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EDUCATION FOR TOMORROW

IN any large-scale social situation, the problems of education and what people think about them are likely to reveal more about the society than formal definitions. For example, striking differences emerge when you compare the educational ideas of the Gandhian movement with those of educational leaders in the United States. Although there are obvious reasons for some of these differences—one being the fact that in India education proceeds largely in a rural, village environment, while American education takes place under circumstances created by advanced technology and industrialism—the comparison is nonetheless worth pursuing, if only to become more closely aware of the extent to which economic processes affect education, and how even the formulation of educational ideals is modified by such influences.

We may start the comparison by quoting from *The University*, a pamphlet published by the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, in the form of an interview with A. Whitney Griswold, president of Yale University, with a comment by Robert M. Hutchins. (This pamphlet is an early fruit of the series of studies of the American character recently undertaken as a project by the Center.) Following is a question asked of Mr. Griswold, and his reply:

> *Q How can you educate a person for life instead of merely for a vocation?*
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> GRISWOLD: That is a question that has occupied the wisest minds of antiquity as well as of the middle ages and the modern age. We cannot, at any rate we do not, distill out of the educational process all of the professional or vocational elements in it. This is impossible except for the one or two students you might get who could be isolated and kept thinking about nothing but ultimates. They might be so rich or so poor that they would not care about preparing for a job or a profession. But those are imaginary people. The real living student does have a vocational interest or a professional interest that tends to crystallize as he matures and progresses in his studies. Presumably more seniors know what they want to do than freshmen, so at some time between the freshman and the senior year this aim tends to develop and gather form and substance; and, as it does, it tends to influence the student in his attitude toward education and in his selection of courses. At Yale the effort is made to defer or delay the student's commitment to the vocational approach to education, so as to expand to the utmost his opportunity for what we call liberal education.

Implicit in this discussion is the idea that "preparing for a job" can be and often is an obstruction to the true educational process. This has been a major contention of Mr. Hutchins for many years, and in an afterword in this pamphlet he contributes some items of evidence to show the devastating effects of vocationalism on the modern university. Mr. Hutchins writes:

> Until I read Mr. Griswold's account of present tendencies, I was under the impression that the service station conception of education had gained the day. No week passes without a bulletin from somewhere—never, it is true, from Yale—announcing a new program exceeding the bounds of anything that even I had supposed possible. The most recent was a clipping from *The Elkhart Truth*, in Indiana, and ran as fellows:
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> "A four-year course leading to a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in mobile homes is now offered at Michigan State University. . . . The special courses deal with manufacture and distribution of mobile homes, the establishment and operation of parks. Field trips to mobile home plants, dealerships, and parks supplement the regular classroom work. . . . Michigan State inaugurated the program at the request of and with financial assistance from the industry. Industry cooperation has been continued through a steering committee (sic)."
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> As Mobile Homes come in, Civilization goes out. According to the *New York Times*, Columbia University is abandoning its required sophomore course in Contemporary Civilization on the somewhat confused—or at least confusing—grounds (*a*) that contemporary civilization has become too

complicated and specialized to be taught by the contemporary teacher; (*b*) that the members of the staff do not regard the course as a challenge to their professional skill; (*c*) that it is impossible to arrive, in a single course, at "some coherent view of the problems of the twentieth century"; (*d*) that the social sciences have become so technical as to defy translation into ordinary language; (*e*) that the course has not "evoked the needed commitment for an inter-departmental venture"; and (*f*) that nobody wants to teach sophomores anyway—"an invitation to teach a graduate course is a token of success."

These illustrations, which I have chosen simply because they are the freshest in my file, reflect the external and internal difficulties of the higher learning. Crude pressure and bribery produced Mobile Homes. Sophisticated academic politics, based on vocationalism, specialism, and departmental indifference to liberal education, killed Contemporary Civilization.

The point to be noted, here, is that the *kind* of vocational training available in the United States may be fairly regarded as a serious intrusion on the educational process. This comment could be drawn out to suggest that vocationalism in education has a tendency to produce propaganda for the acquisitive ideology and to formulate shallow justifications for its replacement of liberal education. The judgment, then, is that institutionalized vocationalism in the United States is either irrelevant to education or is destructive of it. (The classical statement of this view is to be found in Mr. Hutchins' book, *The Higher Learning in America.)*

Let us turn now to Gandhi's ideas on elementary education in India, neglecting for the moment that the comparison is between higher education in the United States and the teaching of much younger children in India. Gandhi wrote in *Harijan* in 1937:

By education I mean an all-round, drawing out of the best in child and man—body, mind and spirit. Literacy is not the end of education, nor even the beginning. It is only one of the means whereby men and women can be educated. Literacy is in itself no education. I would, therefore, begin the child's education by teaching it a useful handicraft and enabling it to produce from the moment it begins its training. Thus every school can be made self-supporting, .

The Gandhian experimental school at Sevagram was established to put these ideas into effect. Sevagram is near the town of Wardha in the Central Provinces, in one of the poorest sections of an economically poor country, where both illiteracy and destitution are high. Following is the account of the founding of the school which appeared in MANAS twelve years ago (July 13, 1949):

Gandhi wanted a school that would grow from grass roots under the most difficult conditions and survive the most overwhelming odds. He wanted a school that would be self-supporting even in such an environment, and he knew that the only way to make such an enterprise self-supporting was to have the school directly related to the tremendous need for village improvement, so that villagers could understand what the school might mean to them. But he wanted to construct more than better villages—he held that performing useful tasks would help men to reconstruct themselves. . . .

From the outset, Sevagram depended on the collaborative work of teachers and pupils in preparing necessary food, clothing and shelter without recourse to outside capital. In the first place, Gandhi and Aranayakam {A. W. Aranayakam had come from Santiniketan, Tagore's famous educational center, to help start Sevagram with Gandhi] knew that they could never secure a subsidy from the British Government for the type of educational work which they planned, and, second, Gandhi believed that any school dependent upon public or private subsidy could easily lose its academic freedom.

The account of Sevagram's work continues in another issue of MANAS (July 20, 1949):

Gandhi's objective was, in a fundamental sense, directly "political" rather than "cultural." He began creating the conditions under which a sense of political responsibility could most easily emerge, divining that no man can be "free" until he has recognized his part in group responsibility and has learned how to fulfill it. When the Indian National Congress moved the Quit-India Resolution and began the campaign of Civil Disobedience against Britain, the resolution was passed under the thatched roofs of Sevagram itself. The pupils at the Sevagram school knew something of what this meant, because they had

already been acting "politically" themselves in seeking application for the principles of Truth and Nonviolence in the affairs of the surrounding villages. Gandhi's combined leadership of a School and a Civil Disobedience movement did not turn the minds of the children away from the task of learning nor make them emotional followers of a Great Leader. Instead, it appears, they were able to feel that Gandhi was doing in another way and within a larger framework of circumstances what they themselves were attempting with their own lives in relation to the places of their birth.

In the Sevagram plan, which was originated for children from seven to fourteen years of age, each pupil became a productive unit in his own village, learning reading, writing, arithmetic and history while actively serving the needs of the community. This meant developing a special sense of regional responsibility, and led also to vitalized methods of instruction. The Gandhian classroom moves around with the teachers and the pupils to whatever is the current scene for useful work—it might be the field or the spinning or the weaving room. Girls and boys learn to grow, pick, spin and weave cotton into cloth, aiding considerably the family economy. They raise and prepare their food, and learn dietetics. A sense of self-reliance develops apace with the sense of responsibility, too, for the children feel that they can, if necessary, support themselves on a small plot of land without recourse to external aid.

There is a marked similarity between Gandhi's emphasis on the constant use of tools and the "learning by doing" methods of Progressive education in America, but there is also a significant difference. The emphasis of Progressive education has been on learning *how* to develop certain manual skills. Gandhi, however, was concerned with skills that could be turned to immediate benefit to the community. Instead of teaching things that *might* be done when the pupils became manually fit, Gandhi presented them with useful tasks which needed immediate performance as a part of the life of the school itself, thus making the work of the children *real* work rather than "token" work. Even the art department occupied itself with permanent æsthetic improvement of the school buildings and, beyond this, with the selection, for use in murals, of subjects immediately related to the work of the school.

This principle penetrates nearly every aspect of the school life, continuously impressing both teachers and students with the importance of always devoting themselves, whatever their special scholarly or scientific attainments, to the needs of the local community. The dietician is not so much engaged in disseminating general information about nutrition, but in stimulating the ingenuity of the pupils in devising a better diet for the noon lunch or the evening supper. Because these "Gandhian" children do nothing at school which cannot find expression in immediate usefulness, pupils are always able to feel related to the facts and spirit of rural economy.

In principle, there should be no reason why Americans cannot put to work in education the Gandhian idea of participation of the young in the economic life of the community, but in practice, you usually get the "token" activities of Progressive education, and, at the college or university level, the fiasco of courses in mobile homes or similar nonsense. Of course, for the comparison to be really "fair," we should wait until India has reached a stage of industrial progress comparable to the United States, since "practical," in this country, means simply useful, or acquisitively advantageous, whereas in India it means, necessary to survival. There is the further qualification that occupational education or rather instruction in the United States is commonly conceived of as assistance to individual achievement, while in India, in the Gandhian view, the motive is to serve and enrich the common community life.

Perhaps we should begin the evaluation of this comparison by saying that the problems of American education grow out of a fairly mature development of an acquisitive society which has been overtaken by the complex processes of technology and the spreading institutionalism of the welfare state. The assumptions of American education are a mixture of incompatible elements, some of them dating back to the Greeks and to Renaissance Humanism, some of them based on the expansive ideas of public service which began to dominate the state universities of the United States at the turn of the century, and some of them representing an infection of education with the shallow religion of acquisitive or commercial enterprise.

There is a natural tendency on the part of teachers and educators to make their plans and projects fit the needs of the times, and it was quite logical that the state universities, created by the people for the people, should turn their attention to the needs of the young to learn how to fit into the expanding economy of the United States. The question of a "philosophy of life" was not an urgent question in the lives of Americans of fifty or sixty years ago. That the American young had or would soon acquire the attitudes deemed appropriate for them was taken for granted. Their problems were practical, not philosophical.

But if teachers have a tendency to meet the needs of the times, institutions of education have a tendency to resist those needs. Mr. Hutchins' illustration of the dropping of the course in Contemporary Civilization at Columbia University is a case in point. The problem of the modern educational institution in the West is the problem of aimlessness, and any honest investigation of contemporary civilization could be expected to expose this problem, which is also the besetting evil of our society. Columbia is apparently resolved to avoid any such embarrassment. To acknowledge the aimlessness and organized confusion of modern education would be tantamount to admitting that our civilization and our schools have no coherent aims or philosophy of life. Our public institutions are not prepared to make this admission.

In other words, the present historical development of the West is against the kind of discovery and inventive educational program that Gandhi devised. Gandhi, genius that he was, had at least the cooperation of history in that he worked in a revolutionary situation on the eve of a great political change—a change which he was a major force in bringing about—and he had poverty, hunger, and ignorance as collaborators. The advantage that the Gandhian movement in education will enjoy, as the years go by in India, is that it is a going concern, a continuing moral identity that will persist throughout the process of the industrialization of India. Even while the Indian people take on from the West many of the assumptions about Progress and the Good Life that have so confused and debilitated social and cultural life in the United States, there will be this *other way* of thinking about life and education on the Indian scene. Modern American civilization came to its maturity virtually without any such leavening influence.

If American educators were to try to copy the forms of the Gandhian idea—that is, the idea of participating in the economic processes of the community—they would do with renewed fervor exactly what they are doing already, to Mr. Hutchins' dismay. The young would have to be properly indoctrinated with the ideology of modern corporate enterprise, the more promising students would be apprenticed to Madison Avenue, while the morally intelligent ones would be urged to control their self-contempt and to direct their energies to working "within the system."

Any such proposal is manifestly ridiculous. We too have, or ought to have, a revolutionary situation, but the British, alas, left our shores something less than two hundred years ago, and hunger, as Barry Goldwater tells us with boyish pride, is also a thing of the distant past. We need to revolt, but against what? Some people tell us—often visiting friends from India—that we ought to revolt against our vulgar materialism. No doubt there is truth in this counsel, but this is a country where Henry Fords and Henry J. Kaisers get born quite regularly, and it seems naive and moralistic twaddle to condemn such men and their achievements as "materialistic." The evil of materialism is not in matter, nor is it in technology, which is skill in the use of matter. Materialism comes from ends, not means; and when you have efficient means, such as the means American inventors and technicians devise, you get more of the signs of materialism, and more quickly, that's all.

There are schools and colleges in the United States where the boys help to build classrooms and the girls sew curtains and work in the kitchen; some of these schools work pretty well and some of them don't; the trouble is that such experimental schools seem a bit odd when they are surrounded by the lush plenty of the domestic economy of the United States. In India, you plant, irrigate, harvest and prepare food or you don't eat. This is basic education and basic living as well.

A rural setting is a great place for living the natural life and getting an education. Any truly pared-down situation makes for effective education, with teachers and students learning together. The fortunate part of poverty is that you are able to understand your hungers and needs and can work to satisfy them in a constructive way.

The hungers and needs of the people of an advanced technological society may be just as acute, but they are much more difficult to understand. The body can go on living, it can even be fed to satiety, while the mind sickens or starves. The social community can be rich in useless things and impoverished in experiences which feed the moral qualities of human beings. What would be the true equivalent of basic Gandhian education in a case like this?

Well, first of all, it would have in common with the Gandhian experiment a grass-roots origin and means of support. It would make no assumptions to the effect that it is either "right" or "natural" for education to be a function of the State. Possibly, in the society of the future, the State will be an outmoded institution, some day to become as extinct as the dinosaur or the dodo. Gandhian education for America would accept without examination no conventional idea of values or ends. It would recognize that education, in a society undergoing rapid transition, has no business in having anything but the most flexible and even transitory physical arrangements. It would recognize that continuity, for education as for culture, lies in a temper of the human spirit, and that unless this temper is communicated from one generation to another, it immediately dies.

Another conclusion about education under such circumstances is that its survival depends upon a high degree of self-consciousness. Past failures in education—education, that is, as an affair of the social community—have resulted from a loss of self-consciousness. Men have supposed that because they had a system going—because they were possessed of institutions established by men of vision—education would inevitably continue. In a stable society, there is some possibility of obtaining continuity from educational institutions, but in a time like the present, about all that you can expect from institutions is the preparation of bad habits and the suppression of original thinking. Institutions seldom survive radical change, but they always fight for survival.

One thing more: It is the peculiarity of a high degree of self-consciousness that it is unable to work with a readymade "philosophy of life." For truly self-conscious intelligence, *acceptance* of truth can have no other psychological meaning than *discovery* of truth. In the sort of education we need, there can be no second-hand goods or traditional philosophy. The working truths will have to be realized truths. That, at any rate, is the principle, the ideal, the dynamic that is sought and made the test of educational progress.

We have to learn to stand upon the surface of our technological society as the terrain given us on which to work, just as Gandhi stood upon the ancient soil and monsoon-swept land of India. Both are natural environments, but ours has more of a man-made element in it than there is, as yet, in the East.

REVIEW
ZEN IN WESTERN LITERATURE

OF the making of books on Zen there is apparently no end. Latest to reach this department is the Dutton paperback ($2.15), *Zen in English Literature and Oriental Classics*, by R. H. Blyth. We can hardly "review" this book with any confidence, since sound critical judgments would require an extensive background of scholarship, as well as more certainty than we possess concerning the "essence" of Zen. Mr. Blyth has collected thousands—literally thousands—of illustrations of the spirit of Zen in Western and Eastern literature, and he seems terribly sure of his judgments, both for and against a large number of well-known writers. But he has assembled a rich and varied fare in evidence of his contentions, as for example the following from Thomas Hobbes—

> Words are wise men's counters,—they do but reckon by them; but they are the money of fools.

So, with Hobbes' undeniable wisdom at hand, one may paraphrase Lao Tze and say that the Zen that may be argued about or contended for is not the real Zen.

This is not to suggest that the sudden influx of books, articles and papers on Zen, in contemporary Western literature, is not a good thing. Whatever else it is, Zen is a splendid antidote for complacency, and it has shaken the intellectual snobbery of traditional Western rationalism. Zen can hardly replace the role and function of rationalist thought, but it can and does create a healthy distrust of conceptual abstractions and what the Buddhists term the delusion of name and form. It also amounts to a direct attack on every form of rhetorical pretense and is especially good at puncturing miscellaneous vanities. It ridicules the pompous in literature and unmercifully mocks the man who expects someone else to explain to him the mysteries of existence.

Each book on Zen is a fresh experience to the reader, since the lore of Zen is almost entirely anecdotal. Here is a story repeated by Mr. Blyth:

> There is a story of two monks on a journey who came to a river with no bridge across it. As they were about to begin to ford it, a young woman came up. The first monk was just going to offer to carry her across, when the second said to her "Get on my back and I'll carry you over." She did so and parted from them gracefully on the other side. After the two monks had walked on for a few miles, the first monk unable to contain himself any longer, burst out, "What did you mean by carrying the girl across the river? You know monks are not allowed to have anything to do with women!" The other said with a smile, "You must be tired, carrying that girl all this way. I put her down as soon as we got to the other side of the river."

Dickens, Wordsworth, Shakespeare, and Blake seem to be Mr. Blyth's best sources for Zen in English literature. He mines them throughout the book, and with the effect that you slowly become aware of the subtlety of what he is seeking—the animation through words of the taste and feel of life itself. He seeks wholeheartedness in human beings—total, not ambivalent acts. It is as though he likes to watch men at work, wholly involved in their work, lost in it. This seems to illustrate, for Mr. Blyth, the meaning of Zen, or one of its meanings.

There is a sense in which this psychology of work, of doing, of being, is enormously instructive. Zen is probably the most thorough-going exploitation of the educational value of paradox in all human history. It has the magic of sudden insight, with a constant shifting of scenes from the temporal to the eternal, and back again, until one gets some kind of intuition that each is inhabited by the other, that each is the other, and yet is not. But what one longs for, yet seldom finds, in these books about Zen is the rich compassion and great-heartedness of the classical Buddhist tradition. Mr. Blyth speaks condescendingly of "ordinary" Buddhism. This may be justified; we have had little experience of modern sectarian Buddhist religion; but no one can read, say, Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia* without obtaining an entirely different impression of the meaning of Buddha's mission and labors.

It is as though the Zen experts are far too fascinated with their tricky psychological discoveries to be interested in saving the world from sorrow. Wanting to "save the world from sorrow" may be a grandiose objective for the likes of us, yet that is the longing which animated the Buddha, as it animated

Christ. It seems to us that the incarnation of a Buddha or a Christ represented a willingness to put up with, and even become subject to, for a while, the common garden variety of human delusions, in order to illustrate an ideal life *in the world*, not in a monastery. People are working out their salvation, suffering the results of ignorance, of greed and excessive appetites, and from time to time they need the example of the symbol life of a great soul. Zen may be all right for the tired sophisticates who have retired from the world, and who have a hermitage handy that is willing to support them, but meanwhile the great sweep of life goes on, and these clever people do little more than extract themselves from the main current.

This comment springs from repeated exposure to what seems the mood of the books on Zen. It is also conceivable, however, that one who finds liberation in the practice of this spiritual sort of *Judo* may find himself led on by his heart to more humane deeps. And lest it be supposed that Zen is tiresomely anti-intellectual, we may quote the following from Mr. Blyth:

> It is hard for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but it is also hard for a fool. Is it a coincidence that Christ and Buddha had extremely powerful and subtle intellects? Christ could quibble with the best of the Jewish Sophists, when necessary. And when we consider the case of Blake, himself, is it not a fact, that, despite his mysticism and his poetry and painting, his chief defect was, not being a genius or mad, but that he was a bit of a fool? To paint pictures which everyone can understand, and write poems which nobody can make head or tail out of without an answer book, argues lack of ordinary foresight. We do not find people like Inge or Shaw despising the reasoning faculty, because they have it. The essence of it is, of course, the power of comparison and the power of self-criticism. It is the scissors and pruning hook of the mind, without which no work of art, in its symmetric perfection, can be produced. . . . The intellect it is which compares our real and ideal actions, which tells us we are not happy when we suppose we are, which reminds us that our past painful experiences are our most valuable possessions, if only we know how to use them. . . .
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> To be ungrateful to your own intellect is just as bad as ingratitude to a benefactor. The only thing is, the intellect must not be divided from the energy of the personality and work in vacuo, or as a substitute for the activity of the person as a whole. But it is *the intellect which reminds us of this.* The intellect is sometimes spoken of as raising problems. It does nothing of the sort. Life raises the problems, disease, accident, violence without, greed, laziness, cruelty within, give us our daily, hourly examinations. We fail, and it is the intellect which tells us so, which points to the problems, sorts and arranges them, ticks off those we have successfully solved.
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> After giving the intellect its due we can now define its limitations. There are three ways in which the intellect overreaches itself.
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> 1. It usurps the function of religion in supposing it can understand life. The intellect can understand intellectual things; life can understand living things. But they cannot understand each other so long as they are apart. . . .
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> 2. It usurps the function of poetry when it replaces the imagination, the compassion, of the poet. . . .
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> 3. Last, the intellect is guilty of constructing dogmas, systems of philosophy, which imprison the mind, until it mopes like a monkey in a cage. . . . Freedom means freedom from error and superstition, freedom to be good. The more freedom the more truth, the more truth the more freedom,— this is the natural law everywhere demonstrated in the history of human thought. Thus the construction of dogmatic beliefs by the highest intellect reduces man to the same state of mental slavery as the crudest and most infantile superstition. The philosopher and the savage are just as distant from the truth. Nevertheless, . . . while there's intellect, there's hope. False and unfounded notions, impossible romantic illusions may be destroyed with the help of the very intellect which helped to create them. . . .

The foregoing seems uncommon sense, and if Mr. Blyth learned it from Zen, as seems likely, his readers may be grateful. When we spoke of not being able to review the book, we meant that we are often uncertain about the author's meaning and the validity of his judgments, not that reading it is not enjoyable. The book manifestly represents a lifetime of study and the author is quite successful in bringing together passages from cultures very distant in time and space, showing delicate insights possessed in common. This is alone an important contribution. Meanwhile, the influence of Zen has already added a new breath of life to literature and the arts, while its iconoclasm will certainly continue to break up barren stretches in Western intellectuality, preparing it for new seed.

COMMENTARY
GROUNDS FOR OPTIMISM

SOMETHING less than twenty years ago—during the early 1940's, when World War II was still going on—Jessie Wallace Hughan, one of the founders of the War Resisters League, wrote a pamphlet outlining the mechanisms of nonviolent defense of the United States against military invasion. We don't have it at hand, nor do we remember the title, but the pamphlet was a carefully thought-out piece which attempted to anticipate the complex circumstances which would attend non-violent defense of the nation.

At the time, as we recall, we read the pamphlet with wistful admiration. It was a brave *tour de force* of pacifist thinking. But the reader couldn't help but wonder who besides already convinced pacifists would take it seriously. And if some wild optimist had then predicted that by 1962 some of the leading thinkers of the United States would be evaluating precisely the methods of defense proposed by Dr. Hughan—well, it would have been hard not to laugh. But the optimist would have been right. Today, in journals such as *Conflict Resolution,* the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists,* the *Nation, Etc.,* and doubtless many other papers (the December number of *Mademoiselle,* for example, printed a fairly complete run-down on pacifist activities in the United States), you can come across serious studies of non-violent action practically by accident. A good illustration of this development is the paper by Jerome D. Frank in the November, 1961 issue of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists,* entitled "Atomic Arms and Pre-Atomic Man." Dr. Frank is professor of psychiatry at Johns Hopkins University and has written extensively on psychotherapy and group psychotherapy. Recently he has concerned himself with what might be called the psycho-dynamics of peace and war, with special attention to the possibilities of nonviolent action. The paper in the November *Bulletin* assembles some of the issues which confront a world which has nuclear forces at its disposal and concludes:

> The first step in solving a problem is to assume that it has a solution. If political and intellectual leaders continue to operate on the assumption that war cannot be eliminated, then it won't be, even if the assumption is wrong; and the end of the human adventure is in sight. The assumption that war can be abolished frees the imagination to try to achieve this goal. If it is wrong, humanity is no worse off than before, but if it proves to be right, mankind will be freed to achieve its full potentialities.

Dr. Frank's paper is filled with this sort of uncommon sense in relation to particular questions and problems of war and peace.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

"SELF-REGULATION" FOR CHILDREN

A CHAIN of interesting circumstances has brought us a copy of *The Free Family*, a book by Paul and Jean Ritter (Victor Gollancz, London, 1959). Previously a reader had suggested that we take note of this book, but attributed it to A. S. Neill. MANAS was corrected on this point by another reader at about the time we discovered that no library had knowledge of a Neill book with this title. Would that all mistakes were as rewarding, for still another reader sent us a copy of *The Free Family*. We may now say that some identification of this volume with the work of A. S. Neill is right and proper, since the authors credit Neill's conceptions of "self-regulation" as stirring them to write *The Free Family* about their experiences with their own children.

To begin with, let us quote the first three paragraphs of Chapter I:

> We assume that you who read this book agree that the behaviour of adults is decisively affected by their upbringing. We assume also that you agree that the adult-controlled world, our society, behaves in such a way today, as for hundreds of years, that a development towards something better is highly desirable. You are therefore on the look-out for ideas. But when you try to learn you face extraordinary difficulties.
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> Upbringing, like most of the really important fields of knowledge, is uncharted. In this field the bees from many bonnets buzz and sting. Amateurs and parents feel entitled to pronounce and contradict with certainty, and interpret their personal experiences to fit their various whimsical theories. Professionals too disagree, though possibly with greater profundity and less profanity. Everywhere attitudes conflict; not only, as might be expected, those expressed in the books of the experts, but, more disturbingly, those which impinge from your immediate environment and even from within your own self.
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> Therefore it should be of interest that we have corroborated, with our five children, that, left alone, the young *homo sapiens* will eat, drink, sleep, love, learn and play to an extent proper for him. From this we arrived at our attitude to education: self-regulation.

Aside from what appears to us a rather obscure discussion of some of Wilhelm Reich's most complicated theories, *The Free Family* is replete with relevant and challenging suggestions in respect to child-rearing. Since the Ritters are also long-time devotees of the Grantly Dick Reed approach to natural child-birth, we find a full discussion of the birth process in these terms, including a photograph of a Ritter birth in process. Most MANAS readers, however, are familiar with Read's work, so no championing of the virtues of "natural" child-bearing need be done here.

A perennial question concerning "self-regulation" in infant training arises when someone wants to know why children who are brought up in a completely permissive home so often become tyrannical themselves. The Ritters give this point thorough discussion. In the first place, they maintain, the doctrine of extreme permissiveness originates in the perspectives of psychoanalysis. It was Freud's view, the Ritters show, that the tendencies toward sex expression and toward aggression are inextricably interwoven. Since we culturally deplore aggression, there is then a sense in which the Freudian outlook is likely to be suspicious of the libido. The Ritters write:

> In spite of the theory of the libido, the psychoanalyst seems to forget that we start with a creative process which is modified according to our culture. The first thing for him has become conflict between love and hate, ambivalence. The result is the negative assumption that many things stem from conflict alone. When, however, we look at some of the conflicts thought basic and necessary, we see clearly how they could and can be avoided.
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> We know that, to give "freedom" to children and make it practicable, the adults in contact with them must have what was, and still is, an uncommon capacity for life, in a limping, lacking, lifeless society.

Although the authors of *The Free Family* make no pretense that self-regulation in the eating patterns of children presents no problems, they

have noted, as have other experimenters, some astounding things. In the chapter on "Food," they quote from a Penguin book, *Common Sense in the Nursery*, in which it is said that "a sensible apportionment for strawberries is to keep strictly to age; a one-year-old child may have one, a two-year-old two, a five-year-old five, and so on." However, the Ritters' daughter, Leonora, first of five children, at the age of two ate, on one occasion, more than a pound of strawberries at a single sitting, and at another time ploughed through an entire pound of tomatoes. Especially in regard to the strawberries, the parents were worried—after all it was their first child—but found no ill effects whatever "either short-term or long-term." Apparently the normal, healthy child can follow his instincts safely. The Ritters continue:

> On that occasion we positively stood by for ill-effects, but waited in vain.
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> "But fruit is all right," say many, when they listen defensively to the tale of self-regulation. And then one has to tell the gory story of how Erica bettered Leonora's record of eating unadulterated fat: almost a pound of margarine, out of her fist, quite neat, on top of that all the fat meat on the table, and finally spoonfuls of very fatty gravy. This sort of thing happens frequently and is far more difficult to watch than the consumption of large quantities of fruit! This hunger for fat occurred every winter in some of the children. It really seemed incredible that no harm should come to a child eating to such seeming excess. Yet it caused no harm whatsoever. It must have been needed and is no doubt partly responsible for their good health and lack of colds. (Maybe it is not very different in effect, if in taste, from cod liver oil taken regularly.)

The Free Family is full of references to the "emotional limp" of our culture, a weakness the authors feel that most parents have picked up. Here are some pithy passages:

> If you doubt the diagnosis of an "emotional limp," or find it hard to believe that this condition is common, ask yourself why the vast majority of people walk straight past a pram with a crying baby when a whining puppy dog would be surrounded by helpers in no time? Why, further, do people not realize that a crying baby is a baby in distress, but believe that the human young, alone among mammals, should have to cry solely for the good of his lungs, or his soul, or whatever? Ask again, why are people so naive as to believe that, because one scientist in search of data has observed and timed some special children and found them to be in discomfort a large part of the first three months of their lives, this discomfort should be unavoidable, inevitable and acceptable?
>
> Reason goes and chop-logic enters when the exasperated mother who is trying to convince you of the "spoiling the baby" theory, picks up the baby and so stops it crying. They shout triumphantly "See, he's just trying it on!" What "trying it on" means in a baby is difficult to fathom. But the obvious logic of the situation is that certainly he is trying to get the comfort he wants from those who naturally could and should give it to him. And, having got it, then of course he stops crying.
>
> We can't consider a baby crying for, and then satisfied by, food as a mischievous trickster who was "only trying it on." That the need for love should be regarded as less real, and that there should be thought to be something ulterior and wicked in the baby crying for it and stopping when satisfied, that indeed is very clear evidence of emotional limp and emotional deadness.

The last chapter of *The Free Family* sums up with what might be called the philosophical assumption on which the Ritters' experiments were undertaken:

> Discovered as a natural principle which applies to the upbringing of children, self-regulation, it must not be forgotten, applies to the behaviour of adults also. The intellect and powers of reasoning merely give the adult wider scope and the word wider meaning. Self-regulation, as the law of energy behaviour in the organism, applies to all the appetites, desires and moral implications of social behaviour, and we are not here concerned with an idealist utopia but with matters of fact, of feasible, attainable health for individuals and societies.

FRONTIERS

Positive Philosophy in Psychotherapy

A FEW issues of the quarterly, *Psychiatry,* pass without yielding material to MANAS—but very few. In *Psychiatry* for August, 1961, for example, are some paragraphs by Dr. Edith Weigert, in a paper entitled, "The Nature of Sympathy in the Art of Psychotherapy," which fit so well with the ideas of Carl Rogers that we shall quote the latter as an introduction to Dr. Weigert. The following refers to one of the "learnings" which Dr. Rogers considers of greatest significance:

> Somewhere here I want to bring in a learning which has been most rewarding, because it makes me feel so deeply akin to others. I can word it this way. *What is most personal is most general.* There have been times when in talking with students or staff, or in my writing, I have expressed myself in ways so personal that I have felt I was expressing an attitude which it was probable no one else could understand, because it was so uniquely my own. Two written examples of this are the Preface to *Client-Centered Therapy* (regarded as most unsuitable by the publishers) and an article on "Persons or Science." In these instances I have almost invariably found that the very feeling which has seemed to be most private, most personal, and hence most incomprehensible by others, has turned out to be an expression for which there is a resonance in many other people. It has led me to believe that what is most personal and unique in each one of us is probably the very element which would, if it were shared or expressed, speak most deeply to others. This has helped me to understand artists and poets as people who have dared to express the unique in themselves.
>
> There is one deep learning which is perhaps basic to all of the things I have said thus far. It has been forced upon me by more than twenty-five years of trying to be helpful to individuals in personal distress. It is simply this. *It has been my experience that persons have a basically positive direction.* In my deepest contacts with individuals in therapy, even those whose troubles are most disturbing, whose behavior has been most anti-social, whose feelings seem most abnormal, I find this to be true. When I can sensitively understand the feelings which they are expressing, when I am able to accept them as separate persons in their own right, then I find that they tend to move in certain directions. And what are these directions in which they tend to move? The words which I believe are most truly descriptive are words such as positive, constructive, moving toward self-actualization, growing toward maturity, growing toward socialization. I have come to feel that the more fully the individual is understood and accepted, the more he tends to drop the false fronts with which he has been meeting life, and the more he tends to move in a direction which is forward.

In the paper in *Psychiatry,* Dr. Weigert points out "empathy" and the positive word "sympathy" may be extremely significant in relation to the help gained by a patient from the therapist:

> The active sympathy of the psychotherapist, in differentiation from a passive empathy, is not merely a transference phenomenon; it is a part of this value-enhancing love, capable of envisioning the personality of the patient in his potential wholeness, even though this wholeness may at present be only adumbrated, obscured by a preponderance of destructive processes from which he seeks liberation. Freud used the word love with reserve, since it is so often misused to refer to sentimentality, but he expected that the patient freed from crippling transference would mature to receive and give love. Just as the word love has become misunderstood in more than one sense—a coin deteriorated by usage—the word sympathy also no longer has the ring of a spontaneous emotion. It carries connotations of hypocrisy, sentimentality, blind partiality, or sadomasochistic exploitation. The emotion of sympathy is so strongly suspect that the psychoanalyst has been instructed in his training to free himself from a prejudicial dependency on value systems, to be mirrorlike and directed only by rational intentions. Yet when his emotional attitude toward the patient genuinely transcends the reactions of transference and counter-transference, he gains the distance of genuine, spontaneous, respectful sympathy, dedicated to honest concern for the patient's welfare. But it seems to me that he can reach this point only if he gives up the illusion of artificial neutrality and becomes fully aware of his emotional reactions.

This is clearly a way of stating, in terms of the specific therapy situation, Dr. Roger's contention that "persons have a basically positive direction," which means, further, that the therapist and the patient may together become aware of an inner urge towards a higher and nobler life—in turn

necessitating a clarification of ethical values. If human existence can be seen in terms of a series of progressive awakenings, of transformations of the psyche, of repetitions of what Joseph Campbell calls "the cycle of the hero," there are endless spiral-like oscillations between group integration and "individuation." Dr. Weigert continues:

> Scheler has spoken of a rehabilitation of virtue in an era in which the striving for goodness, truth, and justice has frequently become suspect of hypocrisy and opportunistic adaptation, and traditional values have been debunked. Freud seldom mentioned his own high standards; he quoted Visher's famous words, "das Moralische versteht sich ja von selbst"—morality can be taken for granted. The longing for goodness, justice, and truth are seldom given weight and meaning as epiphenomena of instinctual drives. The superego, the internal guardian, incorporates the values of the family and the broader community. Every upheaval and change of values represents a loss of solidarity and mobilizes anxiety, since the security of traditional confirmation is shaken. The struggle between solidarity and individuation, dependence and independence, is inevitable, even for a person who has grown up in a harmonious family setting. It is the tragedy of man to lose his integration in a group ever again; it is his glory that he can regain a form of integration on each level of his life course.

From this point of view, human experience of suffering is neither to be regarded biblically, as retribution, nor as cause for cynicism and despair. What is important about suffering, regardless of its nature, is the opportunity it presents the afflicted individual to come to terms with it and to transcend what he recognizes as the temporary limitations it imposes. The ideal therapist becomes a participant in the "soul struggle" of his patient, and the awakening of sympathy may come to the patient, as well as emerge in his behalf.

Our closing quotation from Dr. Weigert seems particularly provocative and to apply to all human relationships, not only that of "patient" and "therapist":

> The patient and the therapist may reach in this struggle the frontiers of despair, as Leslie Farber has demonstrated. He described a turning point in treatment when true sympathy— he called it pity—awakens in the patient. In the course of treatment the patient encounters the therapist more realistically in the mutuality of enduring sympathetic cooperation. The patient recognizes that protesting against adversity, raging blindly against external obstacles and inner limitations, only increases his helplessness and anxiety and cannot achieve a magic transformation of destiny. The greatest achievements in the endurance of suffering are found among those who are committed and dedicated to goals beyond the limits of their egocentricity. Although the security and solidarity of primitive embeddedness are forever lost and the goals of unification remain only partially reachable, the ability to sympathize and to love lifts the person out of his loneliness and suffering under inner and outer limitations. The psychotherapist's sympathy that visualizes the patient's wholeness, despite his various states of confusion and despair, mobilizes his genuine emotions directed toward freedom to encounter also the tragic aspects of his destiny in the spirit of spontaneous responsiveness.