seems really determined to stand for the values which the producer, Matthew Gibbons, sometimes fools himself into thinking his own. As Brooks puts it, using "Matthew Gibbons" as a symbol for an "in-between" sort of man:

MacDonald was a stranger to Matt, a new and violent and revolutionary force in motion pictures. MacDonald belonged to that intense group who had invaded Hollywood since the end of the war: serious-minded, vigorous producers, directors, writers, actors, who chose subject material that was taboo, made pictures inexpensively, made them without "star values" in defiance of exhibitors and box office, made them without glamour, without guaranteed release dates, and still their pictures had been successful, critically as well as financially.

MacDonald comes to Gibbons for advice, and it is difficult for the older man to determine whether to be hostile or friendly to this upstart who, quite bluntly, asks Gibbons whether he should revise the "dangerous" details of a story in compliance with studio recommendation, or quit with his integrity still intact. Gibbons ruminates in reply:

"Baby, I don't like to give advice. Everybody's got to work out his own problems. If somebody wants the name of a sanatorium to get rid of the D.T.'s or what lawyer to handle his divorce, or—but you fellas, nobody knows anything about you, who you are, what you want, where you come from. Jesus, baby, you guys have terrorized the whole business. Nobody ever hears of you. Never see your name in a column. Never see you at any big parties. Never made any pictures before. Then, suddenly, one day, Wham! You've got a smash hit picture out. Know what you are? Students, for Crissakes. Students of the Cinema," said Matt with soft sarcasm.

"What's wrong with that?"

"Who said it's wrong? But how would you feel if you were making pictures hit-and-miss, lucky one picture and unlucky the next and never knowing why, and along comes one of you guys who knows all about cutting and writing and story construction and who can explain how Eisenstein did it in *Potemkin*, how Pudovkin did it in *Mother*, how Dupont did it in *Variety*. You got a reason why the old Chaplin pictures were masterpieces and why the latest one failed, and the reasons make sense."

Mr. Brooks makes Matt Gibbons encounter all the problems. He admires and respects a young author he has employed to rewrite a scenario, but is afraid to defend him when the inevitable red-baiter comes around with a List and

with insinuations that the author may have unorthodox social and political opinions. In the end, Gibbons compromises, not too badly, not too well.

What we have been attempting to say about a number of novels becomes particularly relevant to discussions of the problem of communism and anti-communism. Irwin Shaw's *The Troubled Air* (reviewed here Oct. 29, 1952) was a remarkably educative and challenging treatment of this problem as a domestic issue. In respect to the psychological dimensions of communist appeal in Asia, we find what seems to us a profound analysis in La Selle Gilman's *The Red Gate*, a story against the background of the Korean war. One of Gilman's passages seems to combine ideas found in Edmond Taylor's *Richer by Asia* with other ideas expressed by Justice Douglas in *Strange Lands and Friendly People*. "Sorrell" is a missionary physician with a background of many years of organic relatedness to the life of the Chinese. He "had long ago foreseen a resurrection in the East, a revolt against the West. He believed that it was influenced by a social and civic consciousness borrowed from the West in a blind effort to find a remedy for chronic Oriental evils." The passage continues:

Sorrell pondered the disastrous results of a process whereby the idealist borrows from the materialist, and he came up with a phrase he had heard Corporal Henry use: it was a rat-race. A rat-race of progress. He smiled, but it fitted. And thinking of Henry, he saw the East through the corporal's eyes—a civilization shot with backwardness and ignorance and shrouded by worm-eaten religions.

Sorrell personally took the Eastern attitude that such backwardness might be a blessing, preserving man from the horrors of modern science and permitting him to survive. As a physician, he had long ago realized that certain medical advances created more problems here than they solved, tipping the delicate balance of a lower order of social hygiene. Perhaps the retrogressive East could some day balance the progressive West and thus preserve the tribe. He was inclined to view Asia as a cultural

brake that might yet keep the species from being wiped off the earth.

What seems to us Gilman's best passage occurs when Dr. Sorrell converses with an intelligent Chinese revolutionary, revealing clear and sympathetic awareness of parallels between Eastern and Western attitudes. Discussing Christianity and Communism, Sorrell says:

"Since you refer to the Christian belief, you must recognize an odd similarity between it and your own. In your political creed, I believe heretics are burned and deviationists are purged?"

"You are right, and there are many parallels" Li San nodded. "I have experienced both religious and political conversion, and each is much like falling in love—an illogical compound of passion and hate and ideals and superstitions, but often satisfying."

"You seem to speak with authority."

Li San was silent for a moment, and then rose and began to walk up and down the room.

"My father was a Confucian, my mother a Taoist. I was neither, and as a schoolboy I was exposed briefly to Christianity, where I lost what few moral values I had received from my father's teachings, and became neurotic. The mission disturbed me; it dulled rational thought and generated useless anxieties in my mind. I was filled with fairy tales and a dread of death, though my father had never feared that death could destroy his dignity or degrade his body. I left the mission and went to a monastery in Shantung to live with the monks. There I became tranquil, and sought a way into the golden silence of Nirvana by contemplating the law of Karma. My spiritual goal was to free myself from further reincarnation."

He found a cigarette in a box on Sorrell's desk and paused to light it. "Which was the more satisfactory, then?" Sorrell asked.

"Being with the monks, perhaps. But the temple was too much like the mission. Both the monk and the priest took a dark view of this life and a bright view of the future, though of course for different reasons. The Buddhists held that all was planned, and all was illusion and presently would vanish."

"I comprehend that. One becomes acceptant, if not optimistic. What is to be, will be—whether it happens or not!"

Li San smiled faintly. "That is the phrase of a Western skeptic. What you may not understand is that from there it was only a step to communism. It is a transition easy for an Asiatic to make, I assure you. We minimize death and negate the life of the individual. Hunger and pain, beauty and ugliness, fear and love—they are nothing. Living is at best a sorry affair. In the Temple or in the Soviet, man has no significance; it is all men's accumulated effort toward the goal that is important."

The room was quiet, and then Li San said: "I have found that your religion and the beliefs of my people and the political creed that I have embraced have all rotted. I can't deny it. All faiths, including my own, once amounted to about the same thing. But all have become corrupt and lost much of their original integrity and enlightenment."

"You mean," said Sorrell, "that Jesus, the Buddha and Marx—your Ma K'e-ssu—were three great teachers, but they were not God. Superstitions and ritual have corroded the teachings of all three."

We are reasonably sure that the last paragraph quoted would, of itself, cause outraged resentment in many religious quarters. Mr. Gilman, however, doesn't seem to care and, by the way, he is not saying that Marx was the moral or educative equal of Jesus or Buddha, but only that any institutional embodiment of revolutionary ideas eventually tends to deform its own basic principles.

Godfrey Blunden's *A Room on the Route* is a novel which contributes to an understanding of another aspect of Soviet psychology. One woman in the story, an "ideological enthusiast," had left her home in the capitalist West to participate in the forming of Russia's brave new world. Years later, confused and unhappy, but still held in the ideological fold, she shows that some of the half-truths of communist propaganda sound like some of our own contentions. She finally comes to look upon her own countrymen as "foreigners"—men who have no sympathy for superior Russian ideals. If it is possible for allegiance to shift so easily, and for national or ideological differences to be submerged by environmental conditioning, it seems natural to imagine that there is no "Russian temperament" or "American temperament";

probably the proclivity for irrational belief, and for believing one's own nation exclusive heir to the noblest light of social truth, is common to all peoples. In any case, this is how Mary Anderson justifies Soviet dictatorship, and we fail to see much difference between the psychology she employs and that of other political leaders who feel obliged to regulate the affairs of the people for their own good. Mary Anderson seeks security in her "monolithic" society, while many Americans approximate the same feeling in their support of McCarthyism and MacCarranism. Mary puts it this way:

It is wrong for those foreigners to come anywhere near us. The very presence of foreigners corrupts us. And, of course, they are always looking for weaknesses in our system, plotting against us, attempting to destroy us. You cannot expect people to live and work for ideals all the time. I can see now why the Party has to be so firm with the people. Opposition would confuse everybody: instead of having a straightforward policy which everyone could believe in there would be opposing policies and the masses would not know what to do. It all goes to prove that you must have discipline. You must have a monolithic society. I am terribly excited about the word "monolithic." I had not heard it before and it is my own translation. But it expresses everything I need.

This sounds like some sort of American Legion Convention report, with the substitution of a communist, if somewhat feminine, vocabulary.

COMMENTARY

WHO RUNS THE SCHOOLS?

IF there ever comes a time when you feel that there is a deep and abiding need to make the school board in your community look silly, feel silly, and run for cover—and there is sound reason to justify taking such steps—send for Robert M. Hutchins. He probably won't come, but send for him, anyway. Nobody can blame you for trying.

About three weeks ago, Mr. Hutchins performed this signal service for the city of Los Angeles. It seems that the Ford Foundation, of which Hutchins is Associate Director, had offered to the Los Angeles Board of Education a grant of \$350,000 to finance a teacher-training program. The plan for the project had been developed by the Board of Education staff, and was, he said, to have been controlled by its members. The Board, however, voted to reject the grant, and on July 21 Mr. Hutchins commented briefly on the board's action, which, he said, was inspired by the notion that Paul Hoffman, former head of the Ford Foundation, has "radical" tendencies, revealed by his recent support of Unesco. (The Los Angeles Board recently purified itself of a program of education about Unesco.)

Said Hutchins:

It may be that there are other communities in which there are people so near the fringe of lunacy that they call Paul Hoffman a pink and Unesco subversive, but I know of no other community in which such people are allowed to run the schools.

One wonders whether the real problem of education in Los Angeles is not that of recapturing the schools from the crackpots—from the small but vocal and highly organized minorities who are imposing their prejudices, and very ignorant prejudices, on the children of this city.

A flutter of pouting reaction from the board the next day suggested that Mr. Hutchins' "premises" were in error, but one board member remarked that "the real reasons they (members who voted against the grant) objected were the former associations of the Ford Foundation with

people with whose subversive philosophy they didn't agree. These real reasons were not expressed at our board meeting, but they were strongly implied."

Apparently, Mr. Hutchins had stated his case quite accurately, and, as usual, has placed the real issue before the people. Mr. Hutchins, so far as we know, is practically the only man eminent in public life who has spoken to the people of Los Angeles in these terms.

CHILDREN

...and Ourselves

NOTES IN PASSING

WE must regretfully announce our withdrawal from candidacy as a cat placement bureau. (See "Cats," and "More Cats," this Department, May 27, July 8.) It is very easy. It seems the way of the world, and it now becomes our way—to lose interest in a problem when it is no longer a matter of direct concern, even though there is always enough energy left over to permit indulgence in philosophical generalizations. Apart from this moral weakness, we also have ascertained that the cat population curve at the ranch nobly serving as alternative to kitten euthanasia is now at a peak so high that it supports Malthusian propaganda, and the owners are no longer receptive. We can only hope that our resourcefulness will be imitated by correspondents who, as things stand, are now placed on their own mettle to discover further repositories for an excess of felines.

Last evening we listened to a vibrant presentation, issuing from one who had just joined the ranks of parents, on the necessity for eschewing all conventional interest in what one's progeny are to become. The gist of the argument was this: "Nine-tenths of the psychological difficulties of humanity are probably due to our inveterate moralizing. Usually, when we pretend to be concerning ourselves with 'the child,' we are rather speculating upon the child's presumed *welfare*. The trouble with this is that as soon as we envision 'what is good for' the young, our attention is no longer upon *them*, but upon a preconceived notion of the image in which we should like to mold all infants. Our moralisms take many forms; in some instances we pontificate about the 'greatest good of the greatest number,' trying to explain to ourselves and to children why the desires and wishes of the individual must be related to the social compact. But to be *really* interested in a child means the relinquishing of all

concern in what his standard of values will ultimately become."

These apparently "extreme" views serve to highlight an important distinction between lip-service to the "inalienable rights of the individual" and a determination to be honest in one's respect for the individual. We should like to invite comments and suggestions on the question thus raised, since this is a way of talking about politics, sociology, philosophy, and the education of the young, all at the same time.

The name of this column, as a matter of fact, derives from an attempt on our part to suggest that great benefits may grow from eliminating the artificial distinction between "child psychology" and "adult psychology." In children we find portions of ourselves, and in the adult world we often discover that various social institutions are based upon little more than a child's emotional attitudes. One of the reasons for our continued enthusiasm about Bruno Bettelheim's *Love Is Not Enough* is that this book demonstrates that the study of the mental problems of children is also the study of human society.

We don't propose that Dr. Bettelheim be read by the parent for the purpose of acquiring knowledge as to how to "deal" with youngsters. It is rather that his particular points of emphasis on what the human being is—both as to innate capacity and as a "social" being—indicate why we should guard our tendencies to consider children as means to our "moral" ends.

If you find yourself at a place frequented by both children and adults for the sake of "play," observe carefully how the reactions of the children and the reactions of the adults to various situations are almost identical. With one exception, of course—that the adult, when petulant, attempts to disguise this state of feeling, and digs obscurely at his or her companion, instead of candidly displaying the general displeasure with the universe which a disgruntled child is not in the least ashamed of.

We cannot get away from the fact that the destructive impulses manifested by children are drawn out of the child by the environment in which he lives. One of the weakest points in Freudian psychology, it seems to us, is the insistence that a "death-wish" exists in the human soul. There is no evidence that this is actually the case, and there is a great deal of evidence to indicate that it is the social situation which brings on discord and despair. To this extent, we think Rousseau was right—men are born free yet are everywhere in chains—but the chains are not simply those of economic and political bondage. Their roots are the systems of pre-conceived "moral" values which fill the minds of parents and educators to over-flowing.

In suggesting further exploration of this subtle problem, it comes to mind that there has lately been a dearth of specific questions for discussion from our readers. We should like to have a gross of such questions and problems, suitable for discussion. Perhaps, in the past, we have written too fully on the problems raised, and have thus let topics expire through too much handling. But if the number of communications were substantially increased, it would be easier to avoid this temptation.

Perhaps one way of encouraging more discussion from our readers would be to present a question we have lately received. While no single issue is here clearly defined, several points of departure are possible from these reflections:

We hear a great deal about the *natural* or native capacity in children for growth and development, if the right conditions are provided. But what puzzles this reader is why children are born with such a vast amount of insecurity. This insecurity is manifested in the constant demand of the child for the attention of his parents—mostly the mother—so that the mother becomes literally a slave. If anyone else comes near the mother, the child immediately uses every means he is capable of to insure his mother's undivided attention on himself. I find it very uninviting to visit

any of my friends with young children, as there is always a constant contest between myself and the offspring to get a word in edgewise. Somehow it seems unnatural for a child to become the exclusive focus for any human being. Perhaps this early and constant demand on the part of the child is what makes it so difficult for parents to "let go" when the child unceremoniously indicates that he has no further use for the parents' concern. Is self-reliance so foreign a capacity in the human being that it has to be laboriously taught?

The last sentence is the crux of the question. We can approach the problem in two ways—ways so different as to create a paradox. For instance, there is a great deal of truth in saying that self-reliance is the only thing which *cannot* be taught, but it seems equally true to say that self-reliance is the *only* thing that can be taught. We should like to encourage further attention to the latter assertion.

FRONTIERS

Loyalty To What?

THE men and women who write definitive histories of mid-twentieth century Western societies will almost certainly be struck by the strangest paradox of the age: the nation (the United States) which spent the most words advertising its right and duty to take over democratic leadership of the world was precisely the same nation which saw its own civil liberties—the foundation for democracy—undermined and violated to a shocking extent.

Civil libertarians in the United States have noticed their files filling rapidly during the past five years with case-histories of witch-hunting—loyalty oaths, investigations of political allegiance, questionings of organizational affiliation, and that time-tested formula for conformity, "loyalty checks." Recent annual reports of the American Civil Liberties Union document the fact that there is no roped-off arena in which these suppression devices are put into practice; every citizen is subject without warning to becoming an active participant with or without his own consent, provided he has taken his citizenship seriously. A school principal in Laguna Beach is mentioned by an informer for a Senate investigating committee, and her life loses all semblance of normalcy. A public housing official in Los Angeles is asked about his political affiliations, and his refusal to answer touches off political powder kegs which blow a respected city administration out of office within ten months.

Basically, there is nothing new about these activities. Anyone who has ever opened and read a history book knows this. Authoritarians from Genghis Khan to Hitler made use of similar repressive devices. In fact, one simple technique for understanding both the social upheavals of the sixteenth century and those of our own time is to recognize that the question, "Are you now or have you ever been—a Protestant . . . a Communist . . . a member of the human race . . . ?" is the simple-

minded but dangerous formula for repression. In times of social and political crisis, when shifts in the locus of power become more obvious, opposition to free thought by those in control of a society becomes open, rather than covert—intense, direct, and organized, rather than mildly disapproving. Whether in the mid-sixteenth century, when giants like Luther and Servetus were leading a break-through into the fortress of Catholicism, or today, when the fortress known for more than a hundred years as acquisitive capitalism is showing serious cracks, the techniques of thought-control show a surprising similarity.

Thus, the basic patterns of repression are not new. They are at least as old as human slavery. But there is something new about the social and philosophical setting for these modern inquisitions: they take place in the age which has discovered that human institutions grow old and senile, and must be replaced by new, dynamic ones that can meet changing human needs. So it is in direct opposition to such knowledge that so many of our more enlightened citizens are being asked to "pledge loyalty" to crumbling institutions, or are asked questions which are nothing less than stepping stones to loss of job, public harassment, or imprisonment.

Two distinct areas of analysis become clear in dealing with what Carey McWilliams calls this "revival of heresy" (*Witch Hunt*, Little, Brown, 1950). One deals with the short-term strategy in meeting these attacks; the other is concerned with more basic principles seen in wider perspective. Brief examination of each of these areas may throw light on thought-control as used in the United States as a political tool and a means of securing social control and conformity.

When Laguna Beach school principal Matilda Lewis was mentioned on a televised road-show of the Senate Un-American Activities Committee early this year, the charge was that her ex-husband (from whom she had been divorced more than ten years) was seen at a 1938 meeting of a group

alleged to be Communist-dominated. With this "crime" as the basis, she was immediately removed from her post as principal and made the target for attacks from large segments of the community. Aroused parents, more liberal church groups, and some of her fellow professional workers made it plain they did not care for this attempt at conformity-by-remote-control. Despite these protests she was refused access to her office.

When Frank Wilkinson, public information officer for the Los Angeles Public Housing Authority for eleven years, was put on the stand in court by lawyers for property-owner groups late in 1952 and asked "the question" concerning his affiliation with radical activity, he refused to answer, citing the Fifth Amendment as his basis. The Fifth Amendment to the Constitution provides to any citizen the right to refuse to answer any question asked of him in a legal inquiry or court procedure, whenever, in his opinion, a true answer would "tend to incriminate and degrade" him. One could justly argue that to be forced to testify concerning the private opinions of other people, and their supposed behavior—especially when such information is so easily and commonly misused and made the ground for vindictive persecution—would indeed be degrading to any conscientious individual. As a matter of fact, careful research by the American Civil Liberties Union had disclosed that if he answered just one question concerning his associations, this would leave him legally obliged to answer *any* question about any person, group, or activity within his personal experience. By innuendo and association, all these persons and groups would then be subject to attack. Failure to remember details would leave him open to charges of perjury and possible imprisonment. This is the justification of the widely-discussed "Fifth-Amendment position" taken by many of those who have been made the target of the inquisition. Wilkinson's stand, which he took as the only position legally allowing him to refuse to discuss *other people*, was used as political dynamite by

opponents of public housing, and in a strictly "pro versus anti housing" mayoralty campaign, Mayor Bowron was defeated after more than a decade in office. As the best-known member of the Housing Authority staff, Frank Wilkinson, whose political affiliations are described by his friends as those of an honest supporter of the social principles of F.D.R., was used as the pivotal whipping-boy to oust an entire city administration, by those specializing in witch-hunting as a political tool.

These examples of what two people have done in opposition to the witch-hunting hysteria—at great personal cost to themselves—are illustrative of the difficulties in the struggle to maintain civil liberties and democratic rights in the United States. There is, however, a more basic and fundamental aspect of the situation, which might be summed up in the question, "Loyalty to what?"

What is "loyalty"? Is it paper that can be traded at the nearest bank for silver? Is it something one "checks"—like a hat or coat? Or is it the judgment—backed by deep emotion—as to what is most worth while and most genuinely important for human beings?

The Roman Empire was once a powerful institution. So was human slavery. So was feudalism. Few people today—with some notable exceptions—ask for a check of loyalty to these institutions of the past. They outlived their usefulness. But as they died, they spawned the familiar last-resort psychology which required loyalty checks to themselves, being unable to attract loyalty any other way. This is the pattern we see so clearly today, and it is upon such clear understanding that we must formulate our basic principles with reference to thought-control of any kind.

How can an honest person today be loyal to institutions which are the result of competing, chaotic self-interest; where the social good is often the haphazard by-product of an animal struggle; where "cooperation" is a dirty word spoken only in intimate conversation; where the

threat of war hangs continually over a ceaseless struggle for markets? Bluntly: what genuine human ideals are there, to which we may be loyal? The choice here is certainly not a choice between some loyalties and no loyalties; it is the choice between those loyalties which blindly and uncritically submit to a "check" by an institution—whether governmental, religious, or economic—and those which are consciously and intelligently chosen.

What is there in our society in the nature of a deeply moving faith and loyalty which can catch the imaginations of the sensitive, creative persons in that society? Perhaps, as Lawrence Sears of Mills College and Douglas Steere of Haverford College have suggested, the deepest loyalty we can find is that of allying oneself with those persons and groups within our society who place human values before material values. What is there which attracts men's loyalties more than the ideal and the need for a basic reorganization of institutions toward this goal? It is only necessary to pierce the paper curtain surrounding the United States to see countless examples all over the world of this kind of loyalty being generated among people who have also lived among the ruins of crumbling institutions. Our choice appears to be fairly simple: we will either move in the same general direction as these peoples, or submit completely to the disintegrating institutions now requiring our loyalty, in triplicate.

Those who are working for social reconstruction in any basic manner, whether in labor, church, education, politics, or any other institution, expose themselves today to a social pressure that endangers their families, their jobs, and sometimes their freedom. Thus the choice is not always an easy one to make.

The choice is not easy. But it carries with it encouraging rewards in satisfaction and happiness. Such a choice channels emotions into a purposeful pattern. It releases untapped energies. It brings new perspective for values and creative enjoyment. And it can act as an important catalyst

for the person seeking expression, meaning, and integrity in his life. This is loyalty in its most important sense.