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AN ESSENTIAL PARADOX

A PARTICULARLY effective illustration of a major problem of communication in our time—and not only of communication, but of basic philosophy and outlook upon the world—is provided in a passage from the Wakeman novel, *A Free Agent*, quoted in last week's Frontiers. In the scene in which a Greek girl who had been a Resistance Fighter during the war is questioned by American counterespionage agents, the girl exclaims:

> Oh, how can a Greek explain herself to an American? Did you know your tragedy, *Death of a Salesman* was a comedy in Athens? Audiences laughed, though with exasperation, at your Willy Loman. He had a car, his own house, even that certain sign of wealth, a refrigerator. Food in plenty. What on earth was his problem? It was not a Greek tragedy. . . .

Before attempting discussion of this problem, it may be worth while to assemble other versions or formulations of it, in the hope of becoming able to generalize more fundamentally the issues involved. There is, for example, the observation of Prof. Lewis F. Feuer, a professor of philosophy and social science at the University of California in Berkeley, in respect to the difficulty the Russians have in "explaining" the crimes of Stalin. In an article in the New York *Times* of August 20, 1963, he wrote:

> If they [the Russians] attribute the manifold occurrences under his dictatorship to the underlying social system, their explanation will be a Marxist one, but it will constitute an indictment of the Soviet foundation. On the other hand, if they attribute these occurrences to Stalin's personal traits, his fears, his persecution complex, their explanation will make the unconscious forces of the individual paramount, and this will move them to be "Freudian" despite themselves.
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> [The point, here, is that while the younger social scientists in Russia are beginning to recognize their need of the concepts of psychoanalysis to account for phases of human behavior, Freudian psychology is banned in the U.S.S.R., so that they suffer intense frustration from the denial of this important tool.]
>
> And why, moreover, were the Soviet Communist Party and the Soviet people themselves in such an irrational frame of mind as to allow themselves to be guided by the all-dominant neurotic personality of their time? Soviet thinkers, prohibited from dealing with the great contradiction of Soviet Society, are also vaguely aware that if they did so, the whole Leninist theoretical structure might be shaken.

How are these two quotations related? One of them, the first, reflects the practical difference between a culture whose people are in sore need of the stuff of physical survival, and a culture surfeited with material goods. As Gandhi said: "To a hungry man, God dare not appear except in the form of bread." So, the torturing existential questions which lay unsolved behind the tragedy of Willy Loman had no meaning for the Greek girl. Willy had "food in plenty."

But the Soviet intellectuals described by Prof. Feuer are not now in this position. As scientists, and no longer revolutionaries getting rid of the Czar, nor fighting to establish the "dictatorship of the proletariat," they have now to deal with problems of motivation and the contradictions in human behavior. They are faced with the inadequacy of Pavlovian formulas, of psychological applications of the Dialectic, to give an account of a man like Stalin. They need to understand something of the nature of man, apart from "historical forces" such as the party literature describes. There is thus the question: Has man a nature of his own, apart from economic determinism? The Greek girl, you might say, had not yet reached a point in her life where this question was important or real for her.

We have another quotation, this one from a Jungian. The following is an extract from *The*

Inner World of Man, by Frances G. Wickes (New York: Unger, 1938):

> All collective ideas deal with generalities, therefore they may serve only as refuges from thought. As soon as one takes over a moral or social code, or creed, swallows it whole, the power of discrimination is lost. It becomes an *a priori* truth which no longer needs to be tested by its relation to the reality of the immediate situation. If we have become identified with a collective ideal, a thing is good or bad, desirable or undesirable, not in accordance with its actual value in the special instance, but in accord with its conformity to the accepted code, and people are good or bad as they conform to the ideal image created by the code.

Taking this statement as a basis, we could argue that the Greek girl's reaction to Willy Loman was immediate and spontaneous, based on her own experience. Willy's troubles made no sense to her. But in the case of the Soviet social scientists, pressing economic need and the demand for economic justice were no longer elements of direct experience, but had become a "collective idea," an ideological article of faith, so that when the character of their immediate experience changed, and they needed to think in another way, they were *prevented from doing so* by their code.

This situation can be put in still other terms. Those who remember the temper of radicals and revolutionaries in the early thirties in the United States will recall the supreme contempt in which they held people who were interested in personal morality and psychological problems. Those who asked for attention to such questions were called ivory towerists and navel-watchers. The important thing was to get goods, jobs, economic justice for the people. An entire philosophy was built on this driving claim of revolutionary purpose. It sought to acquire concentrated energy for the revolution by deliberately excluding all other problems. So, today, this revolutionary doctrine of the past has become a yoke which strangles dawning perception and frustrates intellectual integrity.

A dislike of personal psychological problems still affects many modern social and even literary critics. Some months ago, writing in the *Nation*, Lionel Abel spoke of the fact that the American Negroes are now attaining political awareness, participating in "the consciousness of the forum," while white Americans are lying on their backs on the couches of their psychoanalysts. The comparison, while obviously exaggerated, is not without point.

And now we come to the letter of a reader in which these problems are given still another formulation:

> The intellect necessarily abstracts, and in the last analysis I doubt that it can abstract anything but power, for knowledge is power, whatever else it may be. There is universal agreement only that knowledge is power. Knowledge created nuclear weapons capable of universal annihilation of life. The obverse of that coin is similar—knowledge as power to sustain life—but for what end? I don't see how the abstract mind of society can give any other meaning to life than power. History is a struggle for power as a means to some other transcendent ends, but the ends proved transitory and fallacious except as they promoted power.
>
> What I want in my life is more spontaneity. I suspect it is what everyone wants. Only spontaneity gives positive pleasure. Otherwise pleasure is merely the absence of pain, suffering, and boredom. No doubt one can have a spontaneous desire for power for its own sake. Obviously, many have found pleasure in that, as is becoming more evident every day. Furthermore, power for its own sake makes an end of means and gives no real meaning to life.
>
> Julian Huxley with his new Humanism, and Teilhard, a Jesuit priest, both ignore power. For this reason I find it difficult to respect them as thoroughly competent scientists in anything except their own specialized fields. There is little reason to believe that evolution is interested in the spirit of love—it is a movement toward greater organization and complexity. It represents the transcendency of knowledge as power. Just how does the mind transcend except through knowledge as power, and would there have been any psychosocial evolution, otherwise? Throughout history the mind has sought power for its transcendent ideas and ideals. I am suspicious of the very word "transcendent." Further, has either love or courage *evolved?*

Here, the elements of the problem are put in more philosophical terms. It is now a question of the difference between the fruits of "rationalization" and those of what you might call *being* itself—the existential joy of life, the spontaneous pleasures which are ends in themselves—which include, no doubt, the excitement of discovery, the rich feeling of fulfillment which comes with some realization of deep meaning, the sense of loving and being loved, and the various levels of ecstasy reached through creative acts.

Discussion of the problem set by this reader is extremely difficult. An approach by some sort of analogue may be more useful than an attempt to deal directly with the particular questions raised.

Take for example the subjective reactions of a human being to experience of the external world of nature. They are, you might say, of two sorts. First there is the feeling which comes from being witness to ceaseless striving. The struggle for existence is everywhere. In one sense nature is the scene of a vast and continuous devouring. Everywhere there are predators and victims. Life lives upon life. It is all a great hierarchy of consumption. But even this ruthless struggle for survival has another aspect—the endless symbiosis and interdependence which inspired Kropotkin to write *Mutual Aid*. Very nearly any ethical doctrine can be justified from the observation of natural processes.

If to this furious activity of life you add the evidence from the geological record, you recognize a further aspect of the natural world—the omnipresent fact of *evolution.* You are able to assert—as our correspondent points out—that there is a movement in all life toward higher or more complex forms, making possible the expression of what we believe to be higher kinds of intelligence. Seeing this, even the objective scientist is tempted to urge that there is some far-off end which, somehow or other, the processes of nature hold in view. Human beings long for understandable meanings, and so it follows that the strivings of nature are seen as evidence that there is some kind of climactic goal in the evolutionary struggle. Out of this longing, you might say, was born the nineteenth-century idea of progress.

In any event, the scientifically-minded idealists of the nineteenth century were filled with such expectations in regard to the development of man. Whether it was some kind of subconscious transfer of deep religious longing for growth, turned now to service of the scientific conception of the natural world, or actually a logical deduction from a considerable period of observation of evolutionary cycles in the kingdoms of nature, the fact remains that the idea of progress has for more than a century been fundamental to all serious thought about human beings and human good. And as our contributor argues, the tool of human progress has been the mind. By means of the mind, we have advanced our knowledge of the laws of nature in ways which have given us extensive power to manipulate natural forces for material welfare. The mind has been similarly applied to the problems of society, and here, also, the key to accomplishment has been largely in terms of gaining and using political power. It must be conceded that power is reached through knowledge, and that—according to theory, at least—the power is then used to achieve "progress."

Let us say that these are the parallels in human behavior to what we observe as a universal process in the natural world. But there is another side to nature, a quality which reaches in and takes hold of another aspect of human awareness. This is the extraordinary serenity and composure of nature. While some may say that men read into nature something which corresponds to their own longing, it seems equally just to argue that the æsthetic reality in the unperturbed calm of a summer day in the country is not something we just imagine. The unexpecting loveliness of a desert flower is really there. The silent splendor

of the vista seen from a mountain peak has a meaning we find by "feeling" with the natural world. Nature acts in response to the need of all the forms of life, but only according to need. The meaning of quiet eternity is in nature as fully as the meaning of restless struggle. Nature somehow knows the joy of being as well as the fulfillment of doing. Thus men learn meditative repose from nature along with her other lessons. These communions are an authentic part of human life. It is as though nature lives in us, just as we live in the world. That life we see, and sometimes feel, is truly a part of human existence; it is in some sense at the center as well as at the periphery of our lives.

If, then, we are children of nature—if men are *natural* beings, as well as beings who seem to do many unnatural things—are there significant parallels in human institutions to what we observe in the natural world?

Are there institutions which celebrate being as well as those which are intended to implement doing and evolving?

Only to ask this question is to spawn a great progeny of paradoxes, but let us try to answer the question before confronting the paradoxical or contradictory side of what is proposed.

In any society, then, there are two sorts of institutions. There are the institutions devoted to doing—to *evolving;* and there are others devoted to knowing and understanding. Religion and the arts, for example, relate more or less to the immediate values of existence. Both attempt instruction in meaning and identity. Both reflect the intuitive deliveries of human beings regarding the joy of existence. They do other things, too, but they certainly have this role.

Suppose we were to succumb to a brash and impudent impulse, and say to our correspondent: Why don't you take up one of the arts; here, surely, is a means of increasing the element of spontaneity in human life? We could invite him to read Frederick Franck's *My Eye Is in Love*—an extraordinary testament to the existential riches which may be captured by the artist. Or, again, we might argue that in mysticism lies another linkage with the world of unambitious essences; such, at any rate, is the report of those among the mystics who hazard a record of their inward quest for meaning. But this, for our present correspondent at least, would be only to echo conventional counsels and to leave untouched his actual statement of the problem, which is in philosophic terms.

We are obliged to question one of the assumptions of this statement—the idea that the mind or rationality can further only the processes of doing, of building organization or "evolving." We would propose that the mind may also serve the processes of knowing and of conscious being. It follows that man's universe of conscious awareness has a place for the timeless delight in existential reality. The repose of nature may be seen, felt, and participated in. Experience of this sort is sometimes called "religious." It might be spoken of as pantheistic ecstasy—a state of feeling in which, momentarily, ends and means are one. For man, this feeling may amount to intuitive rejection of anxiety about the future, of the self-defeating sort of longing and pain of incompleteness. It has the support of the rationality which instructs: All the world is eternally in flux; everything is doing something, going some place; and since this goes on forever, it is folly for a man to plague himself with frustration because he is here, not there; he will always be "here;" "there" will always lie ahead, somewhere in the future; so why make this unchangeable existential fact into a source of pain? The *mind* enables a man to say this to himself. This is not a use of the mind for the elaboration of the forms of power, but a turning of the perspectives of the mind into a rational ground for reconciliation with the nature of things.

A teacher instinctively follows this course in the instruction of children. The act of learning is not only toward the acquisition of power. The

best acts of learning have their issue only in understanding. The best acts of learning lead to the philosophic peace which makes a man content with the fact that he will always be in confrontation with some kind of flux, in pursuit of some kind of goal; and since there can be no "absolute goal"—for this would mean extinction or an end to natural process—it is the movement of life toward ever-receding goals, accompanied by ever-recurring relative fulfillments, which holds the full meaning, the satisfactions and joys of existence. This is a recognition which has nothing to do with "power," although it inevitably puts power "in its place."

Through the collaboration of his mind with intuitions of existential meanings, a man may learn to say to himself: Participate in all the forms of growth which nature lays before you; fulfill this law of life; but at the same time, become acquainted with that aspect of your being which is outside of time and space—that motionless center which simply sees, knows, and understands, no matter what the changes and progressions of "evolution." For *that* thou art. So the mind, from this point of view, is an eternal artist, a poet, a troubadour, a celebrator of the living excellence and beauty of life; and it is also the wise dramatist who instructs us in the catharsis of tragedy, and helps the realization of ethical verity to spring from the loins of suffering, and teaches compassion to become the solvent of pain. From this deep resolution of the dual reality of action and rest, growth and understanding, individuality and universality, the One and the Many, are born the great altruistic motives which gain articulation in relation to historical epochs and all particular situations by which men are bound. And so, in the light of these particular resolutions, come limited uses of power, deliberate acts of "evolution," which always have a philosophic end beyond themselves, in that they seek, not merely power, but the release of human beings from intolerable finite pressures, in order that they may find the freedom to inquire into meanings, to undertake, with less practical confinement, the philosophic quest which is the essence of being human.

It may be that all our wrangling about the rights of man, and the inviolability of the individual, is simply the speech of self-realizing consciousness to the over-ambitious struggles for power—a power which, whenever it loses its finite measure, its limited object, becomes self-defeating and self-destroying, because it no longer has a *rational* character.

Power for its own sake is evolution gone berserk, and it can have only a nihilistic end.

REVIEW
A CHALLENGE IN PSYCHOTHERAPY

WILLIAM SCHOFIELD'S critique of psychotherapy, *Psychotherapy: The Purchase of Friendship,* is an evaluation of what might be called the "situation of psychotherapy" in our present culture. On the one hand is the tremendous "consumer demand for psychiatric counseling," and on the other, the need for perception on the part of professional therapists that in many instances neither analysis nor clinical therapy is indicated, but simply "therapeutic conversation." This, we might say, is an approach to a basic thesis of Viktor Frankl. Dr. Schofield says in his introduction.

> We have not as yet begun to devote nearly adequate time, energies, or funds to explorations in search of the unique and crucial properties, if any, of the therapeutic conversations.
>
> In the area of mental illness, unrealistic goals and misinformed attitudes with respect to the character and distribution of presently incurable disorders have led to a failure to develop and apply palliative techniques with the sincerity and reasonableness with which mitigation is afforded by the physician and surgeon.
>
> Current programs of public education in mental hygiene, in measure as they are successful, have an unavoidable side-effect that parallels some of the outcomes of successful commercial advertising!
>
> —Persons are sensitized; they are encouraged to self-examination, they look for evidences of guilt, defect, or failure to "live up" to a personal potential and cultural ideal.
>
> —Demand is created; sensitivity is followed by desire for relief.
>
> —Specific expectations are fostered; certain procedures or particular products are invested with remedial potency.
>
> —"Trade-marks" and unit-cost combine to generate a prestige hierarchy which is not necessarily correlated with effectiveness.
>
> These "advertising outcomes" of public education have created a consumer demand, at all levels of the "therapeutic conversation" market, that far exceeds available resources.
>
> In light of the above, in addition to limitations of our training resources, there will never be enough M.D. specialists in psychiatry, enough Ph.D. specialists in clinical psychology, or enough M.A. specialists in psychiatric social work to provide remedial services to all who may feel need of them.
>
> Correction of this burgeoning socio-individual psychopathology demands action along two fronts: we must, at the same time, increase the number of persons who are adequately skilled and appropriately competent to converse therapeutically with the multitudes of the miserable and *also* effectively reduce the demand for and need of such professional friendship.

Dr. Schofield makes reference to a "final report" which summarizes the findings of a Joint Commission on Mental Illness and Health (established by Congress in 1955 under the Mental Health Study Act). One phase of this Report emphasizes the need for what is termed "secondary prevention," involving "the detection of beginning signs and symptoms of mental illness and their relief; in other words, the earliest possible treatment." The Report continues:

> In the absence of fully trained psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, psychiatric social workers, and psychiatric nurses, such counseling should be done by persons with some psychological orientation and mental health training and access to expert consultation as needed.
>
> A host of persons untrained or partially trained in mental health principles and practices—clergymen, family physicians, teachers, probation officers, public health nurses, sheriffs, judges, public welfare workers, scout masters, county farm agents, and others—are already trying to help and to treat the mentally ill in the absence of professional resources. . . . With a moderate amount of training through short courses and consultation on the job, such persons can be fully equipped with an additional skill as mental health counselors.

Dr. Schofield's emphasis on a broader base in psychological counseling is not to be taken as advocacy of a stopgap measure because professional facilities are overloaded by increases in applications for out-based clinical treatment.

Often people seeking psychiatric help remain completely unaware that their "neurotic symptoms" are due to philosophical inadequacies. As Dr. Schofield says:

> Psychotherapists, "invisible," are increasingly confronted by would-be patients who do not manifest any of the more objective hallmarks of a neurotic problem, who do not complain of failures of productivity or achievement, who do not suffer from serious inter-personal conflicts, who are free of functional somatic complaints, who are not incapacitated by anxiety, or tormented by obsessions, whose objective life circumstances they confess are close to optimal. These seekers for help *suffer* a freedom from complaint. The absence of conflicts, frustrations, and symptoms brings a painful awareness of absence—the absence of faith, of commitment, of meaning, of the need to search out personal, ultimate values or of the need to live comfortably and meaningfully each day in the face of final uncertainty. For increasing numbers of rational, educated, and thoughtful men the central struggle becomes one of finding and keeping an emotional- and psychological balance between the pain of doubt and the luxury of faith. A distaste for this struggle, or an insistence on its resolution as a necessary condition for continued existence is at the heart of the *philosophical neuroses.*

This is, of course, Frankl's "existential vacuum," and, as Schofield convincingly shows, we have no established technique to bring to bear on this subtle malady: "We do not have a scientifically confirmable matrix of ideas concerning how or what to teach those who suffer philosophical neuroses." Dr. Schofield thinks that members of his own profession have unwittingly contributed to popular misstatement of the factors involved:

> The mental health movement has achieved a significant increase in public enlightenment in regard to mental illness. But the mental health movement has inevitably created problems as it has offered solutions. As was suggested in Chapter One, the nature of neurosis as presently defined is such as to encourage over-interpretation of the significance of a host of idiosyncrasies and eccentricities. The mental health educator has understandably, in the first phase of the movement, operated within the pathological framework afforded by essentially gross medical definitions of emotional illness. Emphasis has been upon detection and prevention of illness, rather than upon modes of achieving and maintaining positive mental health. The meaning of neurosis, ambiguous to begin with, has been subtly extended to cover a variety of cultural delusions, perhaps the most prominent of which is the Western myth that a state of happiness is both a primary and achievable goal of life. One effect of the mental health movement has been to encourage many people to see their unhappiness as a sign of mental illness and to believe that there are experts who can treat their unhappiness.

Among the many consequences of this conditioning—and illustrative of the foregoing—is the fact that "neurosis has achieved respectability." While it was certainly necessary to inculcate the view that mental problems should not be a source of shame, it is far from useful to excuse immature, selfish and irresponsible behavior as "interesting symptoms" for which the individual cannot be held responsible: to be proud of illness is in itself illness, which needs to be treated first.

Dr. Schofield's concrete proposals to fill the needs suggested by the Joint Commission's report do not, however, suggest that anyone who fancies himself a philosopher should set up shop in psychological counseling. Those who through training and natural ability have an aptitude for "the therapeutic conversation" certainly need to be aware of their own limitations when it comes to medical diagnosis. *They* must consult the psychiatrist and must refrain from meddling in areas where definite neurotic symptoms require professional attention. *Psychotherapy: The Purchase of Friendship* concludes:

> The thesis of this volume has been that there is a great and growing social need which is presently being inadequately and inefficiently met by the limited resources of three quite different professions. As psychiatry, psychology, and social work have tried to contribute directly to the demand for psychotherapy they have suffered serious dilution of their basic and unique contributions. When prolonged individual psychotherapy is involved, the psychiatrist is perjuring medicine, the psychologist is failing what

should be his basic commitment to research, and the social worker is being asocial.

If these disciplines will take joint initiative toward the creation of a new, socially efficient and socially responsible profession they will maintain proper consultative authority for that profession, they will help to meet the social need, and they will create the means whereby they may be freed for intensified, specialized efforts in accordance with their respective, unique and interdependent skills—to the end that we may gain better understanding, better treatment, and better prevention of mental suffering.

COMMENTARY
WISDOM'S FLIGHT FROM POWER

IN the social community the exercise of power is always evidence of human failure. In its social role, education has for its end the introduction of the idea of responsibility, so that the members of the community will seek out and fulfill their obligations without coercion or pressure. In morals, the directed or compelled act has no virtue. And when it comes to creative activity, force or power has no function at all. As William Saroyan said when they drafted him during World War II: "They can have my body but not my mind."

The bent of all the social sciences, taken in their entirety, is toward reducing the role of power. "Rehabilitation," in criminology, means helping men who have broken the law to establish attitudes and ways of living which will no longer make them objects of State control. Every constitution is a formula intended to create an atmosphere in which men will cooperate and live together according to their own rational agreements, instead of under the sovereignty of fear. From this point of view, you could say that the social role of the mind is as the reducer of the use of power. This would mean that the present situation of the Cold War is evidence of the failure of men to *use* their minds in this direction, and not a proof that the end of rationality is the production of power. Nuclear weapons are data for the diagnosis of massive schizophrenia in the social thinking of our time, not a basis for defining the function of the mind.

Our correspondent (see page 2) says that "history is a struggle for power as a means to some other transcendent ends, but the ends proved transitory and fallacious except as they promoted power." This seems one-sided. Western history is also a record of the heroic efforts of human beings to *control* the use of power, through its delegation to authorized groups which are in turn controlled by a precisely defined rationale of the use of the power given them.

That we have to offer only a record of comparative success—or comparative failure—in this undertaking is not conclusive enough to turn from this experience to the making of final definitions.

What is needed, perhaps, to help with this overwhelmingly difficult question is a view of man which is essentially moral—he has two natures, and the mind is the battleground where human destiny is being decided.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

VALUES IN ACTION

SEVERAL years ago the present writer was asked to conduct a seminar for high school students on the subject of "Comparative Religions," based upon the premise that a broadening of perspective in this area encourages self-reliant philosophical thinking. The least promising member of the group, from the standpoint of appearance, was a young gridiron athlete who arrived at the first session (it was surprising that he arrived at all) with an impressive hangover. His looks and demeanor were on the Marlon Brando side, his monosyllabic replies were hip, man, and he came prepared to be coolly indifferent to any assaults which culture might make upon his mental isolation. It turned out, that after some of the passages in Buddha's *Dhammapada* were opened to discussion he began to show some signs of heavylidded interest. And ultimately, after listening to the cautious and conscientious remarks of his contemporaries, he could restrain himself no longer: "Crazy! That's a real tough way of looking at your stick. What that cat *means* is . . ." Well, such irreverences in respect to Buddha—or later *vis à vis* Lao-tse and Krishna—could not conceal the fact that here was the most perceptive member of the group.

Some five years later we heard from this young friend again. He had gone to three junior colleges, perennially supported in his education by his parents, had quit school to work, had worked and gone to school at the same time, had traveled to Mexico and Hawaii, been rejected by the army as "psychologically unfit," and was presently unable to find any satisfying direction for his life. Once more the decision to quit college was immanent. He had lost all interest in his studies and had shifted from an A average to a low D.

It is all very well for adults to say that this young fellow should assume some "responsibilities," but he is the sort who has to recognize them before he can assume them, and there doesn't seem to be very much around to help him see what to do. As for his immediate problem of finding meaningful continuity in the college curriculum during the freshman and sophomore years, we feel profound sympathy. Aside from occasional flap sessions with other cats, man, there is not apt to be much stimulation to inquire into, attack, or defend values of any sort, or to sift the controversial viewpoints of which a perceptive twenty-year-old is aware. Thousands of young men and women are in the same predicament, and if the "higher learning" has anything vital to communicate to them, this is not likely to happen until some sort of individual contact is established with unusual professors during the last two collegiate years. "What am I doing here?" and "What do I want to do with my life?" are questions which seem irrelevant to the mechanistic operations of the System and to the routine activities designed to move the student from one grade to another.

Everyone knows that a college degree is an excellent investment of time; it increases the student's eligibility for higher-paid employment. But suppose one has no dream of a split-level house or a gray flannel suit, no lust for a Corvette or a swimming pool, no eyes for the ordinary marks of prestige or status? This is where our boy is unaccountably deaf to the summons of the Good Life—red-blooded American version. He sees a lot of motion around him, with people priding themselves on their place on the status-ladder, but he tends to feel that, aside from the unpleasantness of stepping on somebody else's toes or fingers, they don't seem to be getting anywhere that makes them happier or more likable.

It is at this point that we feel the burgeoning of a desire to teach a course in "values" which presents the endeavors of a number of unusual ideative communities—places where educators, revolutionaries, reformers, and aroused philosophers have tried to build a new order of

inter-personal and societal relationships. A present course undertaken for Adult Education, which surveys Gandhi's Sevagram, Communities of Work in France, Black Mountain, Goddard College, and finally Synanon Foundation in Santa Monica, evokes considerable interest from adults. But this course, or something like it, should be available during the first two years of college, when the debating and testing of values is a normal part of the transition from youth to manhood. The criticism of affirmative alternatives which have been proposed, and even lived, by at least a few.

How is a college sophomore to become acquainted with the fact that the Thoreau *in him*, the Gandhi *in him*, the anarchist and the pacifist *in him*, have found expression in minorities which have learned to speak out on what they think? An introductory course in social psychology barely notices the existence of such endeavors, if at all. Yet they are the stuff out of which one may learn the uses to which the instinct to nonconformity can be put.

In such community situations, we are afforded a living laboratory experiment in what men are capable of doing to and with themselves when *they* create the environment. That such endeavors are the staff and breath of life to nonconformists—and potentially stimulating contributions to world culture—needs to be apprehended through individual discovery. There are times when the genuine fulfillment of being human requires us to live, as Nietzsche said, as if the day were here. That an "ideal" pattern of living is not presently available in society is of little consequence; for as Plato puts it: "Whether such an one exists, or ever will exist in fact, is no matter; for he will live after the manner of that city, having nothing to do with any other."

We have been discussing, here, what seem to be some of the missing elements of contemporary education. All good educators generalize about the need to "challenge contemporary values," to enter into value-discussions which become part of a continuing dialogue. But the material is at hand and has always been at hand for giving point and specificity to the mind which challenges. The Emersonian advice that "each man learn to speak the utmost syllable of his conviction" should be accompanied by a study of men who have done exactly that, and who have sought and assumed responsibility for their own direction.

FRONTIERS

Social Science and Social Value

[This article is a contribution by Dr. Henry Winthrop, professor and chairman of the Social Science and Interdisciplinary Program, University of South Florida, Tampa, Fla.]

THE dominant myth in the social sciences today is that new knowledge cannot be gained unless considerations of value are excluded from ongoing research. I am here using the phrase "the social sciences" so as also to include what are conventionally referred to as "the behavioral sciences," such as psychology and psychiatry and their several branches. Ideally, the tough-minded social scientist is expected to keep his personal or shared values, sentiments, ideals, biases, etc., from affecting either the presuppositions or the methods which underlie his research and, even more importantly, the interpretations he makes of his findings. Oddly enough, these commitments are not expected to restrain him from engaging in research which is clearly dedicated to the fulfillment of given values. These are usually the given values of industrialism, of the institutional and administrative needs of government, of military objectives and planning, and the many values which are characteristic of the social and cultural themes by which his fellow-citizens live. In short, his commitment to the scientific ideal of detachment does not prevent him from serving the status quo and occasionally embracing the vested interests which are responsible for it.

The social scientist is right in insisting upon *conducting* his research unadulterated by considerations of value. He therefore does well in seeking to describe social processes and individual behavior by the use of statistical and mathematical tools. In this way disinterestedness and objectivity are guaranteed. If we assume that the type of research he is executing in no way serves a special interest, will this commitment to disinterestedness be sufficient to keep our social scientist disengaged from questions of value? Definitely not! Let me try to make clear the sense in which this is so, with a few examples.

Consider an economist who is refining or developing measurements for national income analysis. If we look only at the money flows in the double-entry bookkeeping characteristic of such analysis, no moral questions or questions of value will arise. If, however, we look at some of the items which enter into the production and consumption of goods and services, problems of value will emerge for him both as a human being and an economist. For instance, as a human being, will he not frequently wince over the extent to which "illth" [ill-being—the opposite of wealth] enters into the statement of our national income. In this category of "illth" will fall such items as cigarettes and grown and processed foods whose nutritional values, because of adulteration by chemicals, are definitely questionable. Such items have negative value when tallying up our national wealth. Many thoughtful persons would insist that they be discontinued as part of our national composite, as soon as possible.

Even in his professional capacity, however, questions of value will arise for the economist. In social accounting money is paid for utilities in the form of goods and services. However, the services of housewives do not enter into our gross national product and some economists question the rectitude of this decision. A lawyer who has been paid for a case he has lost, in which the client has had to give up money or some utility, may be said to be providing a service, but it is clearly a service which results in the loss rather than the gain of a utility. This kind of double indemnity raises questions concerning *the value or the adequacy* of the criteria employed in income analysis. The evaluation of used items, like cars, which are second-hand the moment they leave the lot, and priced accordingly, raise questions as to the justice of the procedure and point to the possibility of a downward bias in gross national product. The same considerations apply to *all* forms of planned product obsolescence. Finally, considerations of value arise in connection with the question of whether national income analysis should reflect both waste and what the economist calls the social costs of private enterprise. These refer to such matters as losses due to disasters like floods,

earthquakes and fires or to industrial conditions like smog, water pollution, etc.

Similar considerations arise for other types of social scientist. The political scientist may give his approval to an improved scheme for selecting administrative appointees, but as a human being he may not be able to approve of their decisions—particularly their secret ones—once these have come to light. A sociologist may give the most objective account possible of marriage and divorce, yet, as a human being, he will have to question some of the feudal barbarities which surround the use of alimony and some of the outcomes to which this legal device gives rise. In one form or another, the ends to which research and description are put, often involve goals and targets which the social scientist questions. He may question these as a human being or he may question these in relation to the conceptual framework within which he works professionally. But question them he must.

If the situation with respect to questions of value arises frequently in *pure* social science, it arises even more forcefully in *applied social research.* There has been an increasing volume of literature in recent years, serving to show the extent to which the applied social scientist is willing to minister to vested interests. Well known examples of exposes of this sort are Whyte's *The Organization Man* and Gross's *The Brain Watchers.* Many social scientists are often anxious to eliminate any lingering doubts among our power elites, that social science can indeed minister to their needs. A case in point is Zetterberg's *Social Theory and Social Practice,* a volume that contains *some material* which could be taken as a prospectus intended to convince executives that they can use advice from social scientists, with profit. The history of the subservience of social scientists to their industrial milieus is well documented by Loren Baritz in his *The Servants of Power,* of which the subtitle, "A History of the Use of Social Science in American Industry," is very much to the point. It is important to recognize that many of the values which the practitioner of applied social science seeks to implement are values which raise serious moral questions. The research technician who has studiously cultivated a moral form of "tunnel vision," remains unperturbed by these larger moral issues.

We cannot legislate the type of problem and the research procedure which the social scientist should adopt. As a social scientist, a researcher is free to limit himself to the description and quantification of whatever regularities he finds in the area which captures his interest. If he wishes to become and remain the narrow technician, describing illth, social disorganization, and group pathologies, but is unwilling or unable to see the relation of these phenomena to contexts of human value, this is his privilege. Anyone is free to drive into his own intellectual and moral hell on six cylinders. Side by side, however, with the technician in social science, we need the type of researcher who is a human being before he is a social scientist. This is the type of individual who, apart from possessing the scientist's curiosity about man and his works, is equally moved to relate the findings of social science to questions concerning the good life. He will relegate a Baconian pride of intellect, professionally speaking, to second place and make paramount the social concerns which Robert S. Lynd emphasized in his *Knowledge for What.*

A social science which is linked to questions of social value and public morality, but which at all times does not confuse or blend the two, is a pressing need of our time. Western civilization, dominated by science and technology and drifting in directions and toward purposes which are unquestioned by those at the centers of power, more than ever needs a constant dialogue between the questions of fact and theory (the intrinsic professional concerns of social science) and the larger questions of social morality. The social scientist who strikes a balance between these two major concerns can help the thoughtful citizen who is trying to come to grips with the major social issues of our time. He can be a pillar of strength to those of us who strive to avoid the many forms of alienation which press upon us from all sides. He can help considerably in the widespread, human desire to pour meaning and purpose into one's life and to suggest the many alternative ways in which this can be done.

The type of social science which I am envisaging will continue to press its research and its programs along the lines which it has pursued to date. In addition, however, it will seek to answer certain questions which it generally seeks to avoid by labeling the answers to such questions as the concern of "social philosophy," a phrase which, as is to be expected, the social technician uses in a pejorative fashion. Among these questions are the following: What kind of freedom should we seek? What kinds of community should we strive for? What forms of self-actualization should be promoted by a rational society which is at the same time not alienated from social compassion and the religious impulse? What are the kinds and degrees of centralization and bureaucratization which are the price men must pay for progress and a genuine sense of fraternity? How large should be the area of uncontrolled choice to which the average citizen should be willing to submit? What should be the limits, if any, on human inquiry? What constitutes a rational and an optimal standard of living for Western man? What are the most appropriate ways in which men can use the promise of abundant leisure? These are only *some* of the questions to which a more venturesome social science, willing to lock horns with the social dilemmas of our time, would be willing to make its contributions.

C. Wright Mills regarded alienation as the central and ugly problem of mass society. In his *The Sociological Imagination* he said:

> The advent of the alienated man and all the themes which lie behind his advent now affect the whole of our serious intellectual life and cause our immediate intellectual malaise. It is a major theme of the human condition in the contemporary epoch and of al1 studies worthy of the name. I know of no idea, no theme, no problem, that is so deep in the classic tradition—and so much involved in the possible default of contemporary social science (p. 171).

In my own estimation, Mills is correct. Almost all types of social pathology in our mass, technicist society, can be shown to be expressions, one way or another, of the all-pervasive alienation of our time. In a sense the rational and humane community can be defined as one which gradually approaches a condition in which alienation is almost negligible. This, of course, is a quest for perfection which we cannot hope to attain. What we can hope for, however, is that the forms of alienation which continue to spread their rot, will be considerably less in the future than they are now. This, certainly, is a more reasonable expectation.

If Mills is right, most of our social and personal problems can be shown to be the expression of one of the following seven forms of alienation: man's alienation from self, from his fellow man, from the opposite sex, from society, from work, from Nature and from God. A social science which, *in part*, will dedicate itself to the reduction of all forms of alienation, is a social science which is well on its way to eliminating many of the social problems and social pathologies which beset us. A social science which, if not married to the goddess of justice, is at least willing to spend week-ends with her, can contribute mightily to a reduction of the burdensome forms of alienation which seem to await us all. The narrow technician in social science will sneer at such an expectation. He will probably also label it Utopian and declare that he is not for a Utopian world. To this there is perhaps only one appropriate answer. A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at.

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