

COOPERATION: THE PROBLEM OF SURVIVAL

WE live in a new world. This world is so new that for the first time cooperation among men and women everywhere is possible, if they choose to cooperate; and cooperation, which may turn out to be a synonym for peaceful coexistence, is necessary for mankind's survival.

In the United States we assume that everybody ought to have a chance to live in peace and freedom, under conditions that assure him a chance at the goods that make life varied and noble. Many Americans have such opportunities, and at last the fortunate majority is beginning upon national programs that can extend them to the other Americans who have until now been deprived. We tend to feel that peoples elsewhere in the world have a life like ours—they are poorer, of course, but after all, we say, people are much the same everywhere. Those resigned to the inevitability of war, for example, tell us that men's greed and prejudice and ambition have been the roots of the constant conflicts among them for all their long ages on the planet. We are continually warned that the greed and prejudice and ambition of men—especially communist men—will lead to future conflict. The prescription is always that we must protect ourselves—must keep up our guard.

No one, of course, denies the desirability of "cooperation." Anyone familiar with recent history and the skirmishes of the cold war could point out the advantages that cooperation might bring. Immediate benefit could come with international trade, communications in space, control of air and water pollution, and other forms of collaboration. But these achievements of mankind, we are told, will be accomplished in common, or they will not be accomplished at all. And we are warned over and over that such cooperation is a luxury that comes after safety; we have to maintain our military strength or expect aggression and injustice and communist conquests.

The problem, we are told, is not in the weapons but in the hearts of men. Peace will be won when the evil in men's souls has been brought under control. With appropriate pauses, and the mannerisms of deep and impartial thinking, we are asked to accept this view of the world because it is the reality. Realism about our problems, about the threats and dangers, is necessary to guarantee that our plans for cooperation and improvement will be sound. Some day, perhaps, we will have peace, despite the dismal present, but we shall have to persist in the hard duty leadership of the world imposes on us;

The trouble with this reality is that it is not real enough. The picture is too rosy. If it were accurate, we could just keep on doing what we are doing. No discomforting changes would be required.

The fact is that Reality is tougher: cooperate or die. In past ages there was another choice. We have no other now. We are not cooperating. We shall have to change our international conduct, soon.

Let me support this view with some observations about the nature of people. The people of the United States are *not* the same as everybody. People act as they do because they have learned to act that way. People are not born greedy, prejudiced and ambitious—they are taught greed, prejudice, and ambition. People are born with little instinctive behavior—and what they have is chiefly left over from an era when the human animal needed it to stay alive under conditions that no longer exist. We are frightened by loud noises, dodge rapidly moving objects, resist sudden falls, suck when we are hungry—that is about all. Everything else we know and do we have learned. The world is full of greedy men and women—for good reason. Until this very moment in the long history of man, there has never been a society that had enough to go around—greedy and grabbing tactics kept the stronger people alive. The world is full of prejudiced men and women—for good reason. Until this very moment in the long

history of man, tribal survival required loyalty to the members of the tribe, and enmity to all others. Of course some men and women are ambitious, because until now organizing men's activities to extend power over environments and neighbors meant security for some at the expense of others. Ambition paid. Cooperation is another way of acting. It also has to be learned.

The world is full of people who have been taught that greed, prejudice and ambition are the means of survival. People are born with a biologic impetus to survive; they have learned to survive in a world in which there was too little for all to have enough, and some to have enough had to deny others. The world has been a cruel place for most of the men and women born into it.

We are in the midst of a revolutionary transformation. The United States and Western Europe have, within the last few decades, achieved economic organization and technological development sufficient to let them discern the possibility of a life with enough for all. They have come upon some powerful social inventions—the democratic state, the incentive system of rewards, general education, the factory, the integrated economy serving large common markets. Power has been profitable, and so the rewards for the technology of war-making have been high. Learning together, learning from each other, the people of the United States and England and France and Germany have perfected the means for killing each other in unprecedented numbers; and lately our backward brothers in Russia and Eastern Europe and Asia have picked up these lessons, too. We know now how to kill each other better, faster, more efficiently and economically, using a smaller portion of our total national product, than ever before.

Those who contend that war is inevitable want us to believe that Americans and Russians and Chinese and Africans and South Americans and Frenchmen and Englishmen all act the same way. This is not true. Americans and Russians and Englishmen and Frenchmen are similar; they have nuclear weapons and enough to eat; they have white skins. Chinese and Africans and Latin Americans and Asians don't have nuclear weapons, they don't

have white skins, and they don't have enough to eat. These nations are populated by people who cannot *think* like people in rich nations. The most unrealistic view of the world is one that supposes that the people of the nations already well along in the transition toward plenty and cooperation and highly efficient killing are likely to react to threats and promises like the people of nations where the transition is just beginning.

The world is divided between the rich and the poor, the white and the colored, the well and the sick—and it is a crucial mistake to regard these two worlds as responding to similar stimuli in the same way. Reactions, of nations or individuals, are responses to events in terms of behavior already learned. China, for example, cannot be expected to respond like the United States. The Chinese have many reasons for cooperating with us, as we have with them—but they do not include an equal fear of nuclear destruction. Even Americans cannot understand the ghastly facts about that, and the idea is meaningless to most Chinese.

It may seem senseless to spend time rehearsing the dreary and sordid facts about what nuclear weapons can do to human beings. Secretary of Defense McNamara covered the ground last February—his report to a Congressional Committee was released during the Convocation on *Pacem in Terris*, giving impetus to the leaders gathered there in their discussions about the requirements of peace. He said—as one would suppose everyone knows—that as many as 150 million Americans might be killed in a large-scale nuclear exchange with Russia, and that almost surely 50 to 80 million would die even in a modest war. While tough-minded people may remind us that death by nuclear explosion is after all only death, nuclear weapons poison the atmosphere, maim and distort generations yet unborn, and scorch the earth and all that dwells above, and on it. These are the grisly details about weapons more powerful than have heretofore been available for the exercise of greed and prejudice and ambition.

I remind you of these unpleasant realities, because a recent survey by a member of the staff of the *Forces of Change* (an adult education project

conducted at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions) disclosed that people—even learned and informed people—simply do not realize or remember what nuclear warfare can do. We ought to know and remember and weigh in our calculations the whole horror of the war-making we seek to abolish. We ought to remember, equally, that these horrors are quickly abolished from our minds, even from the minds of those who know them—that the fear of nuclear retaliation is *not* a deterrent to people who do not know what that retaliation would do to them; and it is not a deterrent to people who have put the dread away as unthinkable. Many of us fall into one or another of these categories, even those who know better than most of us what war is like, and who slide past the human costs to talk about "strategic advantages."

Our friends, the tough-minded realists, ought to complete their picture of the world. They treat the problems of policy as if we were not incalculably richer than the nations they warn us against; as if they had not been taught racial prejudice by our example. It is assumed that primitive economies teach men and women to reason like those whose societies feature industrialization, general education, and mass media; as if nations of the sick view death with the same concern as nations of the healthy. Left out of account is the general ignorance of the consequences of nuclear war, and of the psychologically determined repression of what is known of it even among the educated.

Now let me make my fiercest charge: the tough-minded catalogue of the reasons for the cold war and the assertion of the blessings of liberty to be derived from it weaken the case for cooperation.

The world is no longer able to afford the luxury of hostility. It must cease from competition for power and resources on pain of death. But from this premise, which we all share, the tough-minded reasoners reach only to the conclusion that we must cooperate with caution, continue our threats, and take care lest we give away our advantages. One of them has said, for example, that "While we must do all we can to help the small seed germinate and grow into worldwide recognition of the interdependence of mankind I think we must recognize that, for our own

safety and that of the free nations of the world we must keep up our nuclear guard."

"All we can do" is not very much if it means that we continue to rely principally on the instruments and engines of the past. Defenders of our present policy sometimes remark that the United States has set an example to the world in its interest in international cooperation—that we have done more than other nations. By historical standards, I proudly admit the fact. I am glad to be a citizen of a country that devised the Marshall Plan, that supported and encouraged the United Nations, that invented "Point IV" and other technical assistance schemes, and that has come so often and so generously to the help of other less fortunate nations. But, however good this record may be compared with that of other nations, however successful such programs might have been in forestalling previous wars, they are not enough to prevent the war that now approaches. The facts of today's world are not met by America's programs. Again, as all agree, "We have a long way to go and we still have to deal with the world as it is."

But the "world as it is" will not be changed by insignificant changes in American attitudes. The parallel with the civil rights struggle in this country is close. It was true, all along, that colored Americans were gaining each year a little more in the way of equal citizenship. But there comes a time when gradual change is not enough—not soon enough, not extensive enough, and not about enough that matters. The rebellion in Watts took place, as everyone points out, in a city whose record in race relations was among the best. Los Angeles instead of Birmingham had the riots. The point is, of course, that Watts was in part a *result* of the better treatment in Los Angeles, coupled with executive insensitivity and stupidity. The world will burn like Watts, if we cannot recognize that the rising expectations of the poor prepare the fuse that some future Vietnam or Santo Domingo or Southern Rhodesia may ignite. These are fires that have to be put out in advance—or left to burn. If the world goes the way of Watts, all the generosity, Marshall Plans and Point IV's and the rest will seem—like the \$50,000 worth of hard hats Chief Parker of the Los Angeles Police

Department bought last year—a poor fraction of what should have been done.

The United States is currently following the policies that the tough-minded reasoners recommend and defend. The rest of the world, however, is not impressed. Nor are the results what we seek. We seek a world at peace, in which all men and women can begin to develop their inherent capacities for learning and growth. We seek a world in which cooperation, rather than prejudice, greed and ambition have been taught. The United States continues to base its policy on assumptions about greed and prejudice and ambition. We judge ourselves, as Harrop Freeman says, by our own good intentions; we judge others by their failures. The world is not impressed with President Johnson's peaceable words, when it feels the force of our military expeditions and the threat of our nuclear weapons. It does not learn law from our pre-emption of whole oceans and skies for our nuclear vehicles and our experiments with them.

The world does not learn generosity from our exertion of control over smaller nations through economic prowess. The world judges us as much by what we do as by what we say. My point is not that we are evil—for we are not. It is that we talk cooperation and teach another lesson with many of our international actions. One final example will suffice: we say to the United Nations that we believe in justice as the basis for international relations, but we cling to procedural maneuvers to prevent the majority of nations who favor admitting the Peoples Republic of China from expressing their real choice; we maintain the Connelly reservation, that denies the jurisdiction over our international conduct to the World Court of Justice, unless we agree in each particular case beforehand that we will accept the court's judgment. Our posture is that of a nation only sometimes ready to promote international law and the success of the best agencies for international cooperation yet developed. We prefer to be judge of our own cases; we are often generous and quite decent outlaws, but outlaws nonetheless. Outlaws are not likely to be good law teachers.

With many others I celebrate the words of President Kennedy. I too believe there is no swift

and easy way to peace. I agree that there is no way to maintain the frontiers of freedom without cost and commitment and risk. I would that our commitment were strongly to cooperation, and reluctantly to military power. I wish that the cost we gladly bear for weapons could be matched by costs we would pay to develop agencies for international joint ventures to enrich mankind—if we must spend \$50 billion every year to frighten our potential enemies, let us then demonstrate our belief in cooperation by spending \$50 billion to rid the world of the poverty and illness and ignorance that breed the prejudice and greed and ambition that make deterrents necessary. If we must run risks, why must they always be risks of nuclear disaster? Why shouldn't we risk a trust in men and women everywhere, engaging them with us in the way of faith in each other, hope for our common future, and love?

HALLOCK HOFFMAN

Santa Barbara, California

REVIEW

ERIK ERIKSON ON GANDHI

ERIK ERIKSON'S paper on Gandhi, in the September issue of the *American Journal of Psychiatry*, may turn out to be a milestone in the progress of modern thought. The author, who is Professor of Human Development at Harvard University, and Lecturer on Psychiatry, reports on his study of Gandhi's activity in India in 1918, three years after he had returned from South Africa. Gandhi assumed leadership of a strike of workers against an Ahmedabad textile mill, and was able, Prof. Erikson says, "to impose on a poor, plague-ridden, illiterate and as yet unorganized labor force principles of nonviolent conduct which bore full fruit, not only in the fulfillment of immediate demands, but also in a permanent change of the relationship of workers to owners in that city and in India." Prof. Erikson explains his own interest in Gandhi's efforts:

He [Gandhi] was approaching so; and those of you who happen to know of my work will rightly suspect that this study is an older counterpart to *Young Man Luther* (Norton Library paperback). . . . And indeed, my interest does concern the way in which this 50-year-old man staked out his sphere of generativity and committed himself systematically not only to the trusteeship of his emerging nation, but also to that of a mankind which had begun to debase its civilized heritage with the mechanized and organized mass slaughter of world wars and totalitarian revolutions.

Something should be said about the mood of this paper. First of all, it is an invitation, not a polemic. There is the dispassion of the scientist's pursuit of ineluctable facts; by no possibility will the paper be mistaken for a moralist's attempt at persuasion; yet one cannot escape the impression that Prof. Erikson is staking out new territory and adding a moral dimension to the Western idea of the nature of man.

First proposed is a revision of the judgment made by Freud in his letter to Einstein, which was: "Conflicts between man and man are resolved in principle by the recourse to violence. It is the

same in the animal kingdom, from which man cannot claim exclusion." Much of the early part of Prof. Erikson's paper is devoted to questioning this proposition. He is unwilling to accept "the easy conviction that our 'animal nature' explains or justifies human forms of aggression." Drawing extensively on the material on animal behavior in *Das Sogenante Boese* by Konrad Lorenz, he finds little to support the view that "violence of the total kind, that is, of the kind characterized by irrational rage, wild riot or systematic extermination, can be traced to our animal nature." On the contrary, "Mutual extermination is not in nature's book." Within species, definite patterns of behavior serve the conservation of life, through "ritualization" of conflict, and the "omnibus of an aggressive instinct" grows less plausible in the presence of evidence: "A hungry lion when ready for the kill (and he kills only when hungry) shows no sign of anger or rage: he is doing his job."

Prof. Erikson questions the idea that the innate "aggressiveness" of human beings must be overcome by "inhibition" before the world can have peace. He develops, instead, the view that man departs from the comparatively peaceful and cooperative behavior of animals by the invention of weapons and by denying the unity of his species through delusional ideas of identity. Concerning weapons, he says:

. . . we should ponder the fact that from the arrow released by hand to the warhead sent by transcontinental missile, man the attacker, has been transformed into a technician and man, the attacked, a mere target, while both are thus removed from encounters such as the higher animals seem to have achieved namely, opportunities to confront each other not only as dangerous but also as pacific opponents within one species. On the contrary, man, the mere target, becomes the ready focus for hateful projections from irrational sources.

And on the question of identity:

. . . *sociogenetic evolution has split mankind into pseudo-species*, into tribes, nations and religions, castes and classes which bind their members into a pattern of *individual and collective identity*, but alas, reinforce that pattern by a *mortal fear of and a*

murderous hatred for other pseudo-species. . . . Many of the earliest tribal names mean "the people," the only mankind, implying that others are not only different but also unhuman and in league with the Id as well as the Devil. Here then, we face the problem of the *negative identity*. Identity has become a term used so vaguely as to become almost useless, and this because of our habit of ignoring dynamics when we describe normality. Yet, in any "normal" identity development, too, there is always a negative identity, which is composed of the images of that personal and collective past which is to be lived down and of that potential future which is to be forestalled.

Identity formation thus involves a continuous conflict with powerful negative identity elements: what we know or fear or are told we are but try not to be or not to see; and what we consequently see in exaggeration in others. In times of aggravated crises all this can arouse in man a murderous hate of all kinds of "otherness," in strangers and in himself.

Having supplied evidence which suggests that violent, fanatical aggression is not a basic "instinct" or biological endowment of the human species, Prof. Erikson finds an explanation of such behavior in the desperate efforts of individuals and groups—and sometimes nations—to regain or achieve acceptable feelings of identity. All history testifies to this process, and it is within the competence of the psychoanalyst, Prof. Erikson believes, to "examine the psychopathology apparent in historical crises—the morbid motivation in the lives of the daring innovator as well as his fanatic followers," and to study "the phenomenon of historical memory as a gigantic process of suppressing as well as preserving data, of forgetting as well as remembering, of mystifying as well as clarifying, of rationalizing as well as recording 'fact'."

Under historical pressures, he says, individuals and groups—

may suddenly surrender to *total doctrines and dogmas*, in which a negative identity element becomes the dominant one defying shared standards which must now be sneeringly derided, while new mystical identities are embraced. Some Negroes in this country, as well as some untouchables in India turned to an alien Allah; while the most powerful historical example of a negative identity attempting to

become positive is, of course, that of the highly educated German nation despised by the world and debased by the Treaty of Versailles turning to mystical Aryanism in order to bind its shattered identity fragments.

In such cultural regressions, we always recognize a specific rage which is aroused wherever identity development loses the promise of a traditionally assured wholeness. This latent rage, in turn, is easily exploited by fanatic and psychopathic leaders: it feeds the explosive destructiveness of mobs, and it serves the moral blindness with which decent people can develop or condone organized machines of destruction and extermination.

How are these hideous consequences to be avoided? Again, going to past experience, Prof. Erikson says: "In human history, the friendly and forceful power which may combine negative and positive identities is that of the *more inclusive identity*." The historic importance of Gandhi rests on this proposition, for it exactly defines Gandhi's approach to conflict resolution. All the elements of a restored and enlarged identity were taken into account in Gandhi's thinking and action. Gandhi, Prof. Erikson believes, understood the roots of aggression and violence in distorted ways of life and went to work at basic correction:

. . . it seems that in his immense intuition in regard to historical actuality and in his capacity to assume leadership in what to him was "truth in action," Gandhi was able to recognize some of those motivations in man which in their instinctual and technical excess, have come between him and his pacific propensities; and that Gandhi created a social invention (*Satyagraha*) which transcends these motivations under certain conditions.

While he would not compromise with injustice, Gandhi regarded every conflict as a confrontation of *equals*. He would not permit either side to undermine the other. As Prof. Erikson puts it, "His *inclusion of his opponent in all his plans* went so far that Kenneth Boulding could say recently that Gandhi had done more good to the British than to the Indians." Of the starving mill workers on strike in Ahmedabad, he exacted "a pledge that they would abstain from *any destruction*, even of the *opponent's good*

name." The harmlessness of the strikers became so evident that on the third day of the strike the police stopped carrying firearms, and Gandhi also refused to let moralistic condemnation aggravate the guilt-feelings of the employers. In short, he worked directly against the forces which in history divide men into "pseudo-species"—those artificial identities which lead to aggression and war. Specifically, he prevented "cumulative aggravation of *bad conscience, negative identity and hypocritical moralism.*" There is nonetheless a tremendous toughness in the Gandhian stance, which Prof. Erikson generalizes as follows:

. . . he gave his opponent the maximum opportunity for an informed choice, even as he had based his demands on a thorough investigation of what could be considered fair and right: he told the workers not to demand more than that, but also to be prepared to *die* rather than to demand less. To strengthen their resolve, he distributed leaflets describing the sacrifices of the first Indian *Satyagrahis* in South Africa and thus provided them with *a new tradition*. It was when they nevertheless began to feel that he demanded more suffering from them than he was apparently shouldering himself that he declared his first fast. The *acceptance of suffering* and, in fact, of death, which is so basic to his "truth force," constitutes an *active choice without submission to anyone*; whatever masochism we may find in it, it is the highest affirmation of individualism in the service of humanity. . . .

Gandhi thus emerges amidst the complexity of his personality and the confusion of his times as a man possessing that quality of *supreme presence* which can give to the finite moment a sense of infinite meaning for it is tuned both to the "inner voice" and to historical actuality, that is, to the potentialities for a higher synthesis in other individuals or in the masses. This I do not reiterate as an appeal to "higher" emotions in order to hide the methodological incompleteness of our work; rather, I want to submit that we know as yet little of the ego strength in such presence. . . .

The temper of this paper should be vastly encouraging, not simply to enthusiasts of Gandhian persuasion, but to all those who may recognize its rich contribution to the Humanist outlook in terms of both ethics and psychology. Prof. Erikson's analysis goes to the core of the

problem of violence and war by a forthright discussion of the nature of man, opening the way to extensive investigation in this direction. There is an untendentious solidity in his development of the subject, and at the same time an open-hearted linking of fact and human aspiration.

COMMENTARY **THE UNWRITTEN NORMS**

THE closing quotations in this week's *Frontiers*—from Dwight Macdonald and Andrea Caffi—strike a keynote which needs endless repetition. In the lead article, Hallock Hoffman calls urgently for cooperation. Well, how shall we get it? Cooperation is not a virtue you merely adopt in order to "survive," but a lifetime habit bred and nurtured in human beings by family life and community example. It comes from fruitful social formations of the kind described by Macdonald and Caffi—and throughout his career by Arthur Morgan—the small communities and associations of people who make cooperation second nature to them through friendship and by working together in constructive enterprise.

The tendency of the liberals to "compromise" (see this week's "Children" article) arises from the habit of placing all one's hopes in forms of association for which compromise is a condition of success. Is it not evident that nothing precious can be entrusted to the care of such groups? If we look mainly to power to solve our problems, we shall gain nothing but new problems, for power consumes ideals, and the greater the power, the more rapid its consumption.

The primary need is for forms of human activity which lead to "an association whose unwritten norms will actually inspire both the private and the public life of its components." The written laws can never be better—they can never be as good—as the principles of enlightened private citizens. To get good laws, and viable programs of international cooperation, you have to start at the grass roots and generate a quality of people for whom cooperation is the rule of life and who reject the compromises that mean moral disaster.

There is a great task of reconstruction before the world—but it is not a task in which either politics or technology can be of much help. This task is the rediscovery of vital human ends which

are prior to politics and technology, and which may be pursued without compromise by individuals and small groups. What are these ends? Do we ever define them except in cant phrases? Is there any ardor in their pursuit? If we really believe that these high human goals exist, and if the truth is in us when we talk about "spiritual values," why do we endlessly parade our political power and our technological splendor? Is it that spiritual values are no use to us when we need to justify something unpleasant that we have done? People perceptive enough to see where the real lack lies in our common life, and public-spirited enough to want to do something about it, could not face a greater challenge.

CHILDREN

... and Ourselves

THE RADICAL—SOME DEFINITIONS

LAST WEEK'S review of Scott Nearing's *The Conscience of a Radical* provided clarifying ideas on radicalism. Mr. Nearing put it quite simply:

Radicals stand firm for the good, with its qualitative sequence of "better" and "best." They search for the principles underlying appearances, the causes that are operating to produce observed effects. When they discover the principles, they announce them, sometimes insistently, meanwhile doing their best to put the principles into practice.

The critics of student protest movements—which have been gathering momentum in recent years and escalated spectacularly during the intensified war in Vietnam—typically regard these "radicals" as youngsters who abrogate responsibility toward the society in which they live. The extent to which such criticisms have limited validity is considered by Arthur Waskow in an article, "The New Student Movement," in *Dissent* (Autumn):

The student movements seem to me in revolt against labels and roles, though some are wearily convinced that they will probably have to settle (at best) for the coining of fresh labels and the invention of new roles. Among the labels they revolt against are those habitually used by democratic socialists and other independent-left people, and those used by the Establishment. (One of the few left-descriptive words they respond to warmly is simply "radical.")

They seem to me to be making by no means a rigidly or vulgarly Marxist "class" analysis in the sheerly economic sense but to be more interested in all the "left-outs" rather than in just the economic "have-nots." The left-outs seem to be those who have been kicked off the bottom rungs of "status" and "power" ladders as well as those on the bottom rungs of the "class" ladder. Thus students think of themselves as leftouts even though they come from affluent families. And their reaction seems to be that no one ought to be "left-out"—that all human beings belong in the *polis*—that it is an outrage for *anyone* to be napped, starved, ignored, or segregated.

They analyze the reasons for the present exclusion of some people from the *polis* as partly but not wholly economic: partly the wish of the Establishment to make more money, but partly its grasp for power aside from wealth and partly a kind of disease that comes from focusing upon the machine the Establishment thinks it is running rather than upon the people who are really being run ragged. As the students see it, this disease involves the love of order, because the machine must run smoothly, anger at those who create disorder (though sometimes a willingness to buy order back at the price of placating the disorderly); and a willingness to treat people who do not fit the orderly assumptions as if they were not part of society at all.

The *Saturday Review* for Oct. 16 has a brief explanation by a graduate student from the University of Pennsylvania of the state of mind described by Mr. Waskow. Rochelle Gatlin tells why the protesters are disinclined to work within the familiar Liberal focus—efforts to improve society by exerting political influence. Miss Gatlin puts it this way:

The effect of current student unrest may be a critical analysis—even exposé—of hypocritical practices in relation to traditional American values of peace, equality, and individual freedom. For example, it took the Freedom Riders and the registering of disenfranchised Southern Negroes—and unfortunately the murder of a few white Northerners—to focus the country's attention on the wide discrepancy between the ideal and the practice of equality.

One characteristic of socially alert students is their dissatisfaction with and even discarding of the liberalism of Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, and Clark Kerr. Stanley Kauffmann has expressed the growing irrelevance of liberalism with its optimistic belief in progress by saying that although liberal sentiments are unimpeachable, they are almost irresponsible in the light of existing conditions—the contemporary equivalent of a hundred Hail Marys to avert the Black Plague. To many students, there is something ineffectual about the liberal bureaucrat with his tools of mediation and compromise. Furthermore, (as Michael Miller has said in a recent article in *Dissent*) "the more militant students regard liberalism with something less than satisfaction. They believe it to be somehow implicated, if only by default, in the heritage of nightmares that compose

modern history—Auschwitz, Hiroshima, the Cold War, McCarthyism."

But student radicals do not look to bureaucratic, puritanical Russia or to unindustrialized, overpopulated, and poverty-ridden China as models. Not Marx, but Gandhi and Thoreau are their mentors. Their goal is to eliminate the divorce between the political and personal; no definite programs, no slogans, only a direct emotional response to hypocrisy and injustice.

In the closing paragraph of *The Root Is Man*, written in 1948, Dwight Macdonald gives a prevision of the sort of radicalism our quotations have been defining. He quotes from a letter he received from a friend at that time: "So long as morality is all in public places—politics, Utopia, revolutions (nonviolent included), progress—our private mores continue to be a queasy mixture of chivalry and cynicism: all in terms of *angles*, either for or against. We're all against political sin, we all love humanity, but individuals are sort of tough to love, even tougher to hate. . . . No. Damn, our only chance is to try to get as small, private, honest, selfish as we can. Don't you agree that one can't have a moral attitude toward Humanity? Too big." Macdonald continues:

To put it more generally. Technological progress, the organization from the top of human life (what Max Weber calls "rationalization"), the overconfidence of the past two centuries in scientific method—these have led us, literally, into a dead end. Their trend is now clear: atomic warfare, bureaucratic collectivism, "the crystallization of social activity into an objective power above us, growing out of our control, thwarting our expectations, bringing to naught our calculations. . . ." To try to fight this trend, as the Progressives of all shades do, with the same forces that have brought it about appears absurd to me. We must emphasize the emotions, the imaginations, the moral feelings, the primacy of the individual human being, must restore the balance that has been broken by the hypertrophy of science in the last two centuries. The root is man, here and not there, now and not then.

In the *American Scholar* (Summer) Henry May, author of *Discontent of the Intellectuals*, and a University of California professor,

concludes his impressions of "The Student Movement" with this hopeful thought:

A few years ago many professors, I among them, were deploring the passivity and complacency of American students and of American life, and wishing for a revival of campus radicalism. Somewhat wryly, we are forced to realize that radicalism never comes in the shape or size one has asked for. It is the breath of life, and it is full of danger. Our campus now is lively and dangerous. Divided between hope and anxiety, I can look for comfort only to the very considerable reserves, in Berkeley and elsewhere, of intelligence and honesty.

FRONTIERS

Alienation

THE first question posed to Dr. Erich Fromm in a *McCall's* (October) interview was: "Why do you think so many of our young people are cynical today?"

"Cynicism" seems far too passive a word to apply to students who are engaged in the campus protest movements of the present. In terms of attitudes, the young person bent on discovering some kind of "authentic individuality" does not strive for sophisticated techniques of debunking the values his society seems to live by—he simply rejects them, and seeks for others more to his liking. The most interesting of Dr. Fromm's comments occur when he dips beneath the superficial level of questions concerning "good" and "bad" marriages, turning to the root problem of the twentieth century—alienation.

Alienation is certainly far more than the phenomenon Marx described in terms of man's separation from the fruits of his labor and the depersonalization and exploitation of his energy output. For alienation is increasing rapidly in economies of abundance where, though many people have ample leisure and considerable opportunity for changing occupations at will, the "masses" are continually indoctrinated in how they "ought" to feel. Dr. Fromm observes:

It is quite clear that today there is more indoctrination culturally, there are more books and more lectures that tell you what you *ought* to feel than in the past, and therefore people know better what they're *supposed* to feel. If you took a still relatively simple peasant community which doesn't have so much access to all our media of communication, you would find that people are less indoctrinated as to what they are supposed to feel, and therefore many of their feelings are more genuine.

It is an interesting thing, you know, that in the use of the verbs "to have" and "to be," people talk in terms of "I have." For instance, people say, "I have insomnia," instead of saying, "I cannot sleep." "I have a problem," instead of saying, "I am unhappy." And they have, of course, a car and children and a

house and a psychoanalyst; but everything is expressed in terms of "I have" connected with a noun, and not in terms of "to be" connected with a verb.

You can find a tremendous shift in our language from the emphasis on verbs to the emphasis on nouns in terms of "I have." This is an example of alienation. There is no such thing as a problem or a neurosis or freedom. I suffer, I have difficulties in living—well—you couldn't even say I am free, but I am freeing myself. I am liberating myself, because this is a process. But to talk about nations that *have* freedom, people who *have* freedom is just like talking about people who have cars. "To have" makes sense in terms of things, but it doesn't make sense in terms of people. In terms of people, the question is "to be," and to experience life, there is being. Now people today don't experience life as *being* but as *having* something, because our whole system is centering around what one can buy and what one has.

When asked if there may not be a way "out of this," Dr. Fromm replied:

Well, look, if this increases in intensity, we will end up in a madhouse. We are already at the point where most people don't know what they feel, and that means they don't know who they are.

Now, how can the trend be reversed? In the first place people will react to it. The human individual, the human society, reacts to things that are bad. Just as a body, in fact reacts against poisons or stuff that damages it. Somebody has to be very sick if his body doesn't react any more. Then it's hopeless.

People are getting tired of the sense of meaninglessness of life; of the sense that they are little automatons; of the sense that they have nothing to say about their own lives; of trying to save time and then kill it; of trying to be a success and when reaching what they want—with the very few exceptions of creative people—of feeling "So what? What has been the meaning?" I should like to quote the Old Testament, which says, "They have lacked in joy in the midst of plenty." And I think that is what could be said about ourselves. I personally believe this is sin.

A useful collection of discussions of alienation was published in 1962 under the title *Man Alone*. The Introduction by the editors, Eric and Mary Josephson, provides elements in the thought of such modern thinkers as Erich Fromm, David Riesman, Karen Horney, Clark Moustakas,

Karl Jaspers, Hannah Arendt, C. Wright Mills, Paul Goodman, Bruno Bettelheim, Joseph Campbell, and Albert Camus. These writers elaborate the many varieties of "alienation" which are characteristic of mid-twentieth century society, and the Josephsons suggest that overcoming the "alienation predicament" must involve some transcendental or even metaphysical thinking.

The pessimism, despair, and uncertainty of our time have not suddenly sprung into being. Atomic weapons are not the cause but the effect of characteristic attitudes and motivations, each of which has a traceable lineage. The society which prepares to use atomic weapons is itself split and "atomized" in many ways—a process which the Josephsons feel must first be understood, since the spurious "togetherness" brought by a closing of the ranks in fear of war will ultimately only magnify the alienation problem—a problem to be solved by individuals and small groups. Many contemporary thinkers are aware of this problem, and the best of their writing should point the way to the regenerative thought upon which any hope for an enlightened future depends. The Josephsons summarize:

The theme of the alienation of modern man runs through the literature and drama of two continents, it can be traced in the content as well as the form of modern art; it preoccupies theologians and philosophers, and to many psychologists and sociologists, it is the central problem of our time. In various ways they tell us that ties have snapped that formerly bound Western man to himself and to the world about him. In diverse language they say that man in modern industrial societies is rapidly becoming detached from nature, from his old gods, from the technology that has transformed his environment and now threatens to destroy it; from his work and its products, and from his leisure; from the complex social institutions that presumably serve but are more likely to manipulate him; from the community in which he lives; and above all from himself—from his body and his sex, from his feelings of love and tenderness, and from his art—his creative and productive potential.

The alienated man is everyman and no man, drifting in a world that has little meaning for him and over which he exercises no power, a stranger to himself and to others. As Erich Fromm writes, "Alienation as we find it in modern society is almost total; it pervades the relationship of man to his work, to the things he consumes, to his fellows, and to himself." Or as Charles Taylor expresses it, in a mechanical and depersonalized world man has "an indefinable sense of loss, a sense that life . . . has become impoverished, that men are somehow 'deracinate and disinherited,' that society and human nature alike have been atomized, and hence mutilated, above all that men have been separated from whatever might give meaning to their work and their lives.

Dwight Macdonald and Andrea Caffi provide a transition from one-time "leftist" formula thinking to an existentialist emphasis. Macdonald writes:

Granted that individual actions can never overthrow the status quo, and also that even spontaneous mass rebellion will be fruitless unless certain elementary steps of coordination and organization are taken. But today we confront this situation: the masses just do not act toward some fundamental betterment of society. The only way, at present, of so *acting* (as against just "making the record" for the muse of Marxian history by resolutions and manifestos "against imperialist war," "for the international proletarian revolution," etc.) seems to be through symbolic individual actions, based on one person's insistence on his own values, and through the creation of small fraternal groups which will support such actions, keep alive a sense of our ultimate goals, and both act as a leavening in the dough of mass society and attract more and more of the alienated and frustrated members of that society. These individual stands have two advantages over the activities of those who pretend that mass action is now possible:

(1) They make a dramatic appeal to people, the appeal of the individual who is bold enough and serious enough to stand alone, if necessary, against the enormous power of The State; this encourages others to resist a little more than they would otherwise in *their* everyday life, and also preserves the living seeds of protest and rebellion from which later on bigger things may grow.

(2) They at least preserve the revolutionary vitality and principles of the few individuals who make such stands.

not made dependent on an authority endowed with means of coercion.

The point is to make these real *human* relations and not abstract concepts of class or history. It has often been observed that nations—and, I might add, classes, even the proletariat—have a lower standard of ethical behavior than individuals do. Even if all legal constraints were removed, I take it we can assume that few people would devote themselves exclusively to murder or would constantly lie to their friends and families yet the most respected leaders of present societies, the military men and the political chieftains, in their public capacities become specialists in lying and murder. Always, of course, with the largest aims, "for the good of humanity."

And from Andrea Caffi:

As long as today's problems are stated in terms of "mass politics" and "mass organization," it is clear that only States and mass parties can deal with them. But, if the solutions that can be offered by the existing States and parties are acknowledged to be either futile or wicked, or both, then we must look not only for different "solutions" but especially for a different way of stating the problems themselves.

What distinguishes "mass politics" is the fact that it reduces human beings and their occasional spontaneity to the function of undifferentiated and interchangeable particles of energy of which the only thing that matters is how quickly they can be agglomerated into large numbers and "big battalions."

We should probe deeply into the cluster of feelings, hopes, altruistic or egocentric dispositions which color a particular group or individual.

Rather than solidarity, we should promote friendship among the individuals who struggle to emerge from the "mass." Those friendships should then be strengthened through some constructive enterprise carried out in common. The aim remains the rebirth of true "popular" communities. The humblest aims, from an association for mutual help to a club where people meet to spend time together, can eventually lead to an association whose unwritten norms will actually inspire both the private and the public life of its components. Two conditions are obviously indispensable: the first is that the number of people so associated be limited, so as to permit each individual to get to know *well* all his companions, the second is that such an association be