

AN INDIAN WISDOM

WHAT needs to be understood, whenever the term "revolution" is used, is the depth of the overturning. We have, for example, the expression "palace revolution" to describe exchanges of power that leave undisturbed the basic human relationships and ideas of the good which prevail in society. It may be said that, unless some new conception of human identity results, no real revolution has occurred, but only a manipulation of existing power relationships.

The sense of validity men feel in all such transitions depends upon how they think of themselves as human beings. The eighteenth century was a time of authentic revolution because out of its struggles came the idea that to be a man is a self-existent value, underived from heredity or accidents of time and place. There is a timeless verity in this idea, giving the eighteenth century its spiritual grandeur.

Today, however, the inspiration of the eighteenth century survives mainly as a vague personal intuition of human dignity and freedom, and as an ethical abstraction of political philosophy. There are contradictions. Brought forward from pre-revolutionary centuries was the traditional Christian teaching of the human soul as tethered to the will of its Creator, with varying institutional versions of what that will is and how it is to be obeyed. In practice, despite the revolution, the individual often remained the pawn of the theological experts who interpreted this doctrine. To this day, "atheist" is an epithet which marshals suspicion and hate as a weapon of popular rejection, so that the adjective which is placed before the noun "man" is still, for many people, of greater importance than the human essence itself. Unbelieving politicians who are careful to let themselves be seen going to church on Sunday are advertisements of the fact that the government of the times is based upon a blur of conflicting principles and concepts of the good, and that political eminence can hardly be gained without

catering to prejudice. The manipulation of ignorance is still an almost indispensable political skill.

What of the "scientific revolution"? While the discoveries of science, through their extension by technology, have accomplished vast changes in the external conditions of life, its moral impact may now be said to have come full circle. Initially, scientific ideas were reference-points for the liberation of the human mind. The very acts of discovery disclosed the potentialities of free men who looked at the world and the processes of nature without preconception. Science became a kind of functional self-definition for men who broke out of the confinements of theological dogma. Its chief misfortune was that it also became a specialty of men of advanced intellectuality who, in time, provided less inspiring doctrines of the nature of man. We are, they said, as nature has made us, and they proceeded with elaborate accounts of the causes and conditionings which set limits to human potentiality. A kind of naturalistic infallibility has attached to these pronouncements. Were not the scientists reading the Book of Nature, as the great Galileo recommended? What could ordinary people know of these things? To deny them their authority would be to stand entirely alone. And why should they not be trusted? They, who dared to set aside all special pleadings of the moralists—they, who made impersonal, objective truth their only master?

The unpalatable fact is, however, that man, at the hands of the scientists, is still an object of manipulation by forces he does not understand. The human essence cries out a desperate, anarchist resistance to the malleable, plastic image given to man by biology and behavioristic psychology, but meanwhile politics, making capital of angry, know-nothing emotions, calls upon scientists to be sorcerer's apprentices, giving them particular tasks and paying them well, but conceding nothing to the internationalism of the scientific spirit.

How can we have or even talk of having a revolution, today? A revolution is not something that is done to us, but something we do in behalf of a new conception of ourselves. Before there can be anything like a revolutionary change in human life, there will have to develop among us a conception of knowledge and truth that is somehow a fruit of individual understanding and control, and not a set of terrible abstractions which rules high over our heads according to the decisions of experts who claim access to facts not given to ordinary men, and who sorely try our moral emotions.

But what shall we say of these experts? How shall we understand them? Can we claim, as the free spirits of the eighteenth-century revolution asserted of kings and priests, that the authority of the experts is a false myth that chains our noblest impulses and suppresses our true democratic aspirations? No, we can hardly say that. The truth is that our noblest impulses are few and usually still-born, and our democratic aspirations weighted down by the heavy mechanisms created to realize them. The fact is that the parameters of our idea of truth go out of sight like parabolic curves. The practically embodied theories of our doctrine of progress are at least as misleading, as chimerical in their meaning, as were the speculations of the metaphysicians which the empiricists of the brave new world of science condemned with unyielding scorn only half a century ago. Our "truth"—if indeed it ever was the truth, in human terms—is out of scale with our capacity to test and verify its claims as whole human beings. There may be more searching, diagnostic meaning in Eugene O'Neill's anti-hero who turns from Jehovah to fawning worship of the Dynamo, than in any of the portentous statistical studies detailing the incongruities in the social systems of modern man.

We have not got the kind of a society the best representatives of the human race once dreamed of, we are not going in the direction of those dreams, and we have not yet the courage or the integrity to admit the manifest failure of what we have done and the monstrous pretensions in continuing as we do.

There is this fundamental question: Where shall we look for truth and wisdom? In the mathematical

proofs of flat intellectual abstractions, or in men whose lives we cannot help but admire?

Is the good life a feat in engineering, an electronic projection of some mechanism of the tiring human brain, a breeches buoy to the moon—or is it a pattern of existence that can be defined in terms of its own luster, without recourse to entries in the ledgers of a progress that may be erased in a matter of hours or days?

For what, as human beings, do we congratulate ourselves? On the plateaus of all our cultural achievements are mounted the retorts of angry rejection and unqualified reproach for the quality of our civilization. Consult the essay, the novel, the poem, the drama—what do they say on the subject of modern man? Is *Waiting for Godot* the mirror-image of our times? Why are the best of essayists Jeremiahs crying in the wilderness? How shall we explain the fact that the most perceptive observations concerning human need now come from psychotherapists who do nothing but pick up the pieces of broken lives?

Just *where* will you look for human excellence, today? In education? More than a century ago, Francis Wayland, president of Brown University, asked a question which was hardly heard and certainly not answered:

How can colleges prosper directed by men, very good men to be sure, but who know about every other thing except education? The man who first devised the present mode of governing colleges in this country has done us more injury than Benedict Arnold.

The situation has not changed. The Byrne report on the University of California only repeats this question.

Our difficulty is not in producing nothing that is good, but in not recognizing and honoring the only good that can be relied upon by human beings. What is that good? It has not changed. It has always been the same. It grows in men who refuse to live by abstractions and claims which do not fit the growth potentials and higher needs of human beings. Behind and beneath the artificial measures of the good which are made to determine external modes of

action are individuals who from day to day square the circle of their lives by performance in keeping with their grasp of the meaning of integrity. They will not distort themselves into conformity with conventional notions of achievement. They last as long as they can, and then, if they must, they opt out. They do not necessarily blame other people. They may blame themselves. Sometimes they are called failures. Often they think themselves failures. But some deep conviction of meaning makes them deal only in terms that they can understand.

Increasingly, in our society, the price of wholeness is to suffer some kind of segregation at the hand of society. But it is not really "society" that does it. It is rather the anxious allegiance of bewildered human beings to emasculating abstractions concerning the nature of man, the nature of the world, and what is necessary or "right"—these are the dark curtains which make the qualities of whole human beings invisible and without acknowledged value in our time.

To change all this will require incredibly far-reaching reform. Not *many* reforms, but one that is all-important. It has to do with the idea of the truth on which we must absolutely depend. Some idea of this reform was expressed by Thoreau at the end of his paper on the Natural History of Massachusetts. Since natural history is a department of science, the comment is concerned with the practice of science. Thoreau said:

The true man of science will know nature better by his finer organization; he will smell, taste, see, hear, feel, better than other men. His will be a deeper and finer experience. We do not learn by inference and deduction, and the application of mathematics to philosophy, but by direct intercourse and sympathy. It is with science as with ethics,—we cannot know truth by contrivance and method; the Baconian is as false as any other, and with all the helps of machinery and the arts, the most scientific will still be the healthiest and friendliest man and possess a more perfect Indian wisdom.

It is all there. Thoreau is saying that true science is knowledge that men can use as whole men. He is saying what Socrates said in the *Phaedo*, explaining how his investigation of the natural sciences made him blind to matters that had earlier

been self-evident truths, and how he decided to be more careful lest he "lose the eye of soul" through an unbalanced preoccupation with the external world. This is only to say that truth is what makes us better men; or, at any rate, that if it does not, it should not be called truth, although it may be knowledge or correct information.

Now let us see how this might work in practice. For one thing, it would certainly change our judgments concerning disorders in history. Take for example the Luddite revolt against the machines which, early in the nineteenth century, took employment away from the artisans of Nottingham. At night, these desperate workmen attacked the machines that had destroyed their means of livelihood. They carefully avoided bloodshed or violence against living beings until, at the request of an angry employer, a band of them were shot down by soldiers.

In a society pervaded by Thoreau's conception of truth, the conclusion of a social scientist would not concern the backwardness of workers but would declare that men so provoked to destruction must be regarded as a symptom of some extreme profanation of natural law, since the hated machinery had been put into action in a way which ignored the welfare of a number of human beings. In short, in a society where scientific knowledge had not been dichotomized—divorced from awareness of general human good—this kind of event could not have happened at all.

Today, the critics of technological progress are sometimes called neo-Luddites. Yet in a better-informed world guided by Thoreau's kind of science, the epithet might be recognized as a compliment. What is at issue is not the red-herring question of whether or not machinery and laborsaving devices are "a good thing," which reduces the dialogue to an infantile level, but whether they should be regarded as an independent *highest good*, to which all other values must conform or somehow give way. It is this deadly, staring, inhuman, technological absolute which wears away the sensibility of modern man and closes his mind to other standards of value.

Fortunately, there is testimony bearing on this question which, once stated, gains intuitive confirmation from many who hear it. The proposition is that there is no inner principle of balance, no serenity, no harmony of living control in the world that modern science and technology have created for us. The following, taken from Georgy Kepes' Introduction to *The Nature and Art of Motion* (George Braziller, 1965), is a faithful, if incomplete, report on our civilization:

The inescapable attribute of our time is its runaway pace. Tidal waves of traffic pound us; sprawling cities and exploding populations squeeze us. Wildly erratic throbbing migrations—the daily shuttle from home to work, from work to home, the weekend surge from city to country and from country to city, the punctuations of rush-hour deadlocks—toss us in an accelerating rhythm barely within our control. Streams of speeding objects—motorcars, airplanes, intercontinental missiles, orbiting space capsules—weave a rapidly changing fabric all around us with patterns of spiraling velocities. At night, the reassuring calm of the firmament is blotted out by our cities, which are transformed into giant circuses where darting headlights, winking traffic lights, glittering, gaudy displays, and advertising signs whirl and pirouette in frantic competition for our attention.

The traffic of the outside world has its inner counterpart. Our interior world is shaped by the restless haste of bad consciences. We conceive friendships, set goals, and establish values in a relentless hurry. Compulsively, we try to perform faster, produce more, acquire power and possessions that corrupt and corrode us. Our proudest and most potent possessions, without reliable social guidance, become misused. We live under the shadow of superinventions, with their much too easy push-button control. As we all know so well, these have brought us to the brink of final disaster.

Is there any escape? Can we step outside our rushed selves and find the calm to meet our neglected deeper needs? As well step out of a racing express train without expectation of harm! It seems equally impossible to look inside ourselves and find renewal of spirit. Our privacy, the sanctuary for our imaginative powers, is invaded, not only by such lashing tentacles of this world of motion as the onrushing images of the television screen, but even more by our own frantic restlessness.

In spite of all this oscillating traffic, many of us feel that a change, a true change in our human situation has not come about. . . . A feeling of hopelessness has seized our most sensitive and best equipped minds. Their clearest purposes and most passionate efforts have become mockeries. They despair because they believe that individual efforts and achievements are too few and slow to alter massive social events. The individual's role seems meaningless, out of scale with the pace of happenings. . . .

Let there be no mistake. We did not quote the foregoing from Mr. Kepes merely to turn his words into a devastating attack on modern technology. Nor, to be precise, is it meant even as a criticism of our *use* of technology. It is rather an exposure of what happens to human beings when they come to care little about the quality of their lives *as* human beings. Technology is not a mechanical god. We are not its creatures. We can change. We are quite capable of diving in the mess without increasing it, and rejecting the rules which let the causes of the mess become the arbiters of our lives. A man's own understanding of what is good can always be put in command. How he does this is still the measure of a good man. There is no other.

Who can fail to admit that a truth which kills, maims, depletes, wastes, and drives to madness is not a truth? There is no law which compels a man to endlessly submit—which is to do the very opposite of the counsel and example of every hero, every God, every teacher revered in the memory of man. There is no compulsive mandate to action on the basis of claims, teachings, doctrines, and "necessities" which the individual man does not understand and cannot as a rational intelligence believe in. This is the truth which must come before every other idea. It is the first principle of education. It is the foundation of every constitution worth preserving. It is the law by which human beings earn self-respect. How curious that at the awesome zenith of Western man's power over nature, to speak in these terms should declare a revolution!

REVIEW

IDENTITY VERSUS MORALITY

QUOTATIONS in last week's "Children" article, concerned with the "new radicalism" among college students, correlate well with material in the *Nation* for Nov. 1. In "The Irrelevance of Morality," Robert Welker reports on an ambitious teach-in at the University of Toronto, during which the righteousness of United States foreign policy was blandly explained by Mr. A. A. Berle (billed as "consultant" to Dean Rusk) and by two professors of political science. In Mr. Welker's opinion, the result was one more instance of the practice of identifying morality with programs designed to serve the "public interest" of a single state.

If morality is so easily established for us by the thinking of other men, the individual citizen will never really be troubled by moments of individual decision. Moments of decision imply perception of alternative courses to be adopted. The trouble, then—which leads to what Viktor Frankl calls the "existential vacuum," the loss of recognizable individuality—is that unless a man knows he has decisions to make and makes them, he quite literally cannot know who he is.

A thoughtful analysis of the immaturities growing out of neglect of moral decision is found in the *American Scholar's* continuing symposium on morality. In the Summer, 1965, issue, Dr. Kenneth Keniston, a Yale psychiatrist, begins by sharply differentiating between "ethics" and "morality." Moral codes, as rules of behavior, he shows, are specific and situational. The moral man can be moral without thought, acting automatically to fulfill what is expected of him or refraining from what will be socially disapproved. He may even become impervious to "temptation" simply by failing to recognize alternatives to the public code. The tendency of institutional religion, of course, has been to stress conformity and to identify virtue with conventional status. The Protestant code, for instance, linked *work*

with virtue—work divorced from any sort of thinking which might tend to be unsettling. For this reason the revolutionary movements which followed the industrial revolution were inevitably anti-church.

The development of an ethical sense, on the other hand results from what Dr. Keniston calls "the individual's thought-out, reflective and generalized sense of good and evil, the desirable and the undesirable, as integrated into his sense of himself and his view of the world." The ethical man is concerned with conscience, a conscience which relates not primarily to the public code, but to his own integrity. A man desiring to be "moral" usually thinks about what he should *not* do, whereas a man striving to be ethical has affirmative aspirations. Dr. Keniston then relates these distinctions to human growth from infancy to maturity and to the *potential* maturity of a civilization in which ethics would replace morality:

Morals come first in life: anyone fortunate enough to have devoted parents who are minimally consistent in how they respond to him in childhood is likely to develop an ingrained sense of morals—a superego—rooted in his childish anticipations of his parents' response to his behavior. The constituents of the child's moral sense are therefore situational and interpersonal; nor can it be otherwise, for when the bases of conscience are laid down, the child is virtually incapable of abstraction, generalization and conceptual thought.

In adolescence, however, a major change in morality becomes possible. Adolescence brings new powers of cognition and new feelings—a capacity for logico-deductive thought and an urge for self-consistency, an ability to locate oneself in time and a need for historical relatedness, a talent for self-regulation and a will to stand unaided. Thus some adolescents are impelled toward a reexamination of childhood morals which psychoanalysts call a "rebellion against the parental superego"—thereby underlining the youth's need to repudiate his parents' words and deeds. The other function of this reexamination is less often discussed; it permits the adolescent to make conscious the unconscious constituents of his childhood superego and, by bringing them to light, to reject them or incorporate them into a developing sense of individuated

selfhood. In the process, there may develop the beginning of an ethical sense beyond morals, a sense of the desirable and the undesirable that embraces and is supported by remnants of the childish conscience, but that transcends it in abstractness, historical realism, and consistency with other commitments and conceptions of self.

In this perspective, what the psychologist might call "emancipation from the childhood superego" involves the same struggle as that classically portrayed by the myth of Prometheus. Rebellion against morality is, of course, meaningless if it leads only to some new alliance with a substitute authority—as for instance the "codes" of the street gang or of adults with destructive aims. But for some youths, perhaps an ever-growing number at the present time, the struggle to escape the bonds of public morality is the first sign of a development of a reflective ethical sense. It is here, Dr. Keniston thinks, that we may see the promise of responsible individuality. He speaks of growth toward "a reflective ethical sense that may continue to deepen throughout life, to ethical aspirations that replace moral prescriptions, and to a new kind of morality that is a part of the self rather than a force alien to the self." He continues:

Morals, then, can be taught and transmitted with minimal loss from generation to generation, but ethics must be re-achieved by each new generation. For this reason, the ethical attainments of one generation often degenerate into the moral homilies of the next. No matter how high their own ethical sense, parents can never simply bequeath it to their children. Children can only learn moral codes and parents can only hope that their offspring will one day achieve for themselves a transmission of morals to ethics that will betoken their emergence as individuated men and women.

Yet like many of the tokens of individuation the ethical life is often difficult. A moral code provides a rule book for behavior, while an ethical system merely offers ideals without specifying the precise ways to attain them. The ethical man must often hesitate, reflect and ponder, while his moral fellow must merely obey his conscience. And a man who does obey his ingrained sense of morals can usually sleep with a clear conscience; but an ethical man can

never be sure that he has chosen ethically. In his pursuit of the good, the ethical man continually risks conflict between his own ethics and the morals of his tribe, province or nation-state. To his moral fellows who consider Right and Duty self-evident, the ethical man will often seem a Hamlet or a traitor, struggling to reconcile action with aspiration while others act.

This analysis provides background for understanding what A. H. Maslow means by the self-actualizing person. Following are some tentative definitions found in Dr. Maslow's *Motivation and Personality*:

Self-actualizing persons are frequently, but not consistently, unconventional. They observe the rituals and traditions of society with a fair degree of good grace primarily because they prefer not to hurt the feelings of other people. However, they do not permit convention to prevent them from doing something they feel is important. When they do act according to tradition it is voluntary and deliberate but not because they feel any kind of compulsion.

Self-actualizing people are independently ethical; that is, they derive their own ethical standards as differentiated from passively accepting standards established by society. Moreover, these people seem to be relatively free of the lies, hypocrisies and inconsistencies of society. They are concerned with basic issues and eternal, unanswered questions of philosophy. These people compromise less with their own morality than do most people.

The self-actualizing person attempts to show a measure of respect to all human beings, regardless of their station in life, simply because they are human beings. No matter how despicable the other person may be, there is a minimum point below which the self-actualizing person will not go in his attitude toward that person. He is cautious not to destroy the dignity and self-respect of others.

COMMENTARY

AN IDEAL IMAGE OF MAN

IF YOU put together what Maslow says about the self-actualizing man, what Keniston says about the ethical man, and what Thoreau says about the true man of science, you get a composite portrait of an ideal human being that would be difficult to improve upon. And isn't this precisely what is missing in present-day thought and culture—a viable ideal image of man? The times are not saturated with reports and anecdotes about the behavior of men who are worthy of emulation. A mother is at some pains to find individual examples of a human wholeness that her children will be able to understand and relate to their own lives.

The modern young are surrounded by the deceptive grandeur of specialized achievements. Instead of gaining inspiration from them, we are impressed by their runaway tendencies, their unmanageable character. Too bad the Tower of Babel and its attendant confusion of tongues is such a hackneyed analogy, since its application is apt. Sooner or later, with or without the warnings of poets and moralists, the great mass of people will tire of the disjointed drabness of their individually ineffectual lives. They will tire of splendors they cannot really touch and of tastes they do not savor, and will simply stop believing in the monuments of a civilization that bears so little relation to spontaneous human longing. Then the people will change their ideas of the good, of truth, and probably of beauty also. But how much easier, less painful, and less destructive this change would be, if they could in the meantime discover some orienting vision of ideal individuals, some unifying conception in which the elements of goodness described by Maslow, Keniston, and Thoreau are fused in the image of an ideal man.

This will be pretty hard to arrange. Keniston's ethical man is continually revising his thinking about what is right, and this goes against

the tendency to get moral matters "settled" and out of the way. Keniston's ideal man will never be sure enough about anything to regard it as "settled." Naturally, he tends to be in trouble with other people. He "continually risks conflict between his own ethics and the morals of his tribe, province, or nation-state."

But Maslow's account, on the other hand, offers some reassurance. The self-actualizer gives every impression of having some internal gyroscopic device which gives him balance in a lot of awkward situations. His *habit* of being concerned with "basic issues and eternal, unanswered questions of philosophy" fits him for the uncertainty of the ethical man's lot. Finding his way through the maze of circumstances and confusing relationships becomes a natural part of the adventure of life. He takes it in his stride.

Somehow, such people carry a wealth of meaning within themselves. They are unpredictable. The way their minds work has a living synthesis about it and spending some time with them is always a treat. They will not say tomorrow exactly what they said today, although there will be a connection.

Most difficult of all will be Thoreau's project of reorienting science. His appeal is like asking a man who has but lately broken out of a dark cell to accept the subtle bonds of an inner, ethical constraint. Yet it seems likely that Thoreau is nonetheless right. For him, ethics is not constraint but true direction. We can well imagine a mankind that will some day turn away in loathing from knowledge and skills which are so easily bent to anti-human purposes. And if the young of our time find in Thoreau a symbol of the courage they do not altogether possess, or of the resourceful independence they can't see how to apply to a world so changed, the seed of his kind of man is in them. It may swell and grow.

But the young need help. The young always need help, but they need it more than ever in those trembling interludes of history when they are able to feel and dream of things that their parents

recognize only as threatening shadows. In such tragic circumstances of misunderstanding and recrimination are born the desperate remedies of Children's Crusades.

Do we imagine, meanwhile, that our scientific progress has made us immune to the passion of crusades? Have we evidence that the personification of evil in nations of unbelievers is no longer a delusion to which we are vulnerable? It may turn out that, in the long run, Thoreau's "more perfect Indian wisdom" is the only kind of science that can preserve a future for the human race.

It is not too late to order a War Resisters League Peace Calendar for yourself, which is probably what most people do, anyhow. They are \$1.50 each, \$7.00 for five. This time the texts are made up of ancient and modern peace poetry from many nations. The editor is Scott Bates, the introduction by Louis Untermeyer. Address: WRL, 5 Beekman Street, New York 38, N.Y.

CHILDREN

. . . and Ourselves

NOTES ON A HUMANISTIC SCHOOL

WE have accumulated considerable material on the development of such schools as Summerlane and Green Valley, by way of brochures and releases prepared by George von Hilsheimer, General Superintendent of *Humanitas* (a general service headquarters for the encouragement of such endeavors, located at Monastery Road, Orange City, Florida). Three important emphases seem evident in the general approach of both schools. The first is on a broad and thorough "academic" period of learning in preparation for what might be called either useful citizenship or thoughtful living. The Introduction to the Core and Honors Curriculum of Green Valley observes:

Our goals are not academic, but in the largest sense *moral*. They have been well stated by Hutchins: "The foundation of democracy is universal suffrage. Universal suffrage makes every man a ruler. If every man is a ruler, every man needs the education that rulers ought to have. . . . The main purpose of a democratic educational system is the education of rulers."

Our goals are to enable students to become individuals who are able to take action, and to be responsible for their actions; to make intelligent choices; to be critical learners; to have a reasonable fund of knowledge; to be able to adapt flexibly and intelligently to new situations; to be able to use all of their experience and knowledge freely and creatively; to cooperate toward ends they have chosen; and to seek their own goals and not the approval of others.

An academic education is a means to these ends. Only a rich academic program, focused continually on the individual student, can seriously attempt such ideals. We recognize that these goals are drawn on an Utopian scale. The fact that ideals can never perfectly be realized is no reason to abandon them.

The second point stresses the relationship between the dis-ease experienced by alienated children and the traditional religious emphasis on man's essentially corrupt nature. This leads Mr. von Hilsheimer to ontological affirmation:

We need not apologize for man, nor seek to limit his freedom and creativeness. We must come to believe in man, as Archibald McLeish admonishes us, not as the Christians, out of pity; nor as the democrats, out of a sense of obligation; but as the Greeks, out of pride.

The outlook of the traditional Judeo-Christo-Islamic world view describes the nature of man as fixed in time. If society or human nature evolves at all, in this view, they evolve in accord with rigid purpose which transcends the natural universe and man's own comprehension.

The traditional view describes the natural orientation of man as base, sinful and depraved. Confrontation with some transcending being or event is required for man to realize a higher, more noble, plane. Humanistic science affirms that man may achieve his highest potentiality through the fullest expression of his nature in this world. The naturalistic view recognizes that man and other animals are not rigidly ordered. It appears, even in "lower" animals, that the strongest motivations are not the greedy, grasping desires of gluttony.

Children in trouble often suffer, directly or indirectly, from what might be identified as a "suspicious" view of the nature of man:

Most children in trouble have very ordinary ideas about what is right and what is wrong.

Most children in trouble think that they are bad.

Most children in trouble don't like themselves or anyone else.

Most children in trouble are bored and do not see anything to do; they don't know how to do much anyway.

Most children in trouble see little reason to be any other way.

Most children in trouble think they cannot change, and most adults they know agree with them.

Most children in trouble get attention from adults only by being in trouble.

Most children in trouble get no rewards for doing and saying nice things; their friends often punish them for staying out of trouble.

Most children in trouble do not know many adults.

Most children in trouble seldom see an adult alone.

Most children in trouble have never seen a happy adult.

Most children in trouble do not understand the work that the adults they know do; in fact, many of the adults they know don't respect their own work at all.

Most children in trouble are usually told quite different things by different adults about what they should do.

Most children in trouble do not know any adults who behave in the same way toward them most of the time.

Most children in trouble think all adults are inconsistent and hypocritical; and most adults they know in fact are.

Most children in trouble respond to talk about what they should do as if the talk itself were a punishment, yet most adults who say they want to change the children only talk to them.

A third conception has to do with the ever-present opportunity for enlarging the community of ideas in which we and our children live. Persons or families may "move away" from an unfavorable environment physically, or mentally by making new constructions within their present environment. Mr. von Hilsheimer summarizes:

I know many families who live in a town or area which is almost totally made up of reactionary, life-denying, fearful people. Many can find no like-minded friends or neighbors. Many dare not move for sake of economy, or family, or less formal fears. Even in these situations we can enlarge our child's community. If we do find ourselves in such situations we ought closely to examine our "reasons" for remaining in it. We should understand that we owe it to our parents to stand between them and our children if necessary. Our obligation is forward. If we owe our parents love (which is a ridiculous conundrum), we owe our children life. Our obligation to society is the same. We owe it to our fellow men to stand between them and our children when they would maim them whether through malice or ignorance. We owe it to ourselves to seek out those who would affirm life with us, to share ourselves and our children with them and theirs.

There are literally millions struggling through alienation. It may seem a simple matter to us merely to move out. From other points of view the road may not seem so clear. Even in these situations, I repeat, we can enlarge our children's community.

It may seem that a daily "ritual" is too much to arrange. A good friend of mine, a foreman on a power truck, active in civic affairs, taking eight to twelve credit hours in evening classes, insists on at least a half-hour talk with his daughter every evening at her bedtime (never any bedtime problem in this family!). He has done this from her infancy. This is not just a device to quiet her through story reading. They talk about all manner of serious questions. I have sat in amazement outside her door listening to the depth of their conversation about the most fantastic subjects. The ease of communication and understanding between father and daughter is seldom seen elsewhere. This is, however, a dangerous process. I sat at their dinner table one evening and heard the then four-year-old inform her parents that she had an intrinsic right not to eat the Brussels sprouts!

In these families questions about how to deal with religious differences: with the fears, superstitions, and disgusts communicated by neighbors' children; with sexual education; with growing awareness of the world, never develop into "problems." They need outside referents, to be sure; but, if these are not readily available at least some depth is given the child, and the parents.

An interesting side-note appears in answer to the question, "What is Green Valley?":

A community of teachers and students owned by its teachers. There are no administrators who do not teach. There are no teachers who do not also sweep, saw, hammer and cook. Teachers join Green Valley only as full business partners—they can always go elsewhere to be employees. We think the lack of an "employee mentality" makes a difference both in *what* and in *how* our children learn.

FRONTIERS When Is Man "Free"?

How can one tell an act of the will from a simple image when there is no transmission of the senses?

—St. Exupéry

I CAME across this question of St. Exupéry's in a description of the sensations he had while flying through a cyclone in South America on one of his exploratory missions. At first it didn't seem to make any sense, but the more I thought about it, the more it seemed to involve physiology and action, training, Pavlovian conditioning and so on, as well as the relative perception of what goes on about us as much as within us. It proposes one of the more perplexing problems of existence—just what is an act of the will, and how *do* we know if we are acting willfully, or simply being led into action by subconscious forces or what we have learned? The factors that come down to decisions to act are certainly varied and multiple, including conscious and unconscious desires, training and conditioning, individual techniques and skills, and inheritance, as well as the part originality may play in our lives. I am sure that individuals perceive differently, which also influences action. In the context of his sentence, Exupéry must mean that in that instance there was no awareness of transmission by the senses, which puts much of what he did during the episode in the category of learned and instinctual responses. There was really no separation of perception and action. Awareness was bypassed because things happened so fast that the nervous system did not take the time to transmit the impulses to the cerebral area where cogitating and reasoning would proceed at a slow rate. Perhaps an inexperienced, unskilled pilot would not have been so well served by his responses. In the case of Exupéry, undoubtedly the pathways used in this episode had been used many times previously, and his complex reaction was immediate and sure. We who drive automobiles know what this means. There is no question but that experience is a great teacher, and if in dangerous situations we react properly and survive, learning from non-fatal mistakes, we establish pathways that respond without need for cerebration.

How, then, can one define an act of the will? If an individual perceives reality in his own, unique way, and his training, his genes and chromosomes, his experience and training are different from those of another, he is bound to act (or react) in different ways. Within limits, the behaviour of individuals will be similar, and to the scientifically inclined this is a bonanza; but the unique is nonetheless ever present in human behaviour.

In talking with adolescents, I am impressed by the lack of interest they have in learning skills, most noticeably in regard to language—something they have to utilize the rest of their lives. They seem to *feel* that ideas and ideation, thinking and impressions are important, but seldom can they express these ideas clearly, even though much energy is expended by teachers to give them the skills they need for this. Perhaps Paul Goodman is right; the atmosphere of the classroom engenders the concept of technique for technique's sake, which quickly becomes boring, and students find their own ways of acting out in the current happenings of the times, where they can experience things instead of pursuing sterile technique in an unreal setting.

But no instrumental musician is taken seriously until he has mastered his instrument, for then he is able to express the composer's work and the conductor's reading through his instrument, which in reality becomes an extension of himself. But this expression needs an audience, a humanity to communicate with. Of course, some individuals are so naturally adept that techniques of various sorts present little difficulty to them; and this facility also varies among different techniques and individuals. Each person has to be given opportunity to find his best skill so that he *can* express his inner voice through it, and not be hampered by lack of technique. Otherwise the inner voice will remain mute, or this energy may be utilized in a destructive manner. There seems little doubt that the technique of flying an airplane was a means of attaining freedom for St. Exupéry, just as the technique of language one learns in school makes possible free communication to others.

What is the sense of all this speculation on technique, will, action, and reaction? I think I can

make several further points. I wonder whether much of the irrational behavior of men and nations comes from the attempt to cast all people in the same mold, and that, as a consequence, those who cannot express themselves well in conventional means resort to what we consider queer or antisocial behaviour, or even rebellion. In raising and educating children, we try to fit them into a certain standard *we* feel is proper, when in reality they may not be suited for this confinement and lack of individual recognition. It seems that with the rigid upbringing we subject our children to, only rare individuals are able to find appropriate means of expression. Why is this not possible for many more? What would happen if we allowed more chance for freedom of expression, and did not try to standardize everything, especially in education?

Many of the people who do rebel against society in one way or another are quite perceptive, some unusually so. The problem of how much individual variance we can tolerate in a society becomes a paramount issue. It seems as if this latitude is becoming less and less. Totalitarian regimes such as Stalinist Russia or Hitler Germany illustrate the extreme of repression.

Are these things cyclic in the history of humanity? I don't like to think that, for if we can't assume that society evolves and consolidates its progress, what hope is there? The way of science and the pure intellect, on which we rely so much, fills people with too many facts that contribute nothing to living together well. Science has made life physically more comfortable, but it has also brought the ability of man to destroy himself—is this the ultimate in physical comfort? And reason does not necessarily lead to the spiritual awakening which may be a vital ingredient in effective rehabilitation programs. Sensitive people seem to grasp this element when it is shorn of fancy trimmings, and reason only gets in the way of understanding. We find in certain individuals perception so acute that they sense and feel with all their faculties—they have, you might say, an empathy which is highly tuned, like the E string on the violin. Sometimes such people seem able to perceive the feelings of lower animals as well as those of humans, and

without any visible sensory communication. And for whatever reasons may be, there are those who have little if any awareness of the feelings of others or even of what is going on in the world about them. Can sensitive awareness be learned, or is it somehow innate? Even persons in mental institutions who seem out of contact with reality may be extremely aware of aspects of what is going on about them, but do not show it, nor react. It seems to be good advice to say "act, don't react," but is this possible? Perhaps all we ever do is react to the situation as it presents itself, in an individually unique manner, based on what we have learned and what we have inherited, with possibly an extra ingredient of spirituality. Since the individual is unique spiritually, psychically, and biochemically, predicting his reactions with any accuracy is fraught with hazard. And if perception and reaction are subject to such a wide range of individual variation, there is little hope of standardizing, or otherwise developing a science of human behaviour. As much as anything, Freud made us aware that we must dig deep into the individual in order to understand his behaviour, and that few generalizations can be made, and these only as guidelines for general understanding. It seems that we cannot force individuals into stereotyped patterns of conformity without choking off what little chance they may have for spiritual or "free" expression. A highly industrialized society which standardizes so much of our lives, as well as depersonalizing human relationships, tends to become a barrier to human development. What is the effect of putting door handles on Fords day after day after day? Must a man entirely separate his work, his vocation, from individual creative expression? It seems certain that a society that has respect for the individual and his uniqueness would develop less compulsive patterns of behaviour, less dehumanized relationships, and more openings into the spiritual reservoir I believe we all carry within us.

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