

## THE LIFE OF CIVILIZATION

A FEW weeks ago, *Time* Magazine, with clear mastery of the strategy of prejudice, gave what probably seemed to many of its readers plausible reasons for regarding two distinguished American citizens as bad-mannered crackpots of dubious political views, persons whose opinions are not worth serious attention. The men are Robert Lowell, poet, and Arthur Miller, playwright. Their offense was rejection of an invitation from the President to attend a White House affair to celebrate his signing of the bill to create a National Foundation for the Arts and Humanities. Not only did they not come to the party, but Miller made the invitation an occasion for condemning U.S. policy in Vietnam. He wrote, *Time* said, a "nasty little note." Lowell had similarly written last June.

Now there may be those who feel that *Time* had a point. Perhaps it was "bad taste" to exploit a non-political and semi-social event to get attention for unpopular views. Perhaps both Lowell and Miller knew that what they did would be regarded as in bad taste, but went on and did it anyway. They are both skilled artists and must know something about taste—a lot more, it may be, than *Time* writers. Then why did they do it?

One reason for them to do it is the fact that there is practically no way to get a hearing for dissenting opinion, nowadays, except by some kind of rule-breaking. A glaze of comfortable acceptance of whatever the mass media put out as fact or correct opinion afflicts very nearly the entire population, so that the voice of criticism, if it is heard at all, is heard only in connection with some sort of Anarchism of the Deed. You break a rule, say your piece, and maybe you'll have a few moments of the reading time of the millions who are shocked into curiosity. Of course, to get their attention you did something *they* wouldn't do, so that whatever you say has this initial handicap, but sometimes it works. It has worked for the Negro

Movement. As Martin Luther King and other leaders who perform acts of civil disobedience explain, nothing else *will* work in our society. The correction of massive wrongs—wronges which have been tolerated for so long by a majority of the population that they seem practically "right"—requires heroic measures. This means breaking some rules.

What does such a situation tell us about our society? It tells us two things, at least. It tells us what Supreme Court Justice Douglas has been saying for years—that there is no vital public dialogue going on in the United States. The monotony of agreement in the mass media is broken only by the tiny radical and somewhat larger liberal press, and because the mass audience never hears the radical and liberal form of the dialogue, except by occasional misquotation or in broken context, its finding of issues is blandly ignored. The progressive alienation of moral intelligence is one result of this neglect. Another result is that men who feel personal moral responsibility, such as Lowell and Miller, seize what opportunities they can to get attention, sometimes, as in this instance, by breaking some rules.

This situation also tells us that intellectual life in the United States has been dehorned by homogenization as well as suborned by the compromises of the intellectual community itself. At no time in history has the dominant cultural establishment had so many intellectual employees and talented apologists as in the present. The big, if not the good, jobs are practically all subsidized, today, by the status quo—either of politics or of technology—so that *expressed and heard* independent opinion hardly exists at all. A few independent publishers remain, but it is difficult for them to stay in business without substantial institutional backing of one sort or another, and

the impact of what they print is dulled and absorbed by the general mushiness of the entire cultural establishment. In his *One-Dimensional Man*, Herbert Marcuse calls this "repressive desublimation." He shows how stirring utterances which depend upon traditional high-culture ideals have little hope of affecting people who imagine that they "own" these ideals as a prerogative of belonging to a democratic society. As Marcuse says:

Today's novel feature is the flattening out of the antagonism between culture and social reality through the obliteration of the oppositional, alien, and transcendent elements in the higher culture by virtue of which it constituted *another dimension* of reality. This liquidation of *two-dimensional* culture takes place not through the denial and rejection of the "cultural values," but through their wholesale incorporation into the established order, through their reproduction and display on a massive scale.

In fact, they serve as instruments of social cohesion. The greatness of a free literature and art, the ideals of humanism the sorrows and joys of the individual, the fulfillment of the personality are important items in the competitive struggle between East and West. They speak heavily against the present forms of communism, and they are daily administered and sold. The fact that they contradict the society which sells them does not count. Just as people know or feel that advertisements and political platforms must not be necessarily true or right, and yet hear and read them and even let themselves be guided by them, so they accept the traditional values and make them part of their mental equipment. If mass communications blend together harmoniously, and often unnoticeably, art, politics, religion, and philosophy with commercials, they bring these realms of culture to their common denominator—the commodity form. The music of the soul is also the music of salesmanship. Exchange value, not truth value counts. On it centers the rationality of the status quo, and all alien rationality is bent to it.

As the great words of freedom and fulfillment are pronounced by campaigning leaders and politicians, on the screens and radios and stages, they turn into meaningless sounds which obtain meaning only in the context of propaganda, business, discipline, and relaxation. This assimilation of the ideal with reality testifies to the extent to which the ideal has been surpassed. It is brought down from the

sublimated realm of the soul or the spirit or the inner man, and translated into operational terms and problems. Here are the progressive elements of mass culture. The perversion is indicative of the fact that advanced industrial society is confronted with the possibility of a materialization of ideals. The capabilities of this society are progressively reducing the sublimated realm in which the condition of man was represented, idealized, and indicted. Higher culture becomes part of the material culture. In this transformation, it loses the greater part of its truth.

The visions of high culture must now submit to the operational rules of the technological society. This is a process which—

serves to coordinate ideas and goals with those exacted by the prevailing system, to enclose them in the system, and to repel those which are irreconcilable with the system. The reign of such a one-dimensional reality does not mean that materialism rules, and that the spiritual, metaphysical, and bohemian occupations are petering out. On the contrary, there is a great deal of "Worship together this week," "Why not try God," Zen, existentialism, and beat ways of life, etc. But such modes of protest and transcendence are no longer contradictory to the status quo and no longer negative. They are rather the ceremonial part of practical behaviorism, its harmless negation, and are quickly digested by the status quo as part of its healthy diet.

Elsewhere, Mr. Marcuse speaks of the rebellious images of avant-garde literature which no longer operate in the service of serious criticism:

What has been invalidated is their subversive force, their destructive content—their truth. In this transformation, they find their home in everyday living. The alien and alienating oeuvres of intellectual culture become familiar goods and services. . . . The absorbent power of society depletes the artistic dimension by assimilating its antagonistic contents. In the realm of culture, the new totalitarianism manifests itself precisely in a harmonizing pluralism, where the most contradictory works and truths peacefully coexist in indifference.

Under such circumstances, the natural respect felt by many people for artists and scholars operates against them through the frequent betrayal of this trust. The vocabulary of genuine

protest, since it is heard so seldom, has no familiarity, and it becomes relatively easy to ridicule the protesters as discontented and immature people who lack understanding of the true values of American society. The result is that *any* serious protest takes on an "extreme" appearance, and when to this is added the fact that a public relations program of the defiant act, civil disobedience, and outspoken moral indictment has become the only means for the protesters to gain attention, the contrast with ordinary, "respectable" behavior is so great that the self-approval of the conforming majority is doubly reinforced. This drives expressions of uncompromised moral intelligence to the periphery of the social order. It gives practical justification to the neurotic fringe in the protest movement, and condemns the people who might be the very salt of society to a loneliness which verges on moral isolation.

The obvious remedy lies in the development of numerous unaffiliated groups devoted to vigorous, independent thinking—bodies not connected with political parties, and free, therefore, of the curse of office-seeking and the drive to power—which would establish genuine plateaus of moral and humanistic judgment. At one time, this role in the national life might have been played by the universities, but these institutions are now so heavily subsidized by government and so laced with establishment attitudes that they are little more than immobilized Gullivers. It is a question of finding and making articulate the individuals who are determined to speak for Man—not any particular kind of man, but Man himself. In the eighteenth century, the *Philosophes* of France and the Founding Fathers in the United States filled this need. In the nineteenth century, the transcendentalist thinkers of Germany, England, and the United States provided a vision for their time. Who is there today? Let Lewis Mumford stand for the handful of distinguished individuals who are able to find a rostrum. Among groups, only the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, headed by

Robert M. Hutchins, answers to the general description of what we have in mind.

Suppose that instead of only, say, Dr. Hutchins, Mr. Mumford, Justice Douglas, and a few others, there were scores of men who recognized the absolute necessity of an authentic bar of public opinion, before which the actions of men and nations are examined and on occasion arraigned. Suppose that business men as well as scholars and students of history had been able to learn from experience that independent, enlightened, critical opinion is the indispensable condition of survival for a free society, and instead of lending their support to partisan foundations devoted to blind adoration of "Free Enterprise," or to propaganda groups of disreputable origin and dubious intent, gave of their surplus to establish non-profit organs of opinion committed to discover and print the facts of current events and provide impartial humanistic readings of their meaning. Suppose foundations looking for a place to spend their dollars to some good end were to finance schools which would try to bring synthesis between the new knowledge in psychology and the social ideals that have been so vainly pursued for centuries in the West. If these things could happen—if they could be made to happen by a renewed recognition on the part of intellectual leaders that true human freedom exist in the tension resulting from the flow of ideas from the idea to the practical, and not in the slack conceits which equate social goodness with political and technological feasibility—if they could be helped to happen by men of material substance who see the dependent relation of the practical freedom they cherish to the moral and intellectual freedom that has no home except in these tensions—then the common life of the American society might experience the exhilarating stimulus of actual *growth*, instead of the nervous twitching it manifests today.

Too many of the men of good will in the United States imagine that nothing can be accomplished without the expenditure of

enormous sums of money. Money is needed, to be sure, but before the money must come the vision. And great things are accomplished without money, or with very little of it. The price of a trip on a Montgomery bus started Rosa Parks on an Odyssey whose end is not yet. The Civil Rights Movement is now taking some money, but this money comes, not simply because of the activity of money-raisers, but because the need is felt by hearts. All over the country, today, the young are grinding out manifestos on mimeograph machines. Some of these leaflets graduate to more legible and acceptable print, and when they do, the sense of the manifestos does not increase, but is now framed with another kind of communication—a format declaring that its arguments issue from a body of thought which is voluntarily supported by substantial human energies. The growth so demonstrated is far more viable than the conventionally financed efforts which get their funds by giving hostages to the conservative guardians of philanthropic capital. No doubt money can be obtained from foundations by a species of sophisticated trickery, and then turned to slightly unsettling purposes, but who can suppose that genuine social good is furthered by such means? The problem is the restoration of health and integrity to the intellectual and moral transactions of the human race. The practice of a subsidized radicalism carefully disguised by the neutrality of academic language will hardly contribute to this solution. One does not change the world by operating on it at a safe distance from citadels suitably endowed with comforts bought by the sweat of dead men.

There is some irony in the fact that Americans, who loudly boast of their freedom, at the same time plead total dependency on big institutions when it comes to inaugurating change. It is as though, under some law of natural decline in character, they now mistake effect for cause, the tools of confinement for the instruments of liberation. Freedom is what men enjoy *without* the definitions and limitations of political control. The proposition is that only by the use of this

freedom can its quality be enriched and its scope extended. And the further proposition is that what is needed is vigorous, conscious use of this freedom, overtly, publicly, in various channels of human expression—unaligned cultural institutions, schools, adult education programs or discussion groups formed without government aid, private agencies devoted to the dissemination of moral intelligence, non-profit newspapers, magazines—in short, every conceivable kind of circulatory system of intellectual and moral values that can be devised by free human beings in total independence of public pressure and political power. The good that is to be achieved by these means is an *immediate* good, growing out of the current practice of the freedom we already possess, and not the good of some far-off utopian goal. To put authentic human goals in the future *keeps* them in the future—this is both a psychological and a political law.

There might however be desirable end-products and historical realizations not now possible at all. Suppose, for example, you want to make peace, or at least reduce the hazards of war. Today, all you can do is start from scratch with all those people out there. Today, the only voice they know is the voice of existing political power. You want to propose an alternate view, so, if you are poor, you crank up your mimeograph machine; or if you are rich, you put out a nice pamphlet with the names of some worthy professors on the cover, and get together some mailing lists. Either way, you start from scratch. The people you reach must have explained to them the entire development, from A to Z, of your dissenting socio-moral views. They have no ground for starting anywhere except at the beginning. And you can't do it with a pamphlet, or even a dozen pamphlets. Who are you to go counter to the stupendous authority of the existing political organization? You are one little private man, and in our society there is no longer any genuine respect for little private men. They have remained too little, too silent, and too concerned with their little private ends, for far too long.

This is the situation which must be changed. It can't be done by manipulating the reflexes of fear of what will happen to us all in a nuclear war. It can't be done by frightening people with more horrible facts than the thresholds of their present understanding can tolerate. What is wanted is the initiative and responsibility shown by free men, but there is not available to them a living field of intelligent and constantly extended thought concerning the affairs of men, concerning the good of men, and the means of obtaining it. The people have had nothing to help them think about their freedom and how it is preserved. They know only the most primitive equations on this subject. They hear only the echoes of over-simplified slogans. And *now* we want them to jump from the story of the Little Red Hen to the full mandates of a mature ethical life, and be consistent in their behavior ever after, just because we put out a pamphlet entitled *No More War*. It won't work.

No wonder the youngsters burn their draft cards and go to jail. What else can they do? We want civilized behavior, and we are shocked when we don't get it. But what have we done to preserve the sources of civilization in the society around us? We don't like guns and bombs because they kill people, but what about all the little lies which withdraw the attention of the people from the values of civilization, and all the little emotional stimuli which distract their feelings from any vagrant impulses of nobility? Now we want to change all this with some unique kind of moral bomb which will make them think as they have never thought before. They won't do it, because they can't, and they can't because the environment and dynamics of the acquisitive, technological society have totally hidden the fact that civilized human beings stay civilized only by continually reminding one another that the values of civilized life must come first.

If we honestly want a civilized life, we had better get busy restoring the circulatory system of civilization.

## *REVIEW*

### "FAITH WITHOUT DOGMA"

MARGARET ISHERWOOD'S slim volume of this title will be interesting to readers as a projected synthesis of points of view characterizing humanism, mysticism, philosophy, and the scientific idea of evolution. While the space of 126 pages will hardly permit much more than suggested interrelationships, these essays have impressive wholeness, brevity being achieved through the assumption that many contemporary readers are ready to break through compartmentalized prejudices. At times Miss Isherwood sounds like Julian Huxley, at other times like the Theosophist-physicist Raynor Johnson. The author does not wish to antagonize members of Christian congregations, but nevertheless seems hopeful, as one critic observed, that "more and more people will leave the church and return to God." Before investigating the groundwork upon which a "scientifically based religious faith can be developed," the challenge to Christian orthodoxy, Miss Isherwood feels, must be squarely put:

Before the rise of modern science man's belief in an anthropomorphic God who had created him and placed him in a favourable position at the centre of a secure and static universe gave a perfectly adequate explanation of existence. Now modern psychology disturbs him with the suggestion that such an image of God is but the projection of his own unconscious imaginings, and modern astronomy tells him that he is not the centre of a cozy cosmos designed for his especial benefit, but that his planet is but an infinitesimal part of an expanding universe, one of millions of other planets, some of which may be inhabited by beings superior to himself. Clearly our childish concepts will have to go and our religious thinking be revised if it is to cohere with scientific discovery.

At its best, the church may be seen as striving to promote the highest ethical standards; when this is the case Christianity transcends bigotry and is represented by men who encourage independent thinking, rejecting any intrusion of wrathful moralism. But the perennial problem of self-

transformation requires more than static doctrine and counsel of moral improvement. Miss Isherwood notes the glaring failure of Christianity "to build adequate bridges whereby the individual may pass from either a barren agnosticism on the one hand or a narrow-minded sectarianism on the other, to faith in life itself and to a sense of responsibility for helping to further life's highest purposes."

Miss Isherwood quotes from Floyd Ross in *Man, Myth and Maturity*: "To try to go back to the imagined simplicities of the past is impossible; to try to cross new frontiers of the mind and spirit seems to be the only truly live option." She continues:

The old story of Salvation still brings comfort and a sense of security to many. But this will no longer do. In the precarious society we have created there is "no place to hide" or to indulge our infantile longings. Moreover we are part of a universe which is in its entirety one vast process of becoming and therefore we also must become. We may stand still on a moving staircase but not in living. There our "salvation," in every sense of the word, depends on moving forward across "new frontiers of mind and spirit," on relinquishing both the security of the nursery and the habits of the jungle.

*Faith Without Dogma* has this to say about the ideas of the "higher-self" psychologists:

It is easy enough to see that we have in us forces or drives generally referred to as the instinctive self, also that we have a more conscious organizing and observing ego-self. It is not so easy to know what is meant by "the true self," the finding of which is said to be the most important thing in life. The authorized version uses the word "soul" rather than "true self." Is it possible to discover within ourselves anything that could be called a soul? The mechanist replies, "No, the soul is not an empirical entity," and if we look for the soul as a thing in itself—a psychological "object"—we shall not find it, for there is no such "thing."

Most people would agree with the professor's self-analysis. Poetic licence may permit a Walt Whitman to say, "I believe in you, my soul;" but scientific introspection does not reveal the soul as a separate entity. It does however reveal those aspects or qualities of human nature which work upstream

the part of man that aspires, that responds to values and tries to realize them, the sense of responsibility, the capacity for self-sacrifice, the love of beauty and the passion for truth. The soul might therefore be defined as that aspect of man which is responsible to spiritual values.

It is not surprising that Frankl, as a result of the courageous spirit he observed in Hitler's prison camps, should reach the conclusion that "man is more than psyche" and that psychoanalysis is incomplete without psycho-synthesis, that is, without awakening in man his true self or spiritual self—his courage to suffer and his will to find meaning in that suffering as in all life. Only by such awakening can man lose that sense of life's meaninglessness which, says Frankl, "is the mass neurosis of our day."

There remains one last question of profoundest importance. In the process of finding his true self, does man find anything more? Is the spirit of man related to a Spirit of the Universe? This is what religions teach, but to know it, as distinct from believing it, the individual needs to feel it as true in his own experience. The humanist, like the Stoic, believes in the spirit of man; he does not believe in the supernatural, he does not believe there is "Someone" or "Something" behind and beyond the state of being known to us through our senses in the here and now. Man therefore, he maintains, must "go it alone." The search for meaning by reference to other possible realms of being is nothing but a consolatory phantasy.

The affirmation here is that there are ways for the awakening individual to discover that the universe is not a meaningless process. Nor can we conclude that we are likely to be victims of self-deception if we agree with William James that, as man journeys towards spiritual development, "he becomes conscious that this higher part of himself is coterminous and continuous with a More of the same quality which is operative in the universe outside of him and which he can keep in working touch with and in a fashion get on board."

## COMMENTARY

### C. S. LEWIS ON MAN

ANOTHER phase of the one-dimensionality of contemporary culture described by Herbert Marcuse (see lead article) is the subject of a small book by C. S. Lewis. *The Abolition of Man* (Macmillan and a Collier paperback), first published in 1947, defends the idea of an affirmative morality intrinsic to man's nature, against the flattening of the manipulators and conditioners who claim, in effect, that man has no real nature of his own, and that, with the help of science, we are free to give him whatever traits, tendencies, and motives we may think desirable.

Mr. Lewis founds his argument on the postulate of an indwelling spiritual reality, and to make this conception as inclusive as possible, he calls it the *Tao*. Insofar as the idea of the moral ought can be established by reason, Mr. Lewis establishes it. His logic is impeccable, his language lucid.

What needs now to be better understood is the weakness of the traditional morality which Mr. Lewis defends so well. However, it is not really "traditional" in the form that his argument justifies, but rather a philosophical first principle of pantheist character. Just possibly, the Conditioners and Manipulators are only duplicating the claims made for an anthropomorphic God: If Jehovah could make man what he chose, why not they? The essence of what we call "Materialism" may lie in any idea of man as the "product" of some outside force—there being little to choose between religious and scientific determinism.

Virginia Naeve's musings in "The Great Silence" are to be taken, we think, as the rhetoric of an active peace-worker's wondering about cause and effect in the processes of inducing socio-moral change, and not as any kind of practical "directive" to the peace movement at large.

People who do everything they can think of for peace are bound to have thoughts of this sort from time to time. In another context—after he had spent some time at Brook Farm—Nathaniel Hawthorne remarked:

No sagacious man will long retain his sagacity if he lives exclusively among reformers and progressive people without periodically returning into the settled system of things to correct himself by a new observation from that old standpoint.

What is the weight we are trying to lift? Why is it so heavy? These are always good questions to ask.

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### THE GREAT SILENCE

EVERY day we hear about one kind of a crisis or another. Some are real, most are part of the fabric of the cold war. The consistency of this type of hysteria finally succeeds in numbing most of us. Before the numbing sets in there is every type of agitated response. We protest, we sign petitions, we write letters of complaint, we get out into the streets. But the crisis, the *real* one, continues.

There seems to be no time for reflection and thought . . . no creative thinking. Without creative thinking there can be no new approach. There is much bemoaning of the fact that nothing seems to be effective. People are saying to each other, "What can we do?" or, "Nothing can be done!"

Regardless of the fact that our newspapers are saying, "We shall win," the undercurrent among thinking people is that it isn't possible to win a "dirty war." A war that is against *people* will never be won.

We might ponder a bit over the effectiveness of *people* fighting a Dinosaur (U.S. intervention in Vietnam). Why have the Vietnamese continued against overwhelming odds? A silly question—we *know* why. When a bridge is blown up they reroute themselves to another area to bypass that particular spot. When the jungle was supposed to be filled with Viet Cong—and was bombed—



many times no bodies were found. Under the circumstances, the so-called enemy did not in any way stand out from the so-called people.

The peace movement in the U.S.A. has tried in every way to stand out from the *people*. It has carried signs warning of this and that, it has notified the authorities where it was and when it was going to do something. There has been no element of surprise on either side. Peace-makers have worked within a numbed society—or rather with the same implements of a numbed society and with the same ineffectiveness.

The cost of newspaper ads, of groups going around the world in protest, and just the man-hours of work to elect certain officials, has been astronomical. With all this effort we have kept on the same treadmill. We have gone round and round and a lot of the peace and civil rights workers have reached a state of physical and mental exhaustion—their only thought, to continue.

Has the time come for a great SILENCE? For all of us who have tried the treadmill—if we are to survive, we may need to get off and then start thinking, once we have rested. True, it seems like a terrible time to step off—we might be effective if we just got more numbers, just reached the grass roots, just conquered the press for a spell.

A change is painful, the treadmill monotonous, soothing.

The so-called establishment has girded its forces and learned from our protests what to expect.

But what would be the effects on the establishment if during the next six months there was a dead silence from the peace movement, civil rights movement, protest movement?

The establishment *might* feel it had succeeded in stopping the whole movement.

But then again how does one measure effectively a dead silence?

One would suppose the first reaction would be, "Ah, now we can go full steam ahead." But there are some smart brains in the industrial-military complex—sooner or later that dirty little creeping doubt would appear: "*What is going on in the peace movement?*" "*Did we succeed in stopping it?*"

One can never effectively measure or plan strategy when there is no evidence of movement or sight of the objective.

Each protest gives fuel to the democratic process and verbiage—FREEDOM OF SPEECH, etc., etc.—for the rest of the world to see. Nothing can be quite so bad when you can still go out into the streets, carry a sign, print a little-read magazine—but all this has proved the opposite. The war escalates every day right along with the so-called democratic processes.

People have gotten to feel they have such an unpopular cause they have to band together. But has the time come for individuals to stop, think, create, and act *alone*, if no other way is possible—and find a new way to bring about the change that is seething around under the surface of the world today?

I suppose one might interpret my suggestion as a form of collective non-violence.

VIRGINIA NAEVE

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# CHILDREN

## . . . and Ourselves

### CONTINUING EXPLORATIONS AT FRANCONIA

SINCE the establishment of Franconia College in New Hampshire in 1961, we have reported various innovations given experimental focus by this unusual "small college." Last summer Franconia offered a program designed to extend the perspectives of students by means of "off-campus" experience. A bulletin under the heading "Outreach" explains the intent, giving information on the current projects:

Under the general heading of "Outreach" Franconia College is developing a wide range of off-campus educational experiences for which it is prepared to give college credit. The various Outreach projects now under way are oriented to social service endeavors; however, it is our intention to develop off-campus programs in every area in which we give courses at the College. It is our intention to have every Franconia student involve himself in one or more of the crucial social, political, or moral problems of today's world. The scheduling of off-campus projects and the proportion of off-campus work in each student's curriculum will be kept as flexible as possible. The following is a short summary of the various Outreach projects now under way:

Peace Corps: As was announced at commencement, we are formally embarked on a 5-year study "to include Peace Corps service in a 5-year curriculum." Sue Libby has been accepted for training in a Chilean urban community development project; . . . Jack Dicey is still waiting for final confirmation of his application. In addition, we are going ahead with plans to develop a Latin American language-cultural center here on the Franconia campus. . . .

LEAP (Lower East Side Action Project): We have officially joined forces with LEAP, established and directed by Larry Cole, who is now a part-time Franconia faculty member. From 5 to 10 Franconia students have signed up to work under his direction, using LEAP'S facilities and participating in the unique Summerhillian on-the-streets approach to education that he has so successfully developed. More formal course work may be worked out with

him, or with visiting Franconia-based teachers. Students interested in taking course work at other colleges in the LEAP area should obtain information from the New School for Social Research and New York University as soon as possible.

Exchanges with Deep-South Colleges: We have been searching for deep-South colleges with an isolation comparable to Franconia's, for the purpose of working out faculty and student exchanges. Two colleges have invited us to visit them for negotiations early next fall.

Junior Year Abroad: We are looking at this summer's Cores in Greece and France as a trial run for a continuing off-campus term during the second year, or possibly as a full third-year-abroad option.

Washington, D.C. Study Center: We have located a house on the edge of an urban slum area which is owned jointly by 3 midwestern colleges, one of which may want to relinquish its part ownership to us. This looks promising—watch for developments in the next Outreach newsletter.

The editors of "Outreach" consider that Franconia is now experiencing its most significant "transition year," linking campus learning to matters of involvement and decision in social and political spheres. First-year students will spend three out of four yearly terms on campus; second-year students, two terms on and two terms off; third-year students will "outreach" more extensively, with only one term spent at college; during the final year three terms will be spent at home base, with concentrated attention on study and discussion preparatory for comprehensive examinations leading to degrees.

The challenge of the Outreach program is recognized in a statement prepared after an extended series of faculty meetings:

In addition to reading books and thinking, education should include testing out ideas, beliefs, and values. The more real the environment is, the more worthwhile the testing. Academic gain results when such testing experiences have been made an intrinsic part of a student's life.

Credit is a quantitative indicator of change or growth. It usually measures an expansion of awareness (about ideas, past events, different cultures, etc.) or the development of skills (in the case of

Outreach, the abilities to operate, work, think and learn in an unfamiliar but potentially stimulating environment). We think we know how to measure such changes when a student is here on the campus: we examine him or ask him to produce all sorts of "products" which supposedly indicate changes. But how do we measure changes when students are geographically distant? Learning to do this is the essence of the Outreach experimental programs.

The limits and direction of the expected changes must be tentatively formulated *in advance*. We could just wait to see what happens when students are thrust into unfamiliar off-campus situations; it is probably more productive, however, to help students visualize in advance the kinds of gains they can hope to make. Of course, these expectations should be highly flexible, with different degrees of flexibility for different individuals.

This Franconia program assists the student's entry into the "world outside" and provides an experimental approach to a variety of projects. Many years ago, Arthur E. Morgan's Antioch Plan enabled students to alternate campus quarters with periods of time spent in productive work—an "outreach" which bridged the gulf between the cloister of the campus and the assumption of definite responsibilities in the world. Our recent reports on a proposed humanist-existentialist university in Hollywood, California, explained the intention of its founders to have as students working people who would support their after-hours seminars. In this instance, the emphasis is upon the evaluation of psychological problems encountered, with the encouragement of redirection to new fields of employment—a sort of "group therapy" which might be preventive of the alienation so many young people feel regarding their present employment.

Another sort of beginning, serving different ends, has been illustrated in the Communities of Work in France and southern Europe. These experiments in communitarian life, involving an economic and educational system constructed according to the ideals of the members, have demonstrated ways of becoming intelligently involved in political and social issues of the modern world. It might also be surmised that the

startling campus "revolts" of the past two years—at Yale, the University of California at Berkeley, and the University of Colorado—reveal a growing impulsion on the part of college students to bring the campus to the world and the world to the campus. Students who have joined such groups as CORE and traveled considerable distances to protest social injustice are similarly a sign of the times.

Even during medieval times there were occasional efforts by students to break the fetters of conformity. The universities in America have seldom been scenes of such unrest, mainly, perhaps, for the reason that oppressive authority is not easily recognizable, and the traditional goal for the student has been to get satisfactory placement in the acquisitive society. Today an increasing number of students are no longer impressed by this goal. They are coming to feel that their lives will be permanently unsettled until they have discovered "authentic individuality" through commitment to beliefs which have nothing to do with either monetary or status gains. In the context of this mood of the times, the continuing experiment at Franconia should be fruitful for all who take part.

## *FRONTIERS*

### Letter from Venezuela

CARACAS.—I find myself in an environment where the burning issue is socio-economic development. The "intelligentsia" here are acutely conscious of living in a so-called "underdeveloped" nation. Consequently, there is much soul-searching about the ends and means of development—how to achieve a decent material level of existence without losing sight of spiritual values.

I should not, of course, generalize on the basis of my up-to-now limited experience. My impressions of Venezuela may be somewhat one-sided because I am working with people whose main concern is community development, etc. However, a perusal of the press, the university curricula, etc., all point to the fact that most intellectual efforts are directed at resolving the problems of socio-economic backwardness—this, at least, is the way it appears on the surface.

The problem is not simply one of poverty, for Venezuela is a very rich country. It is rather one of distribution. As in most of these nations, the contrasts between opulence and misery are striking and very visible—even in the center of a large city such as Caracas. Caracas itself is surrounded by slums, created overnight by a great rural exodus during one of many political upheavals. The story is interesting but long and complicated, so that I shall save it for another time. Suffice it to say that these thousands of poverty-stricken peasants, who find themselves in between worlds, so to speak, represent an explosive political force. It is periodically exploited by politicians and various party organizations to acquire votes. The election over, the slums are forgotten. Everything sinks back into the habitual lethargy and stupor.

The Regional Center of UCLA (University of California in Los Angeles) is a sort of clearing house for various projects and organizations. CLAVE (as it is called) is supposed to coordinate,

administer, organize. Of this, there is as yet very little—part of my activity will be "liaison" work. The focus of interest is in anthro-sociological research (from Indian tribes to urban slums). Eventually, this information is to have a practical purpose—namely, to work out plans of development at the level of small communities. Thus, there is not the ivory tower atmosphere where people do research just to do research. For me, it is a tremendously exciting experience.

I have the impression of having learned more in these past three or four weeks than I used to learn in a year or two at UCLA. Almost immediately after my arrival here, I was sent as part of a research team to Margarita Island (in Venezuela) This gave me an opportunity to see the reality of poverty, as well as the problems involved in its eradication. The people are fishermen, they eke out their livelihood from the sea. Most of them live very poorly in scattered little fishing villages. But what I increasingly realized was that the subjective factors are as responsible for their miserable condition as are objective ones (such as lack of water, electricity, etc.). This, of course, is a topic on which one could write a book. However, it seems to me that no development—spiritual, social, or economic—can come about unless people understand the concept of responsibility. A sense of individual responsibility for one's actions is totally lacking here.

This characteristic manifests itself at all levels of society and represents an unsurmountable obstacle to any positive change. Among the lower class (the great mass of the poor), one finds an absence of family structures as we know them. That is, most men have many families, regardless of their ability to support them. The results are obvious—many abandoned women, struggling to keep their large broods from starving. Little babies run about naked and dirty, the whole picture is one of subhuman existence. Without arguing for marriage on some sort of moral grounds, it seems to me that no progress will be

made until the men (and women too) realize their responsibility—for their children, at least. The social problems connected with this are numerous. However, this is just one example.

The women too (the ones I talked to in that fishing village on Margarita, for example), are totally lacking in any conception of a world which encompasses more than just their "home." We tried to stir up interest for a group project of some kind—for example, a school for the countless children who have no education, occupation, or activity. But I soon realized that concepts such as "community," or "common good," are totally outside their frame of reference. The women here (in the upper classes as well) are brought up in the best of medieval traditions—their world is their house, their family, and the church. This may have some advantages, but it leaves them totally defenseless when their men abandon them. Furthermore, if the socio-economic level of a given community is to be raised, women, as well as men, must participate.

Aside from this, there is a related trait that one encounters. The great mass of people have no spirit of enterprise or initiative. I do not mean "initiative" in the sense given to this term by hallowed American tradition and mythology. I mean rather that there exists a sort of fatalism, a general expectancy of help from the outside—be it God or government handouts. However, even external economic aid is useless unless there exist the necessary infrastructures upon which one can build. This implies a prior organization or, at least, some sort of community spirit. Here, there is nothing. Not that these people are more egocentric or egoistic than anyone else—quite the contrary. But they have been shaped by a tradition—religious, political, etc.—which was not conducive to the formation of a faith in oneself and in human potentiality in general. Thus, very often, even earnest and dedicated people who want to help become utterly discouraged by the apathy which hangs as heavily over the village as the midday sun. I have just

started, and even now I must confess to a certain pessimism.

At another level, this total lack of comprehension of "common good" or "common cause," is as prevalent among the upper class. It is said that every man has his price, but here, men are bought and sold much more readily (and openly)—at least, so it seems to me. Those that are supposed to be helping others are, in actuality, exploiting their positions as much as they can. Before I came here, terms such as "graft" or "corruption" were more or less abstractions for me; now, I am beginning to see what they signify. Clearly, no socio-economic improvement can occur unless the leading strata acquire a sense of responsibility for the rest of the populace—or, unless forces from below acquire sufficient strength and coherence to demand it. Today, these forces are weak and discouraged. However, this is not a situation that will last forever. Especially because there are so many political movements—domestic, and international—contending for control. I think a revolution is almost inevitable, the only question is when and in what form.

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