

## WHAT PRICE FOR PEACE?

[In an address given last year in Los Angeles, Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas spoke of the decline in the United States of the dialogue concerning issues of national decision. The life of the free society, he pointed out, depends upon the vitality of this dialogue. We print here in condensed form some remarks by Mr. W. H. Ferry, of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions (Santa Barbara, Calif.), as presented on Dec. 19, 1962, before the Professional Men's Club of Los Angeles. We know of no better example of the sort of questions that must be raised and publicly discussed, if this dialogue is to regain meaning and new life.—Editors, MANAS.]

THE price of peace is too high for either this country or Russia to pay. Sooner or later we shall, therefore, have a modern war. I do not care to predict whether sooner or later, and it really makes little difference, for surely it is as horrible—if not more horrible—to bequeath the prospect of thermonuclear war to our grandchildren as it is to face it ourselves.

The price of peace is too high for Americans because the price tag includes giving up many—I am tempted to say most—of our most cherished ideas. The price is too high for Russians for the same reason. They are no more willing to abandon their ideological baggage than we are. Indeed, both sides say that the ideological differences are what the Cold War is all about. I don't know whether this is so or not. Whatever these differences may be, they scarcely look significant enough to warrant the holocaust of thermonuclear war.

The plain fact is that both sides are embarked on a course of high idiocy, and neither has any idea how to stop or change it. Kenneth Boulding points out that we slow down and bring the car to a halt when we see warning lights flashing at a railroad crossing. The warning lights of the next war are flashing all over the place, most recently in Cuba, but there is no sign of slowing down.

Someone may object that things slowed down when Khrushchev backed away. I think not. Cuba caused neither side to abate war preparations. It merely supplied a breathless preliminary to the final event.

The price-tag for peace includes giving up our sovereignty. It includes sharing our wealth and productive capacity and ideas and food with the rest of the world. It includes straightening out our notions about the mission of this country. It includes straightening out the practices that turn words like democracy, freedom, justice, and equality into pompous hypocrisies. It includes coming to terms with revolutions and revolutionaries, and making welfare, not warfare, the guiding principle of the common endeavor. Most of all, the price of peace calls for a triumph of imagination never in history achieved—the imagination of how a warless world would be organized and conducted.

Political imagination of this unprecedented order is usually called utopianism, and that is what it is. Yet utopianism is precisely what is most needed in the thickening mists of contemporary politics, for the pragmatic uses of international warfare are forever gone. This is another way of declaring the often voiced but ill-believed truth that war cannot achieve any aim. Indeed, the historical irony today is that the true pragmatist is he who acts on this conviction, the true dreamer he who acts as if war can accomplish any human purpose whatsoever.

This country has already institutionalized the arms race. We have what looks like a permanent arms economy. Nine per cent of the Gross National Product devoted to the military is a big hunk, and we have grown used to it. This war production is so indispensable that Senators spend a lot of their time squabbling about fair shares for

their constituencies. Giving it up entirely is part of the price of peace. But it seems that the U.S. is not willing to pay it. When was the last time a Congressman proposed a serious cut in the Pentagon budget? So much has come to depend on military outlays that if Russia threw all its arms away tomorrow, the United States would find itself in economic chaos. If we are not on a permanent war basis, I cannot think of what one would call it.

The tendency therefore is to regard present arrangements as profitable and lifelong, when they should be regarded as perilous and precarious. There is no more disheartening experience than to talk with college students in California and discover the remarkable resistance to proposals for any sort of disarmament or change—"What," they ask, "would my father do for a living if he weren't making rockets, or electronic war gear, or whatever?" Since no one, in high places or low, is ready to answer such questions, we may conclude that imagination is dead with respect to them, or so moribund as not to count. If the faculties of our people, young and old, are so stultified, if they are so satisfied with the way things are today, if they are satisfied to live in a permanent war economy, the likelihood of paying the price of peace is non-existent.

Let me go into consideration of another part of the price tag. Two or three years ago I made a few speeches advocating unilateral disarmament by the United States. I was not the first and I was far from the best of those few proposing such a course. I scarcely need to tell you that these views evoked some dissent, as of course they still do. I am not sure I would argue so strongly today for unilateral disarmament by this country, because I am no longer as certain as I was then that, as a practical matter, unilateral disarmament would lead to peace. On moral grounds I still think we should disarm unilaterally. I cannot see a fair distinction between Jewicide of the kind practiced by Hitler and genocide of the kind contemplated by this country, except that we are

planning—"if necessary to protect our vital interests," as we say—to exterminate many times as many Russians as the number of Jews burned by Hitler.

I am often chided when I use this analogy, but there are many nuances in the present situation that I fail to discern, and the nuance between genocide planned by us and Jewicide carried out by the Nazis is one of them.

Let me make the point a little more emphatically. Here is a quotation from a review of a book about Tamburlaine, the fourteenth-century Mongol conqueror:

In siege after siege, hardly an enemy was left undecapitated. The moat at Aleppo was filled to the brim with bodies of men and horses, wounded, living, and dead. Knights of the last Crusade were paraded in their shirts and hacked to pieces. At Delhi, 50,000 Hindu prisoners were summarily cut up for laughing. At Smyrna, freshly lopped Christian heads were fired back at their comrades from the catapults. Minarets were built from 20,000 heads of Syrians, from 70,000 heads of Persians in Isfahan. In Isfihar, 2,000 bound captives were cemented together alive. In the vicinity of Tiflis alone, Tamburlaine left the charred shells of 700 villages. (*The Listener*, Oct. 4, 1962.)

The picture is of a grisly executioner, undeterred in bestialities by moral precepts or common humanity. We have the advantage of Tamburlaine here, for, as we often tell ourselves, we are a nation nurtured in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. We also have a surprising technological advantage over Tamburlaine, for we have it in our power—a power we are prepared to use—to blast and burn many millions more than ever felt the edge of a Mongol sword. We are potentially history's most violent nation and violence is always a moral question.

Our leaders are not Tamburlaines, although the softening effects of their upbringing in Sunday School or temple is often hard to notice through the frantic preparation of ever more inhumane arms. Our leaders are only men sadly caught in an accelerating machinery of violence that they don't know how to shut off, though both reason and

moral teaching show the absolute necessity of doing so.

Now I beg that you will not wilfully misunderstand, for I am as aware as anyone of the Russian capacity to turn our cities into smoking charnel heaps. But I speak as an American. The moral problem for Americans is not what they want or hope the Russians will do, but what we ourselves should do. I did not, however, come here to promote unilateral disarmament. I use the suggestion only as an example of the kind of voluntary action that is the price of peace—a price, let me say again, that I believe neither Americans nor Russians are willing to pay. I am told, in short, that we may be morally as well as practically justified in slaughtering tens of millions of human beings under certain circumstances. I don't believe it, unless the moral code of the jungle is substituted for the moral code of men.

The Greeks had a fine word for which there is no exact English translation, *hubris*. By hubris they meant the intemperate pride into which men sometimes fall, the vanity and certainty of its own transcendent destiny that sometimes afflict a nation. Hubris is the weakness of the vainglorious, who decline to consider the full consequences of their actions, but only the current effects. Hubris is the vice of the mighty, of a people that have grown too big for their britches. America is in that situation today. It is too big for its britches. Hubris leads us to explode titanic weapons in the outer atmosphere without any idea as to what might result from this unprecedented violation of nature. Hubris causes us to fly into the face of reason, as when we serenely announce that we have 30 to 40 times the amount of destructive power needed to eliminate every last Russian—and in the next paragraph proclaim our intention to add even more overkill capacity.

But this is only a lurid instance of the hubris that grips the whole nation, the giving up of which would comprise another substantial part of the price of peace. Hubris is behind the Connally Resolution which makes a farce of the World

Court in U.S. eyes. It is hubristic to think that we have the ability to inflict a Pax Americana on the world, or that we could make it stick if we somehow managed to bring all our opponents to their knees by threat of absolute military superiority. Hubris leads us to bypass the only true international forum, the United Nations, in those situations when it most deserves to be built up by use. Perhaps the most staggering of hubristic assumptions is that we have the right, if we wish to avail ourselves of it, to plunge the world into atomic war. Where do we get the right, except through hubris, to inflict the final violence on innocent nations and people, to wipe out civilizations built up over centuries—libraries and monuments, museums and universities—and to smirch the earth and its fruits for untold generations?

The harvest of pride growing out of our wealth and technical skill is also a harvest of satisfaction with things as they are. I see some disposition in Washington to take disarmament seriously, but not much. For that matter, I don't take it very seriously myself. The trouble is that mankind, having discovered the means to do itself in, can never again forget it. There are few secrets any more about making the great weapons, and even fewer, or so I have been given to understand, about the formulas for creating toxic germs and gases. Although they don't cost as much and are not as intricate as thermonuclear arms, the biological and chemical weapons seem to me an even more ironic commentary on the idea of progress than that of the bursting atom. We have come to the stage of history where we can now begin to restore to the world all the unpleasantness we have spent centuries to eliminate, even including bubonic plague and malaria.

There is no disarmament plan that will ever erase the knowledge of how to manufacture either bombs or bugs. We might disarm, but we can never disknow. I have little doubt that the formulas for these lethal products are safely put

away in the deepest corridor in the deepest mountain sheltering government records, to enable survivors of World War III without undue delay to make ready for World War IV.

Inspection plans seem to me quite certain to do more harm than good. Inspection, at least of the varieties so far proposed, is an ideal way of cementing distrust between nations. The United States would not have survived if they had relied on inspection of one another, and the relatively pacific history of this hemisphere records no dependence on inspection or anything like it.

The paralyzing fact is that we are in a totally new situation and apparently stuck with totally old methods of dealing with it. There is no military or diplomatic or historical precedent for the fix that mankind is in today. We can no longer fight it out, and we aren't getting very far in arguing it out. My view is that novel predicaments require novel approaches. It would be novel for the U.S. to initiate and push through a world federal order; though not as novel as Senator Goldwater and David Lawrence think, for they seem to have missed the lessons in novelty furnished by the makers of the Constitution. The tendencies toward federalism seen in the Common Market and the Atlantic Union movement will, in my judgment, permit post-World War III historians to write: "Such men had the right idea, but alas, they walked when they should have run."

All the novelties today unfortunately are being provided by the research and development laboratories, and none by the statesmen. President Kennedy invoked a 900-year-old tactic—blockade—against Cuba, and accompanied it with the ancient "I double-dare-you" challenge to Russia. Sterility of imagination is the really striking aspect of measures like these. That is to say, all that appears to stand in the way of war is the set of chip-on-the-shoulder attitudes that is labelled deterrence. The instruments of modern conflict being what they are, it is said that they comprise the surest guarantee against war. The great powers are not silly enough, it is said, to

bring down one another's thermonuclear thunderbolts.

It turns out, under this theory, that we are not making weapons, we are just making psychology. The tens on tens of defense billions are spent in an elaborate experiment in behavioral science. Thus the argument of mutual deterrence presumably gives us the assurance we need. Yet, as all saw in the case of Cuba, we are not very assured after all. The President threatened war, talked of its ashes-in-the-mouth consequences, and the nation believed for a good many apprehensive hours that the time might have come. If we really thought deterrence a reliable shield, none of us should have been worried. Nor should we worry if some time the Russians take a similar stand and assert that in some other part of the indivisible world their vital interests are jeopardized by U.S. actions. This time, under the theory, the U.S. will be deterred and stand back. But will it? We cannot look forward with any confidence to a string of such eventualities. Dependence on deterrents leads not to relaxed confidence in the axioms of behavioral science but to acceptance of nuclear war, a lamentable, but to me, irrefutable conclusion.

There is, finally, a good deal of bitter comedy mixed into the deterrence stew. For, while bombs may serve temporarily to deter the Communists, they cannot deter Communism, which appears to be getting on passably well despite our overwhelming megatonnage. I conclude, that is to say, that present policies do not stand in the way of war, but, at best, only afford a small time to think of something better. That effort does not, in all honesty, appear to be under way. The principal enthusiasm for disarmament and inspection—not to speak of something more stable—comes from countries with no weapons to throw down and no missiles to inspect. And it seems to me that the formulas for disarmament so far proposed have fatal flaws in any event, growing out of their foundation in suspicion and their aiming, not at

peace, but at an armed truce able at any moment to erupt in war.

I have discussed the symptoms of what seems to me a certain trend to war, but I realize that my discussion of the causes has been superficial. For one thing, I'm not at all sure what they are, except that some part of the cause is fatty degeneration brought on by the cholesterol of affluence. Some of the malaise is a constant dizziness produced by the accelerations of technology, which on one day presents us with dazzling new means of reducing drudgery, and the next day presents the bill in the form of unprecedented structural unemployment. Ours is a psychosomatic ailment, too. The infections of war preparation are running through the body politic. These fevers have already so desensitized the population that we are not horrified but pleased at news of ever more destructive and inhumane instruments of war.

I wish to anticipate the first question: Well, what have you to propose? There is a prior question: What is wrong with the analysis I have presented? If we can find where it goes wrong, perhaps we can begin to make some sensible proposals. As must be evident, I have no formula to suggest, no panacea likely of adoption in the face of what a British writer labels "America's private crusade against Communism." Yet it seems to me also evident that any start must be made from the fact that we are all sitting in one another's laps. We in the United States have no way of withdrawing from the fretful and dangerous world.

We cannot, in short, afford the luxuries of sovereignty and nationalism any longer. The threat of annihilation is the price of such luxuries. The force of law has to be substituted for the law of force unless civilization is to perish. It strikes me as beyond argument that we need a federal structure, under a constitution, equipped with a judiciary and enough police power to enforce the laws and injunctions of the world organization.

Harvey Wheeler argues that chances of peace would rise measurably once we manage to

"internalize" the great conflicts—once we manage to transform problems like Berlin and the India-China border dispute from international conflicts to domestic issues, so to speak—and once we manage to place the dreadful coercion of present-day arsenals under common control.

I don't think we can overnight imagine and put together a perfect system of international law and government. But if we are ever going to put the force of law in place of the law of force, we had better set about it instantly, if we are not already too late as I think we are.

Let me quote some interim steps that have been proposed, with which I agree:

What I believe is required . . . is a recognition by the opposing powers not simply of the dangers of the continuance of the present arms race but of a prior need for cooperation in projects as exciting and expensive as the struggle to maintain the uneasy balance of terror. . . I would like to see the Communist and the Western world agree to spend a proportion of their national income not less than they are now spending on arms and defence on ascertainable projects of a different order, internal and external—education, building, research, civil engineering, agriculture, and health . . . if [such programs] were actually undertaken, preferably in cooperation, they would offer a fairly definite guarantee that disarmament would proceed. (*Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, December, 1962.)

If the author of these dreamy sentiments were an American he would stand a fair chance of appearing before the House Un-American Activities Committee. But he is safely on the other side of the sea. The author is Lord Hailsham, former leader of Great Britain's Conservative Party and present Minister of Science in the MacMillan government. The statement appears in an article entitled "The Imperatives of International Cooperation."

The obstacles to promoting a discussion of the world brought together under a constitution or cooperation with the Soviets on a Hailsham-like program are vividly illustrated by the flame and thunder that recently played about Adlai Stevenson. The sin of this Presidential adviser, all

here will recall, was to have given advice to the President when asked to do so. No one knows exactly what went on in the National Security Council, but the suspicion that Mr. Stevenson suggested anything but the most draconian measures produced an outcry from the heresy-hunters that will echo for a long time in the United Nations and in the United States. Cooperation with either the Reds or world government is heresy, too, and the hunters rise with a dreadful clatter any time such proposals are made. Yet this tumult will have to be suffered through and triumphed over. It is the only chance for peace and therefore the only choice we have. In Arnold Toynbee's words, "We have either to resign ourselves to committing mass suicide or else to learn to live together as a single family."

Let me conclude this dismal catalogue with four questions by Robert M. Hutchins, president of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. He, with many other men far wiser than I am, believes that I am wrong about the prospects for peace. If we are willing to put our attention on the right subjects, he thinks we may yet mend a sorely troubled and threatened world. Here are his questions about "the great frontiers on which the issue must be squarely faced during the coming decade, if democracy in America is to survive, and if democracy is to survive anywhere in the world."

*Can the community of man prevent a total nuclear war which could destroy civilization?*

*Can the community of man in the new age control the surge of technology, for the good of individual freedom and the general welfare?*

*Can the community of man provide a more abundant life for all, without crippling losses of individual liberties?*

*Can the community of man open up the resources of mind and spirit that could make human life productive at the highest level of mankind's potential?*

Mr. Hutchins' answer to all of these questions is yes, providing only that men will really work at

them, thoughtfully and ceaselessly. I hope, for humanity's sake, that he is right.

Santa Barbara, Calif.

W. H. FERRY

## *REVIEW*

### IN THE JAMES TRADITION

GORDON ALLPORT'S *Pattern and Growth in Personality* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1961), should make an interesting sequel to last week's comments on William James. This volume is generally regarded as a revision of the author's *Personality: A Psychological Interpretation* (first issued in 1937), but in Allport's words, "in another sense it is wholly new." The "newness" is in the philosophical sort of attention given to phases of the human being which received much briefer treatment in his earlier work—a development paralleling somewhat James's transition from *Principles of Psychology* to his later writing in *Varieties of Religious Experience* and his essay, "Human Immortality." Of the new spirit in psychology Allport writes:

Many recent writers have joined me in arguing that psychology should not be content with studying an artificial man but should describe and explain a real one. In recent years several new movements have had a beneficial impact—among them existentialism, phenomenology, client-centered therapy, and so-called ego-psychology.

The basic problem remains unchanged. This problem, as I see it, is to discover the proper balance between uniform factors and individual morphogenic factors in personality. Let me explain what I mean by referring to the science of biology. Molecular biology shows increasingly that life-substances are identical across species. The building blocks of life—vegetable and animal—turn out to be strikingly uniform in terms of nucleic acids, protein molecules, and enzymatic reactions. Yet a sparrow differs from a pine tree, a man from a sparrow, and one man is very unlike another. The challenge of morphogenesis (accounting for pattern) waxes more and more acute as we discover the commonalities in life.

It is so with psychology. The more we search out, and discover, what is uniform in human nature, the more urgent it becomes to account for uniqueness in the form and pattern of the whole. Just as morphogenic biology lags behind analytic and molecular biology, so too does morphogenic psychology lag behind analytic and molecular psychology. One important purpose of this volume is

to call attention to this gap and to possible ways of closing it.

Allport's closing chapter, "The Person in Psychology"—definitely "new" material—explains why any psychology which fails to recognize its close relations with philosophy is inadequate:

Psychology is truly itself only when it can deal with individuality. It is vain to plead that other sciences do not do so, that they are allowed to brush off the bothersome issue of uniqueness. The truth is that psychology is *assigned* the task of being curious about human persons, and persons exist only in concrete and unique patterns.

Since psychology has this peculiar assignment it cannot be content with the dogma that understanding people is achieved merely by ordering the individual to a class. That inferential knowledge of this sort is important no one will deny. But, in addition, knowledge through direct perception, configural comprehension, "acquaintance with," needs to be sought. The full resources of our cognitive equipment are needed as tools of research.

We study the human person most fully when we take him as an individual. He is more than a bundle of habits, more than a point of intersection of abstract dimensions. He is more than a representative of his species, more than a citizen of the state, more than an incident in the movements of mankind. He transcends them all. The individual, striving ever for integrity and fulfillment, has existed under all forms of social life—forms as varied as the nomadic and feudal, capitalist and communist. No society holds together for long without the respect man shows to man. The individual today struggles on even under oppression, always hoping and planning for a more perfect democracy where the dignity and growth of each personality will be prized above all else.

In simple terms, Allport believes that a more mature psychology is promised by the increasing interest in the processes of "becoming." While it is true that "the whole course of man's development may be regarded as simply an extension of the principle involved in temperature regulation, balance of blood volume of sugar content, within the physical body," this kind of determinism concerns only one phase of the total personality. Human beings do not simply seek to balance inner and outer pressures in order to

achieve a state of rest or equilibrium; they also try to *become* something more than they are, by reaching beyond any static condition—however physiologically satisfactory that static condition may seem to be. Allport continues:

Some theories correctly emphasize the tendency of human personality to go beyond steady states and to elaborate their internal order, even at the cost of disequilibrium. These conceptions allow for a continual increase of men's purposes in life and for their morphogenic effect upon the system as a whole. Although homeostasis is a useful conception for short-run "target orientation," it is totally inadequate to account for the integrating involved in "goal orientation."

Many theories put weight on this criterion. Woodworth's principle of behavior primacy, as opposed to need primacy, does so. So, too, Goldstein's doctrine of self-actualization and Jung's individuation. One thinks of Maslow's growth motives, as opposed to deficit motives. Ego-psychology, with its allowance for autonomous and conflict-free motivation, belongs here. White's emphasis on competence, Lecky's self-consistency, Erikson's search for identity, Adler's style of life, McDougall's sentiment of self-regard—all are oriented to this criterion. Although these formulations differ among themselves, they all find the "go" of personality in some dynamic thrust that exceeds the pale function of homeostatic balance. They recognize increasing order over time, and view change within personality as a recentering, but not as abatement, of tension. Needless to add, existential thought moves in this same direction.

The reader is again reminded of F. H. Bradley's classic statement that the man who denies meaning to metaphysics is "simply a rival metaphysician with a different set of first principles." Dr. Allport is concerned with both the metaphysical and the ethical consequences of limited definitions of human nature, and feels that the contemporary psychologist ought to publicly explore all the consequences of his predispositions. "All books on the subject of personality," writes Allport, "are at the same time books on the philosophy of the person. It could not be otherwise. A writer who decides that one theory of learning, or of motivation, is better than

another is thereby endorsing one view of the nature of man at the expense of other views. In most psychological texts, however, the philosophy is hidden. Only a sophisticated reader can detect it. In this regard the present volume is more candid. It invites the reader to note the philosophical consequences of endorsing one psychological interpretation rather than another."

Another "parallel" with William James may be found in Allport's *The Individual and His Religion*—his own approach to the topics which occupied James when he wrote *Varieties of Religious Experience*. There is, apparently, a tradition of open thinking which still continues at Harvard University, of which, in psychology, the writings of both James and George T. Ladd may be prototypal. One hopes that some of Allport's successors will value this tradition and perpetuate it.

For the text of *Pattern and Growth in Personality*, Allport chose this sentence from Spinoza:

I have made a ceaseless effort not to ridicule, not to bewail, nor to scorn human actions, but to understand them.

## COMMENTARY

### THE MEANING OF THE WORLD CRISIS

THE thing that bears in upon the reader of W. H. Ferry's dynamic and even sprightly "pessimism" is the need for others to make similar statement of opinion and position. This is surely the first step of the only way for Mr. Hutchins' four questions to obtain the answer of yes.

This is of course not the first time in history when large groups of people have found themselves trapped in situations created partly by their own passivity and partly by actions of leaders who are locked in old ways of doing things. It has happened before; there have been many *anciens régimes*, and they all gave way and collapsed under the pressures of change—some of them slowly and undramatically, some of them with the brittle snap of sudden failure.

But this is the first time in history that the people and the leaders of a fairly small proportion of the world's total population have set themselves upon a course which leads to both moral and physical oblivion, and have at the same time involved countless millions of other people in the prospect of suffering the same fate.

It is Mr. Ferry's point—or one of his points—that the so-called "issues" of the Cold War pale into almost total irrelevance in the face of this monstrous possibility.

In the past, the people who resolved to live decent, moral lives could usually do so without far-reaching political involvements with other people. If they found that they were unable to do what they believed to be right, where they were, they could move. Thus the English Brownists left their English homeland and migrated to the New World as the Pilgrim Fathers.

From time immemorial, men have been able to seek out clean and fresh lands where they and their families could practice such virtues and seek such fortune as they desired.

*That time is past.*

Today, only one kind of migration is possible. The freedom and the goodness sought by such men

are no longer to be found in the wilderness and on the frontier. If the good life is to be found at all, it must be discovered and drawn out of the secret lives and secret longings of other men. There is still a wilderness to be dared and endured, but it is a *human* wilderness. And in the relationships which are possible in this psychological desert, jungle, or pampas, there is only one course of action to which a man can cleave and survive—it is the course of freedom, rightness, and honor, no matter what others say or do.

Naturally, it is entirely possible that a man may be wrong about what is free, right, and honorable. This is the common lot of all humans. But when a man links with his decisions and his resolve the determination to harm no one else—when his first step in the direction he chooses to go is taken as a disarmed and peaceful individual—what errors he may fall into will at least not bring disaster to others.

So, when you range the alternatives side by side, to see what you can do as an individual, there is very little choice. You can either stand as a man who will not lend either his strength, his talents, or his assent to a program which gambles loosely with every ultimate value that human beings have cherished since the world began, or you can jettison the last semblance of individuality in a silence which endorses evils that may at any moment go totally out of control.

For ages men have been able to leave the question of the quality of their humanness to others. They have been able to gain assurances from conventional moralists and other social authorities that their way of life is sound, progressive, and good. But now the conventional moralists and social authorities are precisely those who can no longer be relied upon. Now a man has to look to his own intelligence to find out what he ought to be and do, if he is to remain a man—not turn into some kind of monster. The suddenness of the coming of this crisis in self-evaluation is almost too much to bear. But it may be the only specific for what ails the human race.

## CHILDREN

### . . . and Ourselves

#### TEARS WITHOUT LAUGHTER

HAVING on principle long scorned doing the "depressing recital" sort of story, we now succumb, mainly because two criticisms of the educational situation that have come our way admit of no other treatment. Betty Fancher's "We're Cheating Our Children," in the *Saturday Evening Post* for Sept. 29, 1962, takes an extremely gloomy view of adult-organized pre-adolescent activity. Beginning with a peculiarly offensive example, Mrs. Fancher describes a fifteen-week course in "Social Graces"—costing \$100—which instructs "in skin care, personal grooming, posture and the delicate art of entering a room effectively; also telephone technique, table manners and courtesy to elders." The writer witnessed the presenting of a diploma to a "young graduate"—four years old. Mrs. Fancher continues:

She already was being groomed for the junior rat race—the endless round of parties, special classes and club meetings which consume the rigidly scheduled after-school hours of our young and keep their little date books brimful of appointments.

Gone—long gone—are the idle days of youth. Sandlot baseball has given way to the high-pressure competition of the Little League. The enchanted age of dolls and fancy dress is now the time when girls must bethink themselves of poise—with a capital P. And the leisure, the freedom and the incalculable magic of childhood are being lost in an endless maze of planned activity.

In our efforts to provide "all the advantages," we have produced the busiest, most competitive, highly pressured and over-organized generation of youngsters in history—and probably the unhappiest. As the mother of three daughters, I have had ample opportunity to observe the junior rat race firsthand, and I've concluded—not without bitterness—that, if every five-year-old could be given a miniature car and a driver's license, the institution of motherhood could be abolished altogether.

Europeans often oversimplify in criticism of the indulgent attitude of American parents towards their young, but to say that we are more nervously concerned with our children than any generation in

any culture comes closer to the truth. The traditional Chinese, for example, indulged nearly every whim and fancy of the child for the first five years or so, allowing it to be, in a sense, "magically omnipotent." There was nothing anxious or fearful about the Chinese elders, for they derived both amusement and joy from observing free juvenile expression. Soon enough, everyone knew, would come the serious rites of discipline leading toward responsible maturity. Mrs. Fancher seems to regard the typical American adult as the victim of "parent-hating psychiatrists." While this, too, may be oversimplification, it is obvious that many American parents are afraid to be on their own with children. They are much more apt to hand them over to the experts—the teachers and coaches, directors of religious education, Little Leagues, child guidance clinics, etc.

Now for the most serious of Mrs. Fancher's attempts at cultural analysis:

I suspect the junior rat race really results from the fact that too often our children have become extensions of our own egos—human status symbols in whose bright light we may preen ourselves. We dream of the day our son will become the toastmaster of his Rotary Club, and the time when our daughter will be ushered into the rarefied regions of the Junior League. In other words, we're bent on producing a generation just like ourselves—only more so. And we're in terrible danger of succeeding.

The talents of many a tender, sensitive, contemplative child—fledgling poet, or potential artist—will not survive the junior rat race. Others, gifted with more active thyroids and stronger nervous systems, probably will prevail and go on to become the sort of well-rounded supersouls who run our communities with a high hand. By and large I fear that the rat race will produce a wretched issue.

Commenting on Chief Justice Warren's idea of a new profession of "counseling in ethics" for Americans, James E. Clayton finds that "several fascinating questions" are posed by this suggestion:

Have Americans become so confused by the complexities of modern life that they base their decisions on something other than what is right?

Has the emphasis of American thought on the idea that the nation lives under a rule of law brought people to believe that whatever is legal is also right?

How closely do laws conform to ideals of what is right and what is just?

Mr. Clayton continues:

The answers to these questions would tell much about the morality of Americans in 1962. They are questions that have long bothered many who observe modern life from ivy-covered halls or cloisters. But in recent years, these are questions that have also become troubling to those who watch the drama of everyday life.

Is it right to take shortcuts on income tax returns? Is it right to pad expense accounts? Is it right to deceive a partner in marriage? Is it right to buy property at a cheap price when the seller does not know its hidden value? Is it right to avoid the spirit of laws governing business?

Our reason for linking these two discussions—Mrs. Fancher's criticism of the "junior rat race," and Mr. Clayton's look at the Warren proposal—lies in the fact that all effective ethical ideas must derive from some sense of individual integrity. And, unless you allow and foster the development of individuality, how can you possibly know what integrity means? Educators also encounter the stultification of individuality in the intellectual area, and some of them are attempting to get a new spirit going in the schools. A paper by William P. Chapman, one of the founders of an experimental secondary school at Riverside, California, tells why the average highschool graduate arrives at the university with so little sense of his own capacities, so little understanding of *himself*. Mr. Chapman writes:

The students themselves feel so. They are bored, confused, discouraged, and greatly at a loss. The public has little conception of the critical situation in the colleges. While a few of the fraternities may give by their actions the impression that colleges are the care-free societies they were in the 1890's the majority of students, responsive to the promptings of intellect and having learned something of standards, come to see that they are radically ill-prepared, that any attempt at a remedy for them is only expediency at this late date, and that the real remedy should have been applied at least ten years

previously. They are right. Parents worry whether their children will get into college. Students entering college are faced by a graver problem, and each one is alone with it: how to close the monstrous gaps in their knowledge in an impossibly short time, how to learn in two or three years what they should have been engaged in learning for twelve. Real instruction in college can no longer begin until the Junior or Senior years and often not until Graduate School. American students cannot hold up their heads to their European contemporary. They feel their lack, their delay, the oppressive sense of its being "too late." It is not too late for the energetic. But somewhere in their college career they must make a superhuman, dedicated effort on their own, if they wish to enter the company of the learned and to be in professional control of any body of knowledge acceptable by the standards of the world, standards, I may add, in which professional "education-educators" have no interest. Only the rare student succeeds in this rigorous course. The colleges have attempted to meet the situation for the rest by offering general survey courses in something called "Humanities 12," "Humanities 13," etc., and other subjects formerly only taught in the schools, such as the elements of foreign languages. The students learn hurriedly, desperately, and superficially what they should have had twelve years to assimilate. They learn enough, for the most part to pass examinations, but the honest ones know at heart that they are nearly as ignorant as the day they were born and that they are still on the outside looking in. An AB may be agreeable to some employers and to the public at large but the honest ones know it is a veneer and that the company of the learned, in Hades or Heaven or wherever, avert their gaze.

We are here inclined to borrow from Joseph Wood Krutch's *Desert Year* the suggestion that ordinary schooling should be supplemented by the equivalent of a *Thebaid*—a retreat into solitude practiced by the ancient Thebans. Since few of us live in regions with opportunity for solitude, we may be hard pressed to find equivalents, but we can try. And it might be best to hurry, before someone starts to "organize" a project for achieving "solitude," with some "individuality" added to make a package deal.

## *FRONTIERS*

### **Out of Many Lives, Many Minds**

HERE, on Jan. 2, we expressed doubt as to the feasibility of a reader's (Miss Mary Navratil's) proposal that studies directed toward self-knowledge be undertaken by the public schools. Another reader, Mr. Robert J. Burdett, of Chicago, offers another view:

Your conclusion may be entirely correct, that the public schools cannot improve our culture, but rather, the culture must improve the public schools. On the other hand, you may be in error—at least partially—because of the very broad scope and goal of the objective: To challenge "the very basis of the society in which no such milieu exists"[the milieu in which the pursuit of self-knowledge has no place and commands little interest]; and in error, also, in assuming that we need a Buber, a Tillich, a Maslow, or a Thoreau to teach such a program, or to work out the text for the program.

Let me suggest a couple of sources where, I think, the text might readily be obtained, and very simply. Contrary to the assertion [in MANAS] that "since the decline of the high metaphysical religions, there has been no current material on being and knowing one's self," there are roughly 250,000 or 300,000 alcoholics in this country who have arrested their disease by just such a process. The material showing how to put the process into practice is embodied in twelve simple steps. Originally there were but five or six. Synanon, of which your columns have been descriptive, embodies the same process. A Wisconsin physician named Schindler, whose book was a bestseller for years, worked out an audio-visual educational course for his emotionally immature patients, whose instability had resulted in actual physical illnesses. Unfortunately, he was killed in an automobile accident a couple of years ago, but his material must still be extant. A lawyer named McGoldrick, who was a corporation counsel in New York under La Guardia, evolved a course in psychological growth, said to be effective not only with alcoholics, but also with others suffering from personality disturbances. Schindler ten years ago cited work by two educators (I think a husband-and-wife team) leading to this kind of teaching at the primary level. Recovery, Inc. employs this kind of insight and self-teaching. Mr. Mowrer and his graduate students are compiling a country-wide directory of these self-help movements.

I hope it might not be necessary to have a Thoreau or a Socrates, or even a Dewey, outline the course of study from these materials. Probably any good arrested alcoholic school teacher could do so. (Kind of an anonymous Socrates or Thoreau.)

Now, as to the teaching, the "mining of the ore of anecdote and biography": Is not such material in the classes themselves? The subject-matter would be the children's problems. Father, mother, brother, sister, teacher, bicycle, house-work, studies. You name it, the kids will have it. As to "rare and distinguished individuals," every youngster will probably know them, both good and bad. Daddy, Uncle John, Aunt Ruth, teacher, Bobby's teacher, Jimmy's mother, Sally's grandpa.

Often in your column on children there is recognition that teachers can learn from their pupils. This would happen here. And I dare say that if it were to get started in any school, inevitably it would lead to all of the teachers being forced into like courses; and that this would tend to force administrators into like courses. Then let us hope it might go on from there to the board members and then to the community.

Maybe you can see what I mean from a little story about a five-year-old. The daddy, an arrested alcoholic, announced that he was going to an AA breakfast, because some friends of his were speaking. A little later, the mother asked if she could go, too. The five-year-old was heard to say: "She ought to go, she surely needs it."

Years ago I outlined a similar course of study or teaching and suggested it to the Church Federation of Greater Chicago in lieu of religious education in the schools. It was about six to ten pages. My reply was a nicely worded mimeographed form letter inviting financial contributions to that fine organization. The same kind of response might come from nine out of ten school administrators—or even ninety-nine out of a hundred—but there always might be one out of a hundred who would get the point and see the need.

I have seen this thing work with a group called Alateen. These are the youngsters of non-arrested alcoholics. They use the twelve steps, but with the single change that they are powerless over their alcoholic parents or parent. It has given me goose pimples to see what these kids have done with themselves through this program. And I have thought how immeasurably the learning capacity of all youngsters would be enhanced if they could have something of the same kind, too.

In comment on the foregoing, the first thing that ought to be noted is that this writer is himself doing a great deal to establish the milieu in which Miss Navratil's proposal might become a clear possibility. The resistance he has encountered from institutional interests is to be expected, but from the many encouraging developments he reports there is reason to think that this resistance can be worn away in time. It is pertinent, of course, to add that the activities he describes may be exactly the processes by which "the culture" will eventually "improve the public schools." Our point was mainly -that this transformation must begin with the initiative of individuals—people like Mr. Burdett and the others whose work he reports. In short, we take what he says to be a confirmation of this point in our article.

But his letter is far more than this. Mr. Burdett shows, first of all, that the movement toward self-knowledge in our age and civilization is functional rather than doctrinal, experimental and pragmatic rather than metaphysical or conventionally religious. This is worth thinking about. Second, it shows that the inspiration for self-search and self-discovery comes primarily from "smashed" people who have picked themselves up and made a new start in life.

There is a plain parallel between this fact and the contention of Gerald Sykes, in *The Hidden Remnant*, that the only wisdom in public affairs, these days, comes from men who practice the politics of shipwreck.

There is a need, however, to meet this tide of strength rising from weakness, of vision growing out of blindness, with positive ideas of meaning based upon deep philosophical reflection; with—if you will—metaphysical conceptions that can be tested in the fires of experience. All aspects of man's nature should be involved in this quest.

The Existentialists, the Self psychologists, the Zen thinkers whose breadth of mind includes the discoveries of Western culture, and some of the Neo-Freudians are all beginning to make contributions in this direction. Perhaps, before

another generation passes, the milieu so sorely needed will come quietly into being. Gandhi will have helped, by his own unique revival of the meaning of high metaphysical religion and his practical applications of the ancient Eastern idea of the Self in behalf of world peace. Emerson, Thoreau, Tolstoy, and others will have helped by bringing the essences of ancient philosophies into the currency of modern thought.