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A HERALD OF CHANGE

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF POWER, by Ronald V. Sampson, lecturer on politics at the University of Bristol, is much more than an essay in gentle persuasion. This recently published work (Pantheon, $4.95) has the tempered strength of a mind schooled in principle and at home among the peak achievements of modern thought. Its sinews of reason are wholly the servant of uncompromised moral idealism. The book has a hero—the human spirit—and while the embodiments of this protagonist are various, Leo Tolstoy emerges as the author's most frequent choice to illustrate what he is championing.

We have here a vision, a mood, and an argument. The vision is heroic, the mood one of striving, the argument strong and clear from the premises of the vision. A paragraph in the concluding chapter makes the vision explicit:

> It has been the central contention of this book that Machiavelli was right when he insisted that the practice of power politics cannot by any logic be reconciled with the precepts of morality. He was wrong in inferring that the profession of prince could be legitimized by the amoral or immoral logic of *raison d'état.* But he was more honest than those who engage in the kind of self-deception that maintains that the State rests on will, not force. Tolstoy saw quite clearly, with Machiavelli, that the State necessarily rests on the logic of power and force. He also saw quite clearly, again with Machiavelli, that this logic leads quite inevitably to the recurring explosion of the power tensions in war. But Tolstoy, unlike Machiavelli, drew the right inference from this; that man is bound by the law of his being to seek the truth and live in accordance with it, and that the truth is expressed in the law of love which is the antithesis of the law of violence. All history testifies to the fact that the law of love is by no means impotent to move men's hearts and minds. Had it been otherwise, mankind would have perished long ago; since power, as the world understands it, necessarily resides and must always reside with those whose moral sensibilities are sufficiently blunted to allow them to use such weapons. It is true that the law of love may prove expensive in the sacrifice it demands from the individual. But even if the conscience can be silenced in order to evade the sacrifice, the rewards of success and of power are incompatible with a man's best self and in any case fleeting. The strictly egocentric secular purpose has a bleak enough core in all conscience. "Success? In a few years thou wilt be dead and dark—all cold, eyeless, deaf, no blaze of bonfires, ding-dong of bells or leading-articles visible or audible to thee again at all for ever: What kind of success is that?"

Now who will oppose this view? All the world of "practical" men will oppose it; all the devotees of "facts," the compilers of discouraging odds, and the tough-minded disdainers of what ought to be in behalf of what unmistakably is. And so, by vast consensus, by the law of experience, and by the blood of all the crucified saviors and the gray ashes of human defeat, the vision is put down.

But Mr. Sampson still has witnesses to call—witnesses who, the reader finds, are as unanswerable as the silent Christ who returned to confront the Grand Inquisitor in Dostoevsky's tale. It is unquestionably true, for example, that had Tolstoy knuckled under to his critics—had he accepted the judgment that man's "animal requirements" are the spring which must be used to influence his behavior, and not his "moral forces"—then, as Edward Garnett said, "his gigantic, national figure would have shrunk to small dimensions." A Tolstoy who joined the consensus would be a forgotten man, today. If the practical leaders of the world are right in declaring that Tolstoy, dreamer and sentimentalist, embraced a "central fallacy," how are we to explain the undying quality of his thought? Mr. Sampson ends by pointing to the spontaneous reactions of human longing:

> Yet apparently it was precisely because of his scrupulous adherence to this central fallacy that Tolstoy bestrode the world like a moral colossus,

> dwarfing the millions of commonsense men. What an odd universe it must be in which falsehood leads directly to "moral grandeur," and truth to the "small dimensions" of men who proceeded to slay one another by the million for reasons which have yet to be discovered. The wisdom of returning good for evil is very difficult to learn, but it is not impossible. The legacies of previous crimes, follies and weaknesses have perhaps loaded the dice against our generation. Our response must be in proportion to the challenge, for in the nuclear age we cannot afford to fail.

The Psychology of Power treats the reader to the almost unique spectacle of a lecturer on politics who contends for a politics which renounces what men have long acknowledged to be politics' principal tool.

Where will men gain the courage and the confidence to turn their backs on authority armed with force and violence? They can get these necessary qualities only, Mr. Sampson says, by acknowledging the supreme rule of the principle of equality. Of those who say, "Oh yes, we know about that," Mr. Sampson replies that indeed they do not, and proceeds to give evidence. Much of his book is devoted to exposing mere lip-service to the principle of equality, and to showing how doctrines of pluralism and empiricism, by rendering moral decision ambiguous, and making it dependent upon shifting sands of "facts," have established compromise as the ruling principle of modern life. Who will deny the dominance/submission pattern of human relations so long as people remain persuaded that irrational brute forces compelling inequality are at the heart of the reality in their lives? If inequality is the law of nature, what force to change it can a "moral impulse" have? In a universe so constructed, Mr. Sampson shows, manipulators and astute compromisers are acknowledged to be the "realists" who grasp the way things are and ought therefore to be relied upon as "leaders." Only the distinction of a misty-eyed melancholy in defeat remains for "morality," which is ceremonially mourned but quickly forgotten by those in charge of "destiny" and of explanation to the people of the practical necessities of life.

But is no attention, then, to be paid to the manifest differences among men—differences in their capacity to get things done and to order the resources of the human community? Mr. Sampson seeks no escape from facts of this class, but inquires, rather, how political authority can be rendered ineffectual as the tool of injustice. His answer is twofold. First, he declares that equality *means* that the differences among men are not of a sort that give sanction to injustice. This arms the will to justice with moral right and leaves no excuse for denying it. Second, he declares that practical recognition of equality means the abandonment of force as a principle of control. Mr. Sampson nowhere proposes that there is anything easy about attainment of the social ideal which he defends, but is mainly interested in opposing the claim that since a truly moral social order will be difficult to obtain, it is therefore impossible and not to be sought after with all the determination men can muster. We can hardly measure our capacity to obtain it, he says, so long as we embrace doctrines which assert that it cannot be done. He would clear the air of this propaganda against the moral ideal so that an intelligent estimate of the difficulties will become possible. But he also says that there is nothing else to do. Following is Mr. Sampson's statement of what he understands by "moral law":

> The moral law rests on the fact that it is possible for every human being to develop in greater or lesser degree in one direction or another. He may seek to order his life and his relations with others on the basis of love or on the basis of power. The two forces are antithetical, but are directly related to each other, in so far as it is impossible to develop in both directions at the same time. To the extent that we develop our capacity for power we weaken our capacity for love; and conversely, to the extent that we grow in our ability to love we disqualify ourselves for success in the competition for power. To the extent that the forces of love in men triumph over the forces of power, equality among men prevails. And conversely, to the extent that the forces of power prevail over the forces of love, domination and subjection characterize human relations. The former is good and leads to human well-being; the latter is bad and leads to suffering and strife. The struggle

> between these dialectical forces is always the same. No one may contract out of it, however much he may wish to do so. For of necessity, everyone at all times and in all positions stands on a relation with other men which will be predominantly of one category or the other. In this sense, what happens in the world, what happens in history, inevitably reflects the contribution, active or passive, of everybody who participates in the vast web of human inter-relations. There are not diverse planes of reality to be judged by different standards. There are no separated, insulated planes of the cloister and the Chancellory Office. Jesus Christ and Adolf Hitler belong together to the common plane of our single human experience. It is merely that they represent extreme polarized positions within our common moral spectrum. I cite them only as rough examples, or rather symbols, to demarcate the limits of the scale on which the rest of us must also find a place. At the one extreme is to be found the strength of a courageous and selfless non-violence. At the other end of the scale is to be found the extreme of violence to which the logic of power, when pushed far enough, can degenerate.

These are the bare bones of Mr. Sampson's thesis. He covers them with lucid argument in chapters which focus on man's ideas about man from several points of view. He is mainly concerned with showing the corrupting effects of beliefs which justify the power of one man over another, or of a man over a woman, or of a ruler over a people. His discussion of the contribution and influence of Sigmund Freud has an excellence seldom found in a brief survey. One may say, after reading this chapter, "The Psychoanalysis of Power," that modern thought has at last assimilated the value of Freud's work and can now begin to use it with more wisdom and less disturbance and shock. The chapter on the nineteenth-century domination of women by men, in family life, draws on biography (Elizabeth Barrett Browning, John Stuart Mill, Samuel Butler). Mr. Sampson endeavors to show that dominance is wholly unjustified, distorting to both the dominating male and the submitting female, and productive of endless pain, not to speak of the moral confusion and ambivalence of those who struggle to free themselves from a tyranny which they have been taught is inevitable and therefore "good." The same kinds of torturing uncertainties afflict men who try to contest the domineering power of class and of the State. A later chapter, "Inequality and Power: Theory and Practice," is followed by a clarifying discussion of "Reason and Emotion and the Logic of Equality."

The Psychology of Power is a book with full command of the modes of contemporary sophistication, yet which cleaves to classical moral simplicities in the exploration of issues, and which justifies what it does by the deepening meanings which result. It is a brave, wise, and compassionate book which should open the way for many more such volumes. Mr. Sampson speaks unashamedly in behalf of the affirmative, envisioning, human spirit. His argument has the added advantage of thorough awareness of all the evils and weaknesses which it refuses to espouse. It places before its readers decisions that all men must make, sooner or later. In time, such works of the mind will create both matrix for and invitation to Tolstoys of the future, giving them a platform of public address and a forum with the amplifying acoustics the times will require.

Letter from
EASTERN EUROPE

THERE is no nonsense about a Rumanian aircraft. The illuminated sign up front says: SMOKING PROHIBITED—PUT ON YOUR BELTS. Nor is there any nonsense about Bucharest policemen. They come, like Jello, in assorted flavors. My companion observed there were two types: packaged and unpackaged. The former inhabit unsightly streetcorner cages and manipulate the traffic lights. The latter either stand woodenly in front of buildings or shamble along the streets, usually looking something less than fully conscious. Whistles are not often blown, but appear to mean business. Even a tap on the window of one of the "packages" causes all heads to turn for instruction. I have never seen anyone hauled off by the scruff of the neck, but one has the sense that it might be possible.

I think it is this sense of impending authority that characterizes the atmosphere of Eastern Europe more than anything else, tightening the nerves involuntarily. Whether this authority is employed capriciously, or viciously, or—as claimed—for the good of all: this is not the primary question. That question is its mere existence. After six years of intermittent travel in almost all of Eastern Europe I still face that question, every hour of the day.

On this trip I seem to have been in contact with an unusual number of persons in several countries who are in one way or another—or who consider themselves to be—victims of this authority. One, trained to teach English, has spent years at the distasteful (to her) task of teaching Russian. The alternative was no job at all. One, formerly an industrialist and a rich man, was exiled from the capital city for fifteen years to the provinces and forbidden any job except that of bookkeeper in a State enterprise. Having now reached retirement age, he is allowed to come back to the capital, and he draws a pension at the bookkeeper's level, equivalent to $20 a month. He is not bitter, but is no warm supporter of the regime.

A third would be, I readily confess, a thorn in the side of any government. She is critical, independent, outspoken in any company. She has no use for authority, and says so. Daughter of a family prominent in the old regime, she has seen one brother, a scientist of stature, disgraced by the new government and now apparently dying of the shock. Another brother, a diplomat, simply elected not to come back to the country after the revolution. But whether the sister by any human standard should be, as she says she is, prohibited from working, refused a pension, and permanently condemned to the role of an outcast in her own country, is at least a valid question. She lives with her invalid sister in one room of the house of her parents, taken by the State and now occupied by several families. She endures squalor, lightened only by a triumphant personal faith and a sardonic sense of humor.

A fourth, polyglot with five languages at professional standard, widow of a businessman, translates movie subtitles for the national television. She still has part of the flat she occupied with her husband. There are three separate doorbells, each with its name. She has relatives living in Paris and in England. Recently her application for a visit to Paris was refused with, as usual, no reason given. She thinks it is because, since she is the last of her family in the country, no one would be left as hostage for her return.

This raises an interesting point. If, as always alleged, it is necessary for the Socialist regimes to adopt draconian measures in order to retain their supply of trained workers, can't they be expected, on reasonable grounds, to make better use of it? A competent and experienced business executive, condemned to bookkeeping in the provinces; an experienced practical nurse, a person of natural sympathy and humanity, condemned to idleness; a cultural polyglot translating the gibberish of a television serial: not a very good case.

These regimes are not, of course, alone. In the U.S. we do not constructively use the skills and aptitudes of Negroes and other minorities. We do not fully open training and other opportunities of a so-called democratic society to them. But this situation is of a different order of magnitude from the slavery of a century ago, and Eastern European conditions seem in some ways more like the latter than the former. I say this reluctantly, since it is uncomfortably close to the claims of the compulsive anti-Communist whose attitudes more or less direct our society. Yet it is not enough to explain that an omelet cannot be made without breaking eggs. A revolution, certainly, though it may bring benefit to many, is bound to hurt at least a few. But must it continue indefinitely to hurt those few, decade after decade? I wonder. I see no signs of significant resistance within any of these national societies. Nor is their performance so bad as to suggest imminent economic or social breakdown, as some foreign diplomats with whom I have close contact in the area would like to believe. Improvement must come from within the societies, but at this point I find it increasingly difficult to summon the necessary patience.

ROVING CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW

JOURNAL ENTRY

SINCE so few scholarly journals have much life in them, it is a pleasure to report on a new MANAS exchange, the *Journal of Human Relations,* a quarterly published by Central State College, Wilberforce, Ohio, now in its fourteenth year. The editor is Ralph T. Templin, whose book, *Democracy and Nonviolence,* was discussed in MANAS for June 29. The *Journal* seeks light on human relations from all the disciplines and endeavors to foster a unified "science whose scope is humanity within a laboratory for personal and popular experimentation with truth upon every level of the developing human community."

The issue for the third quarter of 1965 (No. 3, Vol. 13) is devoted to studies of Twentieth Century Violence and consists of reports on the Conference on International Tensions held in September, 1964, in Montreal, and on Brandeis University's First Conference on Violence held in December, 1964. The Montreal conference, sponsored by the Society for the Study of Social Problems, considered papers concerned with methods of peace research and others which reported on practical efforts toward reconciliation. Among the latter, Roland L. Warren's discussion of his "two-year experience in a mediating role in East and West Berlin" is particularly interesting. He begins by describing his job:

> As International Affairs Representative in Germany for the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), the writer lived in West Berlin and developed and maintained contacts with high officials of the German Democratic Republic as well as of West Berlin and the Federal Republic. It was part of his deliberate function to talk with officials who, because of the difficulties of the German situation and the Federal Republic's policy of non-recognition of the German Democratic Republic, were not talking to each other.

The effort to find and develop a common ground for discussion between two such militantly opposed "belief systems" would be a very tough assignment for anyone; as Mr. Warren says: "It subjected the writer to considerable psychic strain, since he continually disappointed conversants on both sides of the conflict by not agreeing with them sufficiently to satisfy them." However, what immediately occurs to the reader of this paper is the enormous educational value of such "in-between" roles, despite the pressures involved. Anyone having such experience would acquire a discipline in impartiality so rigorous as to affect all the rest of his life. One wonders if practical applications of this idea, in relation to lesser conflict situations, could not be worked out for use in the high schools and colleges of the United States. Such deliberate instruction in the distortions of partisanship might do much to lessen the heat of controversy for coming generations.

Mr. Warren gives this account of the psychological circumstances of his various confrontations:

> Each side knew how its reasoning was derided by the other side, but it dismissed the other side with relative ease. There still remained the question of how its position would look to a presumably dispassionate observer. Each side wanted reassurance.
>
> It is remarkable how often the conversation really began with such a question as "Well, then—and what do you think? Don't you agree with our position?" The context and the attitudes tended to vary, though. In the East, the attitude tended to be very highly aggressive against the West, with extensive verbalization and a recital of well-known arguments of militarism, revanchism, and fascism, as though the official really supposed one had never heard them before. In the West, the attitude tended to be one of self-assurance, of simply assuming that since the writer seemed to be a decent sort of person he must be quite aware of how they, over there, are 100 per cent wrong; and one does not protest this any more than one protests that he loves his mother.
>
> While the Communist expected rather complete disagreement and was gratified at the least indication of understanding of this or that point of view, the West German or American expected agreement and was disappointed at the slightest indication of giving credence to one or another Communist point. Also, from the writer's standpoint, one expected agreement

> from one's own kind and was disappointed to find the Western officials so often "unreasonable," while one was aware of basic disagreements with the Communist and was gratified at small indications of "reasonableness."

One might almost conclude, from study of this paper, that the tough-minded righteousness of the partisans in such situations is a divisive factor of more importance than the actual differences between them. To the extent that this is the case, conflict may be recognized as no more than an effect of self-fulfilling prophecy.

A paper on "The Futility of Deterrence," by Elwin H. Powell, has this passage:

> Deterrence is a threat-system used to "persuade a potential enemy that he should in his own interests avoid certain courses of activity." The theory presupposes the rationality of the adversary—it would not work with masochists or madmen. Deterrence necessitates trust (*i.e.,* faith in the sanity of the opponent) and creates distrust through its reliance on threat. As a tactic or temporary expedient, threat may be useful, but as a policy, it sows the seeds of its own defeat. In fact, deterrence is not so much a policy as an ideology—a justification for continuing the arms pile-up after the concept of defense has lost all meaning.
>
> Does deterrence work? The "new civilian militarists" who have elaborated the doctrine of deterrence are talented gamesmen but poor politicians. Henry Kissinger views with great alarm the decline of American *influence* since World War II, yet during this period our military might increased astronomically. For fifteen years we talked *only of defending, not of creating* a free world. Supposedly, the United States is a "status-quo power uninterested in new territory or areas of influence but determined to keep what it has." Yet after two decades of cold war with an arms expenditure of 500 billion dollars and another 100 billion on foreign aid, the United States has been unable to buy security, retard the growth of communism, or even maintain its far-flung entanglement of alliances. American foreign policy has been undermined by the deterrent intent which inspired it, and American military policy has not provided defense but increased the probability of disaster.

However, this writer finds some encouragement in recent efforts on the part of one of the nuclear powers to substitute persuasion for threat:

> The Cold War has evolved from a game into a debate, and as Anatol Rapoport puts it, "The objective [of a debate] is to convince your opponent, to make him see things as you see them." A debate cannot be won through the threat of force. The cornerstone of Soviet policy since the mid-fifties has been the concept of "peaceful coexistence." Since there is no long-term alternative to coexistence except a mutually suicidal war, can the United States take the initiative and go a step beyond coexistence to cooperation? Sloganeers talk of winning the Cold War. But as Schelling points out, "winning in a conflict does not have a strictly competitive meaning," *i.e.*, it is not relative to the adversary. It means gaining relative to one's own value system. Through cooperation both sides win. Is such an idea "unthinkable"?

Some observations by Karl Menninger, in a paper entitled "Toward Understanding Violence," presented at the Brandeis Conference, add a dimension which seems essential to any genuine reconciliation of differences between partisan groups:

> There is no such thing as the "psychotic population." Mental illness is a condition from which every one of us suffers at one time or another to different degrees, and it is neither thee nor thou business, or me and thou business to say, "Well, those psychotic people, they are the ones that do these things." You and I are the psychotic people in the sense that you and I are the ones who are aware that there are fluctuations in our ability to organize and manage our aggressions and the temptations of the outside world. . . . If we mean, therefore, to study violence, we must study the people that cannot get along, that cannot cope with the realities of life in a civilized way. I think Dr. Sachar, my colleague here, has contributed something very important in the *Scientific American* article where he points out that our attitude towards offenders has been almost one of saying "Since I cannot understand you, I am angry at you; therefore, I am not willing to try to help you change. I only want you punished." This conventional attitude should be corrected. . . . Sooner or later it seems to me it ought to be an expression of our civilization that we are not interested in returning violence for violence, that we are interested in trying to bring about change in the people who cannot live in a way that will allow us to be safe, especially as we get closer together.

The closing statement of the Conference at Brandeis, by J. Lee Rankin, included the following:

> The most important lesson in the Warren Report is the fact that the system we are supporting (and apparently are going to carry on with) and our society are probably developing many Oswalds day by day throughout the country. Apparently, no one has observed this. . . . We have an educational system which did its part to produce Oswald. Society did its share to make Oswald what he was. I wonder whether our country can afford to have a person like Oswald developed by our system, or many like him constantly? . . . I also wonder about aggression. Is there so much difference, or only in kind, when people like Oswald use a violence in pulling a trigger and others, who live a much more sophisticated existence and have enriched backgrounds and training, go through the process of abusing their colleagues when discussing their ideas and ideals? When I was working with the [Warren] Commission, I observed men of great ability and experience who freely tore to pieces the brain-children of their associates with delight. Is that another expression of aggression in which we all love to indulge, as Dr. Menninger pointed out?

Apparently, a journal of this character does not attract contributions which evade basic issues, but rather gives scope to statements which seek the actual sources of responsibility and attempt to mark them for identification.

COMMENTARY
THE OPTICS OF TOMORROW

DURING a discussion of the contents of this issue, one of the editors remarked that the key idea of "equality" in R. V. Sampson's book does not come out strongly enough—or that its meaning is not sufficiently characterized.

This makes an occasion for pointing out that the essentials of Humanism always depend upon humanly *generated* meanings—not upon plainly "objective" realities. The moral universe may be a transcendental fact, not an "illusion" of wishful thinking, but realizing it is an act of the imagination.

The vision of Emerson is a *generated* vision. You share in the vision by the power of his mind, and then, if you are able, generate a vision of your own. Such visions grow or pale with the quality of a man's life and of his thinking and feeling—but are nonetheless real for being subject to these oscillations.

The "equality" of which Mr. Sampson speaks is of this order of reality. It is one of the functions of love, of which he also speaks. If you brood upon the idea of equality, you get around to the view that it is a name for the manifest yet indefinable capacity for growth in all human beings. To deny that capacity is to work injustice, to support the principle of inequality. When we see some men attempting to freeze arrangements which cut other people off from the possibilities of growth, we feel outrage. It is not that they are all "the same" in some ridiculous, overt way. The principle of equality does not mean that. It means that we feel, spontaneously, insistently, although alas inconsistently, the law of the brotherhood of man.

"Equality," in Mr. Sampson's energetic and rigorous vocabulary, has the same meaning that we would put into the word "charity" as used by Saint Paul (I, *Cor.*, 13), to make it acceptable to contemporary ethical feelings. Equality means mutual recognition and honoring of the human essence. It is both the lover's and the teacher's idea of the human being. It has no *fundamental* measure of a man save his limitless or unpredictable potentiality. Having this view of his fellows does not make a man a fool, but makes him wise. You cannot participate in any educational enterprise without it. You cannot obtain trust or win respect—the central principles of all worthy social order—without relying on it. Our difficulty is that Equality is seen by a light which must come from the eye of the one who sees—and we have yet to understand how the shadows which darken the common life are cast.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
THINKING ABOUT A COLEEGE

THE idea of setting up a college grew out of dissatisfaction with both the structure and the operation of the traditional small college. A number of us were challenged by the opportunity to re-think educational values at a time when the conception of college experience as a moratorium and a kind of refuge from the challenges of society has become increasingly irrelevant. Students of today are above all seeking to establish their identity through direct involvement with the key problems of our society, and their need is for a time when they can experiment and learn, but learn from doing, not simply from theorizing at a distance.

Moreover, there is a need for a new set of guiding ideas to help define the ends of education. On the one hand there is the bureaucratization of the university with its paraphernalia, of grades, electives, departments, and meaningless specialization of experience. On the other hand there is the anarchy of social experience that leads to drugs, opting out, cynicism, and a philosophy of kicks. Both point to the need for an integrative approach that has the courage to speak to the whole person, not simply in terms of his needs and interests, but in terms of a commitment to a set of values that can serve to shape and give meaning to the educational community. There must be freedom for the individual student to pursue his own path toward realization of his abilities, but there must also be the structure to inform the student and allow him to recognize and understand ideals of excellence that he can work toward.

What are the structures? What are the values? They will develop as a result of the people who are involved. But discussions that have already taken place, based on the experiences of a number of us, give some directions. There is a need, for one, to get away from the factory approach: certain classes, a nine-to-five day, then nothing. The relationship between student and faculty must be closer and more meaningful than can be provided for by the nine-to-five approach. Thus, we have talked rather in terms of an apprentice system using workshops, labs, studios, as the place where education takes place. Discussing this, we have felt that such an approach could provide for the interaction of theory and practice, thought and action, which is central to an integrative approach to learning. We must seek to provide settings where learning can be put into action. This means extending the college beyond the boundaries of the physical community in many directions: into the city where social problems can be studied first hand; into the surrounding rural areas where rural poverty can be seen directly; into the south, where the problems of the Negro can be studied in the context of a hostile white population and rural poverty.

We have discussed the possibilities of substituting for the traditional system of grades a system that would be no less demanding yet which would be defined by the particular purposes set forth by student and teacher together: the student and the teacher would jointly make a contract to deal with certain topics, to work in certain areas, to engage in certain activities. This contract might be for a month, six months, a year. At the end of this time, as well as during it, evaluations would be made so as to determine how well the contract was fulfilled. Did the student gain an understanding of certain ideas? Did he learn certain skills? Either verbal, technical, or artistic? Did the teacher help him as he should have?

What about the immediate society, the educational community? Can we provide here also for the necessary interplay of freedom and structure? How can we create an environment fit not only for learning, but for living? We must allow for the freedom of individual life styles, but we must also provide for self-government and a necessary degree of order and decency. There will be some students who have already learned to live decently with others. But others will know little of this, and thus expectations must be created which are met by everyone. A system of self-government must be set up which both insists that standards be maintained, yet which deals with the enforcement of standards with intelligence rather than in bureaucratic fashion.

Education is, basically, that which promotes growth in the human being. Thus the distinction between the curricular and extra-curricular is artificial. For some, the curriculum will be a set of studies oriented toward a graduate school or profession. For others, the curriculum will consist of working among sharecroppers as well as learning the economics and politics that govern their lives. We will, perhaps, offer a degree. Here again, we should seek to achieve maximum flexibility along with integration. We spoke of the possibility of a requirement not of horizontal integration in terms of the mastery of several disciplines as prerequisites for the degree, but rather of vertical integration: that there be required a capacity to deal with both the practical and theoretical aspects of any given field.

In talking of how the college should be operated, we felt that we should question the traditional structure. Why should control be vested in people who were not directly involved in the continuous and daily operation of the place? And so we arrived at the notion of a group of trustee-teachers who would be ultimately and legally responsible for the college. Applying our contract idea, we saw this group contracting with other teachers to come for a week, a month, a year, to operate the chicken farm, a laboratory, a work shop in crafts. But here, too, flexibility should be the rule: those who were both continuously involved and deeply interested in the college should then be offered the opportunity to become trustees if they fitted in and were willing to take on responsibilities of trustees. Trustees in turn, would delegate responsibility by contracting out any of the duties to be performed. Would we also want a student or students trustee, elected every year? Would we need anything more than a chairman of the board of trustees to represent us? Or a managing director?

We also discussed the problems of teaching well. Is each of us sufficiently clairvoyant that we can be certain we are best able to evaluate our own teaching? We thought not, and suggested that we should require that all of us should be willing for the first year or two to undergo evaluation by our by our colleagues.

Several of us have taught in high school. It is hard to take college freshmen who have been miseducated for the major part of their youth and expect to affect their attitudes and orientations in basic ways. But supposing we took kids for the last two years of high school? Their education would have less chance to do its damage, and we in turn would have more chance to lay a groundwork for the college level. Then also we might concentrate on off-campus projects for the last two years of college, so the many students could use this period to prepare themselves for the final break with campus life in general. But even here we discussed the possibility of continued contact. Does our contract with and obligation to the student run out at that point when we hand him a degree? If not, what form should continued contact take? Should there be periodic seminars so that alumni could continue their educational life beyond their formal study? Should we, from the beginning, offer continuing education programs, available to anyone, of any age?

Also, to go back to the community itself: it is true that we wish students to learn from doing, and particularly from involvement in actual situations of responsibility within the community. But do we not also wish to create our own society, wherein values excluded from the larger society may be lived and realized? Wherever people live together, one is stuck with the problem of how to live. The question is really whether we want to take responsibilities for these problems or let them go by default. Also, what about different age groups? Would we want to maintain the graded segregation of most institutions, or would we want to find ways whereby high school, college, and adult students might interact with each other as well as with the faculty?

These then are the topics which have formed the basis of a discussion which we hope to continue, and to implement, with some people who are dedicated to the search for new ways to make the educational experience relevant to the times we live in.

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FRONTIERS

A Ramble on Education

> Not until we realize that a poor culture will never become rich, though it be filtered through the expert methods of unnumbered pedagogues, and that a rich culture with no system of education at all will leave its children better off than a poor culture with the best system in the world, will we begin to solve our educational problems.
>
> MARGARET MEAD

IF this prediction borrowed from Dr. Mead's *Growing Up in New Guinea* is essentially correct, what an enormous lot of wasted breath there is in most of the arguments about "education"! That she is right seems beyond dispute. Very nearly every clear-thinking study of modern education reaches the same conclusion. Three recent books, for example—Paul Goodman's *Growing Up Absurd,* John Holt's *How Children Fail,* and Edgar Z. Friedenberg's *The Vanishing Adolescent*—find the fundamental ill of today's education in the impoverishment of the adult society, which reflects itself in the schools.

Why is so much of educational debate beside the point? Probably for the reason that it is easy to make arguments based upon definite but superficial reference-points. It is easy, for example, to compare the low expenditures per pupil in the southern states with the high allotments of New York and other industrially prosperous areas, and then argue for correction of this disparity among educational opportunities for American children. Dollars spent do measure something, and such statistics are not wholly insignificant, but they ignore what may be wrong with education in all, including the richer, areas of the country. The equating of educational standards with its cost in public funds is on a par with what Walter Weisskopf has termed "GNP Fetishism"—taking the dollar-volume of total annual production as a measure of the material "health" of the nation. This figure doesn't tell us what we most need to know, and it distracts us from finding out.

There are really two problems here. One is little more than the familiar "materialism" which leaves unquestioned such false standards of measurement, a basic distortion in the outlook of human beings. This is difficult enough to cope with, but is now a commonplace condition of life in all regions of the world which are under the dominance of "economic progress" ideologies. The other problem is more serious, since it is shaped by the moral determination of plainly altruistic reformers who cannot bear the thought of losing arguments in behalf of under-privileged children. It seems wrong to criticize them at all, yet in the yearning for a case built on "hard facts," they degrade the content of their argument. They lend their energies to the very delusions at the root of the impoverishment of education and culture generally, because, filled with a passion for "action," they fight for solutions that can be *manipulated* into being. The suggestion that these solutions may not really help matters is rejected as a form of selfish indifference to the needs of the dispossessed. Yet working arduously to establish equality of opportunity for the schooling a "poor culture" affords may only hide the deeper issues from view.

The basic reason why the meaning of Margaret Mead's phrase, "rich culture," is not seriously argued about is that those who conduct the debates on education do not see how their cause can "cash in" on the possible answers that might be obtained. You could say that Margaret Mead is talking about "existential values," and existential values are by definition values which cannot be achieved by manipulation. A federal plan for improving education with equalizing appropriations can have no measurable relation to these values. A school bond issue can be passed without the slightest notice of these values or awareness of how they are served. A "rich culture" grows rich out of the individual reserves of human beings who have themselves become rich because they recognize the difference between "cash-in" and existential values, and prefer the latter whenever there is significant choice. Reforms which ignore this difference can never be more than grandiose projects in irrelevance and educational self-defeat.

Does this mean that no attention should be given to inequities in education growing out of economic want? Of course not. It means only that projects for human betterment which give attention to nothing else will in the long run bring only anti-human results. If the richest country in the world suffers from the educational malnutrition described by Goodman, Holt, and Friedenberg, something is plainly wrong with the remedies that have already been applied. More of the same will hardly help.

Who, then, can help us to understand what is meant by a "rich culture"? Not, certainly, the economists, who would only bludgeon us with facts. We need the help of people who deal throughout their lives with the Glorious Uncertainties, who have somehow gained what you can't buy with money and enjoy victories that are not won with votes. Who are such people? Well, deciding how to identify them is a step in the enrichment of culture. More often than among other groups, however, they are found to be artists; and artists whose work leads them to grapple with the needs and hungers and dreams of other people sometimes seem to have a better understanding of what a "rich culture" would be like than almost anyone else.

Take for example the general cultural understanding displayed in *What Is Design?* by Paul Jacques Grillo (Paul Theobald & Co., Chicago, 1960). The following discussion of "Archetypes" in design embodies existential values:

> This type of design consists of all the homes, farms and articrafts designed by peasants and villagers the world over, by little people composed of ingenious craftsmen and shrewd practical men who have sharpened their wits and common sense in working out logical solutions to the many problems involved in living close to nature. To survive, their mode of living had to be in symbiosis with natural life. Their buildings had to be designed as natural shells to protect and help their way of living, just as forms of nature had to adjust their design to the conditions of their particular environment in order to survive.
>
> As a result, we have an infinite variety of basic designs keyed to the natural conditions that surround a group of people living in the same region. They represent the sum of the ingenuity and wisdom of the people. . . . As would be expected, this type of anonymous design shows identical solutions in countries separated from each other by half the globe and in people separated by thousands of years. It shows that art is the common denominator among all civilizations, regardless of difference of language or degree of evolution.

In another place, Mr. Grillo brings the designer's insight to an analysis of public buildings:

> The kind of government that rules a society is revealed even more clearly in plans than in façades. The three examples shown here represent masterworks from three characteristic types of government: (1) The mysterious and absolute ruling of a deity—or theocratic government. Like a gigantic safe, the armored walls of the temple protect the awesome inner sanctum through their successive enclosures. (Temple at Medinet Habu:) (2) The theatrical display of power and total symmetry that is the expression of a dictatorial government. The Romans, a people of engineers, soldiers, lawyers and merchants, counted few poets. Their total disregard for the beauty of the natural sites and forms turned planning into bulldozing. Design became a man-made formula, no longer a poetic understanding of the natural environment, no longer a search to belong—but only an arrogant claim to the right to destroy the divine order of nature. (3) The wandering fun and freedom of the individual that make a democratic government so dear to our hearts. The Greek plan is organically distributed around a center of gravity, as are the vital organs of the human body within the chest cavity. Under the seemingly carefree and chaotic plan lies a thorough understanding of the flow of action and a humble and poetic obedience to the site and the contour of the land. It breathes independence and freedom. . . .
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> What we proudly call our age of technology is in danger of being known by historians of the future as the age of plumbing, if we continue to define function in design by bathtubs and washing machines. True functional design has very little to do with what we

> call progress. In fact, it seems to be in reverse proportion to the degree of material progress of a civilization.

Now all these contentions are plainly arguable. What is not arguable is the fact that dialogue with Mr. Grillo on these questions would be a refining and enriching experience for almost anyone. You might, for example, wish to debate with him about the symbolism of an Egyptian temple, as perhaps typifying the difficult access to inward truth, or to complain that while the Greeks were indeed "free" in their way, they also externalized their values to a point of inner dissolution. What is to be avoided, at any rate, is any sort of "final" settlement of such uncertainties about the human spirit and its embodiments and monuments. The point is that these things *matter*, and their neglect can only lead to short-term, vulgarly "empirical" solutions which cut off vital flows of life without our even knowing it.

At a level of broad generalization there is direct correspondence to all this in a passage in Herbert Read's *Education Through Art* (Faber & Faber):

> If we have no a *priori* notions of what art should be—if we realize that art is as various as human nature—then it is certain that a mode of æsthetic expression can be retained by every individual beyond the age of II and throughout and beyond the adolescent period in general—if we are prepared to sacrifice to some extent that exclusive devotion to the learning of logical modes of thought which characterizes our present system of education. The art of the child declines after the age of 11 because it is attacked in every direction—not merely squeezed out of the curriculum, but squeezed out of the mind by the logical activities which we call arithmetic and geometry, physics and chemistry, history and geography, and even literature as it is taught. The price we pay for this distortion of the adolescent mind is mounting up: a civilization of hideous objects and misshapen human beings, of sick minds and unhappy households, of divided societies armed with weapons of mass destruction. We feed these processes of dissolution with our knowledge and science, with our inventions and discoveries, and our education system tries to keep pace with the holocaust; but the creative activities which could heal the mind and make beautiful our environment, unite man with nature and nation with nation—these we dismiss as idle, irrelevant and inane.

A rich culture is a culture with the resources to define its needs and ends with wisdom. Getting such resources is not a matter of budget; they come from people who set their hearts upon them and who, with eloquence and by example, show why they have done so. A win/lose, politicalized society tends to drive such people underground.