

THE FOCUS OF HOPE

IT has been just about a century since the ideal of human development shifted from the individual to society. According to Mazzini, Byron and Goethe were the last great individualists to give voice to the Renaissance tradition of perfectibility without making their hopes depend upon some sort of social reconstruction. Practical discouragements may have played a part in this change, but its chief cause no doubt lay in the rising insistence of socially inspired moralists who found themselves continually distracted from thought of individual goals by the conditions of life imposed on the great majority of people by the Industrial Revolution. While there were strong currents of individualist philosophy in the eighteenth-century demand for political equality and freedom, the means of satisfying these longings—the historical forces of political revolution—were now recognized as the only tools available to practical men who wanted to "get things done." It was natural, therefore, for the goals of human striving to be defined thereafter in the terms of the political contract and social justice.

During the first half of this century, the books embodying the idealism of the age were addressed to populations, or to the political publics within the populations, not to individuals. The idea was to define the best possible relationships of men in society, not the best possible men. Not the imitation of Christ, but the invention of Utopia, was the goal. If Byron and Goethe were types of the Renaissance vision of individual excellence, H. G. Wells may stand as their opposite number during the succeeding era, in which the vision was of socio-political or collectivist perfection.

Wells is a good choice for this role, since he may also represent the shock of apprehension which overtook all but the doctrinaire utopians in the middle years of the twentieth century. His *Mind at the End of Its Tether*, published just

before he died, in 1946, was the work of a man who saw the dreams of a lifetime challenged by the malignance of uncontrollable events. More sophisticated observers had already begun warning against collectivist illusions; Aldous Huxley was first, with his *Brave New World*; then came George Orwell, with *Animal Farm* and *1984*; and there have been dozens of anti-utopian non-romances since; but Wells, we may think, had invested too much positive emotion in his dream of the Good Society to take refuge in either humanist irony or liberal wrath. He gave up.

This is not to suggest that positive Utopian thinking ended with H. G. Wells. It has slowed down some, it is promising less, and it pays more attention to the danger that ideological certainties will turn into totalitarian absolutes when plans for "order" are translated into political programs. Perhaps we can say that, chastened by recent history, Utopianism has shifted down into second gear and, no longer expectant of synthesizing the Ideal Social Good, is attempting to make provision for Escape from Unimaginable Evil. Another way of defining the situation would be to say that while the practical obstacles to carrying to completion some well-considered plan for the Good Society have not diminished—they may in fact have grown—the need of the world for a rational order which will eliminate the possibility of nuclear war seems so desperate that a great many men have felt obliged to lay aside their reservations and come out wholeheartedly for a reconstituted utopian vision of World Community. What else, they say, can we do?

But this is too brief, too cavalier an account of what has been happening. Actually, modern utopian thinking reflects a great deal of searching inquiry into the qualities of a viable human society, involving serious comparison of the various cultures and religious attitudes which will

have to become compatible under the conditions of world civilization. The best minds of the age have addressed themselves to these problems. The fruit of their efforts is reviewed by W. Warren Wagar in his recent volume, *The City of Man* (Houghton Mifflin). Indication of the scope of this work is given in the Introduction:

. . . in all the thousands of books provoked by the twentieth-century world crisis, . . . partial views and . . . cheerful fantasies are transcended time and again by flashes of authentic prophetic insight. The present study is an effort to assemble in one place the widely scattered elements of still another approach to the future, which looks on the crisis of our time as the birth pangs of a new world civilization. This is not yet a distinct school of thought, much less an "ideology." But the realization steadily grows that we are in the midst of an immensely complex revolution. On the one hand, the binding forces and structures of the traditional civilizations have been shattered; on the other hand, all civilizations have been flung willy-nilly into a precarious and premature geophysical unity. And the realization steadily grows of the inevitability, if we survive at all, of an organic world civilization built to the new planetary scale of human life: not simply or even necessarily a world government, or a world economy, or a world religion, but a completely viable world civilization.

For all its overtones of old-fashioned Utopianism, this may be the most vital vision in the thinking of our time. It cuts through the blinkered imagination of bigotry to inspire Marxists and Catholics and religious leaders of every faith. It grips some of the century's leading philosophers. It demands what may be an impossibly vast transfiguration of human life, and it leaves nothing untouched or unquestioned; but its devotees argue, with conviction, that nothing less radical is any match for the world crisis.

Recent anticipations of world order not surprisingly take almost as many forms as there are books and prophets. Independent scholars as various as Arnold Toynbee in history; Karl Jaspers, Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, William Ernest Hocking, and F. S. C. Hocking in philosophy; Pitirim Sorokin in sociology; Erich Kahler and Lewis Mumford in the humanities; and Sir Julian Huxley and Father Pierre Teilhard de Chardin in biology, have each in the past quarter century produced prophecies of a world community of man based on the insights of their fields of special competence. . . . Many movements

and individual thinkers have tried to envisage at least some one or two salient features of a possible new world order: its sciences, its religion, its economy, its political life, its social structure, its obligations to human personality. What brings together the prophets explored in the present study is not their consciousness of any common cause, since they often come from hostile camps, hold dissimilar world views, and work with different basic concepts, but rather their awareness of the disintegration of the existing order of human life and their attempt to find formulas of constructive response.

At the end of his book, after having surveyed the thought and proposals of dozens of writers, Mr. Wagar examines what seems to him a possible common ground. Essentially, this ground is Responsible Relativism. It involves admitting and learning to live with our uncertainties, acknowledging uncertainty as the common human lot, and combining forces with the functional wisdom that this practical humility provides.

Mr. Wagar has an evolutionary theory to support this view:

From this perspective, . . . the human enterprise will divide naturally into three great life-phases. In the childhood of the race, men lived secure in their possession of ultimate wisdom and utter Truth, except in eras like late Western antiquity, when different cultures with different Truths were hurled together by the vicissitudes of empire, and had to achieve some higher synthesis. In our adolescence, here and now, we shift uneasily between frantic dogmatism and the opposite assumption, based on sound analysis, that man is wholly blind and all values wholly relative. In the coming age of man's spiritual maturity, beyond dogma and beyond skepticism, he will somehow learn to live with perpetual uncertainty, and at the same time work in concert with his fellows to determine, in the light of all current knowledge and belief, what is the closest approximation to Truth possible at each successive stage in his development. If man cannot ever know the infinite Truth, still he can always strive to reach a common definition of what infinite truths, subject to unlimited revision, seem cogent to him in the vital present. In a given epoch, at a given level of scientific knowledge, from a given perspective, the world will always appear to have much the same meaning to most men of intelligence and good will. And as we approach the epoch of One World, and a unified world science and a world perspective in

philosophy and religion, something remotely akin to what Teilhard de Chardin calls "Unanimity" may be possible for free minds working with passion and sincerity to reach tentative agreement on values, goals, and knowledge.

While Mr. Wagar seems aware of many of the difficulties that will have to be overcome in order to realize this dream, there is still the question of whether the problem ought to be set in "collectivist" terms, or rather collectivist terms alone. (By "collectivist," here, we do not mean any necessarily regimented beehive sort of social organization, but simply the discussion of social issues in terms of the social *whole*.) Resolution of the conflicts between the nations is an obvious goal, to which a world political order seems an inviting path, but it may turn out that the individual and certain of his personal problems are even more important than the larger, social situation. It may be true, as Mr. Wagar says, that "there will be no world civilization without a substantial measure of tentative agreement among its intellectual leaders, on ultimate values as well as on the details of practical policy," and we have no inclination to challenge this statement on the ground of the immediate difficulties it implies (on any theory, including the theory of doing nothing, we shall have no easy time), but we think more attention needs to be given to the people who are not leaders, without whose help and assent the leaders can accomplish practically nothing.

There is this to consider: Men are different. Brotherhood consists not in dissolving differences but in understanding them. Men have common interests, are all children of the same Mother Earth, and are all lifted, on occasion, by the same feelings of high spiritual destiny, but they have many differences. We generally agree, upon reflection, that these differences are no misfortune but a fact as natural as the colors in the rainbow or the notes on the scale. The differences, we say, present us with projects for mutual understanding. They also afford rich material to the arts and literature, by means of which we learn to celebrate the common human essence. However, there are

other differences. Mr. Wagar listed them when he divided the human enterprise into "three great life-phases." He spoke of the attitude of simple belief characteristic of "the childhood of the race." A large segment of mankind still participates in this frame of mind and feelings. Then there is the attitude of hard-headed skepticism and irresponsible relativism. The people in whom this view prevails tend to be angered by any attempt to involve them in large-hearted universal projects. They are alienated from all systematic thinking—indeed from all thinking except the negative kind of empiricism which thrives only on analysis and admits only reductive conclusions. There is also, of course, a tempered skepticism with warm-hearted associations and inclinations. This latter spirit, termed by T. H. Huxley Agnosticism, thrives best in times when there is no threat of world catastrophe; further, in pure form, such generous-minded agnosticism is quite rare. Finally, there are those whom Mr. Wagar names the spiritually mature, who are of course still rarer. They are the ones who have risen above primitive belief, beyond skeptical denial, having found the subtle but solid ground of Responsible Relativism. Plotinus might have spoken of these as the Illuminated; Gerald Sykes would probably include them in his "Hidden Remnant"; and students of the *Bhagavad-Gita* might recognize them as "non-attached" men.

Now the thing that seems all-important to acknowledge is the fact that all human beings are working their way through these three categories of learning, experiencing, and awakening, and that there is no way under heaven of forcing their development or of getting all these people suddenly to see life and its meaning in more or less the same way. Nor are these categories clear and distinct, so far as individuals are concerned. The qualities they represent are present, in varying degree, in every individual. Sophisticated intellectuals have been known to give way to the hierarchically guided herd behavior of True Believers and sectarians. Unblinking courage of mind sometimes raises distinguished individuals

from a narrow intellectual environment to the high wisdom of true impartiality. You never know where the light will go on, or where, alas, it will go out, although you come to expect more light in some places than in others.

What are the demands upon all human beings, regardless of time and place? Ultimately, they need to find a sense of meaning and purpose in their relations with themselves, in their relations with the social community, and in their relations with the world at large—the natural universe. We know something of how these needs have been met, and are being met, although inadequately, today, through the study of comparative religion, through reading and reflection, and by various encounters with others in daily life. And from what the observer may learn by such means, one thing seems sure: No one is wise enough to devise a politicalized universal religion or philosophy capable of meeting all these needs for all these people. Or another way of putting it would be to say that to search for a common ground of belief because of the compulsions of political necessity (or simple survival) is the wrong way to go at the problem. Politics and the requirements of world order represent interests and concerns which do not touch the deepest springs of human life. If anything is to be done in this direction, it needs to begin at the prepolitical level. What needs renewal or rediscovery is the very source of human conviction concerning the meaning of life. This must occur before or without the achievement of Utopia, if its inspiration is to illumine or make possible any such good society of the future.

Despite the splendor of the conceptions of world society reviewed by Mr. Wagar, the thought which dulls our response and chills any latent eagerness to join his band is the possibility that even the best of plans, if put into effect by some kind of psycho-alchemical *force majeure*, would almost at once degenerate into the hair of the dog that has already bitten us almost to death. Modern thinking is already too much concerned

with the building of organizations to do things which organizations can never do. The problem is to arouse the good in human beings. For some two hundred years we have told ourselves that this is accomplished by means of the right kind of organizations. Organizations have brought us many things, but they have also brought us to the brink of extinction. They have not helped us to develop great and good human beings. List the men who speak best to the human heart and mind; more often than not, they will be rebels against organization—unclassifiable, unadjusted. We seek them out and honor them because they resisted the grooves and patterns which an excessive reliance on organization produces in the lives of most people.

If it be argued that *this* organization will be different, we shall reply that it will have to be, and propose that more attention—primary attention—be given to making it different; and this, we submit, will be best accomplished if at least some of us forget all about it for a while.

The best organizations are those which remain flimsy improvisations, nakedly *ad hoc*. And how can a "good" organization have such ephemeral characteristics? Not from any intrinsic virtue of its own, but entirely from the rich development of the human beings who make use of it. They never become dependent upon it, and for this reason it never rises to any specious "sovereignty"; it is strictly a convenience, like a car or a street.

How could a *world* society get along with such loose bindings? The answer is that there will be no world society until loose bindings are seen to be just what is needed for such an association. This, it seems to us, is what a number of Mr. Wagar's modern utopian authors mean when they declare that the coming world order must be "organic." In organic relationships, the rules are modelled by the spontaneous behavior of the living units who form the whole. External bonds are non-existent for organisms. So, in the case of human beings, for whom constitution-making

happens to be a minor organic process (that we think it major is a spastic accommodation to organic failure in the nonpolitical aspect of our being), we allow the possibility of loose bonds.

The point is that, regardless of appearances, the lessons that mankind needs to learn are not the lessons of world organization.

Well, how shall we get on with the lessons that we *do* need?

There can be only a "cooperative" answer to this question, since all such answers to fundamental problems are lived-out evolutions and never recitations. One thing, however, seems plain. There are some modes of thinking and problem-solving which have universal application. They are like the great myths which have profound meanings at every level of interpretation. For the child, the story of the hero—Arjuna or Rama, Ulysses or Siegfried—is a tale of high adventure; for the mature adult it is the drama and crisis of human life. One of Mr. Wagar's writers, F. L. Schuman, hints at something like this when he says that "world federal union cannot become a real possibility until the great 'myth of human unity' reaches down into the hearts and souls of millions of men all over the world, transmuting patriotism into true humanism. Exactly. Yet "unity" alone cannot be understood. The myth that accomplishes the enormous educational task so laid upon it will have to account for differences as well as affirm the relationships in which they are to be forgotten. Modern recoverers of mythic meanings may find it necessary to mine all the great eschatological mysteries of the past, and—again—not for the expedient purpose of "preventing war," but because we need this sort of understanding in order to become fully human. Government is the expedient, not our humanity.

It is the order of Mr. Wagar's priorities, and not his aim, which seems awry. He writes in his conclusion:

But if we can agree at least on the desirability of world peace, and if the only reasonably sure guarantee of world peace in the long run is an

integrated world civilization, coherent and harmonious because its thinking men freely associate to create a world mind, some few working criteria seem fairly obvious. In the absence of any possible final knowledge, we must prefer those approaches to reality, those systems of thought and value, which assume that the cosmos, and man in it, are not merely absurd, chaotic, purposeless and meaningless, but organized to some transcendent end. . . .

Oh Lord, give me a purpose, lest in a fit of depression I end it all!

Any self-respecting Creator could only reply, "Good riddance! I'll have to try something else next time."

The trouble is that the compulsion to find a "transcendent end" sufficiently dirigible to lift us out of our nuclear anxieties will come only to those frightened enough to feel the anxieties—the "leaders," no doubt. Mr. Wagar would have us scare ourselves into being Emersons and Thoreaus, a curious piety which reverses the field on all human experience. You have to get your Emersons and Thoreaus first. Yet the logic of the argument is flawless, if you can overlook the priorities:

Then, once we have assumed the coherence of the cosmos and the meaningfulness of man, the test which every idea and value must ultimately meet is profoundly simple: does it contribute to the integration of the world community, or does it encourage division, fratricide, or genocide? Is it on the side of peace and brotherhood, or on the side of conflict and isolation? Does it promote integral harmony between men and Man, or does it annihilate both by degrading persons into things and by accelerating the collapse of civilization? Is it for life or death? For without life there can be no goals at all. The heartbeat of mankind, stopped for one minute by an act of stupendous folly, would be stopped forever.

What ought to be added is that *The City of Man* is none the less a record of the pregnant longings of the human heart. That they take the form of plans for world organization is no more than natural, since this expresses a vision of the future in terms of the skills so familiar to our age. The vision is far more important than its form. A

closing passage gives the flavor of much of this book:

Let us not be afraid to aim high. Prophecies of world order may seem like exercises in sheer fantasy to the "realistic" man, but it is the so-called realists who are the lunatics of the twentieth century. The interminable analyses of the immediate future in terms of the immediate past served up by our fashionable newspaper pundits and professors of international relations, and the "crackpot realism," as C. Wright Mills calls it, of our warmongering politicians, do verge at times on perfect insanity. Stuck to the flypaper of the present, enthralled by the Thing-That-Is, these realists miss what is most vital in human affairs: the role of free-ranging will "To believe in power that exists," says Erich Fromm, "is identical with disbelief in the growth of potentialities which are as yet unrealized. It is a prediction of the future based solely on the manifest present; but it turns out to be a grave miscalculation, profoundly irrational in its oversight of human potentialities and human growth. . . . While to many power seems to be the most real of all things, the history of man has proved it to be the most unstable of all human achievements."

REVIEW

NOT THE LAST OF C. G. JUNG

ANY appreciative review of *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, a posthumous collection of the writings of Carl Jung, including his "life story," recorded and edited by Aniela Jaffe (Pantheon Books, 1963), is bound to concern itself with some of the biographical material. But biography is misleading when so much "spontaneous generation" goes on in a human mind, confounding, as in the case of Jung, all easy generalizations. The last years of Dr. Jung's life (he died on June 6, 1961, at eighty-six) were not, it is clear, given over to a reshuffling of either ideas or events of the past. Jung's thought, in fact, during his 80's seemed to be striving, with an unusual combination of patience and brilliance, for a higher synthesis, a "larger circle" to draw around the tentative conclusions which constituted many of his earlier psychological formulations. This is the context of Jung's remarks on the subject of possible "life after death," and his revaluations of the psychological content of different forms of Christianity. For it is evident that Jung never identified himself with a closed "position." He was always willing to reach beyond the cautious limits of former theorizing to alter his opinions.

For these reasons, and because sequential accounts of thought-development may be a misleading measure of a man, we begin by quoting from the last page of the concluding chapter, "Retrospect":

I am astonished, disappointed, pleased with myself. I am distressed, depressed, rapturous. I am all these things at once and cannot add up the sum. . . . When Lao-tzu says: "All are clear, I alone am clouded," he is expressing what I now feel in advanced old age. Lao-tzu is the example of a man with superior insight who has seen and experienced worth and worthlessness, and who at the end of his life desires to return into his own being, into the eternal unknowable meaning. The archetype of the old man who has seen enough is eternally true. At every level of intelligence this type appears, and its lineaments are always the same, whether it be an old

peasant or a great philosopher like Lao-tzu. This is old age, and a limitation. Yet there is so much that fills me: plants, animals clouds, day and night, and the eternal in man. The more uncertain I have felt about myself, the more there has grown up in me a feeling of kinship with all things. In fact it seems to me as if that alienation which so long separated me from the world has become transferred into my own inner world, and has revealed to me an unexpected unfamiliarity with myself.

It is possible, of course, to arrive at various conclusions concerning the content and tone of such passages as these. Our view is that Jung's acute awareness of the multiple possibilities of psychic reality made him wary of positive affirmations. In other words, as a younger man, Jung had *intellectual* sympathy for certain religious beliefs, but no empathy in respect to group religious attitudes, none of them eliciting the sort of attraction he finally came to feel for a philosophy of immortality. This was not, however, because Jung became "converted" to any structured faith, but because his "thinking through" of religious areas of thought enabled him to distil the wheat from the chaff; his writings on any subject which involved the "soul" are integral with the requirements of logic and philosophy. These nuances, hard to formulate, seem necessary to consider, since many of Jung's admirers are likely to feel that in his old age he slipped into a personal interest in immortality. Nothing, in our opinion, could be further from the truth, and *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* should be abundant evidence. Take, for example, Jung's hardheaded introduction to the subject of life after death:

In general, the conception people form of the hereafter is largely made up of wishful thinking and prejudices. Thus in most conceptions the hereafter is pictured as a pleasant place. That does not seem so obvious to me. I hardly think that after death we shall be spirited to some lovely flowering meadow. If everything were pleasant and good in the hereafter, surely there would be some friendly communication between us and the blessed spirits, and an outpouring upon us of goodness and beauty from the prenatal state. But there is nothing of the sort.

If there were no imperfections, no primordial defect in the ground of creation, why should there be any urge to create, any longing for what must yet be fulfilled?

When Jung does reach the domain of transcendental philosophy and his own "personal" metaphysics, it is in this manner:

It seems probable to me that in the hereafter, too, there exist certain limitations, but that the souls of the dead only gradually find out where the limits of the liberated state lie. Somewhere "out there" there must be a determinant, a necessity conditioning the world, which seeks to put an end to the after-death state. This creative determinant—so I imagine it—must decide what souls will plunge again into birth. Certain souls I imagine, feel the state of three-dimensional existence to be more blissful than that of Eternity. But perhaps that depends upon how much of completeness or incompleteness they have taken across with them from their human existence.

It is possible that any further spell of three-dimensional life would have no more meaning once the soul had reached a certain stage of understanding; it would then no longer have to return, fuller understanding having put to rout the desire for re-embodiment. Then the soul would vanish from the three-dimensional world and attain what the Buddhists call nirvana. But if a karma still remains to be disposed of, then the soul relapses again into desires and returns to life once more, perhaps even doing so out of the realization that something remains to be completed.

In my case it must have been primarily a passionate urge toward understanding which brought about my birth. For that is the strongest element in my nature. This insatiable drive toward understanding has, as it were, created a consciousness in order to know what is and what happens, and in order to piece together mythic conceptions from the slender hints of the unknowable.

The chapter, "Late Thoughts," is largely concerned with a review of religion. Here, Dr. Jung feels that he must be first the critic, only later a man of affirmation—because he sees in the centuries of theological domination over Christendom a suppression of the very voices which might have brought helpful psychological meaning. "The Christian nations," writes Dr. Jung, "have come to a sorry pass; their

Christianity slumbers and has neglected to develop its myth further in the course of the centuries." He continues:

Our myth has become mute, and gives no answers. The fault lies not in it as it is set down in the Scriptures, but solely in us, who have not developed it further, who, rather, have suppressed any such attempts.

Those who gave expression to the dark stirrings of growth in mystic ideas were refused a hearing, Gioacchino da Fiore, Meister Eckhart, Jacob Boehme, and many others have remained obscurantists for the majority. The only ray of light is Pius XII and his dogma. But people do not even know what I am referring to when I say this. They do not realize that a myth is dead if it no longer lives and grows.

The old question posed by the Gnostics, "Whence comes evil?" has been given no answer by the Christian world, and Origen's cautious suggestion of a possible redemption of the devil was termed a heresy. Today we are compelled to meet that question; but we stand empty-handed, bewildered, and perplexed, and cannot even get it into our heads that no myth will come to our aid although we have such urgent need of one. As the result of the political situation and the frightful, not to say diabolic, triumphs of science, we are shaken by secret shudders and dark forebodings; but we know no way out, and very few persons indeed draw the conclusion that this time the issue is the long-since-forgotten *soul of man*.

COMMENTARY

CLOSER TO HOME

OUR reluctance to embrace wholeheartedly Mr. Wagar's dream (see lead article) stems, we suppose, from acquaintance with a lot of people who are either by nature or by inclination unlikely to give themselves over to thinking in terms of the "total" problem of human society. Actually, only a small proportion of the population of the world is naturally drawn to this kind of thinking. The gas station attendant at the corner, the clerk in the grocery store, the foreman at the shop, the sales manager who works in the front office—for all these people and countless millions more, the world "out there" is a vague unreality. Their lives are caught up in other involvements, their ingenuity turned to seeking other solutions. Somehow, we can't see grabbing hold of all these people and telling them that they must change the focus of their interest to the organization of a world society. We are not even sure they should.

Hallock Hoffman's expression, "living with present reality" (Frontiers), doubtless has various meanings, and one of them certainly includes awareness of the need for world peace, but for a great many people there are more immediate problems and bewilderments. These, we think, are rooted in existential dilemmas which touch all human beings and which the serious-thought of the modern world is only now beginning to expose to view. We propose, in short, that Dr. Jung (Review) speaks more clearly to the present condition of man than the advocates of political solutions—even when those political solutions contain provisos which are far from alien to Jung's thought. The matter of the meaning of our lives, in *any* political arrangement, is more important than the best possible political arrangement. And if someone objects that without a world order, no one may live long enough to solve any philosophical questions, we must answer that there is no political antidote to dying, which is going to happen, anyway, and that philosophy has at least some things of value to say on the subject.

A world state will not teach us how to meet death with serenity, nor how to live wisely before it comes.

When Plato proposed that philosophers must become kings, he did not seek only for a king who could qualify, but also laid out a plan for rigorous education that would bring into being the kingdom. For us, the king is the government, and a philosophical government would be our philosophical-king. But where is the constituency that will nourish a philosophical society?

There are times when it seems to us that the talk of "world order," without close attention to the meaning of "order" for individuals, with all that this implies, is a form of escape from the hard, unromantic task of general education, and the creation of a culture capable of peace.

The American Friends Service Committee, representing the Quakers, has put into print for general distribution 50,000 copies of Martin Luther King's "Letter from Birmingham City Jail." In this letter, written in longhand in his cell on April 16, the Negro civil rights leader answers in detail the criticisms of his freedom demonstrations, put by white religious leaders in Alabama.

Asked, "Why didn't you give the new administrations time to act?"—Dr. King replied: "We have not made a single gain in civil rights without determined legal and nonviolent pressure." He added: "We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed." Dr. King observed that he had never "engaged in a direct action movement that was 'well-timed,' according to the timetable of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation."

An hour of greatness is upon the Negro citizens of the United States. They have leaders who are participating today in the revolution of tomorrow—the revolution whose only weapon is

human dignity and whose only strategy is nonviolent action. They have in James Baldwin a champion who is able to see in the confrontations of the race issue truths which reach beyond any partisan claim, and yet to use those truths in behalf of his people. He serves the Negro cause with insights about Man, not simply Negro Man. He pleads a cause which presses white Americans to look at themselves, and to take their own measure—and to argue no longer the "Negro Question." He helps his readers to discover that by oppressing the Negroes the whites are degrading themselves.

This kind of thinking is something new in the common life of the American people. It represents the beginning of responsible dialogue of human beings with themselves—a development that is owed, quite plainly, to the example set by Negroes.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves QUOTES AND NOTES

WE seldom are moved to reproduce a newspaper item in its entirety, but have no embarrassment in borrowing all of a New York *Times* dispatch for April 7. The heading is "Hundreds of Whites Attending Negro Colleges in 'Reverse Integration'," and the text reads as follows:

Hundreds of white students are attending educational institutions that were once Negro, according to the Associated Press.

"Reverse integration," this development is called. It has happened at many colleges and universities across the country, North and South. To an overwhelming extent, students and faculty say, the situation is working fine.

"The people here are no different than the people at any other college," says Linda Labig, a white junior at Central State College in Wilberforce, Ohio. Once solidly Negro, the school now has about 450 whites in an enrollment of 2,300. Charles H. Wesley, its president, declares: "Integration is a two-way street."

The shift has come largely since the United States Supreme Court's desegregation ruling in 1954. So sweeping has been the change at West Virginia State College that its previously predominant Negro enrollment is now 65 to 70 per cent white. It now has a record enrollment of 2,502. "We didn't recruit white students," says Dr. William J. L. Wallace, State's president, a Negro. "We felt it might be resented. However, we knew many persons were interested, and when white students showed up we accepted them."

Such hospitality has marked the transition at most of the formerly Negro schools. It has been "all very pleasant," says a spokesman for Tougaloo Southern Christian College at Jackson, Miss. It now includes two white girls and three white men in a student body that previously was all Negro. "They participate in all activities quite normally," the spokesman said. "There is no social strain." The college is operated by the Disciples of Christ and the United Church (Congregationalist and Reformed).

Similar patterns have developed at other previously Negro campuses in Louisiana, Texas,

Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Missouri, the District of Columbia, Maryland and elsewhere.

The cordial reception accorded whites apparently came as a shock to a white Baptist missionary minister, the Rev. W. A. Monroe of Houston, Tex. Accompanied by 25 placard-carrying members of his congregation, he appeared in 1958 at Texas Southern University, then all-Negro, to "show that integration is foolish" by trying to enroll. The school enrolled him. "He was surprised," a spokesman said. "He thought we would turn him down." Although Mr. Monroe soon withdrew, a small number of whites are now enrolled. The number is uncertain because no records are kept on race.

For many white students, the new campus atmosphere has provided "the first social contacts with Negroes," Dr. Wallace says. He adds: "The relationship has been generally congenial. Indeed, many students, both Negro and white, have found their interracial experiences enlightening and uplifting. They testify that they have been freed from the bonds of enslavement to prejudice."

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Progress in "race relations" is usually accomplished, it appears, by what may be called "the symbolic act." The Freedom Riders, the disciplined, thoughtful followers of Martin Luther King, Jr., and such "whites" as those described in the *Times* story are all men whose behavior clearly carries symbolic meaning. And the symbolic act plays a tremendously important role in education. Erwin Goodenough, writing on "Myths and Symbols for Children" in *Religious Education* for June, 1962, makes some generalizations on this subject:

Symbols present the concrete even more tersely. A symbol, we have said, is a concrete image, form, ritualistic act, or perhaps a single word, which operates directly upon us subverbally, or at least subrationally. It is not simply an abbreviated reference, like a trade mark, but carries power in itself to move us.

All nature is symbolic, but the child will learn it as he sees it completely embodied and practiced in ourselves. The slightest hints, perhaps not grasped at first, will turn the little child to seeing in the concrete

phenomena of nature symbols of the greater processes.

A symbol is not a veiled reference to an abstraction, much as the term is used in this sense in modern writing. A symbol is a concrete form, act, or experience which itself embodies and conveys broad conceptions, or deep emotional terrors or gratifications. The symbol begins always with the concrete, and often acts as a profound and diffuse influence without conscious awareness at all. We should indeed put into the lives of our children symbols which we have found beneficial to us, but we cannot make forms or acts genuinely symbolic if they are only poetically beautiful to us.

It seems especially appropriate that the keynote of equality has been struck so often on university campuses, particularly and most dramatically in the southern states. For if we still cling to the hope that part of higher education consists in suggestive instruction as to how to be human, we need perennial assurance that the universities are succeeding, at least at times, in this most important task. Every "symbolic act" undertaken by a solitary student or group of students helps to establish communication with the latent idealism in other young people.

* * *

The child, of course, does not need to divest himself of prejudice. He starts out entirely unprejudiced, and it is a reverse tribute to the conditioning power of our culture that during his formative years he learns so many things that are not so that it takes a truly talented teacher or a psychiatrist to bring him back to normal. The view that childhood is not a time for nurturing inevitable seeds of sinfulness but, rather, a time for a natural idealism is well expressed by Robert Henri in one of his letters to a student:

Whoever approaches a child without humility, without wonderment and without infinite respect, misses in his judgment of what is before him, and loses an opportunity for a marvelous response. Children are greater than the grown man. All grown men have more experience, but only a very few retain the greatness that was theirs before the system of compromises began in their lives. I have never respected any man more than I have some children.

In the faces of children I have seen a look of wisdom and of kindness expressed with such ease and such certainty that I knew it was the expression of a whole race. Later, that child would grow into being a man or woman and fall, as most of us do, into the business of little detail with only now and then a glimmering remembrance of a lost power. A rare few remain and hold on through life to their universal kinship.

FRONTIERS

In and Out of History

A GREAT many people are doing fruitful thinking about the nature of man, these days. However, that this is the kind of thinking they are doing is not always immediately evident. Sometimes it comes in the form of an analysis of typical behavior patterns or psychological responses, but so developed that a fresh insight of general meaning results. The following illustration is taken from Hallock Hoffman's KPFK Commentary for May 19:

Thinking requires abstracting, and living requires a continuous exchange with existing objects. The complication arises because men can experience their own thoughts and emotions. In fact, I suspect that most of us spend a good deal more time experiencing what we think about the world and how we feel about it than we do experiencing the world of actual things. We have a tendency to attach our loyalties and feelings to a set of ideas, and fail to make contact with the objects about which the ideas came into being.

Take the example of the troubles between Negroes and whites in the South. The troubles are real. Men are being injured and even killed. Thousands of persons are being deprived of goods, or of a say in their government. But in a sense the whole struggle for civil rights is the result of disagreements about abstractions. The ideas of white superiority, or white-black equality, or of prior claim on resources or privilege or social power, or of rights and duties and authority, are being fought over and experienced by the men and women who take part in the battle for racial integration. The kinds of human encounters that characterize the relations among people who approach each other as individuals, rather than as representatives of groups, tend to be few. Once such categories develop, it is difficult to break out of the ideas people have of each other, and get back to the reality of experience.

Once many years ago, I asked my friend Lewis Jones, a Negro sociologist, why even he, who knew how much affection and concern I had for him, so often fell into a sort of *pro forma* defensiveness. "It's because," he said, "no Negro ever knows when his white friends are going to turn white on him." I suppose I never knew when Lewis was going to turn colored on me, either. But it was my problem, not

Lewis', when I feared he might stop being himself and become a representative of a race. I was thinking of him not solely as Lewis Jones, a person, a human being, but as a thing, called Negro, whose actions and responses I ceased to see as individual and began to imagine were qualities of some abstractions of mine about an idea named "Negro."

This kind of behavior is not living with present reality; it is living with an expectation, an anxiety about loss of control of the situation.

Thinking of this sort has an immediate, practical importance. For example, it throws light on the recent statement by James Baldwin that the Negro can no longer be controlled by white America's image of him. This is a psychological reality which, as Baldwin explains, "has everything to do with the rise of Africa in world affairs."

Mr. Hoffman's analysis is at the psychological level of human behavior. Years ago, in his magazine *Politics*, Dwight Macdonald made virtually the same analysis in political terms. Under the heading, "We Need a New Political Vocabulary," Macdonald proposed that the designation "Left" was no longer of much use in political analysis. It should be replaced, he said, with two terms having almost opposite meanings—"Progressive" and "Radical." These he defined as follows:

By "Progressive" would be understood those who see the Present as an episode on the road to a better future; those who think more in terms of historical process than of moral values; those who believe that the main trouble with the world is partly lack of scientific knowledge and partly the failure to apply to human affairs such knowledge as we do have, those who, above all, regard the increase of man's knowledge over nature as good in itself and see its use for bad ends, as atomic bombs, as a perversion. . . .

"Radical" would apply to the as yet few individuals—mostly anarchists, conscientious objectors, and renegade Marxists like myself—who reject the concept of Progress, who judge things by their present meaning and effect, who think the ability of science to guide us in human affairs has been overrated and who therefore redress the balance by emphasizing the ethical aspect of politics. . . .

The Progressive makes History the center of his ideology. The Radical puts Man there. The Progressive's attitude is optimistic both about human nature (which he thinks is basically good, hence all that is needed is to change institutions so as to give this goodness a chance to work) and about the possibility of understanding history through scientific method. The Radical is, if not exactly pessimistic, at least more sensitive to the dual nature of man; he sees evil as well as good at the base of human nature. . . . The Progressive thinks in collective terms (the interests of Society or the Workingclass), the Radical stresses the individual conscience and sensibility. The Progressive starts off from what is actually happening, the Radical starts off from what he wants to happen. The former must have the feeling that History is "on his side." The latter goes along the road pointed out by his own individual conscience; if History is going his way, too, he is pleased; but he is quite stubborn about following "what ought to be" rather than "what is."

Macdonald's "Radical" is the man whom Hoffman sees as "living with present reality."

It goes without saying that this kind of clarifying discussion of a basic dilemma in the human situation does not resolve the dilemma; but it does make us more self-conscious, more personally aware of the ethical issues involved in the decisions we are obliged to make.

Some further attention to the Negro question should help to sharpen awareness of the existential realities underlying events which most white people interpret only in terms of stereotyped images. *Time* for May 17 began an effective story on James Baldwin with this paragraph:

Strolling down a quiet street in a small town, James Baldwin came upon a scene that has since haunted his dreams. From a sunlit patch of grass came the singing laughter of a child. Baldwin looked—and saw a white man swinging his little daughter in the air. "It didn't last for more than a second," recalls Baldwin, "but it was a unforgettable touch of beauty, a glimpse of another world. Then I looked down and saw a shadow. The shadow was a nigger—me."

The core of Baldwin's intense address to the white race (in his new book, *The Fire Next Time*) is this existential wisdom: "At the root of the

American Negro problem is the necessity of the American white man to find a way of living with the Negro in order to be able to live with himself." This is a reality which is outside of history, outside of "current events." It is a truth about man, any man of any color.