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FRAMEWORKS OF IDENTITY

A WIDELY noted characteristic of the present is the tendency on the part of many people to give expression to new ideas of human identity. Two causes, one might say, have been at work to produce this effect. The first is the increasingly inadequate framework of national identity. Traditional conceptions of the good which are based upon the order of nation-state are breaking down. A multiplicity of factors have taken away the savor of life according to the rules of the domestic order, while the security which the nation is supposed to provide against disturbances and intrusions from without can no longer be relied upon or taken for granted. The emotional response of people to what are called "national ideals" has become sluggish or labored; either this, or the response is a shrill, angry cry animated more by fear than by the dignity of man's hopes and aspirations.

The other cause at work in this trend is more mysterious. It presents itself in the work of artists and writers and in the religious and philosophical areas of human expression. It is as though the subjective sense of being has gained in strength and feeling of independent reality. The vocabulary of psychological values is increasingly a language of substantial communication. People understand one another without difficulty when they talk of the beinghood which does not depend upon political tradition or identity. This vocabulary borrows extensively from other areas—chiefly from the arts—in order to grow, mainly because Western civilization has no metaphysical vocabulary and remains justly skeptical of the theological vocabulary. The non-theological language of humanitarian ethics also makes its contribution, as for example in Dr. Schweitzer's expression, "Reverence for life." Probably the most over-worked word in contemporary speech is "creative," which rolls off the tongue as practically the only remaining important superlative in an account of human endeavor. Psychologists are having to invent terms to describe what they find to be the differentiating aspects of man's inner life. Dr. Maslow's "self-actualization" and "peak experience" are illustrations, and Viktor Frankl's categories of "psychic" and " noëtic " are further examples of the need to devise a new language of the "soul." Psychic and noëtic are of course not new words, but derive from ancient Greek psychology, *psyche* being the Greek word for soul, while noëtic is an inflection of *nous*, or mind—in Greek thought "an intelligent purposive principle controlling and ordering the world." Two books by Ira Progoff, *The Death and Rebirth of Psychology* and *Depth Psychology and Modern Man* (both Julian Press), provide extensive evidence of what may be called a new center of gravity in serious thought. Of the latter work, Harry Overstreet said in a New York *Times* book review: "This book reflects a major change that is taking place in modern thinking. We are discovering that there is something in the universe—and in ourselves—far more meaningful than conscious mind and measurable matter." One might add that this is another way of saying that the "conscious mind" is extending the scope of its awareness to include more of the stuff of subjective being or reality. For a wider survey of this general development, the reader may turn to the psychologists often referred to in these pages, including, in addition to those already mentioned, Erich Fromm, Karen Horney, Bruno Bettelheim, Jerome D. Frank, Clark Moustakas, and others.

It would be a mistake, however, to assume that the deepening consciousness of modern man is somehow a creation of psychologists. One finds it necessary to report on this change by quoting the work of specialists, simply because they observe and write down what they see, but the

change is elsewhere manifest—in the novel and literature generally; in various revolutions in the arts—which take place so rapidly that it is difficult to keep up with them—and in the kind of philosophy which results from socio-political disillusionment, as found in the writings of the Existentialists and in the work of a hard-headed political thinker like Dwight Macdonald.

No doubt a book and perhaps several books could be devoted to fortifying the generalizations with which we have begun. In a survey of this sort much space would have to be given to epoch-making works such as David Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd* and Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, which, more than anything else, are manifests of the increased self-consciousness of our time. People talk longingly of revolution and of their hope for the development of a new way of life for mankind. These books may contain more of the promise of change and illustrations of the dynamics of change than anything that has been published in the twentieth century. The ground of all change for the better is in the idea and sense of self, out of which meaning and purpose arise. Books which reveal this ground are the charts of human development.

The organized social community has a twofold purpose. It has both practical and transcendent ends. It orders the life of the individual in relation to the physical environment, helping him to cooperate with others in the support of their common material existence. The other function of the community is to provide a scheme of graded meanings which will accommodate the search for truth and spiritual fulfillment by the members of the community. The differences among people, often very great, are met by various devices of social organization. In the old, hierarchical societies of the past, these differences are accounted for by the gradations of caste, which are supposed to approximate the various levels of human nature. From the ancient theocratic society of ancient India, based on the laws of Manu, to the class structure of the Elizabethan world view, all the social orders of the past (with hardly any exceptions) have been intended to provide a proper setting for the self-realization of the individual, according to the pattern of revealed religion. The institutions of theocratic society shaped the common life and announced the status and degree of those who pursued their differentiated roles in the society. The individual who conformed to these patterns had no difficulty in recognizing his identity in relation to others. He was defined by his place in society, and this place was but the earthly symbol of the more majestic relationships of the spirit.

Where did these patterns come from? The familiar explanation is that they had a divine origin. More acceptable, these days, is the account given by Plutarch of the way in which Numa modelled the institutions of the early Romans, after accepting their invitation to rule over them. He began by dismissing the personal bodyguard of three hundred men made traditional by Romulus, explaining that "he would not distrust those who put confidence in him; nor rule over a people that distrusted him." Plutarch continues:

> When Numa had, by such measures, won the favor and affection of the people, he set himself without delay, to the task of bringing the hard and iron Roman temper to somewhat more of gentleness and equity. Plato's expression of a city in high fever was never more applicable than to Rome at that time; in its origin formed by daring and warlike spirits, whom bold and desperate adventure brought thither from every quarter, it had found in perpetual wars and incursions upon its neighbors its after sustenance and means of growth, and in conflict with danger the source of new strength; like piles, which the blows of the hammer serve to fix into the ground. Wherefore Numa, judging it no slight undertaking to mollify and bend to peace the presumptuous and stubborn spirits of these people, began to operate upon them with the sanctions of religion. He sacrificed often and used processions and religious dances, in which most commonly he officiated in person; by such combinations of solemnity with refined and humanizing pleasures, seeking to win over and mitigate their fiery and warlike tempers. At times,

> also, he filled their imaginations with religious terrors, professing that strange apparitions had been seen, and dreadful voices heard, thus subduing and humbling their minds by a sense of supernatural fears.

It was not until the eighteenth century that such prescriptions and endowments lost their power over the minds of the people. Voltaire, Baron D'Holbach, Lamettrie, and in America men like Thomas Paine and Ethan Allen declared the basis of the new social order to come. It was rationalist and humanitarian, replacing the theological sanction of the state with the impersonal principles of political philosophy. The political revolution of the eighteenth century took place at approximately the same time as the scientific revolution; or, at any rate, it took its major premises from the self-reliant attitudes of the new scientific philosophy, which had spread from Europe to the new world and given the Deism and even the agnosticism of the Founding Fathers of the United States a firm foundation.

Now began a new cycle of civilization, which was to reach its climax in the linking of state power with the gods of technology instead of the ministers of theology.

Adopting another perspective, we may say that Western man has three times in his history found himself alienated from the form of his social community, and has three times sought reform by internalizing his sense of the moral order, rejecting the authority of the state, and seeking his sense of identity in the stuff of his own being. The first dramatically self-conscious break came with the philosophizing genius of Plato. The death of Socrates at the hands of the Athenians is the climax of political failure which gives Plato his lead. Werner Jaeger (in his *Aristotle)* draws the following conclusions concerning Plato's intentions, in the *Crito* and other dialogues:

> That dialogue [the *Crito*] shows the tragic conflict of the fourth century sharpened into conscious absurdity; the state is now such that according to its laws the justest and purest in the Greek nation must drink the hemlock. The death of Socrates is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole state, not merely of the contemporary office-holders. In the *Gorgias* Plato measures the Periclean state and its weaker successors by the standard of the radical moral law, and arrives at an unconditional condemnation of the historical state. When he goes on in the *Republic* to sacrifice the life of the individual completely to the state, with a one-sided strictness intolerable to the natural feelings of his century, his justification lies in the changed spirit of his new state. The sun that shines in it is the Idea of the Good, which illuminates its darkest corners. Thus the subordination of all individuals to it, the reconversion of emancipated persons into true "citizens," is after all only another way of expressing the historical fact that morality has finally separated itself from politics and from the laws or customs of the historical state; and that henceforth the independent conscience of the individual is the supreme court even for public questions. There had been conflicts of this sort before, what is new is the proclamation of permanent conflict. Plato's demand that philosophers shall be kings, which he maintained unabated right to the end, means that the state is to be rendered ethical through and through. It shows that the persons who stood highest in the intellectual scale had already abandoned the actual ship of state, for a state like Plato's could not have come alive in his own time, and perhaps not at any time.

It may be argued that Plato, with great common sense and a grasp of the potentialities of the people of his time, deliberately placed this view in the form of a political allegory, knowing that the standards for personal behavior he had set in the *Republic* were beyond the great majority. The *Repub1ic* might be thought of as Plato's *Bhagavad-Gita,* in the sense that while it seems to concern politics, it amounts to the rejection of politics, while the *Gita,* set in the midst of a battlefield, and if taken literally is an urgent demand for righteous war, nonetheless became the manual of the pacifist Gandhi. Great books are subject to several readings, and Jaeger seems to have seen in the *Republic* a transition from political philosophy to advocacy of the disciplined rule of private conscience. Paul Friedlander, a Plato scholar who has taught at the University of California, offered a similar reading, suggesting that the three classes of society in Plato's ideal

Republic were intended to represent three corresponding levels of human nature, making the book really a treatise on moral psychology which displays the factors each individual must learn to relate and govern within himself.

Some twenty-one hundred years later, the political states of the West again showed themselves to be irredeemably bad, and this time there was a qualified success in the design of a social order which gave individual judgment and conscience the authority previously reserved for rulers. In a democracy, every man, agreeably to Hellenic definition, is king. But while the common man was willing enough to be king, he was not yet ready for the strenuous responsibility of also becoming a philosopher.

The new states born of the eighteenth century willingly threw out theology as the authority for the social order and the meaning of human identity, but without philosophy, without the principles of self-restraint and the pursuit of the Good which Plato had recommended, the acquisitive instincts eventually gained full play, and after a century or so the intellectual vacuum left by the departure of religion and the default of philosophy was filled by *Ideology*, which is a political sort of religion.

This brings us more or less up to date. It is again a question of whether, as Aristotle proposed, the ordinary citizen is simply a product of the reigning political principles, a being whose membership in the state exhausts his nature. Since the eighteenth century, we have assured ourselves of another view of man, and boasted of the distinction of having established a political system which is prohibited from infringing upon the transcendent ends of our real identity. What we claim may be true in principle, but the common-man-king of our modern democracy, neglecting philosophy, has substituted for it an unholy mixture of technology, acquisitiveness, and ideological irresponsibility (which he calls "freedom"), and has produced a strangely contradictory pseudo-identity or image of the stuff of the self for the mass man. "The ultimate disease of our time is valuelessness." (A. H. Maslow.) "Our industrialized society has succeeded in building beauty in impersonal situations, . . . but has failed not only miserably but frighteningly in situations involving people. . . . our society does have a clear symbol as significant in this century as pyramids, Parthenon, and cathedrals were in past centuries. . . . Our symbol . . . . is junk." (George Nelson.) "We produce things that act like men and men that act like things." (Erich Fromm.) "Members of our culture (and likewise the members of cultures in other highly technological nations, including Russia) tend to *project* the 'non-human' part of the self and perceive it as a non-human thing which threatens the conscious self with destruction; it is too threatening to let oneself recognize the extent to which the non-human environment has, as it were, already invaded and become *part of* one's own personality." (Harold F. Searles.)

The problem, now, is to find a conception of the self which will enable us to shake off these clinging costumes of pretense, these masks of false identity, and to live like authentic human beings. But as we make attempts in this direction, we find, to our horror, that the individual freedoms which the fascists and the communists used to sneer at as "luxuries" enjoyed by a prosperous society are now regarded in the same way by a growing proportion of our countrymen. In these days of emergency and desperation, political necessity invades more and larger areas of one's private life. There is increasing pressure to "worship" the correct God, to practice the petty conventions which indicate submission to more serious conformities, and to avoid carrying any form of rational analysis to its logical conclusion, especially in the area of the nation's foreign policy and in the theory and practice of national defense. To be honest and popular, today, it is necessary to be honest but stupid, unable to recognize the simplest relationships of cause and effect. (We speak, of course, of communications at the level of the mass media. There are numerous small

publics for whom integrity and intellectual and moral penetration are the only criterion of human distinction; it is in these areas that one may see practically all the signs of hope for the future. And the fact that all worthy futures are designed by the vision and brought into being by the courage and persistence of small minorities is what makes an analysis of this sort worth pursuing.)

We can extract no more juice from Plato's allegory of the Republic. Practically every political version of what he suggested has been tried and found wanting. It is now necessary to give Werner Jaeger's reading of the *Republic* a chance—to take, as he might put it, our Plato straight. Nor can we any longer leave the conception of our non-political identity to the shallow slogans of fourth of July speakers, who refer to our "spiritual values" as though they were some kind of curious heirlooms you keep up in the attic—symbolic of something you're supposed to be proud of, but without any practical use. Actually, what has happened is that our faith in the principles of the eighteenth-century revolution is being tested for its depth and sincerity. We now have to find out whether we really identify with those principles, as an expression of the nature of man, or with something, or some *things*, of a very different sort.

Unlike life in past ages, we no longer have our social institutions to help us. These institutions are largely turned against us as spiritual beings. Nor have we any metaphysical doctrines about the nature of our being to give direction to our feelings. By studying the ancients, as so many people are doing, we may get hold of some untheologized lines of suggestion that will add a dimension to our inward sense of being, but it seems likely that we will never again be able to substitute transmitted beliefs, however elevating, for the fire of personal conviction.

So, today, we approach the high noon of our third alienation from the prevailing form of the social community. The first alienation came with the decline of Greek civilization and found its expression in Plato and later in the writings of the Stoic philosophers. The second came in the eighteenth century, bringing a new, positive formulation of human identity and a conception of the social community that was intended to shield, foster, and enlarge the "rights of man," for that was how we put it in those days. And now we need another formulation—one so rich in its conception of being and value that it will support a social order that has no place for war or the tools of war, since it is designed by and for men who refuse to think of themselves as making war. War, after all, is a symbol of our extremity and alienation, so it is natural to speak of a view of self and reality in which war can play no part. But this is surely the least of the qualities of the self that we seek. Men will not abandon war simply because it is bad. Human beings have always been willing to risk evil to gain their ends. Only when men fix upon ends for which war is plainly irrelevant will this worst of our ugly institutions die away.

REVIEW
ODYSSEY BY BUS—ORDEAL BY FLAME

JAMES PECK'S *Freedom Ride,* just published by Simon and Schuster, is an important reference book for anyone interested in the campaign for desegregation by "non-violent direct-actionists." It is also the history of a determined and dedicated group of men from the time of an earlier "Freedom Ride" which made fewer headlines. The first ride took place in 1947, and was preceded by training of the participants in non-violent techniques. The business of breaking the barriers of segregation, as everyone knows, is a slow one, and the first southern penetration by disciplined teams combining Negroes and whites did not go far into the *deep* South. Fourteen years later a similar group, composed largely of pacifists, took the struggle all the way. When Mr. Peck was interviewed in a Birmingham hospital, after having been beaten nearly to death by a mob, he was able to say that his fifty-three stitches in the head were worth it—because he knew that the "Freedom Ride" team was winning decisive battles.

The introduction to *Freedom Ride* by Lillian Smith is a memorable tribute to Mr. Peck and his growing number of associates:

> I have been deeply stirred [Miss Smith writes] by the sit-ins and the Freedom Rides. Here, I felt, was not another small answer but a new way of asking the old great questions. Segregation, as set up in the South, has been for a long time an elaborate ritual which all of us, white and black, have been compelled to observe, however dissenting might be our feelings and values, however sharp our inner protests. So—what do these young students do? Intuitively, with perhaps little grasp of the symbolism, they set up a new way of acting, the beginnings of a new ritual: one of human acceptance, of—*not* freedom (that word is too big)—but *free movement in the public places of the earth.* And with direct action, they bring the human being's most powerful defense: compassion, understanding, forgiveness, nonviolence. How can you fight a compassionate man? You can kill him, sure, but you never come in physical contact with his spirit. It is there, you feel it, but you cannot touch it, and you know this spirit will survive you and him. The rioters feel this and are bewildered and shaken; they feel they are fighting ghosts, they are haunted by something stronger than they. And they will continue to be haunted by these ghosts who will, in an inexplicable way, become the Holy Ghost. And these rioters, these killers, these policemen and officials will finally begin to feel they are in the presence of something numinous which they cannot reduce to small answers.
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> This is the test, the test of anything we mortals do or think or create: can it be reduced to small answers? If it can be then it isn't worth much; it holds only fleeting value.
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> I think the Freedom Riders—not all of them, for some are mediocre in spirit or perhaps just bewildered and confused—are, themselves, experiencing a new and terrible strength. They are, sometimes—at least, it seems so from the quiet talks I have had with them—wrestling, like Jacob, with the angel. They are discovering that suffering does have redemptive power. They have in a sense memorized that phrase, but when the test comes, and they survive it, mauled and beaten and slashed but without hate and often without fear, it does something tremendous to them.

Mr. Peck began to write the account of the courage-packed odyssey shortly after his own injuries had been sustained and a Greyhound bus burned. He writes without rancor, but with unbending opposition to the admonitions by some desegregationists that a "cooling-off period" is now in order:

In giving her friends her own impressions of "the New Negro," my wife says, "They are the young people who have decided they cannot accept the kind of humiliation forced on their families for generations. They are intelligent and they have dignity. The cause for which they are working is precious to them because it is an acutely personal one. How can there be a cooling off period for them?"

There can be no cooling off period in the struggle for equal rights, either in the South where extreme segregation prevails, or in the rest of the country where there is housing segregation resulting in school segregation, and where there is employment discrimination in all but menial jobs.

The courage of the Freedom Riders must certainly be considered what Lillian Smith calls "part of a new faith." She attempts, incidentally, to place the whole non-violent desegregation campaign of the South in the broadest of hopeful perspectives:

> I think we are, once more, completing a spiral curve: the absurd and naive skepticism, the disbelief of the nineteenth century and much of the twentieth is turning into a new faith a faith frankly based on the uncertainties, frankly grounded on the knowledge that while more and more can be proved by science, the questioners always arrive at an invisible line where proof ends. Heisenberg says it in brilliant words that scientists can respect; the sit-in students, the Freedom Riders, are saying it in a simpler, more earthy way. They are acting this out: human beings are on this earth for an unknown purpose; hence every one is important and in a sense holy, for there is something we call "human relations" which must be created and re-created again and again in new patterns, and who knows which of the three billion earth children is needed for a special point in the intricate design?
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> Their acts are saying this: dehumanization will cease only when we learn to believe that we have no inalienable right to a proof or an answer; the time has come when we must acknowledge that small answers won't do; the North's and the South's and the world's small answers must be brushed away so that the questions, Who am I? What is death? Who is God? can be heard again. We are men; and as men we must declare our right to move freely in our search for meaning; we have a God-given right to be and to become. Sitting at lunch counters, riding the buses are symbolic rights. They are small, but we need to claim them, not because they are enough or because we really want them, but because an unclaimed human right bars a man in his search for significance.
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> So, this story of how it all happened is important; the vivid, detailed account of how a few people, accidentally or spontaneously, found the symbols that speak to everybody: the need to eat, the need to move—how they went at it, what they endured, how they changed within themselves.

When Peck began the stormy Freedom Ride of 1961, his fellow-travelers were an oddly assorted group, many of whom might never have-met under other circumstances. Albert Bigelow, who did his own pioneering in nonviolent protest action in the Pacific aboard the *Golden Rule* is "a gray-haired ex-naval commander"; John Lewis, Negro, is a muscular divinity student; Albert Person served a sixteen-day jail sentence during the sit-in protests at Atlanta lunch counters. These newly acquainted comrades found common ground in the movement Lillian Smith describes. During the early part of their travels, until they reached the deep South, they noted a tremendous contrast between the bus segregation system as it existed in 1947 and in the present. Psychologically, as well as actually, desegregation *had* taken place in these regions. Negroes unselfconsciously sat by whites and vice versa. The program planned in 1946 by George Hauser and Bayard Rustin had won adherents and had been fused into an expression of patient but determined discipline by willingly-undertaken trips to prison and by ceaseless challenge of the barriers to racial equality. It is now becoming evident that the brutal violence of the segregationists who attacked Freedom busses cannot be sustained and is now in uneasy retreat.

COMMENTARY
THE GREAT QUESTIONS

THE quotations from Lillian Smith's introduction to Jim Peck's book (see Review) illustrate with remarkable clarity some of the points made by Harry Zitzler in his letter in the March 29 MANAS. Miss Smith is able to "read" the action of the Freedom Riders as one might interpret a runic text. To her, what they have done, and are doing, says: ". . . human beings are on this earth for an unknown purpose; hence everyone is important and in a sense holy. . . . " Their acts are saying: ". . . the time has come when . . . the world's small answers must be brushed away so that the questions, Who am I? What is death? Who is God? can be heard again. We are men, and as men we must declare our right to move freely in our search for meaning. . . . "

It isn't, as Miss Smith notes, that it is so terribly important to be able to eat at a particular lunch counter or to ride in any vacant seat on a bus. On a literal scale, these are but small rights, but as *symbolic* rights "they speak to everybody: the need to eat, the need to move."

If the white, Anglo-Saxon community can't understand this, it can't understand anything of importance and its members deserve to suffer comparable confinements and to suppress their rage from fear until they are able to grasp the validity, *in principle*, of Miss Smith's proposition: These symbolic rights "are small, but we need to claim them, not because they are enough or because we really want them, but because an unclaimed human right bars a man in his search for significance."

The white, Anglo-Saxon community has not even the shadow of a right to dispute this proposition.

We are bound to admit that, under Miss Smith's interpretation, the Freedom Riders may be seen as contributors to a new framework of identity—of "a new faith, a faith frankly based on the uncertainties." This is impressive nonverbal instruction in the dignity of man. It is well to add, however, that while the Riders made the word flesh, Miss Smith turned this flesh back into the Word, with a resulting illumination we would not wish to be without.

NEW CNVA BULLETIN

In response to the nationwide wave of peace demonstrations and other activities, the Committee for Non-Violent Action has decided to issue a monthly bulletin (it may come out more frequently) to provide coverage of the various peace "fronts" and to give advance information on projects being planned. The second issue is dated March 16 and contains a full report on the March 3 rally in Times Square, New York, in which some five thousand persons jammed the congested streets at the heart of the largest city in the United States. Instances of police brutality are reported and these are evaluated editorially by Bradford Lyttle, national secretary of CNVA.

The March 16 *CNVA Bulletin* is an eight-page tabloid newspaper. Those wishing to receive the *Bulletin* as often as it comes out are invited to send at least a dollar for a year's issues to CNVA, 158 Grand Street, New York 13.

In this issue of the *Bulletin* are also accounts of sit-down demonstrations in front of AEC offices in New York and Berkeley, of arrests of persons attempting to see the President in the White House, and of new peace walks being planned in various parts of the country. There is an article by A. J. Muste on projected Peace Brigade help to an African demonstration in the form of a walk from Tanganyika into Northern Rhodesia, in non-violent protest against the white supremacy implications of the proposed Rhodesian Federation of Sir Roy Welensky. There is an "I am with you" statement by Linus Pauling to the British demonstrators in Trafalgar Square, and notice of the possibility of another "Golden-Rule"-type voyage to protest the Christmas Island cycle of nuclear tests.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
THE INDIVIDUAL YOUTH AND RELIGION

OUR lengthy quotation last week from Walter Van Tilberg Clark's *The Watchful Gods* portrayed with rare perceptiveness the predicament of youth in a traditional Christian culture—a puzzling suspension between the ideal of saintliness provided by the story of Jesus and the awesome, anthropomorphic Jehovah. Some of the drama of the Old Testament certainly reaches the psyche of a boy in the first pangs of growth toward maturity, because he knows and feels violence many times. If left uninterrupted, he may move to some subconscious symbol-making suggestive of the Greek pantheon, wherein the many gods were not expected to be consistent or in harmony. One thing is sure, there is a great lack in the appeal of New Testament religion to active youths. While purity and greatness can be appreciated and looked up to, there is no scope for the spirit of vigorous, sometimes bumbling, adventure.

How can religion be made "adventurous"? This is a great question, one of the most important, perhaps, for parents to wonder about. As we have often noted, so-called "primitive" societies met this need by progressive initiatory ceremonies in the wake of tangible daring accomplishment—ceremonies which Joseph Campbell calls "rites of passage."

Simply to criticize traditional religion is of little value, and this is why combative atheism has seldom been a markedly constructive force. But, viewed in a psychological light, an examination of the elements of a traditional religion which has failed is also an examination of the weaknesses in our culture and in our collective attitudes. A paragraph from an article, "The Study of Religious Experience in Children," translated from the Swedish and appearing in *Religious Education* for May, 1959, is suggestive on this point. The writer, Gate Klingberg, says:

> In the older psychology of religion, the religious experience of the child was usually considered in relation to the question of the origin of religion itself—a question of great interest to scholars with an evolutionistic orientation. The chief hypothesis involved was that the child's religion originated in (1) the need to have a creator as explanation for the existence of the world, (2) experiences of fear, encounters with the demonic and the holy, (3) the need for security through a projection of the father and mother image.

It is apparent that peoples of the world have long been at each other's throats because of fear, or because of what, philosophically, must be called an unbalanced preoccupation with "security." From the crusades to Hitler, and to the feverish preparation and testing of atom bombs in our time, we see the same psychic drives being expressed. Any ideology, whether religious or political, which emphasizes the motivations which arise from fear or from the desire for security at any cost gives rise to a violent and unreasoning partisanship. And it is violent partisanship which holds the mind in bondage and makes *adventures* of the mind nearly impossible.

As to the need "to have a creator as explanation for the existence of the world," we may come to see the need for more complete incarnation of the highest motivations in science. Many liberal Christians realize this, and we note in an article by Dorothy Spoerl in the *Unitarian Register* (Mid-Summer, 1961) an attempt to identify the questing spirit of religion with the questing spirit of science. She writes:

> Science can be taught in many ways, and far too often our children emerge with the view that science has the ultimate answers. Seldom in our schools does a teacher go on from the facts to the awe and wonder which those facts hold.
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> Our religious education is religious if it can teach science as a method, as a way of attacking a problem, a means of searching answers to the unknown. It becomes successful if we are helping children to face the unknown with curiosity rather than fear and to thrill to the struggle of the scientist.

Mrs. Spoerl asks: "Is Our Religious Education Religious?" Her answer is an attempt to

distill essential ethical and psychic values from tradition. She writes:

> Our religious education becomes religious if we are teaching our children that to be different is not to be wrong. There is a growing authoritarianism in our society, in the demands of those who would have education be more "basic," in the attempts of those who would revitalize the House Un-American Activities Committee, in the over-organized recreation and extracurricular activities of our children.
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> Our religious education is religious when it is the quiet searching together of teacher and children, more in the sense of the students of Abelard than in that of the test-happy students struggling for college entrance requirements. To learn the attitudes of a Jesus, a Gandhi, a Schweitzer is to begin to believe that all life is sacred.

Pertinent to the findings of the Loukes report on *Teenage Religion* in Great Britain, there are other evidences of a far-reaching shift among enlightened people, away from vestiges of authoritarian concepts in religious thought. The Loukes report was stimulated by such considerations as these:

> By fourteen we may expect children—even less able children—to be capable of "autonomy" in religious ideas. They are ready to take hold of them in their own way, provided that they see their point. The problem then is not "Are they ready for an adult presentation of religion?" but "Has an adult religion any point for a fourteen-year-old? Is his experience the kind of experience on which religious ideas throw light?"

There are many indications that thoughtful teenagers are seeking "autonomy"—even though they have no image of greatness in religion before them nor any clearly defined goals. Characteristic replies to queries put by Mr. Loukes in his survey of religious opinion on the subject of life after death are these:

> There is no proof that there is a heaven—it is a belief of people who think when they die their souls and minds go there. Scientists today are experimenting on people who can tell of their experiences of a few hundred years ago. In other words, they have either come back to earth or not left it. I will only believe there is a heaven if the people in the experiments talk about having been there or when I go there myself.
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> . . .
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> Heaven is not like a city or such but something abstract like happiness, its something which you look forward to when you die somewhere where worry strain or heartbreak etc. doesn't exist. I think heaven is not a place above the clouds that's for children to believe in. I believe heaven is in the person. Heaven is like God you cannot see it or touch it but it is there.
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> . . .
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> I think that heaven is in the heart, not in the clouds or any other place because that is where the goodness will come from.
>
> . . .
>
> Oh! I believe that heaven is all around you, and not way up in the clouds. I also believe that it is part of the mind.
>
> . . .
>
> I think when I die I will come back as someone else and carry on like that. I don't believe in heaven and hell because millions of people are dying every day, and there wouldn't be enough room for us all, we would be meeting stone age men and so on.
>
> . . .
>
> I don't believe in heaven. I think people just die and are born again (re-incarnated).
>
> I don't think there is a heaven. Nobody's been there and come back so nobody knows. When you die you come into the world as someone else.

What is particularly interesting about the foregoing remarks—apparently rather surprising to Mr. Loukes—is that they seem to be groping in the direction of ancient philosophy. Our own interest in philosophy which embodies the idea of palingenesis, or rebirth, springs from the fact that such speculation allows a perspective which answers "the call to adventure," while still suggesting a reasonable basis for growth in ethical awareness. Here, also, is a way of coming to terms with *all* religious traditions which have pictured a life which transcends, in several dimensions and perhaps in time, physical existence. In this realm of ideas, W. Macneile Dixon continues to be a valuable source. Take,

for example, the following from *The Human Situation:*

> In respect of our true natures, of what in truth we are and are capable of becoming, to what heights in knowledge, wisdom, power, the soul can climb, of all this science and philosophy have so far hardly yet spoken. Nor can any boundary be set, any "Thus far and no farther" to the expansion of the mind. In our present life we have acquired at the most the alphabet of this knowledge; and as for the universe, of the modes of existence and happiness of which it permits, of its possibilities as an abode for progressive beings like ourselves, we know less than nothing, and no single life could teach us what they may be. Nor can any reason be advanced why we should not in the end become its masters, mould it to our hearts' desires, and make of it a home, the natural and happy estate of the immortal spirits to whom it indefeasibly belongs.
>
> According to Plato's theory of reminiscence, our present knowledge is a recollection of what was learnt or known by the soul in a previous state. You will say, it has no knowledge of its previous lives. But what man remembers every day of his life? And lost memories, as the psychologists will tell you, are recoverable. For the memory appears to be a palimpsest, from which nothing is ever obliterated. If we have forgotten most days and incidents of our present lives it is natural that memories of previous lives should fail us. Yet from infancy every forgotten day and hour has added to our experiences, to our growth and capacity. All that a child was and did, though unremembered, is still a part of him and is knit up into his present nature. Every day and hour had its value and made its contribution to the mind and soul. So it may be with former lives, each of them but a day in our past history. The universe is wide, and life here or elsewhere might on this view be regarded as a self-prescription, a venture willed by the soul for some end and through some prompting of its own, to enlarge its experience, learn more of the universe, recover lost friends, or resume a task begun but not fulfilled. The time has not come to close any of the avenues of thought into the mysteries surrounding us.

FRONTIERS

Beeville—New Zealand Community

[This article is a brief account of a cooperative community formed in New Zealand thirty years ago. Beeville has the distinction of being a successful community which has held together without the glue of dogmatic religious belief. As readers of the literature on communities of the past will know, this is a considerable achievement. For those who wish to pursue a study of attempts at community living, Charles Nordhoff's *Communistic Societies in the United States* (London: John Murray, 1875) is still the best book to begin with. V. F. Calverton's *Where Angels Dared to Tread* (Bobbs-Merrill, 1941) is another useful volume, while Robertson's *A Southwestern Utopia* (Ward Ritchie Press, Los Angeles, 1947) is a little-known book which tells the fascinating story of a community founded late in the nineteenth century on the west coast of Mexico. Watson Thomson's study of Henri Lasserre, *Pioneer in Community* (Ryerson Press, Toronto, 1949), is a work invaluable for understanding the problems encountered by intentional communities. Then, for an exciting survey of the accomplishments of the French Communities of Work, Claire Hutchet Bishop's *All Things Common* (Harper, 1950) should be included as a recent volume. Information on present-day communities may be had by writing to the Fellowship of Intentional Communities, care of Arthur Morgan, Yellow Springs, Ohio.]

WE here at Beeville are getting MANAS regularly, and this letter is in answer to your letter saying that you would be glad to send MANAS free and asking for a description of Beeville Community.

This information is intended as a brief summary of some significant facts about Beeville. We welcome further inquiry from any one interested in closer and more fully-informed acquaintance with the Community.

As we see it, we are a group of some thirty people (less at times, other times more) who voluntarily share our economic existence together on a pooled basis. Members draw no wages nor receive any arbitrary allocations. Depending on common understanding in cooperative living, all draw on a common purse, purchasing what is considered necessary with whatever degree of sound judgement each of us has, individually or as a group. Seeing the miseries of a competitive and exploitative existence predominating in our present day world, we are attempting to be free and flexible in meeting individual and group needs. Learning to distinguish between needs and the enslavement of mere wants or fancies has been and is the basic criterion of community living.

Beeville is open to anyone who is concerned with living in a cooperative way without restriction or distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, colour, nationality or age, having an initial association period of undetermined length, that those interested in community living may have the opportunity to examine relevant values and to arrive at a decision in common with others of the Community. Most people come on quite non-committal visits. Anyone can withdraw at any time.

Our population is about equally comprised of adults and children, men and women, including approximately a half-dozen families and several single adults at the present time. Though numerically greater than in our very small beginnings some thirty years ago, we do not regard numbers as necessarily a criterion of the soundness of the Community, believing that what really matters is full individual development and understanding so that there may be relationship without fear or the desire to control and dominate. In voluntary community no one has status as leader or head.

We are hesitant about placing ourselves in any category, but as a matter of personal background, most of us are total objectors to military training or to participation in war. Some of us have come to our present position only after being a member of one of the military forces. Some of us base our "pacifism" on religious grounds, others on humanitarian, philosophical, or ethical grounds. All have brought with us our own particular backgrounds, religious or otherwise, but all are free to discover what is true,

each in his own way. We are concerned with world unity which we see coming about through individual understanding and initiative. The New Zealand Government's attitude toward us seems respectful, although at times guarded.

We are free of debt in that the Beeville properties of one acre and fifty acres with buildings are paid for, this having been accomplished through the economic enterprises of honey production, welding and engineering shop, concrete products and farm produce. The Trust Board is rated as a non-taxable body in the meaning of the Charitable Trust Act under which it was incorporated in 1960.

Our members are deeply interested in the organic method of farming, although as yet not all our produce is free from spray, and some chemical fertilizers are used. As a group we have maintained a non-meat diet, although a number of us have used meat and the individual has freedom to choose. We are able to have some meals together as a group. Smaller kitchens are available and in use for those who wish to have some or all of their meals separate from the common dining areas, and for those, who, due to circumstances, have little alternative.

We are actively exploring all the possibilities of a Community school which would not be restricted to Beeville children.

All of us here at the Community are enjoying MANAS, and we are regularly sending it to others here in New Zealand to read, after we have finished. I have several names and addresses below which you may send free sample copies to, and some of whom will probably subscribe after a few weeks.

Beeville is somewhat unique in the realm of intentional communities in that it combines the close-knit or full community of the common purse with no restriction on the philosophy, religion or belief of others. That is, we have in our midst at present Christians, atheists, agnostics, Krishna-murti-ites, theosophists, etc., and all able to communicate well enough to exist together economically in a close-knit group. The only other community we know of which did combine the full economic co-operation with freedom in belief was Macedonia (in Georgia) which functioned from 1945 until 1956 when The Christian Bruderhof Communities bought the land and took in about half the people of Macedonia. We would be glad to supply further information about New Zealand in general, or Beeville specifically, by letter to inquirers.

EMERY JONES

Beeville Community Trust Board
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