

THE WORLD ON YOUR SHOULDERS

IN any gathering of six or eight people who are getting around to serious discussion, there are usually one or two who refuse to admit disturbance at "the way things are" and who, if some member of the group should propose an idea or an explanation which departs from the familiar, will challenge whatever has been said, exhibiting what might be termed a "You'll-have-to-show-me" outlook toward any daring innovation in thought.

We should like to start out this discussion by suggesting that the "show me" outlook is a gross distortion of the universal human situation. No one has to "show" anyone anything. The man who is waiting around for others to persuade him, practically against his will, of matters concerning which he has no deep interest, or even curiosity, is at heart a collectivist, one who has transferred the prerogatives of personal decision from himself to the System and who is willing to take his cues from the dull averages of common consent.

And yet—in this region, we always need some "and yet"—what would you have him do? Embrace every novelty? Show no respect for the past and the common fund of accumulated knowledge? Such questions at once precipitate the issue of the relation of the individual to society and press the consideration of other problems. What are the questions which society is entitled to settle for the individual? Are the obligations of the individual obligations of knowing and discovering, or are they obligations of believing and behaving? What are the moral issues in a disagreement between society and the individual? We have in the world political systems which constitute practical answers to these questions, although the philosophical positions from which these systems arise are no longer spelled out with the explicitness that was characteristic in the old days of theological certainty.

The medieval view was well put by Henry Adams in *Mont-Saint Micheland Chartres*:

Theist or atheist, monist or anarchist must all admit that society and science are equally interested with theology in deciding whether the universe is one or many, a harmony or a discord. The Church and State asserted that it was a harmony and that they were its representatives. . . . Good was order, law, unity. Evil was disorder, anarchy, multiplicity. Which was truth? The Church has committed itself to the dogma that order and unity were the ultimate truth, and that the anarchist should be burned.

And for the individual of the twelfth century, Adam of Saint-Victor versified the rules:

Thus professing, thus believing
Never insolently leaving
 The highway of our faith,
Duty weighing, law obeying,
Never shall we wander straying
 Where heresy is death.

More of this case for order and authority is stated by the Grand Inquisitor in Dostoevsky's *Brothers Karamazov*. But this is not the only case for order and authority. The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States are a statement of another, but not similar, case. While these documents are by no means anarchist manifestoes, they clearly acknowledge the sovereignty of the individual in relation to his personal philosophy and his pursuit (within limits) of the Good ("happiness"). Implicit in these instruments is the argument that order" is important *in order that* the individual may remain free to pursue the various undertakings which seem *to him* to be good. In this view, the government of the United States is a theory of ground rules to be followed by men in seeking their own conceptions of good and truth, instead of a series of signposts marking "the highway of our faith." As Supreme Court Justice Brandeis put it:

The makers of our Constitution undertook to secure conditions favorable to the pursuit of happiness. . . . They sought to protect Americans in their beliefs, their thoughts, their emotions and their sensations. They conferred, as against the Government, the right to be let alone—the most comprehensive of rights and the right most valued by civilized men. To protect that right, every unjustifiable intrusion by the Government upon the privacy of the individual, whatever the means employed, must be deemed a violation of the Fourth Amendment.

To complete the gamut, we should now have some account of the vision of the anarchist society, since this is the opposite of the idea that order and unity represent the highest human good. Bakunin is a good authority for the philosophic ground of anarchist thought. He wrote:

Man has liberated himself (by breaking the divine commandment not to eat of the tree of knowledge), he has divided himself from animal nature and made himself man, he began his history and his human development with this act of disobedience and knowledge, *i.e.*, with rebellion and thought. . . . Freedom is the absolute right of all adult men and women to seek permission for their action only from their own conscience and reason, and to be determined in their actions only by their will, and consequently to be responsible only to themselves, and then to the society to which they belong, but only insofar as they have made a free decision to belong to it.

A formal definition comes from Kropotkin, taken from his article in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th edition):

Anarchism is the name given to a principle or theory of life and conduct under which society is conceived without government—harmony in such a society being obtained not by submission to law or by obedience to any authority, but by free agreements concluded between the various groups, territorial and professional, freely contributed for the sake of protection and consumption, as also for the satisfaction of the infinite variety of needs and aspirations of a civilized being.

Well, having shifted the discussion from the problem of the attitudes of individuals to the

subject of political philosophies and systems, we should now return to the individual. The value in looking at these systems lies in the fact that they are quite obviously generalizations from the differing qualities of human nature. They reveal by carrying to extremes the various facets of man's life and thought, as well as showing, to a degree, the composition of the population in terms of these facets. There has never been, for example, an ideal anarchist society, but only anarchist philosophers and now and then wholly self-governed individuals of the sort who, you might well imagine, could live together in an anarchist society with great success. The weight of experience is indeed upon the side of Order as the principle which has won the most consistent practice, although every time an order has been changed, we see that the principle of Freedom was responsible for the change. The American form of government seems to have been the first large-scale attempt to bring together the principle of order and the principle of freedom, shading the balance a little on the side of freedom.

Now we get into an awkward situation, since it is difficult to imagine the present generation of Americans going to work and making a Constitution with the ingenious balance of freedom and order such as the Founding Fathers produced. The Americans of today are the inheritors of this instrument, and if the Constitution can now be said to be "dated," the fault lies not in its principles, but in the lack of a contemporary inspiration in behalf of those principles.

We said that we ought to return to the attitudes of individuals, but seem to be having trouble in doing this. The reason should be clear enough. The current view of the good life and of "reality" does not take individuals seriously. The examination of the life of the individual apart from the social system under which he lives—apart, that is, from the institutional framework—has an other-worldly quality. Just so; but possibly, a little of an other-worldly quality may be precisely

what we need. Our inability—our presumed inability—to repeat for our own times what the Founding Fathers did for theirs may be due not alone to the enormous complexity of modern technological civilization. There may also be a basic weakness in us—an inability to *believe* in the individual, or in individual destiny. This makes declarations in behalf of the individual tend to become merely traditional, a rhetoric with only the content that faint intuitions can supply.

It is even possible that our difficulties with government grow out of the common expectation that government is an instrument for solving all human problems, when the truth is that it is an instrument for solving only secondary problems. Government may be like science in this respect. Perhaps we could say that it is the business of government and science to deal with the knowns—the concrete, matter-of-fact elements of experience, whether they are known directly, by examination, or statistically, through large samplings—while it is the business of individuals to deal with the unknown.

It is here, in the area of the encounter with the unknown, that our civilization is indecisive and confused. Is meeting the unknown a collectivist or an individual enterprise? We do not know. Is it both? If so, how are the roles of the individual and society combined? We build great launching pads to expel rockets and space vehicles into the unknown depths of space. This is a collectivist undertaking. But what about launching the individual? How do we get him ready to go aloft into the mists of our ignorance? Do we even admit our ignorance?

When a child is born, we ease him into the world with all the skills of modern obstetrics. We are even able to hide the miracle of birth from the mother by deadening her sensations of pain to the point of unconsciousness. We feed the child and teach him the minor skills of coping with his physical environment. We don't do as well in preparing him for his intellectual and emotional environment, but we try. He comes into

adolescence like a lost skiff on a stormy sea, and while he struggles with the currents which are whipped up by artificial winds from Madison Avenue, he begins to dream dreams. But on our streets he encounters no Socrates. What will he do with these longings? There is the question of identity. Do we tell him that he must solve it, or that it has already been solved? Do we tell him that goodness and justice are mysteries, or that he will find them well displayed in the institutions of his time?

There is the possibility, of course, that this obstacle race for the human spirit is a normal condition of life. The hardy souls are the ones who keep on asking questions, the ones who have some kind of *daemon* inside which prevents them from settling for easy, institutional solutions. And then, when six or eight people gather together for serious conversation, these are the ones who make the daring proposals and who respond to the daring proposals of other men with eager questioning and wondering.

Speaking of the modern university, a distinguished educator once said, "The curriculum is a sea; the student must learn to swim." The same might be said of the world, in which all human beings are students. The world is a vast ocean of circumstances and institutions, in which the individual must learn to swim. There are right answers and wrong answers about the currents in this sea, and both kinds of answers are posted on buoys which dot the surface. There are various kinds of life rafts floating about, some of them new and strong, some water-logged and sinking. You can have all the charts there are, and the best judgments of the best men concerning which rafts to cling to, but you still have to learn to *swim*.

There are good societies and bad societies, societies getting better and societies getting worse, but the man who does not decide to cope with his own unknowns is a man who refuses to swim. The best possible society cannot help him to be alive as a human being until he decides to

swim. A man who decides to swim can make himself a great life in even a very bad society.

The fundamental verity which the modern world seems to have lost sight of, or ignores with a kind of *hubris* that is its besetting sin, is that the individual has to make his own good life, regardless of the kind of society his time provides him. A culture which neglects this law is in danger of destroying itself with institutional substitutes for the qualities of individuality. Now and then you meet a man or a woman for whom this law is an invincible instinct. If you could put into a book the secret of the determination to live one's own life, you would have the rules for direct human encounter with the unknown. We don't say it is impossible to write such things down, but we say it is enormously difficult. All the great doctrinal religions began in this way, and they all ended up in crystallized dogmas with pompous institutions to perpetuate certainties grown false with age.

So the person who says, "You'll have to *show* me," is likely to be a person who fears that what you really want is to take down some familiar barrier which stands between him and the unknown, and expose him to direct encounter.

There are many ways for a man to insist that he be shown. The seventeenth-century doctor of the Church who threatened Galileo with the Inquisition because he had claimed that the earth moved around the sun, was saying "I won't look," which has the same psychological meaning as *show* me. The nineteenth-century theologian who jeered at evolution and Darwin was saying "show me" in the same way. The Behaviorist psychologist of the 1920's who denied any meaning to the word "consciousness" belonged to the same club of Certified Security. The Mechanists who laugh at the Life-Force, the materialists who ignore psychic research, the physicalists who insist that they *know* that Immortality is a fraud—these are all types of the people who demand to be "shown." Why should anyone bother to show them anything?

The real point of this inquiry is the existence of a region of wonder, an avenue of endless *possibilities* for human beings. It is not a matter of showing or being shown. What is at issue is the importance of maintaining an open world of thought, in relation to the unknown. And equally at issue is the importance of dispensing with spurious certainties and insupportable guarantees of the good life for human beings.

If this in any way approaches a just account of the comparative values in human life, what, then, is the meaning of Progress? If every man must start anew and live his own life; if there is a sense in which he is indeed alone, how can we speak of progress at all?

Earlier, we referred to the peculiar difficulty in discussing the life of the individual apart from the surrounding society. Modern thought, we suggested, seems inseparably connected with *social* conceptions and values, to the exclusion of an idea of individual destiny. This indispensable element of sociality in thought may be precisely where our progress lies. It is an expression of the idea of brotherhood. We are unable to have a sense of reality about private, individual salvation. We, each one of us, carry the world on our shoulders. It is even a little ridiculous, from the individual viewpoint, for how can individuals save the world? But the important thing is, that at the same time, we cannot think of *not trying*. Here, it may be, is a tangible growth in the individual *psyche*. If we are going to get there, we say, we are going to go together.

So now there is the problem of the rediscovery of the individual and the regeneration of the idea of individual destiny *within* the vision of the collective destiny.

The individual man is himself and no other, and yet he is also blood, bone and heart of his fellows. They cannot make a man of him, yet he is nothing without them. A man can expand his sense of self to enclose the sun and the stars, but he can also shut out his closest loves in the insanity of absolute egotism. He can stand upon

some high promontory of events, look back upon the past and feel the full pride of humanity in his kinship with the great of history. He can hunger with the hungry and know that his tears will start with every broken heart, and then he can turn with a will to the endless work of binding up the wounds of others. With the poets and mystics he can celebrate the consanguinity of all the stuff of being, and as a rational intelligence feel that reverence for life which has become a by-word of humanitarians of the present.

A man is a being with Herculean powers. By the intensity of his will, he gets what he wants. He makes from the sensitive, raw, but living materials of existence precisely what he designs, although he does not always know the full measure and the dark side of his creations. Does the bee know his geometrical genius, or the silk worm hear the rustle of his gossamer inventions? Has a comet eyes to thrill at its own track in the sky? How much do we, with all our self-consciousness, know of ourselves? In the struggles and agonies of our age, we may be gaining the strength to do all that we dream of being able to do. We live in a world given tangible shape by the thoughts and acts of a mere handful of men. Who can say that, one day, we shall not be able to hold it high?

REVIEW

THE TANGLED WEB OF LAW

FORMER newsman Brad Williams' book *Due Process* (William Morrow, 1960), the biography of George T. Davis, a famous defense attorney, captured our attention at once because of its promised bearing on a favorite MANAS theme. The dedicatory text of *Due Process* comes from the fourteenth amendment of the Constitution of the United States:

No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

There is no uniformity of law or procedure among the fifty states regarding capital punishment—whereby a "citizen" is undeniably "deprived" of life. And this fact of itself suggests a potent second line of attack against the death penalty in any state. Mr. Davis' contribution to the fight against capital punishment is considerable, and his efforts have been inspired, not alone by the conviction that legal execution is a crime against the whole of society, but also by his belief that nearly every execution, in the present condition of contradictory laws, is accomplished without regard for "equitably conceived due process."

Mr. Davis' clients have come from every level of the social and monetary scale; one defendant was a penniless houseboy, another the head of a vast munitions empire. The book closes with his vigorous but losing battle for the life of Caryl Chessman. Davis' indefatigable probing in all capital cases, entirely without regard for the size of his fee, or its total absence, led, according to Mr. Williams, to the revision of laws in every state. Although Davis first rose to fame as the young lawyer who finally freed Tom Mooney—an international *cause célèbre*—Mr. Williams attributes Davis' present eminence chiefly to his

integrity and his deep personal conviction of the wrong of the death penalty:

There can be no question that his greatest motivation stems from an undying hatred of capital punishment. To Davis, an execution is legal murder, a barbaric custom that accomplishes nothing more than instilling a contempt of life in all citizens who live in the states where it is practiced.

He has devoted hours, weeks, even months of effort in his fight to outlaw the death penalty. It is significant that the president of the People Against Capital Punishment Inc. is George T. Davis. His practice has suffered. Clients in cases not involving the death penalty have been referred to law partners, and lucrative fees have been abandoned in pursuit of his campaign to outlaw murder.

That this is currently an issue in California is to a large extent the responsibility of Davis. And so far as he is concerned, it will always be a key issue, not only in California, but in all of the United States. His dedication to this belief can perhaps best be shown by the fact that never has a person charged with a capital offense been refused counsel by Davis, even though this has often meant travelling from one end of the world to the other, more often than not at Davis' own personal expense.

In recounting the long list of famous cases tried by Mr. Davis, the author deals candidly with the extent to which successes, as well as failures, were due to political maneuvering and manipulation. Davis *had* to become something of a politician to gain Tom Mooney his freedom, and he soon discovered that all cases involving public feeling had to be approached from a public relations and political as well as a legal standpoint. The later stages of Chessman's appeals provide a typical example of the pressures which build up around a highly-publicized life-and-death issue. Williams writes:

It is unlikely that any convention of legislators was ever subjected to such a propaganda barrage as were the members of the California Assembly in March of 1960.

The Judiciary Committee announced it would hold public hearings on the proposal and that experts would be asked to testify both pro and con.

Davis journeyed to Sacramento and filed articles for the incorporation of a new organization, "The People Against Capital Punishment." "It is high time," he told reporters "that the fight against ritualistic murder is organized. If capital punishment in the State of California is to become an intense political issue, then so must it be handled on the political level."

This statement no sooner was publicized than Davis received an urgent call from a prominent California politician. "What are your plans, George?" he asked. "Are you going to turn this Chessman mess into an issue in the pending elections?"

"It is already an issue. And if it is going to be defeated in committee, I think it should be on the ballot."

The politician clucked softly. "You are aware that the governor is intensely interested in his water development program for the state," he went on. "Now you must realize that if the capital punishment question is placed on initiative, it may have a direct reaction upon water development."

"We're dealing with blood, not water," Davis retorted. . . .

There were other telephone calls, asides, and comments. The chances for abolition of capital punishment were greater if Chessman died. It was a mistake to tie the issue to Chessman. This hoodlum had made a mockery of our courts. After he went, the issue could be discussed without emotion.

The public hearing on the issue opened in Sacramento and again Davis received a telephone call. "You are so closely tied to Chessman it would be best if you did not testify," he was told. "The issue here is capital punishment, not Chessman." Davis shook his head. "But my client is extremely concerned in the issue of capital punishment," he replied. "I expect to be called to testify."

It is, of course, the Chessman case which is most likely to capture the reader's interest, for it is doubtful if any execution in history has been surrounded with so great a variety of significant issues. Public officials who hated and resented Chessman extended their ire to Davis himself, who was indicted for an alleged part in the conspiracy to "smuggle" a third volume of Chessman's writings out of San Quentin. For those who have been puzzled concerning Davis' possible

complicity (although he was found not guilty, who could blame him for this?), and for those who have any doubt that Chessman was persecuted even while on Death Row, the following paragraphs will be interesting:

Much of the attack on Chessman had gone far afield. After his first best seller, which brought his plight to world attention, the Attorney General had tried to shut off his writings. A novel had been confiscated. Still Chessman wrote another book, and in ways known only to Chessman and one or two others, the manuscript was smuggled out of Death Row to the publisher.

Deputies and prison officials were furious, apparently operating on the principle that an impoverished Chessman would be a lot easier to pry into the gas chamber than a wealthy Chessman. With religious regularity, after the appearance of the second book, guards visited Chessman's cell searching for any "contraband."

He could not be deprived the privilege of working on his legal papers and these indeed were voluminous, but anything in the way of writing for publication and profit was considered contraband.

The con-wise author did manage to write a third volume. The guards who "rousted" him every twenty-four hours paid little attention to the tall mounds of carbon paper which Chessman used in preparing legal papers. But on the back of each sheet, written on the slick surface of the carbon paper, was a page of his third manuscript.

Eventually, in some mysterious manner, these carbons disappeared from the cell. Several days later, when Davis arrived in his office, a bulky package was on his desk. Inside it was a crudely typewritten copy of the third manuscript with instructions that it should be passed on to a literary agent in the Midwest. With little more than a passing thought that his action would trigger an uproar throughout the state, Davis complied with his client's instructions.

It happens that Mr. Williams is personally convinced of Caryl Chessman's guilt in relation to specific charges. But he is also thoroughly convinced that only the grossest travesty of justice could allow a man to be executed for these offenses, never intended to be classified as "capital" crimes. Chessman, according to Williams, was intractable and often obnoxious,

difficult even for Davis to deal with until the final stages of the defense. But Chessman's last letter to Davis, written in the closing hours of his life, may fittingly be regarded by all as a tribute to both men:

Dear George,

Now my long struggle is over. Yours isn't. This barbarous senseless practice, capital punishment, will continue. In our society other men will go on taking that last walk to death until . . . when? Until the citizens of this State and this land are made aware of its futility. Until they realize that retributive justice is not justice at all.

I die with the burning hope that my case and my death will contribute to this awareness, this realization. I know that you will personally do all in your power, as citizen and lawyer, to convince your fellows that justice is not served, but confounded, by vengeance and executioners.

Good luck.

My best,
CARYL

Due Process is not a great book; the organization of its material might have been better; but we should rather stress that it presents two themes of great importance, and that it makes a number of undeniable contributions to the final outlawing of legal murder throughout the world.

COMMENTARY

"ONE DAY IS AS GOOD AS THE NEXT"

THIS phrase of Eric Freedman's (see "Children") seems to define a philosophical attitude that it is possible to contract—almost like an "infection"—from a life close to nature. He puts the contrast with urban existence well. In the town or city—

. . . existence is punctuated by a series of highlights—a good time over the weekend, a someday improvement in status, etc. Always one is living for some purpose; now is not so good as some later moment will be. But here, one day is as good as the next. Nothing needs to be looked forward to or longed for—what is wonderful is here already, every day. . . .

There must be dozens of ways to write about this comparison. The immediate response is a longing for the wilds, where the good life is heaped up and pressed upon you. And yet, you can't—or most of us can't—leave town for Alaska. There are things to do, here.

The second response is perhaps a wondering why the city and the town impose these dreary compulsions, making anxious futurists of us. Why can't we find the same ever-present joys and satisfactions wherever we go?

It is a question, of course, of what we think we are doing, or are after, with all our projects and busyness. If you live in the wilderness, you may look on a mountain or a stream, but you don't figure on changing it. It's right the way it is. The things you have are accessories to the unchanging life you are living, not means of changing it. So even the things—a stove, or a gun, maybe—have a sensible quiet about them. They don't interfere or intrude, or make demands upon you. You react to the march of technological advance with a disinterested passivity. A new stove would be all right, but the one you've got still works.

But if you talk this way in town, you're against progress. Of course, there is a different rhythm in town. In town, human enterprises, not the timeless motions of natural enterprise, engross

our attention. And human enterprise cannot be contemptuously dismissed. Even if you feel you can get along without it, too many people's lives are bound up in it for you to turn your back. The question is, *why* do the enterprises of men create the atmosphere of psychological sickness—or, at any rate, this mood of endless pursuit of a future which never quite arrives?

Couldn't we have industry and even a sort of commerce and finance that would conduct their affairs without all this anxious expenditure of nervous energy? Couldn't a man build a house or make a pair of shoes without getting so *excited* about it? They're just things.

You get the impression that all the noise men make about their productive enterprise is only a way of filling a void in their lives; but the noise doesn't really fill the void, and so it's tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow . . . until the sickness comes.

The world of nature has a secret very few of us understand. We are different, or represent another level of nature, so that if we have, or ought to have, a secret of our own, it must be a different sort of secret. Nature intends without intending. Nature is voiceless, for all her moving cries. But we have voices and consciousness and a furious energy for raising ourselves out of ourselves—and then, suffering the loneliness of alienation from our natural roots, we ask the question of the bewildered and frustrated Zen disciple—"*How can I want not to want?*" The whole thing is a contradiction in terms!"

There is of course an intermediate stage, a temporary solution. It is to want things that are more worth wanting. And these, one may suspect, are the things we have never been without—"what is wonderful is here already, every day," in Mr. Freedman's happy phrase. Seeing this, the wise man, so unlike ourselves, stops wanting anything, for now he is completed by the full flow of natural human life.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

CORRESPONDENCE AND NOTES

HERE, on Jan. 4, we made some comment on England's recent experiment with Compulsory National Service for youth, drawing on a *Listener* article which found advantages in such enforced discipline and remarked: "What this conclusion suggests is that the familiar complaint against 'authority' ought to be tempered by recognition of the necessary role authority plays in most societies, and that when authority is eliminated, other forces, possibly much worse, always rush in to fill the vacuum." Our own observation was this: "The people who are able to live harmoniously and constructively without some sort of regulatory authority are people of exceptional maturity. If we want to get rid of authority, we shall have to get the maturity, and get it first."

On this point, a correspondent writes:

In regard to the topic discussed in the Jan. 4 "Children . . . and Ourselves," I strongly disagree with the suggestion that genuine maturity can be the product of authority. Its emergence, at least, will certainly be difficult and delayed.

My husband and I, along with educators such as A. S. Neill, believe that the most important factor in the raising of a child free and healthy in mind and body is that he be permitted to develop in his own directions and at his own speed. Children cannot be squeezed into "good citizenship" molds either by parental preaching or state-enforced disciplines. Not, at least, with the results that you and I would desire.

We try in every way possible to avoid imposing our own or the state's will and personality upon the young, searching minds of our children, except to require that they, in turn, respect the rights of others. All other aspects of maturity can truly be learned only from example and from free experience.

It is our conviction that the more a young person has been coerced (either obviously or subtly) the harder it will be for him to regain his birthright, a soul free to be creative and to love itself and others.

Our own editorial hospitality to such geniuses in education as A. S. Neill and Homer Lane has been amply demonstrated since MANAS began publishing. And as Bruno Bettelheim has proved at the University of Chicago's Orthogenic School, the emotionally disturbed child cannot be helped to unfold his thwarted capacities through authoritarian or coercive means. On the other hand, it is impossible to ignore the fact that elimination of the many "enforced disciplines" of normal childhood which prevailed in a less technical society, has deprived young persons of certain basic opportunities for growth. The lad on the old-fashioned farm was "forced" to become responsible for a number of useful chores, and the "authority" was the parent—who was responsible for the farm as well as the sustenance of his family. Those who propose some kind of national non-military service for youth in a predominantly industrial society are usually not thinking of control of the child's mind, but of helping him to learn to control himself through application to useful work.

Whether any "national program" can produce benefits outweighing its disadvantages is no doubt a debatable point, but it is surely possible for a parent to offer a child substantial opportunities for learning self-discipline in a framework of required tasks. Our recent notes on the spread of the Outward Bound movement indicated what might be called community development along this line, and there are many American parents who would wish that their children might be drawn into a movement with a similar *esprit de corps*.

The present writer recalls participation, some years ago, in a youth program which endeavored to arrive at some useful definitions of "authority" and "discipline." Each weekend a strenuous plan was evolved for both productive work and for recreation, designed to build physical and psychic stamina—and a sense of order. Activities included the building of a boat, skin-diving for food and the cooking of same, the planning of meals, and, in the mountains, the felling of trees

and the hauling and sale of firewood. To get the jobs done, smoothly-running organization was needed, even mandatory from the standpoint of physical safety. Youngsters were assigned various tasks and required to fulfill them without question, and the director of activities was the authority in regard to any disputes which might arise. But each young person, in turn, assumed the *role* of director when his or her turn came. Here the *function* of authority was separated from its permanent embodiment in a particular person, and the usefulness of discipline and organization readily became apparent. Further, the general structure of the program was evolved through open discussion.

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One of our subscribers has introduced us to an interesting family. The father, a dentist, envisioned an unusual kind of upbringing for his three sons, and encouraged true pioneering. Last year Dr. Joel Freedman and wife and family produced a quite original "holiday greetings" message, consisting of the wilderness experiences of the different branches of the family. Paragraphs in a letter from one of the sons, Eric Freedman, and his wife, show that it is still possible for the pioneering spirit to find expression; and possible, too, for philosophizing to keep pace with action—at least for these members of the Freedman family in an Alaskan wilderness:

I suddenly realized one day the enormous but subtle difference between living here and in the town or city and working. In the usual routine of life, existence is punctuated by a series of highlights—a good time over the weekend, a some-day improvement in status, etc. Always one is living for some purpose; now is not so good as some later moment will be. But here, one day is as good as the next. Nothing needs to be looked forward to or longed for—what is wonderful is here already, every day. Even if something goes wrong it is fun. There's no boredom, no mediocrity, time doesn't need to be *made* to pass. Before we came here, it seemed logical and fitting to ask occasionally what the purpose of life was, or of living. But here it is plain that life or living doesn't need to justify itself with a purpose. Life IS and it is good.

It is amazing how perceptive one's senses become in this kind of place—especially the sense of hearing. There is the constant roar of the water, the crackling of the stove, the whistling of the windcharger amid occasional howls of the wind. Yet let a bird cry out, let some irregularity come into the movement of the water, let something move through the nearby bush—let anything out of the ordinary happen—and one of us looks up questioningly, the sound perhaps not really heard but rather sensed.

This sort of life, with the necessity of procuring one's own meat doesn't result in a hardened attitude toward life at all. The little killing we do, being necessary, isn't a matter for squeamishness, but that duck, the rabbit, the fish—all seem marvelously beautiful and delightfully formed, and we gaze at them most admiringly each time. It would take a hard heart indeed to live in all this and remain a wanton killer, or even to kill more than is necessary for the table. Feathers and fur and fins are such wonderful things; every child should have a chance to play with them and see them growing on beasties.

FRONTIERS

Nonviolence in the Twentieth Century

[For those who have wondered how nonviolent action and civil disobedience in protest against military preparations may fit in the larger pattern of a constructive life, the two papers here printed should be of interest. The first is taken from No. I of *N.V. Notes*, a monthly bulletin issued by the members of the Garthnewydd Community House, Merthyr Tydfil, Wales, England. The second paper, by Bob Swann, is one of a series of articles by Polaris Action staff members on "how a constructive program may be combined or related with nonviolent action." This discussion appeared in a recent Polaris Action release. Readers wishing to be on the Polaris Action mailing list should send their requests to Polaris Action, 13 North Bank Street, New London, Conn.]

IT is hard in these days not to become obsessed with the omnipresent threat of atomic annihilation and by this fear become driven rather than creative people. The human race has never before devoted such a large portion of its energies to production for destruction. At the same time, however, there are forces at work full of great potentialities for the future of the family of man. Never before have powerful nations been so sensitive to world opinion, so hesitant to trample down weaker countries in the advancement of their own selfish purposes. A world morality is emerging.

Even more important is the increasing appreciation of the use of nonviolent action as a revolutionary tactic which carries in it the very qualities of compassion, courage and brotherhood we hope for in a peaceful social order.

The methods used by Gandhi have spread, in just a decade, to many parts of the globe. Anti-apartheid Africans have used them in South Africa. American Negroes have used them with remarkable success in all parts of the USA, often side by side with white nonviolent demonstrators. Some African independence leaders advocate nonviolence and have encouraged their followers to use it. In France there is a growing nonviolent movement against the Algerian war, and in the

USA and the UK are nonviolent civil disobedience movements against atomic armaments.

This expanding acceptance of nonviolent action can be a first step on the long road to a peaceful social order. If we are willing to work patiently with each other where we are, growing together and upwards little by little, we can evolve the kind of organic human-centred society needed to eliminate war.

With this in mind a group of people from the Garthnewydd Community house propose to establish a nonviolent training and study centre. Though we all realize our personal limitations and how much we have to grow, we believe we can render a valuable service by creating a place where people may come who wish to improve their ability to use nonviolence. Together with those who come for training we believe we can grow, each being at one time resource leader, at another, fellow trainee.

We hope to work closely with various individuals and groups who are concerned with nonviolent action, organizing training programmes in cooperation with them. These might include weekend courses in preparation for demonstrations, and longer summer sessions for people ready to go deeper. We may also be able to have courses for some of the Africans seeking better nonviolent methods with which to struggle for freedom and equality.

Those so far committed to forming the centre are David Hoggett who has lived for over three years in India working with the Gandhian movement and was for several years a full time SCI work camper; Maddalena and Lawrence Rayner who have lived and worked closely with Danilo Dolci in Sicily; and Bob Luitweiler who has studied the Gandhian movement in India and had a farm in the USA where nonviolent training courses and weekend seminars were held.

The proposed centre is to be in a rural area preferably in central Britain. The permanent residents will have a sharing relationship on many

levels, including social, religious and economic. In order to be free to undertake special activities for nonviolence, to have an economic basis that exploits no one, and yet be self-supporting, we plan to grow much of our own food, do our own necessary building, and produce for sale weaving and leather articles that are useful, durable and beautiful. This plan should permit longer term trainees to be partially self-supporting by working with us. Cooperative living and creative manual work, we believe, are an important part of nonviolent training.

DIRECT ACTION AND CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAM

It seems to me that the most dynamic life ("Peace" is a debatable word) movement will develop when we combine direct action against war and weapons of destruction, with constructive action which affirms life. The greatest vitality will exist *at the point* where these positive and negative aspects are most intensively expressed, as it is the tension created between true opposites which always creates vitality (*e.g.*, the Yang and Yin principle of Taoism). We may look upon them as necessary aspects of the same program but in reality they are true opposites just as male and female are true opposites, but united in marriage are part of the same organic family. In the same way, negative action against total destruction and constructive program are part of the same organic whole.

Therefore, while I advocate the strongest kind of negative action (civil disobedience, nonviolent obstruction, etc.), I also advocate the strongest kind of constructive action. What kind of constructive action? To me the clearest approach to our problems is in the suggestions of Lewis Mumford, Arthur Morgan, Jayaprakash Narayan and others who are working for regional and community redevelopment and revitalization. In this, the concept of Regionalism is central. This means the economic, political, physical and social reorganization of our communities, regions

and world itself along organic, human lines of thinking that will bring the machine and our vast technology under the control of Man, instead of serving some abstract purpose such as the "free enterprise system," the "state," "dictatorship of the proletariat," etc.

What does this mean in Polaris Action? For me it means that part of our concern is to be deeply involved in such practical and constructive efforts as the Southeastern Connecticut Regional Planning agency, wherever that agency is working to develop positive economic alternatives to the dependency on war preparation in this area, for example. It means working in the community with numerous persons and agencies that are working at the social and economic problems of the community, such as Community Councils, etc. It might be assumed that we at Polaris Action would be shunned by these groups because of our open and demonstrated opposition to the major economic basis of the region, namely Polaris submarines. So far on the basis of experience, I would say this is generally not true. On the whole, most such organizations, or at least individuals in the organizations, are happy enough to receive support and help from individuals wherever they can find them. Moreover, because of our association with Polaris Action, it is clear to many persons in the community that we work without concern for personal gain or partisan politics, and therefore we are apt to be given a more open-minded hearing when we advocate this or that particular proposal.

There is the problem of time and energy to devote to this concern. Certainly there is a need for persons trained in related fields of community organization, city planning, architecture, ecology, regionalism, economics, etc., to come and share in this part of a program. If they are persons willing to give up personal desires for careers, making money, etc., just as those volunteers who are working on the direct action against Polaris subs are doing for their part, they would find a

satisfying creative outlet for their training and interests.

Another phase of this problem which has not yet been touched upon is the experimental use of nonviolent techniques and methods to accomplish the purposes of what would otherwise be considered a political program with political means of achievement only. To illustrate this concept: Although working with the regional and city planners on any particular problem, it might at the same time become a fact (it is often true) that an injustice to some individual or group would occur as a result of the tendency of planners to think in abstract terms rather than human ones. In this case, if the planners remained adamant, the pacifist group (Polaris Action) with experience in nonviolent action might help organize an action project to dramatize the injustice involved, as the sit-ins dramatize the injustice of segregation in the South. This would be possible because Polaris Action would be working as a nonpartisan in all such undertakings.

In all of the foregoing I foresee a possible pattern of action for pacifists who wish to engage themselves at the point of the most vital and dynamic impact on the society in which they live. That is to help develop living action groups that will adopt a two-sided program: First, selecting a major military installation in a given region, such as the Polaris submarines or ICBM sites, which symbolizes as clearly as possible the condition of our civilization; then developing the strongest action program to dramatize this situation; and finally to work within the community and region on constructive programs as suggested above.

BOB SWANN

New London, Conn.