VOLUME XIX, NO. 25
JUNE 22, 1966

PEAKS AND FACADES

THE present is peculiarly a time of wondering about the validity of the institutional façades which surround our lives and in large part shape the ideas and attitudes of the age. This tendency is considerably more than a familiar revolutionary wave of "down with the old," and "up with the new." It is more, also, than a "safe," objective sketching of the psychological structure of associations of men in communities and organized societies. Rather, the inquiry now going on is a basic questioning about the relation of individuals to *any* set of institutions, and about the bearing of this questioning on the idea of self.

It is obvious enough, however, that this sort of inquiry is by no means pursued by everyone. Some men ask basic questions with a determination that will not be put off with relativistic answers or cultural bribes. Others hardly ask them at all, finding it difficult even to imagine a life in which the *status quo* is not taken as the final definition of the terms of their existence. Indeed, the differences among men in respect to the sources of self-definition and the bounds of meaning in life are a central, although neglected, part of the human situation.

Again, the complex of culture may be looked at according to some static form of analysis, in which social and institutional structures are accepted as "given," in the same way that climate and geography are given; or, it may be examined in terms of cyclic social change—in the frame, say, of the Hegelian dialectic. And both these forms of approach may be further modified—basically altered, that is—by demanding that the *individual,* with his longings and personal strivings, be accepted as an end in himself and not treated as some kind of neuter statistical element in a process which gains significance on only a historical or collective scale. The upshot of combining these modes of approach would be that the answers—if any be found—would have to illuminate the meaning of the lives of the "creative" people, the initiators of great happenings, but throw light, also, on the human significance of the lowliest of the *fellaheen,* people who, on any account known to us, seem to have keen the entirely passive objects of history.

Not only what we have come to regard as the top of the human pyramid must be understood, but also its base, as well as all the "terraces of enlightenment" between. Now this, of course, may *sound* like an insistence on a great leveling operation, but it need not be. The leveling ideologies are as ruthless in practice as any despotic theory of the social order, and end by erasing, at least in theory, all recognition of individuality—which was, at the outset, the chief ethical justification for revolt. The worth of the underdogs as individuals had been denied by the class society. But in serving the needs of the underdog—or what were alleged to be his needs—his individuality was defined away entirely in order to make the revolution ideologically pure and a systematic success.

What actually happens, in "leveling" situations, is the gradual hardening of social institutions into factories of sure-thing formula-substitutes for human independence and the ambiguity and uncertainty of private reflection. Insofar as the institutions exercise culture-shaping and thought-determining influence, they breed conformist attitudes and exploit the timidities and hungers of the mass society for a kind of security that can be bought only at the cost of freedom. And, in consequence of promises made by "the authorities," the popular demand for various material and emotional satisfactions must be met, which puts the institutional planners under the continual necessity of producing "results." Increasingly, therefore, the plans displace

individual decision, and there is always the utilitarian excuse for these encroachments—such as "economic justice for all," or the necessities of "national defense," or the demonstration to all the world of the superiority of the nation in terms of material wealth.

Pressed by the expanding requirements of these objectives, the conceptions of ends and means in such societies gradually become more and more mechanistic, until, finally the ideas of freedom with which the society started out are almost entirely rubricized in terms of techniques and "products" which have a market value. The ambiguity of all the higher meanings of human life is eventually replaced by one-way readings of subjective value, enabling these readings to be converted into externalized symbols well within the power of the managers to manipulate. For example, in the United States, the principal Establishment defense against the claim that the Technological Society takes away human choice is a dramatic display of the endless variety of commodities and services which can be selected from by the people.

Only one kind of "reality-testing" is popularly acknowledged in such a society. Does this method, project, or process in question produce goods you can *own,* places to which you can go, platforms of status on which you can *pose?* What are the objective *results?* What precipitates or separates out at the end, that you can point to as a desirable *thing?* The subjective goods, when they are mentioned, are proved to be really good because they contribute objective, countable or measurable values. Freedom is a good thing because you can use it to make a nice (Democratic, honest-to-God) *profit.*

Even great revolutionary and reform movements which originated as deeply inspired altruistic protests against economic injustice and exploitation of the many by the few are corrupted by the same sort of "reality-testing," as recent critics of Socialism such as Erich Fromm and Jayaprakash Narayan have made clear. The ethical goal of "possession" is not fundamentally changed by varying title from the one to the many. The end is still to have and to hold.

Only during the past ten years or so has it been clearly possible to recognize the close relationship between the value-system of the acquisitive society and the scientific—or rather scientistic—idea of "reality" or truth that has grown up in connection with the mechanistic cosmology. The development of this world-view arose from a number of collaborating causes, some of them intensely "moral," such as the anti-clerical determination to make an explanation of things which would not have to resort to any element of the supernatural, as we see in the writings of De La Mettrie and Baron d'Holbach—the purpose, in this case, being to take away the psychological power of oppressive religious institutions. Galileo's desire to get rid of subjective vagary led him to define the "real" in terms of the "primary qualities" of the external world—what would submit to mathematical definition and description. This "measuring" approach to natural reality had its original inspiration in ancient Greek and Pythagorean mathematics, but was also involved through Galileo's attempt to avoid conflict with the Church's monopoly of subjective or "spiritual" matters—an effort, incidentally, which could not then succeed, since the geocentric system of Ptolemy, taken by the Church from Aristotle, was in fact the stage-setting for the drama of Salvation. (The Copernican theory was not removed from the Index Expurgatorius until 1835!) Descartes is another enormously influential figure who was cautiously subversive of theological claims, paying lip-service to the faith while removing the logical ground from any dynamic conception of an inner life and laying the practical basis for an essentially behavioristic view of human conduct. Cartesian philosophy, with its mathematical and mechanistic pseudo-clarity, seemed to many a high road to complete intellectual independence of religion.

We are now able to see, looking back on the past of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, how the righteousness of the cause of scientific objectivity, of nailed-down, sure-thing, mechanistic explanation of the way things are, created a moral capital that was accessible to various "progressive" movements and groups, from tough-minded advocates of scientific "rationalism" to the authors of the *Communist Manifesto.* The subsequent elaboration of "Scientific Socialism" was suffused with the angry certainty of men who believed themselves in possession of absolute truth concerning the natural forces of the world and life, enabling them to declare without the slightest self-doubt the ruthless morality of total revolution. The rancors of men moved by deep moral indignation *plus* a confidence that now, at last, the forces of evolution had placed in their hands the means to final certainty and the tools for rebuilding the world according to principles of justice and equality for all—these feelings of frustrated righteousness, of bitterness at the stupidity and selfishness of "reactionary" forces, are manifest throughout the literature of the modern period. Sometimes this attitude appears as the aloof condescension of the *cognoscenti,* openly revealed when men who believe themselves informed by the discipline and impartiality of science converse with each other; sometimes it drips with the contempt of "liberated" minds for backward people who cling to conventional religious beliefs—people who are unmoved by the prospect of emancipation from superstition, through the progress of science and its irresistible demonstrations, within a generation or two; and sometimes it takes on the accents of well-mannered but impatient challenge, as in Robert Lynd's *Knowledge for What?* of almost thirty years ago.

Now the confusing, as well as the saving, side of this situation lies in the psychologically validating effect of the moral emotions. A genuine altruistic fervor originally pervaded all these movements which found their hope of progress or their demand for revolution on the knowledge that science has brought or is expected to bring. Deep concern for mankind obviously animated Nicolai Lenin, for example, as very nearly all those who had close contact with him testify. Eugene Debs is a figure in American history whose unselfish devotion to workingmen and the ideals of the socialist cause makes his memory luminous to this day. In fact, anyone who is serious in his concern for the social and human future of the world can hardly afford to neglect extensive reading in the history of the radical movement in the United States, from Edward Bellamy on, since the relationship between altruism and theories of knowledge, and the dynamic effect of that relationship on society through political activities, must surely be understood before there can be any real "objectivity" toward the idea of progress. Likewise, the last great linkage between devotion to human welfare and the scientific spirit, represented in education with such deep commitment by John Dewey, and carried forward by the Progressive movement through the years of William Heard Kilpatric and the *Social Frontier* at Columbia, and also by men of the caliber of Boyd H. Bode at the University of Ohio, must be similarly understood and appreciated. It is simply a psychological fact of incalculable importance that the quality of love for one's fellows has a way of diminishing the partisanship and inadequacy of limiting theory, even to the point of invisibility, so that these flaws have little practical effect until the theory falls into the hands of time-serving followers, people who bureaucratize it into doctrines which require no use of the imagination. How to provide theory—*any* theory—built-in protection against such deteriorations is obviously the chief theoretical problem of the self-conscious society or intentional community. It is a problem which probably has no real solution at all, and facing this probability squarely may be the only means of achieving whatever partial solution is possible, from day to day.

Intellectual observers are by no means unaware of the susceptibilities of human beings to moral appeal—the emotional miracle-worker which gives the similitude of wholeness to partial knowledge. Recognition of the dangers of partisanship which tend to arise when attempts are made to apply the "truths" of science to human problems has produced an endless controversy between advocates of "pure" science and their more fervent colleagues, who continually challenge researchers to become human—to descend from their ivory towers and place their skills in the service of mankind. (Very practical discoveries are often made by scientists when they do this, such as the recognition by many medical men, and even more by psychotherapists, that they are now practitioners not so much of science as of "art.")

We seem today—to make our opening point specific—on the eve of a great collapse of the True-Believer certainty of the scientific establishment. A great many people are eyeing with deep suspicion the half-conscious collaboration between the "objectivity" of scientific self-confidence and the externalizing temper of "acquisitiveness" and "possessiveness" which lies at the root of so many of the psychological as well as social problems of modern man. The horrors of scientific destruction, those already accomplished as well as what is fearfully anticipated, act as a generalized spur to this sort of questioning, while the increasing distance of today's scientific knowledge from common experience (except as embodied in the mysteries and miracles of technology) has taken away the ordinary man's capacity to equate science with rationality. (As Cyril Connolly said: "I have a scientific attitude toward magic, but a magical attitude toward science.")

But where, during all this time, has the idea of the self been hiding? After the knowing, perceiving, unitary consciousness of man was ejected from the "real" universe by Galileo and his successors—to be declared totally nonexistent by John B. Watson in the 1920's—where did it go?

There are so many answers to this question that it is hard to decide on the important ones. You could say, for example, that the self took refuge in the arts and literature, or that it went underground, to be rediscovered, in its darker aspects, and somewhat the worse for its imprisonment, by Dr. Freud in the nineteenth century. You could say that it went on imperialist tours, since in an amoral universe brute strength is entitled to make up its own rules and to put down all resistance with a firm, military hand. You could say that the "self" as an object of knowledge was hardly missed during a period of almost constant progress, empire-building, discovery, and achievement in the external world. Who needs introspection when there is the West to win?

However, while these developments were proceeding, there were isolated individuals who in some sense preserved a wholeness of mind which included at least the first principles of the scientific spirit, yet at the same time left traces of having found their way past many of the most difficult ambiguities of the inner life. Their record is in the form of what may be called philosophical art. In the eighteenth century, for example, there was William Blake, a man whose wisdom does not wear out with time. In the middle years of the nineteenth century there was an obscure Belgian diarist, Amiel, whom we know only through his *Journal Intimé.* Then there was Thoreau, in whom it is fair to recognize something of both scientist and artist, and for whom the idea of self was a controlling principle. These were men who beheld the dignity of man, not in the deductions of political philosophers, as though they had to be *told* of their human potentialities, but in some subjective mirror which was part of their natural equipment as men. It is as though, either by personal temperament or by some obscure calling they could not resist, they listened only to first-hand instruction in what it means to be a man. The doctrines of the day had no more influence on

their true convictions than the blandishments of the market place have on the decisions of any man of high purpose. They were not buying or conforming their way through life. Mrs. Humphrey Ward says of Amiel, "The meditative gift was in him, not the product, but the mistress of circumstance. It took from the outer world what that world had to give, and then made the stuff so gained subservient to its own ends."

It is this strength of individual mind, the evident presence of what Emerson called "the soul's enormous claim," that we need to examine—not so much, now, in terms of its impressive works, which we readily acknowledge, but rather as a thing in itself. And we must ask, is this even a possibility?

Answers to questions about the self may be more possible now than ever before. From Nietzsche's madman who proclaimed that God is dead to the twitching impotence of Beckett's *Endgame,* men in the arts and literature have struggled with the problem of self-definition under the conditions of a universe governed by blind, impersonal forces and lit by no stronger flame than their own flickering awareness. What, they asked, can we say about the world and the people in it simply by acts of the imagination? Actually, they wrote, sang, and painted in a cipher—it was not the world they were giving an account of, but themselves. They sought meaning and a place of meaning for themselves. How else are we to read Whitman's vast, undaunted affirmations, Van Gogh's tortured letters, Yeats' wooing of mysteries behind mysteries, Rilke's vision beyond heartbreak? These artists were trying to recognize themselves in the broken mirrors of history and to make revolve, against the resistance of hardening institutions and useless bourgeois preoccupations, the kaleidoscope of life. Meanwhile the novel, for all the predictions that it was an exhausted form, became the vehicle of uninterpreted myth. From dos Passos' tragedyless victims of circumstance to Nelson A1gren's parodying defeat of the American vagabond's dream (*A Walk on the Wild Side*), the modern novel has attempted to report the "closing-in" sequence, the souring decline, of man's existential fate. Ruthlessly exploring the laminated truths of disillusionment, the novelists hear Eliot's extinguishing whimpers all about. But what these chroniclers of alienated subjectivity are really exclaiming to the rest of the world, and most of all, perhaps, to themselves, is the challenge: *Say it isn't so!* Prove to us, with evidence we can accept, that there is some vision of hope for man, some Promethean triumph awaiting him, beyond the mutilations and ground-up expectations that our shadowed integrity permits us to see!

Now the fact is that modern art and modern literature, despite their lack of metaphysical measure, speak a language with greater meaning for human beings than the attenuated abstractions of science, the slogans of a bankrupt politics, and the heavily institutionalized forms of academic learning. And, during the past twenty years, other self-focussing influences of incalculable potency have been seeping into the thought of the times—meditative currents of Eastern mysticism and philosophy from Zen Buddhism and Gandhian conceptions of the human being, and both the religious and non-religious expressions of Existentialist revolt and affirmation. The readiness of the age for these self-declaring and meaning-seeking themes is illustrated by their swift adoption, in some form, by leaders in the proliferating field of psychotherapy. Actually, the reunion between art and science began long years ago, when the founders of the psychoanalytical movement recognized that the archetypal problems and relationships of the human situation are luminously displayed in great literature, and while the abstractions of conventional science restricted the progress of psychotherapy for a generation or more, both the creative reality of the arts and the inescapable daily encounters with human beings in pain were bound to wear away the mechanistic frame of psychotherapy. As Ronald Bringle puts the present stance—"The postulation is: there are qualities about the healthy

adult that allow him to organize his experiences, and to transcend the simple accumulation of stimuli impinging upon him; he is something more than the sum of his experiential parts—more than a reactor (Behaviorism) or a reactor-in-depth (Psychoanalysis).'

A further development—climactic in significance—in this direction is the turning of outstanding men in the "mature" sciences toward the arts and the reality of subjects in quest of unified humanistic understanding. Michael Polanyi's major work, *Personal Knowledge*, is unquestionably a main foundation stone of the scientific epistemology of the future; it represents a searching recognition and exacting demonstration of the subjective sources of all scientific discovery, and it links the creative—almost pre-scientific—aspect of science with the ethical and socially responsible intelligence of human beings. J. Bronowski performs a similar function, providing lucidly clear definitions of the scope and function of scientific knowledge, as contrasted with the living flow of communication in the arts, which never lets go, for the sake of some finite clarity or practical need along the way, of the endless Ariadne's thread of self-discovery. (See Bronowski's article in the *American Scholar*, Spring, 1966.)

The work of the humanistic psychologist, A. H. Maslow, should be mentioned here. In his latest book, *The Psychology of Science* (Harper & Row), Dr. Maslow explains that the appearance of Polanyi's *Personal Knowledge* enabled him to give up a much larger project concerned with the philosophy of science and to concentrate on explicitly psychological questions. While a number of humanistic psychologists are making important contributions to the understanding of subjects, and are pioneering introspective methods of investigation, Dr. Maslow has combined this research with study of the psychology of scientists; and, as a former practitioner of mechanistic techniques in psychology, he has reflected long and fruitfully on the implications of what has been called the "third force" in psychology for the basic scope and meaning of science itself. His own work, first described in *Motivation and Personality*, has had an important bearing on these reflections, since it is founded on lifelong study of the symmetries of psychological health and human excellence.

The peculiar value of Dr. Maslow's work in relation to problems of identity lies in its focus on the highest potentialities and qualities of human beings. His findings, beginning with the idea of the peak experience, have led to a conception of man consistent with the intuitions and spontaneous insights of artists and poets, and these findings result, under development, in a psycho-dynamics (such as his comparison of deficiency-needs and being-needs) which makes introspection a wholesome and rewarding enterprise. His view is that if introspection is not presently regarded as "scientific," then the meaning of science must be enlarged. As a scientific psychologist, he says, "My main intention is to include subjective experience in this all-inclusive realm of being and then to pursue some of the radical consequences of this inclusion."

There is considerable fitness in the fact that basic changes in the idea of scientific knowledge as well as the design of a new science of man, are coming from eminent workers within the scientific institution. The ideas of Polanyi, Bronowski, and Maslow promise to become "events" in the history of science, and, since this is a scientific age, in the history of man. Conceivably, with the questions now being asked, it is permissible to call science a "self-regenerating institution," and to say that these men, as well as some others, are taking what Erich Fromm has called a "therapeutic leap" in behalf of both science and mankind.

REVIEW
GANDHI ON NON-VIOLENCE

THE published works of Gandhi are a Himalayan resource for anyone seeking to understand the ground of Gandhi's conviction, the justifications of his method, and the logic of his expectations. There is deep system and inner consistency in Gandhi's thought, but this structure is usually revealed only by inspection of almost endless materials, representing his day-to-day declarations, musings, and afterthoughts in relation to the long succession of crises and struggles which made up his life.

There are various avenues of approach to Gandhi's thought. One may, for example, go to him for instruction and strength in relation to the feeling that war and violence are wrong, and become a "Gandhian" (Gandhi disliked the term) from being immersed in his ideas. Another way to study Gandhi is as a worker for peace who has his own substances of conviction well developed—in some sense "matured"; to turn to Gandhi, that is, as a kind of colleague, yet one from whom it is possible to learn a great deal. Such men study Gandhi without looking for a leader to lean on, and without any sneaky, sectarian competitiveness (*our* pacifism has a depth which Gandhi lacks, but one must read him all the same!); and while, in revealing the fruits of their study, such men usually impose some unifying pattern, the over-all result is an enriching perspective on what Gandhi was about and what he sought to accomplish.

Thomas Merton's slender paperback, *Gandhi on Non-Violence* (New Directions, 1965, $1.75), is a work of this description. Made with selections from Gandhi's *Non-Violence in Peace and War* (Navajivan Trust, Ahmedabad 14, India), the book is divided into sections which suggest by their titles the pattern of Merton's approach. They are Principles of Non-Violence; Non-Violence: True and False; The Spiritual Dimensions of Non-Violence; The Political Scope of Non-Violence; The Purity of Non-Violence. The passages included under these headings seem a fair representation of Gandhi's major ideas.

Here we should like to consider some questions raised in Mr. Merton's Introduction, which is probably the most important part of the book (since the Gandhian material is already in print). In one place he says:

> In Gandhi's mind, non-violence was not simply a political tactic which was supremely useful and efficacious in liberating his people from foreign rule, in order that India might then concentrate on realizing its own national identity. On the contrary, the spirit of non-violence sprang from *an inner realization of spiritual unity in himself.* The whole Gandhian concept of non-violent action and *satyagraha* is incomprehensible if it is thought to be a means of achieving unity rather than as *the fruit of inner unity already achieved.*
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> Indeed this is the explanation for Gandhi's apparent failure (which became evident to him at the end of his own life). He saw that his followers had not reached the inner unity that he had realized in himself, and that their *satyagraha* was to a great extent a pretense, since they believed it to be a means to achieve unity and freedom, while he saw that it must necessarily be the *fruit of inner freedom.*
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> The first thing of all, and the most important of all was the inner unity, the overcoming and healing of inner division, the consequent spiritual and personal freedom, of which national autonomy and liberty would only be consequences. However, when *satyagraha* was seen only as a useful technique for attaining a pragmatic end, political independence, it remained almost meaningless. As soon as the short-term end was achieved *satyagraha* was discarded. No inner peace was achieved, no inner unity, only the same divisions, the conflicts and the scandals that were ripping the rest of the world to pieces.

Now it is right here, in this contention that the inward condition of the individual is the *crux* of peace-making, that the Westerner has his greatest difficulty. He may be willing to give the proposition casual approval, as a kind of "sentiment," but to take it seriously would involve abandoning or revising a basic assumption of libertarian politics in the West. Gandhi, let us note, is proposing what amounts to a sociological *law;* he is saying that the harmony, justice, and freedom of the social community is in fact a projection of the harmony, justice, and freedom which have been achieved in their own lives by individuals. And against this view is by

implication the whole weight of the Western radical and liberal attack on the authoritarian or "organic" state, and on the historical linkages of moralizing religious institutions with political tyranny. The Western skepticism of a politics which makes moral demands of individuals is no doubt partly rooted in the same human, all-too-human resistance to discipline and moral laziness encountered the world over, but it also has passionate intellectual justification from centuries of political experience in the West. For a thousand years or more, the peoples of Europe who lived under feudal regimes were told to practice the virtues, to be content with their lot, and to trust in the mystical presence of their interest in the heart of the ruling prince, whose throne and authority enjoyed heavenly sanction. Gandhi, in short, is proposing a pure and (one hopes) incorruptible version of the principle of hierarchy and of the organic moral structure of the social community—a principle which in European history suffered its most extreme inversion and debasement. Even Gandhi's taking to his own bosom of the responsibility for the "failure" of the *Satyagraha* movement in India can be read as a kind of revival of the Great Chain of Being idea, with the interest or "progress" of his followers made somehow dependent upon him. (If *he* had not failed, whose would the success have been?) Tough-minded, atomistic, democratic political thinking which cherishes the individual as the ultimate, independent value (the anarchist movement completes the logic of this view) is bound to regard Gandhi's moral organicism with a suspicious eye and may even see in it not only hints of spiritual authoritarianism but also a latent apologetic for existing power structures.

Gandhi doesn't mean this at all, and to read him with any attention is to find it out. But the aversion of the West to Immanent Justice or doctrines of Moral Law is an emotional reality which is deeply engrained in self-protective political instincts. Yet the typical Westerner, or rather American, does not even recognize the hierarchical principle operating full steam throughout the horizontal plains of democratic societies. From party moguls and the boys-in-the-back-room to the Corporation-Take-Over and C. Wright Mills' Power Elite, the amorphous mass society of the West is honeycombed with hierarchical structure which distributes power and exercises management through countless nodes of clandestine influence and practical control. Actually, the not-quite-delinquent, boisterous, tough-guy instincts of many Americans cherish the existence of regions uncharted by political theory where they may be able to "operate" and beat the system. Willy Loman's legendary older brother, master of shady commercial magic and secure in his tycoon know-how, is not a *bad* man; he is merely successful in the American way. How are you going to tie *him* down with metaphysical rules?

Gandhi's law of the good community is probably something that the West—or surely the United States—will have to learn in a backhanded way, by *doing*—that is, by experiencing its influence before recognizing and admitting its validity. American morality, such as it is, has always grown out of practice, and while there is strength in principles found out from immediate experience, the pragmatist tends to become a man incapable of larger vision and slow to recognize the operation of universal rules. He usually waits until the feedback of his mistakes is literally overpowering before he is willing to discuss what he may be doing wrong.

But another of Gandhi's confessions of "failure" may be more fruitful for the inquiring Westerner and would-be learner from Gandhi. He said at the end of his life:

> In placing civil disobedience before constructive work I was wrong, and I did not profit by the Himalayan blunder that I committed.

How this hindsight may be turned into foresight by the peace movements of the West is a question that has hardly been considered at all, as a matter of theory, although here and there the high morale of "constructive work" projects in connection with the Civil Rights movement may be accumulating evidence that will be noticed and understood. Meanwhile, Gandhi's extrapolation of the good in the individual to the good of all remains an untested challenge for all but the very few.

COMMENTARY
AUTONOMY AND RESPONSIBILITY

WHAT seems important to recognize, in connection with Gandhi's conception of social structure arising out of individual self-realization (see Review), is that its hierarchical aspect would be wholly non-authoritarian in character. What in the West is known as the aristocratic principle, debased by self-seeking, and made anathema by liberal politics, is more or less obviously an operative reality in all social relationships. Ignoring it achieves nothing more than leaving its operations ethically unexamined. This naturally functional principle need not be outlawed in the Gandhian social scheme, since by definition the best of men would be the most determined in their rejection of power. They would also be the best defenders of the values of the eighteenth-century revolution, since they would embody the qualities through which the highest meaning of freedom is demonstrated. But such ideas as these can be fearlessly adopted only in the context of the nonviolent society envisioned by Gandhi.

A disintegrating tendency soon becomes manifest in societies made up of people who think of their freedom entirely in terms of "rights." And when this centrifugal effect becomes so strong as to threaten the coherence and power of institutions, spokesmen of "national unity" are quick to revive the "organic state" doctrine as the source of political obligation. It is then that radicals and critics of totalitarian power have reason to protest the identification of political unity with "morality." The last citadel of human freedom is then seen to reside in the defiant individual (Savage in *Brave New World,* Rubashov in *Darkness at Noon*). Gandhi, however, maintains that the freedom of the individual must be, as Thomas Merton says, the *"fruit of an inner freedom,"* if the community is to become the kind of association where external or political freedom can survive. His "organicism" relates to the flow of this inner freedom into the entire society. Gandhi, in short, contends that autonomy and responsibility are the two sides of a single coin. This is much more than the watchdog or "eternal vigilance" theory of freedom's preservation.

Gandhi's proposition is really prepolitical, although it has political consequences. And no part of Gandhi's constructive program rests on coercion—a fact which gives an entirely different moral complexion to ideas which the West recognizes only in their most infamous applications. An understanding of the conception of a nonviolent social order requires that the leading ideas of Western political theory be thought through again, in the light of its implications.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

NOTES IN PASSING

IN a vote called the largest turnout in Stanford history, 20-year-old David Victor Harris, campus militant who advocates student strikes, abolition of required courses and all grades, and of fraternities, was elected president of the student body of Stanford University last April. Called in the Los Angeles *Times* report "a long-haired admirer" of the Free Speech Movement at the Berkeley U.C. campus forty-five miles to the north, Harris respects Mario Savio and reads Paul Goodman. His heroes are Staughton Lynd, pacifist Yale history professor who visited North Vietnam recently, Robert Moses, SNCC leader, and Norman Thomas. He has announced his intention to apply for conscientious objector status when he is drafted after graduating. He took the quarter off last fall from Stanford to work in a Mississippi civil rights project. Surprised by his selection by the student body from among a total of eight candidates, Harris said he thought his militant approach to educational reform has "caught on" among the Stanford students. A former football player for Fresno High School, he campaigned in dungarees, wearing a rumpled sports coat and sandals. The *Times* article identifies him as "an honors student in social thought" who recently marched in the Delano (Calif.) grape strike protest. Harris said in a statement:

> I do believe American society is sick. Individuals in the society have stopped looking at themselves and the rest of humanity and considering themselves in relation to that.

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Since David Harris is also called "an admirer of the 'new left'," we reproduce a few passages from the Port Huron Statement adopted by the Students for a Democratic Society at their convention in Port Huron, Mich., in 1962—expressive of a view which, while not "official," is said to be extremely influential among students entering the "new left" movement:

> Making values explicit—an initial task in establishing alternatives—is an activity that has been devalued and corrupted. The conventional moral terms of the age, the politician moralities ("free world," "peoples democracies") reflect realities poorly, if at all, and seem to function more as ruling myths than as descriptive principles. But neither has our experience in the universities brought us moral enlightenment. Our professors and administrators sacrifice controversy to public relations; their curriculums change more slowly than the living events of the world, their skills and silence are purchased by the investors in the arms race; passion is called unscholastic. The questions we want raised—what is really important? can we live in a different and better way? if we wanted to change society how would we do it?—are not thought to be questions of a "fruitful, empirical nature," and thus are brushed aside. . . .
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> There are no convincing apologies for the contemporary malaise. . . . The apathy is, first, subjective—the felt powerlessness of ordinary people, the resignation before the enormity of events. But subjective apathy is encouraged by the situation—the actual separation of people from power, from relevant knowledge, from pinnacles of decision-making. Just as the university influences the student way of life, so do major social institutions create the circumstances in which the isolated citizen will try hopelessly to understand his world and himself. . . . The vital democratic connection between community and leadership, between the mass and the several elites, has been so wrenched and perverted that disastrous policies go unchallenged time and again. . . .
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> The first effort, then, should be to state a vision: What is the perimeter of human possibility in this epoch? . . . The second effort, if we are to be politically responsible, is to evaluate the prospects for obtaining at least a substantial part of that vision in our epoch. What are the social forces that exist, or that must exist, if we are to be successful? And what role have we ourselves to play as a social force? (Quoted from *The New Student Left,* an anthology, edited by Mitchell Cohen and Dennis Hale, Beacon Press? 1966, $4.95)

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A reviewer in *Art Education* (January, 1966) supplies generous quotations from Sir Herbert

Read's *Selected Writings—Poetry and Criticism* (Horizon, 1964, $7.50), and a passage on the role of art in the life of children seems especially important to notice. In one place the author says:

> The modern world has largely forgotten, and our educational systems ignore, the primary importance, in the evolution of man, of various types of symbolic communication—the communication embodied in gesture, ritual, dance, music myth, and poetic metaphor. All these modes of expression constitute a language of feeling, a non-discursive form of thought, absolutely essential to our individual development and to the unity of social life. Adult civilized societies have developed language and discursive logic to such a pitch of refinement that they tend to ignore what may be called the primary non-discursive language of symbols. We may even question the adequacy of a logical syntax for communication even in a developed civilization.
>
> But there is no doubt whatever that intellectual modes of communication do not meet the needs of a child. The child is utterly dependent on symbolic modes of communication, and that is the crux of the whole problem. It is precisely because the child, as it matures and develops complexities of feeling, cannot at the same time express these complexities in verbal and logical form, that frustration results with all its melancholy neurotic aftermath. The ability to represent inner feeling in outward forms is the essential instrument of self-realization, and this ability is a technique that can be taught. We can only "realize" ourselves adequately if we know how to express ourselves significantly; and we only know how to express ourselves significantly if we have preserved the natural intensity of our modes of perception and feeling and are capable of coordinating these modes into significant patterns—into forms which effectively communicate the quality of our sentience to other people.

It is pretty hard to extract memorable meaning from writing "about" art or art education, yet what Herbert Read says seems fundamental enough to absorb. A recent book, *The Education of Vision* (a volume in the Vision + Value series published by George Braziller), edited by Gyorgy Kepes, has in it several contributions about teaching art to children, with many examples and illustrations These articles are mainly worth reading for their impassioned defense of visual thinking and the child's need of it, with vivid illustrations of how it works, such that "word-people" and others who have difficulty in sensing "reality" in non-verbal communication are helped to get the idea.

FRONTIERS

More on Revival of Religion

[The Frontiers article for May 25 was a discussion of the revival of religion, by Alfred Reynolds, reprinted from the *London Letter* for November/December, 1965. The succeeding issue of *London Letter* (January/February) contained a letter of comment with continuation of the discussion by another reader, which we reprint below.]

THE decline of religion has gone hand in hand with the rise in importance of science and the scientific way of looking at things. In those corners of the world where science has had little or no impact, the immanence of God is still felt as a powerful and meaningful force in the destiny of man. As soon as science is able to cast doubt on this immanence and can further demonstrate that certain cherished beliefs have in fact a mundane explanation, and still further can replace uncertain religious benefits by tangible present benefits, it becomes more and more easy to feel that science alone is real and the cherished beliefs at best a superstition and at worst an opiate for a miserable existence. It must be admitted that without science life would be coarse and brutish.

Up to this point I think agreement would be general, but an improvement in living still leaves unanswered the meaning of living at all. Do we just live out our existence as comfortably as possible and then vanish, leaving not even a single footprint upon the sands of time? But even to live comfortably requires a very considerable effort and in any case we cannot prevent the ravages of old age. The question then arises: Is it worth it—why not end it now?

Mankind having now got over the first thrill of discovering that he can largely control his outer world is left vaguely wondering when the process is going to stop and whether, having got so far, he can now pause for a little to see whether the results of unremitting toil are not getting out of control. It is only a short step from controlling things to controlling people; the alliance between politics and science will ensure that those who derive a peculiar satisfaction from manipulating others will be able to do so with battery hen efficiency. This process is already so far advanced that a position eighteen years from now (1984) might well approximate to Orwell's worst fears.

I cannot conceive of anything vital enough to halt this march to human "automation" except a new religious revival. By religious I mean a great upsurge of a desire for a meaningful existence. The present religions of the world are on their way out, so far as outward forms are concerned. It is mistakenly thought that the Christs and the Buddhas who appear from time to time directly start new religions; they do of course make no impact at all on the vast body of the peoples of their day, but they are a sort of magnet to the saints and sages who, because they are already spiritually enlightened, are able to recognize that a great Spiritual Power has come amongst men. These enlightened ones are able to spread the "message" amongst ordinary people who are only imperfectly able to perceive the "message" and in accordance with their various interpretations form different groups of disciples who go about preaching the gospel. These original disciples die off, by which time a somewhat garbled version of the "message" has become accepted as the true gospel. Churches are then formed and a whole hierarchy is built up—an "established" religion is in full sway. From this point the original meaning has become overlaid with dogmas in order to keep the hierarchy in power and the steady decline in spirituality once more leads on to doubt, uncertainty and chaos. This doubt and uncertainty is itself a sign that people are seeking a new direction and a more or less unconscious desire for somebody or something to put them on a path that seems to lead somewhere worthwhile.

I myself consider that these Holy Ones who appear from time to time and who do so to restore a meaningful existence to mankind are the embodied expressions of a Spiritual Force that is not indifferent to our ultimate destiny, but their

importance can be maintained without necessarily putting this interpretation forward.

Suppose now that a Holy One of the stature of Christ has come into the world; we should be no more aware of this than people were when Jesus came amongst men nearly two thousand years ago, or when the Buddha came nearly five hundred years before that; and as a corollary a New religion of world importance is launched. It will be interesting to speculate upon the form this new religion would take, given the world situation as we see it in 1966.

It seems to me that any new religion would have to take account of violence in the modern world, and opposition to violence would be a vital part of the spiritual message. With modern weapons the ultimate end of violent action would be so terrible as to make it certain that no religion would be a complete answer to the world's problems without taking this factor into account and building up a great spiritual resistance to any suggestion of violence.

I would also consider that any new religion would be inspired by what those who have taken their religious inspiration from the East have called "spiritual Communism." The inspired feeling that humanity is *one* and spiritually indivisible; this or that way of observing a religion has no real significance; all attempts at reaching out to the Unknown, whether they can be regarded as strictly religious attempts or not, are to be viewed with sympathy and understanding; what may therefore seem meaningful to one person will not necessarily seem meaningful to another. The human factor being what it is, people must always be at different stages of development, physically, mentally and spiritually. Inability to grasp this point has been disastrous to the established religions, more particularly so in the West—in the East where the religious life has been less ego-centered, less concerned with a personal God and a personal religion, the results have been far less intolerant and aggressive.

The basic assumption of all religions is that there is an Ultimate Reality which lies beyond our immediate perception but which nevertheless impinges at all points, and that by the observance of certain disciplines we can place ourselves in harmony with it. This process of being in harmony with Reality is the yardstick by which all conduct must be measured.

Finally, we must conclude that *all* men are religious but that their degrees of perception vary from those to whom the cares and delights of this world seem all-embracing and of dominant interest, and are consequently easy prey for power politicians and other human manipulators, to the saint and the sage who have little or no interest in the things of this world. The latter are very rare indeed, the former fairly common, and somewhere in between lie the vast majority of mankind.

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