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OUR NORMAL CONDITION?

IS there now a "human crisis"? Numerous writers are now declaring that a crisis is upon us and are writing luminous books to explain what they mean. It is no longer necessary to identify their themes or to summarize their contents. These matters are becoming well known. Yet what may remain unknown is the underlying cause or causes. For this reason we are grateful to a reader who recently sent to us, for our library, a copy of the Fall-Winter 1946-47 issue of *Twice a Year,* edited and published by Dorothy Norman, which has in it an essay by Albert Camus, "The Human Crisis," a talk he gave in the United States in the spring of 1946. One thing may be said about Camus' work: it never becomes dated. The circumstances and provocatives of what he says may change, but its truth and meaning do not.

He began by speaking of himself and his generation:

> The men of my age in France and in Europe were born just before or during the first great war, reached adolescence during the world economic crisis, and were twenty the year Hitler took power. To complete their education they were then provided with the war in Spain, Munich, the war of 1939, the defeat, and four years of occupation and secret struggle. I suppose this is what is called an interesting generation. And so I thought that it would be more instructive if I spoke to you not in my own name but in the name of a certain number of Frenchmen who today are thirty years old, and whose minds and hearts were formed during the terrible years when, with their country, they were nourished on shame and learned to rebel.
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> Yes, this is an interesting generation, and first of all because confronting the absurd world its elders had prepared for it, this generation believed in nothing and lived in revolt. The literature of their period was in revolt against clarity, narration, and even the phrase. Painting rejected the subject, reality, and even harmony. Music rejected melody. As for philosophy, it taught that there was no truth but only phenomena, that there could be Mr. Smith, M. Durand Herr Vogel, but nothing common to these three particular phenomena. The moral attitude of this generation was even more categorical: nationalism seemed to it a truth that had been transcended, religion a banishment, twenty-five years of international politics had taught it to doubt all the purities and to think that no one was ever wrong since everybody could be right. As for the traditional morality of our society, this was what it still seems to be to us, a monstrous hypocrisy.

How are we, in our time, different from Camus? We,or a great many of us, have come to regard the conditions he describes as more or less "normal," whereas he found them completely unacceptable. As he put it,

> Other generations in other countries had undergone this experience in other periods of history. But what was new was the fact that men, estranged from all values, should have had to adjust their personal position to the realities of murder and terror. It was at this point that they were led to think that there might be a Human Crisis, for they had to live the most heartbreaking contradictions. They entered the war as one enters Hell, if it is true that Hell is the denial of everything. They loved neither war nor violence; they had to accept war and exercise violence. They felt hatred only for hate. However, they had to apply themselves to the study of this severe discipline. In flagrant contradiction with themselves, without any traditional value to guide them, they had to confront the most grievous problems for men.

Instead of generalizing these problems, Camus chooses to tell "four brief stories" which explain what he means.

> (1). In an apartment rented by the Gestapo in a European capital, after a night of questioning, two accused, still bleeding and tightly bound are discovered; the concierge of the establishment carefully proceeds to set the place in order, her heart light, for she had no doubt breakfasted. Reproached by one of the tortured men, she replies indignantly, "I never mix in the affairs of my tenants."

(2). In Lyon, one of my comrades is taken from his cell for a third examination. In a previous examination his ears had been torn to shreds, and he wears a dressing around his head. The German officer who leads him, the very one who had taken part in the previous interrogation, asks in a tone of affection and solicitude: "How are your ears now?"

(3). In Greece, after an action by the underground forces, a German officer is preparing to shoot three brothers he has taken as hostages. The old mother of the three begs for mercy and he consents to spare one of her sons, but on the condition that she herself designate which one. When she is unable to decide, the soldiers get ready to fire. At last she chooses the eldest, because he has a family dependent upon him, but by the same token she condemns the other two sons, as the German officer intends.

(4). A group of deported women, among whom is one of our comrades, is being repatriated to France by way of Switzerland. Scarcely on Swiss soil, they see a funeral. The mere sight of which causes them to laugh hysterically: "So that is how the dead are treated here," they say.

What has happened to human beings, that things like this go on as a matter of course? Camus points out that the perversion of values is such that "a man or an historical force is judged today not in terms of human dignity but in terms of success." But the offenders, someone may say, were Nazis, who were hardly human beings. What, then, of the current reports of similar happenings by Amnesty, Inc., in many parts of the world? To bring the matter closer to home, one might look up some of the reports of what the *contras* have done to Central American peasants, and the activities of the "death squads" in other parts of Central America.

The comment of Camus has wide application today:

Men live and can only live by retaining the idea that they have something in common, a starting point to which they can always return. One always imagines that if one speaks to a man humanly his reactions will be human in character. But we have discovered this: there are men one cannot persuade. It was not possible for an inmate of a concentration camp to hope to persuade the S.S. men who beat him that they ought not to have done so. The Greek mother of whom I spoke could not convince the German officer that it was not seemly for him to arrange her heartbreak. For S.S. men and German officers were no longer men, representing men, but like an instinct elevated to the height of an idea or a theory. Passion, even if murderous, would have been less evil.

Camus then speaks of the prevalence of bureaucracy.

By means of paper, bureaus, and functionaries, a world has been created from which human warmth has disappeared, where no man can come in contact with another except across a maze of formalities. The German officer who spoke soothingly in the wounded ears of my comrade, felt he could act thus because the pain he had inflicted was part of his official business, and consequently, there was no real harm done. In short, we no longer die, love, or kill except by proxy. This is what goes by the name, if I am not mistaken, of "good organization."

What has happened, as Camus puts it, is "The substitution of the political for the living man."

What counts now is not whether or not one respects a mother or spares her from suffering, what counts now is whether or not one has helped a doctrine to triumph. And human grief is no longer a scandal it is only a cipher in reckoning the terrible sum of which is not yet calculable.

It is clear that all these symptoms may be summed up in the single tendency describable as the cult of efficiency and of abstraction. This is why man in Europe today experiences only solitude and silence. For he cannot communicate with his fellows in terms of values common to them all. And since he is no longer protected by a respect for man based on the values of man, the only alternative henceforth open to him is to be the victim or the executioner.

History now seems to be the process by which we are brought closer and closer to the realization that for Camus had become plain in 1946. He also saw the emptiness of the age, already a moral vacuum which more and more individuals are struggling to fill in the present. The urgency of the search for meaning was well understood by Camus:

If the characteristics of this crisis are indeed the will to power, terror, the replacement of the real by

> the political and the historical man, the reign of abstractions and of fate, solitude without a future, and if we want to overcome this crisis, then these are the characteristics we must change. And our generation finds itself confronting this immense problem while having nothing to affirm. It is in fact from its very negations that it has to draw the strength with which to fight It was perfectly useless to tell us: you must believe in God, in Plato, or in Marx, since the problem was that we were without this type of faith. The only question for us was whether or not to accept a world in which there was no choice possible save whether to be victim or executioner. And it goes without saying that we did not want to be the one or other, since we knew deep in our hearts that even this distinction was illusory, and that at bottom all were victims, and that assassins and assassinated would in the end be reunited in the same defeat. So the problem was no longer merely whether or not to accept this condition and the world, but to determine what reasons we could have for opposing them.

What then did Camus decide? With his extraordinary strength of mind, he said:

> We must call things by their right names and realize that we kill millions of men each time we permit ourselves to think certain thoughts. One does not reason badly because one is a murderer. One is a murderer if one reasons badly. It is thus that one can be a murderer without having actually killed anyone. And so it is we are all murderers to one degree or another. The first thing to be done, then: the pure and simple rejection in thought and deed of all forms of realistic and fatalistic thinking.
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> We must cleanse the world of the terror congesting it, a terror that controls everything and prevents clear thinking. . . .
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> Politics, must, wherever possible, be put back in its rightful place, which is a secondary one. Its aim should not be to provide the world with a gospel, or a catechism, either political or moral. The great misfortune of our time is precisely that politics pretends to furnish at once with a catechism, a complete philosophy, and at times even with a way of loving. But the role of politics is to set our house in order, not to deal with our inner problems. . . .
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> Finally, it is necessary to understand that this attitude requires that a universalism be created through which all men of good will may find themselves in touch with one another. In order to quit one's solitude it is necessary to speak, but to speak with candor, never to lie under any circumstances, and to tell all the truth that one knows. But one can speak the truth only in a world in which truth is defined and founded on values common to all men. It is not for a Hitler to decide that this is true and that false. No mortal man, today or tomorrow, can conclude that his truth is good enough to justify imposing it on others. . . . The freedom we must finally win is the freedom never to lie. Only thus can we come to know our reasons for living and for dying.

Toward the end of this essay, Camus says:

> To sum up now, and to speak for myself for the first time, I would like to say just this: whenever one judges France or any other country or question in terms of power, one aids and sustains a conception of man which logically leads to his mutilation, one encourages the thirst for domination and in the end one gives one's sanction to murder. As with real acts, so with thought. And he who says or writes that the end justifies the means, and he who says or writes that greatness is a question of power, that man is absolutely responsible for the hideous accumulation of crimes which disfigure contemporary Europe.

Albert Camus was born in Algeria in 1913 and died in 1960 in an automobile accident in France. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1957. He wrote novels, plays, and essays, and recorded his thought in notebooks. Those who knew him well came to love him, as is plain from a book, *Men of the Stone,* put together by proofreaders, compositors, and linotype operators who met him while he and they worked together on *Combat,* the underground French newspaper during the war. This book, printed and published in a small edition by Jack Werner Stauffacher of the Greenwood Press in San Francisco (1971), has in it several splendid photographs of Camus, some of them showing the quiet smile of which many spoke with affection.

One theme that seems present in many of his works is given in his prefatory remarks about the play, *The Just Assassins,* available in the Vintage book, *Caligula and Three Other Plays:*

> I merely wanted to show that action itself had limits and if it must go beyond them, at least accepts death. Our world of today seems loathesome to us for the very reason that it is made by men who grant

> themselves the right to go beyond those limits, and first of all to kill others without dying themselves. Thus it is that today justice serves as an alibi throughout the world, for the assassins of all justice.

Camus commands our respect by reason of an undefined reality in himself, the secret origin of his insight and strength. He could not tell us what that secret was, nor are we able to deduce it from his work, but we know its presence from reading him. Yet he makes it evident in whatever he writes. For example, in a brief essay, a reply to Gabriel Marcel who had objected to Camus' placing in Spain the scene of a play, *State of Siege*, about totalitarian tyranny, he said at the end:

> If I had to rewrite *State of Siege*, I should still set it in Spain; that is my conclusion. And, now and in the future, it would be obvious to everyone that the judgment pronounced in it transcends Spain and applies to all totalitarian societies. And no shameful complicity would have been involved. This is the way, and absolutely the only way, we can maintain the right to protest against a reign of terror. This is why I cannot share your opinion that we are in complete agreement in matters of politics. For you are willing to keep silent about one reign of terror in order the better to combat another one. There are some of us who do not want to keep silent about anything. It is our whole political society that nauseates us. Hence there will be no salvation until all those who are still worth while have repudiated it utterly in order to find, somewhere outside insoluble contradictions, the way to a complete renewal. In the meantime we must struggle. But with the knowledge that totalitarian tyranny is not based on the virtues of the totalitarians. It is based on the mistakes of the liberals. Talleyrand's remark is contemptible, for a mistake is not worse than a crime. But the mistake eventually justifies the crime and provides its alibi. Then the mistake drives its victim to despair, and that is why it must not be condoned. That is just what I cannot forgive contemporary political society: it is a mechanism for driving men to despair.
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> It will probably seem to you that I am getting excited about a small matter. Then let me, for once, speak in my own name. The world I live in is loathesome to me, but I feel one with the men who suffer in it. There are ambitions that are not mine, and I should not feel at ease if I had to make my way by relying on paltry privileges granted to those who adapt themselves to this world. But it seems to me that there is another ambition that ought to belong to all writers: to bear witness and shout aloud, every time it is possible, insofar as our talent allows, for those who are enslaved as we are. That is the very ambition you questioned in your article, and I shall consistently refuse you the right to question it so long as the murder of a man angers you only when that man shares your ideas.

Among those who write, and write well, today, Camus is a natural model. He never slights the reality of the evil in the world, but, at the same time, will never aim below his vision of the ideal. His alliances are always with the vision, not with the compromises and confusions of other men. Camus was one of the few who have helped to keep alive in the world this conception of striving and of human duty. He knew one thing, that even in the worst of circumstances and an assemblage of opposing forces, there is always something a human can do, even if it be only to shout "No!" to the rest of the world. This is the Promethean stance, and the conflict which the prometheans bring upon themselves is good evidence of the nature of true human beings and the mixed nature of the world. Crisis may indeed be our normal condition.

REVIEW
ACCUSTOMING OURSELVES TO THINKING

THERE are ideas, proposals, solutions which have been clearly voiced in the past by observers of and participants in society, the merits of which are virtually obvious, yet which have been systematically ignored over generations. Why? Because applying them would require such far-reaching changes in attitude of mind that the people capable of instituting such changes are unable emotionally to consider them seriously.

This reality of human nature, we may say, is a major factor in determining the course of history. What can we do about the control or reduction of this factor? Usually very little. The only thing possible is to point out in as many ways as we can how habit blinds us to recognizing what we ought and are able to do. And this, of course, is what the individuals who offer good "ideas, proposals, solutions" have themselves been doing, as well as they can, through the years.

We have a fine example of this in an article, "The Critical Question of Size," contributed by E. F. Schumacher to the May-June 1975 issue of *Resurgence.* Since it appeared we have kept this article on our desk in the "current" file and have quoted it at least a dozen times. This seems as good a reason as any for a review, here, of what it says. Schumacher was an economist, an administrator, and a reformer. As a reformer he became well aware of the shortcomings of administration in the large and unwieldy organizations which are largely responsible for the troubles of our society. He says, for example:

> Everybody has a boss; the little bosses have bigger bosses and so on, if not "ad infinitum," in general through quite a few levels of authority: the bigger the organization, the more such layers there are likely to be.
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> Such structures cannot function without many rules and regulations which everybody, even the top boss, has to abide by. It follows that nobody, not even the top boss, can act freely, though at each level there may of course be a certain amount of discretion.
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> One of our fundamental needs is to be able to act in accordance with our moral impulses. In a big organization our freedom to do so is inevitably severely restricted. Our primary duty is to stay within the rules and regulations, which, although contrived by human beings, are not themselves human beings. No matter how carefully drawn up, they lack the flexibility of the "human touch."
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> The bigger the organization, the less it is possible for any member of it to act freely as a moral being; the more frequent are the occasions when someone will say: "I am sorry, I know what I am doing is not quite right, but these are my instructions" or "these are the regulations I am paid to implement" or "I myself agree with you; perhaps you could take the matter to a higher level, or to your member of parliament."
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> As a result, big organizations often behave very badly, very immorally, very stupidly and inhumanely, not because the people inside them are any of these things but simply because the organization carries the load of bigness. The people inside them are then criticized by people outside, and such criticism is of course justified and necessary, but it bears the wrong address. It is not the people of the organization but its size that is at fault. It is like blaming a car's exhaust gas on the driver; even an angel could not drive a car without fouling the air.
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> This is a situation of universal frustration: the people inside the organization are morally frustrated because they lack freedom of action, and the people outside are frustrated because, rare exceptions apart, their legitimate moral complaints find no positive response and all too often merely produce evasive, meaningless, blandly arrogant, or downright offensive replies.

Schumacher writes at a level of generalization that is well within our grasp, if we think about it. What sort of light, for example, does his analysis throw on the tortured revelations of the Iran-contra hearings in Washington last summer, and on the public response to the testimony of the witnesses called by the inquiry?

Schumacher's comment is pertinent:

> Many books have been written about moral individuals in immoral society. As society is composed of individuals, how could a society be more immoral than its members? It becomes immoral if its structure is such that moral individuals cannot act in accordance with their moral impulses. And one method of achieving this dreadful result is by letting organizations become too large. (I am not asserting that there are no evil individuals capable of doing evil things no matter what may be the size of organizations or, generally, the structure of society. It is when ordinary, decent, harmless people do evil things that society gets into the deepest trouble.)

There are, Schumacher says, "three things healthy people most need to do—to be creatively productive, to render service, and to act in accordance with their moral impulses." He then points out that modern society frustrates most people most of the time in several respects. People are bored with or dislike their jobs. Work, for a great many of them, is a hateful necessity.

> Alienation, frustration, boredom, brutalization, resentment, lack of appreciation . . . the greatest single failure of the modern scheme of things is what it has made of human work. Anyone who can say, honestly and convincingly, "I enjoy my work," has become an object of astonishment and envy. Work, as the sociologists say, has become purely instrumental; unlike sport, it is not being undertaken for the joy of it, since for most people the joy has gone out of it; it is undertaken as a hateful necessity—because people have to make a living. Those who can get a living without doing work are being envied even more intensely than those who enjoy, actually enjoy, their work. . . .
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> Too many people are imprisoned in organizations which, on account of their super-human size, make people insignificant and powerless. . . . Decent survival now depends on redesigning technology and redesigning organizations.

This is Schumacher's proposal and solution. From it came the title of his best-known book, *Small Is Beautiful*. How should organizations be redesigned? They should be *smaller*. This is a design solution. It doesn't insist that people become better, no matter what. It simply says that as they are now, they *can't* become better unless their situations, the places where they work, are so designed that they can at least be as good as they already are. This is the meaning of the title, "Moral man and immoral society." Schumacher saw this clearly. He said:

> A large organization, to be able to function at all, requires an elaborate administrative structure. Administration is a most difficult and exacting job which can be done only by exceptionally industrious people. The administrators of a large organization cannot deal concretely with real-life problems and situations: they have to deal with them abstractly. They cannot enjoy themselves by devising, as it were, the perfect shoe for a real foot: their task is to devise composite shoes to fit all possible feet. The variety of real life is inexhaustible, and they cannot make a special rule for every individual case. Their task is to anticipate all possible cases and to frame a minimum number of rules—a small minimum indeed!—to fit them all. . . .
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> We all know that life, all too often, is stranger than fiction; the dilemma of the administrators, therefore, is severe: either they make innumerable rules the enforcement of which then requires whole armies of minor officials, or they limit themselves to a few rules which then produce innumerable hard cases and absurdities calling for special treatment; every special treatment, however, constitutes a precedent which is, in effect, a new rule. . . .
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> If there is any truth in this (very rough) analysis, the conclusion is obvious: let us organize units of such a size that their administrative requirements become minimal. In other words, let us have them on a *human* scale, so that the need for rules and regulations is minimized and all difficult cases can be resolved, as it were, on the spot, face to face, without creating precedents—for where there is no rule there cannot be a precedent.

Insofar as words which apply directly to our experience may convince, the problem of organization is solved. "Get small!" Schumacher says, and gives persuasive reasons why. So he concludes:

> The problem of administration is thus reduced to a problem of size. Small units are self-administrating in the sense that they do not require full-time administrators of exceptional ability; almost anybody can see to it that things are kept in reasonable order and everything that needs to be done is done by the right person at the right time.

If you read his books and articles, you will find ample illustration of how intermediate or appropriate technology works to everyone's advantage. The only requirement for the application of this idea is consistent common sense. His closing idea is of this character:

> "Right size" is a difficult concept: the touchstone is the reaction of people—can they still give or receive individual attention? My own guess is that we should accustom ourselves to thinking in terms of very much smaller units than we may be inclined to, conditioned as we are by a society addicted to "rationalization by giantism." . . . We should experiment to find out.

COMMENTARY
HOMEOPATHIC MEDICINE

IN this week's Frontiers there is a reference to those who "decide to go outside conventional medicine for a remedy for their ills." Where do they go? For one answer to this question we have a book which has just come in for review—*Homeopathy—Medicine for the 21st Century*, by Dana Ullman, published by North Atlantic Books at $12.95 in paperback. While in no sense an aggressive attack on conventional (allopathic) medicine, this work makes clear why today more and more people are turning to homeopathy for help with their ills. The author says in his introduction:

> Homeopathic medicine offers an alternative. Instead of giving one medicine for a person's headache, another for his constipation, another for his irritability, and yet another to counteract the effects of one or more of the medicines, the homeopathic physician prescribes a single medicine at a time that will stimulate the person's immune and defense capacity and bring about an overall improvement in that person's health. The procedure by which the homeopath finds the precise individual substance is the very science and art of homeopathy. . . .
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> Most Americans today know little or nothing about homeopathic medicine, despite the fact that 15 per cent of American physicians at the turn of the century considered themselves to be homeopaths, and despite the fact that homeopathy is so popular throughout the world today. Homeopathic medicine is a natural pharmaceutical system that utilizes microdoses of substances from the plant, mineral, or animal kingdom to arouse a person's natural healing response. Homeopathy is a sophisticated method of individualizing small doses of medicine in order to initiate that healing response. Unlike conventional drugs, which act primarily by having direct effects upon physiological processes related to a person's symptoms, homeopathic medicines are thought to work by stimulating the person's immune and defense system, which raises his or her overall level of health, thereby enabling him or her to re-establish health and prevent disease.

Homeopathy began in the latter part of the eighteenth century with the discoveries of Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843), a German physician who coined the word *homeopathy* from the Greek words meaning "similar" and "suffering." Feeling that the medicines of his time were inadequate, he experimented on himself and his family and learned that drugs derived from nature which produced symptoms similar to the ill which the patient suffered from had a curative effect. This law of similiars, Ullman says, was previously described by Hippocrates and Paracelsus and was utilized by many cultures, including the Mayans, Chinese, Greeks, Native American Indians, and Asian. Indians, but it was Hahnemann who codified the law into a systematic medical science.

> Hahnemann's first comments about the general applicability of the law of similars came in 1789, when he translated a book by William Cullen, one of the leading physicians of the era. At one point in the book, Cullen ascribed the usefulness of Peruvian bark (cinchona) in treating malaria to its bitter and astringent properties. Hahnemann wrote a bold footnote disputing Cullen's explanation. Hahnemann asserted that the efficacy of Peruvian bark must derive from some other factor, since he noted that there were other substances and mixtures of substances decidedly more bitter and more astringent than Peruvian bark that were not effective in treating malaria. He then described his own taking of repeated doses of this herb until his body responded to its toxic dose with fever, chills, and other symptoms similar to malaria. Hahnemann concluded that the reason this herb was beneficial was because it caused symptoms similar to those of the disease it was treating.

The entirety of medical orthodoxy was against Hahnemann, but he persisted in his work and his demonstrations, based on experiment, and slowly his following grew. The lack of modern knowledge about homeopathy is owing to the fact that, as Ullman says, it "posed a serious threat to entrenched medicine." Its logic would not fit into the mechanistic theories of the science of the time, despite the fact that homeopaths were notably successful in healing their patients. At a 1903 meeting of the AMA, a respected orthodox physician said: "We must admit that we never fought the homeopath on matters of principles; we fought him because he came into the community and got the business." The complete story of the

persecution of the homeopaths is told by Ullman, who at the same time shows that the more intelligent the individual, the more likely he is to be a supporter of Homeopathy. In England, where the attacks on homeopathy have been mild compared to the United States, homeopathy has grown and flourished. As Ullman says:

> Homeopathy is particularly popular in Great Britain, where, . . . the Royal Family has been under homeopathic care since the 1830s. The *New York Times* noted that visits to homeopathic physicians are increasing in England at a rate of 39 per cent per year. A British consumer organization surveyed its 28,000 members and discovered that 80 per cent had used some form of complementary medicine and that 70 per cent of those who had tried homeopathy were cured or improved by it. . . .
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> The rediscovery of homeopathy by the general public is even more encouraging. The magazine *FDA consumer* recently reported a 1000 per cent increase in sales of homeopathic medicines from the late 1970s to the early 1980s.
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> Contrary to some critics who think that people try homeopathy only because they are uneducated, research published in the *Western Journal of Medicine* shows that the homeopathic patients tend to be better educated than the average American.
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> It is difficult to predict how popular homeopathy will be in the United States in the 21st century, though it is probable that most physicians will utilize at least some of the microdoses that research has proven effective. Growing numbers of consumers will also learn to self-prescribe homeopathic medicine for common acute conditions and will probably demand homeopathic care from their physicians for more serious medical conditions.
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> Clearly, homeopathy will play an increasingly important role in health care, for as internationally acclaimed violinist and humanitarian, Yehudi Menuhin once said: "Homeopathy is one of the few medical specialties which carries no penalties—only benefits."

Ullman's book, *Homeopathy*, is a thorough explanation for the general reader of his subject and worth reading by everyone. We live in a time when everything is changing, when people are assuming more and more responsibility for their well-being, and when they see that in order to be healthy they need to accept this responsibility. Ullman's work is a proper introduction to the steps that may be taken by individuals as a result.

CHLDREN
. . . and Ourselves
THE HUMAN SITUATION

THIS week we present some of the general musings about education of Hannah Arendt, taken from her book *Between Past and Future* (1961). After several pages on the peculiar problems of education in the United States, she says:

> Normally the child is first introduced to the world in school. Now school is by no means the world and must not pretend to be; it is rather the institution that we interpose between the private domain of home and the world in order to make the transition from the family to the world possible at all. Attendance there is required not by the family but by the state, that is by the public world, and so, in relation to the child, school in a sense represents the world, although it is not yet actually the world. At this stage of education adults, to be sure, once more assume a responsibility for the child, but by now it is not so much responsibility for the vital welfare of a growing thing as for what we generally call the free development of characteristic qualities and talents. This, from the general and essential point of view, is the uniqueness that distinguishes every human being from every other, the quality by virtue of which he is not only a stranger in the world but something that has never been here before.
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> Insofar as the child is not yet acquainted with the world, he must be gradually introduced to it, insofar as he is new care must be taken that this new thing comes to fruition in relation to the world as it is. In any case, however, the educators here stand in relation to the young as representatives of a world for which they must assume responsibility although they themselves did not make it, and even though they may, secretly or openly wish it were other than it is. This responsibility is not arbitrarily imposed upon educators; it is implicit in the fact that the young are introduced by adults into a continuously changing world. Anyone who refuses to assume joint responsibility for the world should not have children and must not be allowed to take part in educating them.

This view by Hannah Arendt is the fundamental attitude for both parents and teachers. The child *needs* adults who have this attitude in order to gain the courage that life will require of them and, little by little, to accept responsibility himself. Hannah Arendt continues:

> In education this responsibility for the world takes the form of authority. The authority of the educator and the qualifications of the teacher are not the same thing. Although a measure of qualification is indispensable for authority, the highest possible qualification can never by itself beget authority. The teacher's qualification consists in knowing the world and being able to instruct others about it, but his authority rests on his assumption of responsibility for that world. Vis-a-vis the child it is as though he were a representative of all adult inhabitants, pointing out the details and saying to the child: This is our world.

Historically speaking, the breakdown of conventional political authority—the authority of kings and hereditary rulers—took place in America where the constitution placed the people themselves in the position of authority. But the people have not been well able to adopt and exercise that theoretical authority, nor does it seem likely that any political arrangement will enable them to do so. Only in the small community where pure democracy becomes at least possible can the authority of "the people" make itself felt. And it follows, then, that in a mass society where the authority of the individual *is* lost in the complexities of government and in the manipulations of politicians and propagandists, all forms of authority should lose their significance. As Hannah Arendt says:

> The general loss of authority could, in fact, hardly find more radical expression than by its intrusion into the prepolitical sphere, where authority seemed dictated by nature itself and independent of all historical changes and political conditions. On the other hand, modern man could find no clearer expression for his dissatisfaction with the world, for his disgust with things as they are, than by his refusal to assume, in respect to his children, responsibility for all this. It is as though parents daily said: "In this world even we are not very securely at home; how to move about in it, what to know, what skills to master, are mysteries to us too. You must try to make out as best you can; in any case you are not entitled to call us to account. We are innocent, we wash our hands of you."

> This attitude has, of course, nothing to do with that revolutionary desire for a new order in the world—*Novas Ordo Seclornm*—which once animated America; it is rather a symptom of that modern estrangement from the world which can be seen everywhere but which presents itself in especially radical and desperate form under the conditions of a mass society. It is true that modern educational experiments, not in America alone, have struck very revolutionary poses, and this has, to a certain degree, increased the difficulty of clearly recognizing the situation and caused a certain degree of confusion in the discussion of the problem; for in contradiction to all such behavior stands the unquestionable fact that so long as America was really animated by that spirit she never dreamed of initiating the new order with education, on the contrary, remained conservative in educational matters.

Conservatism, in the sense of conservation, Hannah Arendt says, "is of the essence of the educational activity, whose task is always to cherish and protect something—the child against the world, the world against the child, the new against the old, the old against the new."

> Even the comprehensive responsibility for the world that is thereby assumed implies, of course, a conservative attitude. But this holds good only for the realm of education, or rather for the relations between grown-ups and children, and not for the realm of politics, where we act among and with adults and equals. In politics this conservative attitude—which accepts the world as it is, striving only to preserve the status quo—can only lead to destruction, because the world in gross and in detail, is irrevocably delivered up to the ruin of time unless human beings are determined to intervene, to alter, to create what is new. Hamlet's words, "The time is out of joint. O cursed spite that ever I was born to set it right," are more or less true for every new generation, although since the beginning of our century they have perhaps acquired a more persuasive validity than before.

Now the wisdom of Hannah Arendt becomes evident:

> Basically we are always educating for a world that is or is becoming out of joint, for this is the basic human situation, in which the world is created by mortal hands to serve mortals for a limited time as home. Because the world is made by mortals it wears out; and because it continuously changes its inhabitants it runs the risk of becoming as mortal as they. . . . it must be constantly set right anew. The problem is simply to educate in such a way that a setting-right remains actually possible, even though it can, of course, never be assured. Our hope always hangs on the new which every generation brings; but precisely because we can base our hope only on this, we destroy everything if we so try to control the new that we, the old, can dictate how it will look. Exactly for the sake of what is new and revolutionary in every child, education must be conservative, it must preserve this newness and introduce it as a new thing into an old world, which, however revolutionary its actions may be is always from the standpoint of the next generation, superannuated and close to destruction.

To those who sigh and say that only readers with extraordinary understanding will be able to try to apply what Hannah Arendt says, there is only one reply: It has always been thus,for she has simply drawn for us one more version of the human situation. A civilization that is on the way up is a civilization which has enough perceptive people in it to keep it going in the right direction. A civilization on the way down and out lacks these people.

Finally, Hannah Arendt says:

> Education is the point at which we decide whether we love the world enough to assume responsibility for it and by the same token save it from that ruin which, except for renewal, except for the coming of the new and young, would be inevitable.

FRONTIERS

"How Come You're Alive?"

IN a paper issued last May by The Institute of Noetic Sciences, on "Healing, Remission, and Miracle Cures," Brendan O'Regan, the Institute vice-president for research, discussed at some length matters largely neglected by conventional medicine. We report some of his findings here by reason of their general interest, without wishing to suggest that people who are seriously ill may find unorthodox help in this direction. Those few—an increasing number, however—who decide to go outside conventional medicine for a remedy for their ills do so at their own risk, by relying on their own judgment instead of a medical doctor's. They go against the grain of the conventional wisdom of their time, but in some cases not against their own common sense.

Explaining his own interest, O'Regan said:

> . . . .maybe there is something in addition to a nervous system and an immune system and an endocrine system—something like a healing system. Maybe it is a system that doesn't manifest itself unless challenged. Maybe it's a system that can lie dormant until confronted with stress, trauma, disease or illness of some kind. If that was so, then it would explain why it just isn't an obvious part of ourselves.

Finding confirmation of this idea in Norman Cousins' book, *Human Options*, O'Regan began to look into the subject of what doctors call "spontaneous remissions," which simply means getting well without any doctoring, without "medical intervention." Not remarkably, he found very little on the subject in medical literature, there being only two books and a report of a conference twelve years ago at Johns Hopkins University. O'Regan used a computer to assemble material on the subject in twenty different languages from some 860 medical journals and the Institute plans publication of this information as a bibliography next year.

He gives some examples of spontaneous remission, beginning with this introduction:

> Let me say that many of the people who write these medical journal reports do so with a great sense of apology, because they seem to be saying to their colleagues, "Well, we really did diagnose this correctly; we thought that the x-rays might have gotten misplaced so we took them again; and we definitely found that this person really had the disease. Then you get the same story all over again when they go through the remission. In effect, they are saying: "The disease really did disappear. We re-did the tests several times and to our amazement, the tumor was completely gone.

In one case described at length in a reputable medical journal a white man fifty-nine years old was opened up and found to have a lung cancer so well developed that the surgeon decided it was inoperable, and after taking a biopsy sewed him up again. Five years later the patient was readmitted to the same hospital. Research made it clear that the lesion in the lung was almost gone, and that the patient, a linotype operator, had changed his job, taken two halibut liver oil capsules daily for a considerable time, some vitamin B-1 tablets and some vegetable compounds daily, which contained asparagus, parsley, watercress and broccoli. This led the examining doctors to conclude that in this case there had been no medical intervention except the taking of the biopsy, which was not of course regarded as having a healing influence.

In another case a woman who had cervical cancer that had metastasized throughout her body was considered "beyond treatment and beyond help." O'Regan summarizes:

> As the paper continued it said, "And her much-hated husband suddenly died, whereupon she completely recovered." So you say to yourself—wait a minute, shouldn't we follow up these kinds of things? One is left wondering what might be behind that kind of statement.

Other remissions of cancer following bacterial infections were reported early in the century by a Dr. William Coley of New York.

> He noticed back in the 1890s that his patients who became infected with a bacterial skin infection called erysipelas would react with a fever and spend a few days fighting it off—as though the immune

> system were being activated to fight off the infection. Then in about 40 per cent of the patients, the cancer would disappear. Coley turned this around and started giving people infections, infecting them directly with erysipelas in order to stimulate their immune systems; he did indeed achieve an interesting success rate.

Sloan-Kettering in New York is now carrying on research based on a large collection of Coley's cases, his work having led to what is called a "tumor necrosis factor."

There is, O'Regan says, a National Tumor Registry operated by the National Cancer Institute with eleven centers around the country. These centers keep track of all tumors diagnosed as cancer. O'Regan went to the San Francisco center and asked the people there to look up people who were diagnosed as having terminal cancer between 1973 and 1975. They went to their records and gave him a hundred names. They found that 89 of these patients were still alive. O'Regan says:

> These people all had different kinds of cancer. What startled me the most was that there were two cases of pancreatic cancer, which is normally very lethal. So we are now attempting to get the release of their names and permission to talk to them.
>
> Talking to somebody in remission can be a very delicate process. We learned this when two women in remission came to visit us. (By the way, I can't verify this statistically, but we *seem* to hear of more women than men in remission.) One of these women came to talk to Caryle Hirshberg, my associate who has been doing our database research. She looked at Caryle somewhat suspiciously and said "You're not a doctor, are you? I don't want to talk to a doctor!" Caryle said, "No, I'm not. Really, honest." Then she said, "Well, I just don't want to be put down and turned away again, like I was so many times. I'm going to keep my state of mind intact, no matter what."

People who recover seldom tell their doctors, O'Regan says.

> You will see cases in our files of people who were seen ten years later in the hospital for something else and the physician says, "My God, I thought you were dead! You were in here ten years ago for something. How come you're still alive?" So they sort of have to apologize, I guess.

There is a lot more interesting material reported by Brendan O'Regan, including some remarkable cases of recovery at Lourdes. A copy of his paper may be obtained by writing to the Institute of Noetic Sciences, 475 Gate Five Road, Suite 300, P.O. Box 97, Sausalito, Calif. 94966-0097.