

GANDHI'S VIEW OF MAN AND HISTORY

What has for centuries raised men above the beast is not the cudgel but an inward music: the irresistible power of unarmed truth, the attraction of its example.

—BORIS PASTERNAK

The term perfectible . . . not only does not imply the capacity of being brought to perfection, but stands in express opposition to it. If we could arrive at perfection, there would be an end to our improvement.

—GEORGE GODWIN

I—THE CONCEPT OF HUMAN NATURE

GANDHI'S indictment of modern civilization, his view of politics and especially of social and individual ethics are firmly based upon his assumptions regarding human nature and human perfectibility. He started with a very definite conviction about what man is in his essential nature and of what he becomes through a false view of himself, of what he should be and can become, and of his place in a law-governed cosmos. All political and social theory must begin with a clear conception of the psychology of man, at least in so far as it affects his moral aims and conduct in society. Many sociologists, including Durkheim, would not agree with this, but no empirical studies of power relationships can answer the more fundamental questions, involving assumptions and theories regarding human nature, that moral and political philosophers have raised. All the major political thinkers have recognized this, from Plato and Aristotle to Hobbes and Rousseau.

Marx's failure to formulate a definite theory of human nature makes it easier for us to regard him as a *philosophe* and a powerful propagandist rather than as a political thinker, in the strict sense. It is, of course, true that Marx did ask and attempt to answer questions about human nature in his early philosophical writings, but he did not

consider them in his later works in which Marxism, as a system, was elaborated. Hobbes, on the other hand, began his political theory with a psychological theory, apparently empirical but essentially *a priori*; his mechanistic, authoritarian picture of the state was devised for a fear-driven, self-seeking humanity that could be manipulated. Locke and later on Mill advocated a mild and minimal role for government on the assumption that man was naturally a harmless and self-improving creature and that his economic aims and activities were automatically helpful to society.

Political theory which does not start from a theory of human nature tends to become either pretentious or trivial.

This would be regarded by many today as basically uncontroversial. What is not so widely recognized is that the choice between an optimistic conception (from Plato to Kant) and a pessimistic view (from Augustine to Hobbes) of human nature is logically independent of the choice between an open and a closed view of human nature, or again, of the choice between the acceptance and the rejection of the perfectibility of man, or finally, the degree of power and autonomy that is granted to man in relation to nature (or God) and his material and social environment. Since the seventeenth century many political thinkers in the West have taken for granted that human nature possesses a characteristic and constant structure, the essential features of which could be formulated as a result of introspective insight and detached observation or as the necessary corollary of a coherent rational theory of the universe. Even Hume, who had no use for the idea of natural law or transcendental order, did not doubt that there are "the constant and universal principles of human nature." This assumption has been questioned or set aside in our

own agnostic and sceptical age. In Vedic India and in Pythagorean Greece, man was regarded as a microcosm of the macrocosm. In order to understand man we must contemplate the cosmos.

Any theory of human nature, as Feuerbach recognized more clearly than perhaps anyone else, must not only point to the essential difference between man and the brute but also between man and God (or Nature). Man is both an observer, standing apparently outside the world, and an agent affecting and affected by the world. Man converses with himself, but can also put himself in the place of another, and his essential nature is an object of thought. A human being, unlike an animal, can formulate and articulate his intention to act for his own benefit or for the good of others, according to his own conception of himself in relation to others as well as his view of the world around him and his expectation of an order of events in the future.

Political and social philosophy involves a search for "a definition of man" and the major political thinkers differ in the accounts they give of the powers essential to men. This means both description and prescription; the facts are verifiable but cannot be conclusively settled, the values and choices commended may be defended or disputed in terms of moral principles and common experience but must in the end be left for each individual to test for himself. Man first of all sees his nature as if out of himself, before he finds it in himself. Man also denies to himself only what he attributes to God or Nature. Alternatively, what a man declares concerning God or Nature, he in truth declares concerning himself. Augustinianism puts God in the place of man; Pelagianism puts man in the place of God. The denial of the divinity of man is usually accompanied by the humanization of God in the image of what man would like to be but could never become. The denial of God often leads to the deification of man.

In secular philosophies, the elevation of man is usually achieved through a mechanistic

conception of nature and the belief that human reason is capable of comprehending and manipulating the world. On the other hand, it is possible to stress the impotence and the irrationality of man in relation to a determinist view of the world or a historicist view of society as an objective and independent reality in time. In any case, it is not easy to dispense with "the para-political myth" regarding man, for it is deeply embedded in our language.¹

Where does Gandhi stand in relation to all this? Human nature, he repeatedly asserted, will only find itself when it fully realizes that to be human it has to cease to be bestial or brutal.² He claimed in 1921 to be a fairly accurate student of human nature and "vivisector of my own failings. I have discovered that man is superior to the system he propounds."³ In his autobiography, he declared that the brute by nature knows no self-restraint, and man is man because he is capable of, and only in so far as he exercises, self-restraint.⁴ Elsewhere, he states that the duty of renunciation differentiates mankind from the beast.⁵ Man becomes great exactly in the degree in which he works for the welfare of his fellow men.⁶

The differences between men are merely those of degree, not of kind.

We were, perhaps, all originally brutes. I am prepared to believe that we have become men by a slow process of evolution from the brute.⁷

To the extent of this Darwinian element in his thought, Gandhi was more a Victorian than a Hindu. Again,

man must choose either of the two courses, the upward or the downward, but as he has the brute in him, he will more easily choose the downward course than the upward, especially when the downward course is presented to him in a beautiful garb.⁸

The "downward instinct" is embodied in all men. Gandhi claimed that he was not a visionary but a practical idealist, and that non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute.

The spirit lies dormant in the brute, and he knows no law but that of physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law—to the strength of the spirit.⁹

The moment a man awakens to the spirit within he cannot remain violent.¹⁰ The essential difference between man and the brute is that the former can respond to the call of the spirit in him, can rise superior to the passions that he owns in common with the brute, and therefore, superior to selfishness and violence, which belong to brute nature and not to the immortal spirit of man. "This is the fundamental conception of Hinduism, which has years of penance and austerity at the back of the discovery of this truth."¹¹

Fundamentally, Gandhi believed in what he called the absolute oneness of God and therefore also of humanity.

What though we have many bodies? We have but one soul. The rays of the sun are many through refraction. But they have the same source.¹²

He was fond of quoting the Mohammedan saying: "Man is not God; but neither is he different from the light (or spark) of God—*adam khuda nahin; lekin khudake nurse adam juda nahin.*" The essence of his position is contained in his statement that

. . . we are born with brute strength but we are born to realize God who dwells in us. That indeed is the privilege of man and it distinguishes him from the brute creation.¹³

Man is bestial in origin but he is human precisely because he is potentially and essentially divine. It is not that Gandhi offers a simple dualistic view of man, but rather that man is neither brute nor God and is human in so far as he uniquely possesses the power of choice that determines either the increasing brutalization of his nature and a reliance on instinctual violence (re-inforced by intellectual violence), or his increasing awareness and manifestation and consequent realization of his innate divinity. To become divine is to become attuned in thought, feeling and act to the whole of creation. More

specifically, when human nature "acts equally towards all and in all circumstances, it approaches the divine."¹⁴

Gandhi declared explicitly that he was a believer in *Advaita* (the Indian doctrine of monism), "the essential unity of God and man and for that matter of all that lives."¹⁵ This is similar to the Stoic idea of the universe as a divine whole and of mankind as an essential unity in which the individual can realize himself. Man alone is made in the image of God.

That some of us do not recognize that status of ours, makes no difference except that then we do not get the benefit of the status, even as a lion brought up in the company of sheep may not know his own status and, therefore, does not receive its benefits; but it belongs to him nevertheless, and, the moment he realizes it, he begins to exercise his dominion over the sheep. But no sheep masquerading as a lion can ever attain the leonine status.¹⁶

He argued that to prove the proposition that man is made in the image of God, it is surely unnecessary to show that all men admittedly exhibit that image in their own persons. It is enough to show that one man at least has done so. "And, will it be denied that the great religious teachers of mankind have exhibited the image of God in their own persons?"¹⁷ At the same time, the *hubris* of man needs to be corrected by a contemplation of nature:

When we look at the sky, we have a conception of infinity, cleanliness, orderliness and grandeur which is purifying for us . . . When once we are in tune with the sky, the nature of our environment on earth ceases to have any significance for us.¹⁸

Man must adopt a correct mental posture, neither too high nor too low, as was taught in the *Gita*.

The doctrine of man's oneness with God and humanity has several implications. *First of all*, this doctrine is incompatible with the belief that an individual may gain spiritually and those that surround him suffer. Gandhi believed that if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him and, if one man falls, the whole world falls to

that extent.¹⁹ There is not a single virtue which aims at or is content with the welfare of the individual alone. Conversely, there is not a single moral offense which does not, directly or indirectly, affect many others besides the actual offender. Hence, whether an individual is good or bad is not merely his own concern, but really the concern of the whole community, indeed of the whole world.²⁰ *Secondly*, the monistic doctrine implies that all human beings are working consciously or unconsciously towards the realization of that identity.²¹

I believe that the sum total of the energy of mankind is not, to bring us down but to lift us up.²²

Thirdly, what one man is capable of achieving is possible for all to attain.²³ The soul is one in all. Its possibilities are the same for everyone.²⁴ Gandhi did not go so far as the Stoics did in regarding man as "cosmic-political," designed to form by deliberate effort a single community with one common law, a "City of Zeus" or universal *communis deorum et hominum civitas*. To Gandhi the moral solidarity of mankind was an ever-present fact rather than merely a contrived political ideal that remains to be realized.

I have been taught from my childhood, and I have tested the truth by experience, that primary virtues of mankind are possible of cultivation by the meanest of human species. It is this undoubted universal possibility that distinguishes the human from the rest of God's creation.²⁵

Fourthly, it is quite proper to resist and attack a system, but to attack and resist the author is tantamount to resisting and attacking oneself.

For we are all tarred with the same brush, and are children of one and the same Creator, and as such divine powers within us are infinite. To slight a single human being is to slight those divine powers, and thus to harm not only that human being, but with him the whole world.²⁶

Fifthly, man's ultimate aim is the realization of God, and all his activities, social, political, religious, have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God. The immediate service of all human beings becomes a necessary part of the

endeavour, simply because the only way to find God is to see God in creation and be one with it. This can only be done by service of all "I am a part and parcel of the whole, and I cannot find Him apart from the rest of humanity."²⁷ Again,

. . . true individuality consists in reducing oneself to zero. The secret of life is selfless service. The highest ideal for us is to become *vitaraḡa* (free from attachment). Ethical rules were framed by *rishis* (seers) on the basis of personal experience. A *rishi* is one who has realized for himself. *Sannyasa* in the *Gita* is renunciation of actions inspired by desire (*kamyā*). He is a man who is the ruler over his body.²⁸

Clearly, then, the divinity of man manifests itself according to the extent to which he realizes his humanity, *i.e.*, his oneness with his fellow-men. For Gandhi, as for Spinoza, men must unite themselves "by bonds that make all of them as one man." The unity between all men, though veiled from common sight, is in fact as "real" as the idea of separateness is to a man still under the spell of his senses. Although at times Gandhi spoke of God as a person and the ideal man as a servant (*dasa*) of God, he really regarded God as the Stoics did, as an indefinable and universal Power that cannot be conceived apart from humanity or from the whole of nature. Each man is a ray or a part (*amsha*) of that divine Power that underlies all change, that is changeless, that holds all together, that creates, dissolves and recreates²⁹ all forms of life.

Every man is born in the world with certain natural tendencies that are variable and alterable, while at the same time he is born with certain definite limitations that he cannot overcome. While admitting that man actually lives by habit, Gandhi held that it is better for him to live by the exercise of the will.³⁰ Men are capable of developing their will to an extent that will reduce exploitation by others to a minimum and make them capable of self-rule. Man's triumph consists in substituting the struggle for existence by a struggle for mutual service.³¹ Man is a thinking no less than a feeling animal. To renounce the

sovereignty of reason over the blind instincts is, therefore, to renounce a man's estate.

Man's estate is one of probation. During that period he is played upon by evil forces as well as good. He is ever a prey to temptations. He has to prove his manliness by resisting and fighting temptations. He is no warrior who fights outside foes of his imagination, and is powerless to lift a finger against the innumerable foes within, or what is worse, mistakes them as friends.³²

In man, reason quickens and guides the feeling; in the brute, the soul ever lies dormant. To awaken the heart is to arouse the dormant soul, to awaken reason and to inculcate discrimination between good and evil.³³ "The rule of all without the rule of self is deceptive and disappointing, as a painted toy mango."³⁴

Gandhi recognized that in spite of the greatest effort to be detached, no man can altogether undo the effect of his environment or his upbringing. But he believed that man is essentially capable of self-direction. It is "man's privilege to overcome adverse circumstance."³⁵ Manliness consists in making circumstances subserve ourselves. Those who will not heed themselves perish. To understand this principle is not to be impatient, not to reproach fate, nor to blame others. "He who understands the doctrine of self-help blames himself for failure."³⁶ He argued that while in *Kali Yuga* the level of practice had deteriorated, the mind of man in history had very much progressed. Practice has not been able to keep pace with his mind.

Man has begun to say, 'This is wrong, that is wrong.' Whereas previously he justified his conduct, he now no longer justifies his own or his neighbour's. He wants to set right the wrong; but he does not know that his own practice fails him. The contradiction between his theory and his practice fetters him. His conduct is not governed by logic.³⁷

Self-direction, for Gandhi, involves passing moral judgment on one's own behavior, justifying or condemning it. But man mistakenly believes he has set right what was wrong; he tries, fails and does not always recognize that he has failed. Yet,

he progresses at least in so far as he recognizes as wrong what he once regarded as right, and he tries to avoid it, even if he cannot always assess correctly his level of effort and the extent of his failure. What distinguishes man from the brute is his ceaseless striving to rise above the brute on the moral plane.

Mankind is at the cross-roads. It has to make its choice between the law of the jungle and the law of humanity.³⁸

Gandhi had thus a frankly optimistic view of human nature. "I am an irrepressible optimist . . . My optimism rests on my belief in the infinite possibilities of the individual to develop non-violence."³⁹ And yet in practice Gandhi was often more inclined to deny a pessimistic view than to uphold a positively optimistic view of human nature. "I refuse to believe that the tendency of human nature is always downward,"⁴⁰ he declared in 1926, and stated the next year: "Men like me cling to their faith in human nature . . . all appearances to the contrary notwithstanding."⁴¹ In fact, it is in moments of trial that human nature shows itself at its best.⁴²

I know that people who voluntarily undergo a course of suffering raise themselves and the whole of humanity, but I also know that people, who become brutalized in their desperate efforts to get victory over their opponents, or to exploit weaker nations or weaker men not only drag down themselves but mankind also. And it cannot be a matter of pleasure to me or anyone else to see human nature dragged in the mire. If we are all sons of the same God, and partake of the same divine essence, we must partake of the sin of every person whether he belongs to us or to another race. You can understand how repugnant it must be to invoke the beast in any human being.⁴³

Though we have the human form, without the attainment of the virtue of non-violence we still share the qualities of "our remote reputed ancestor the ourangoutang."⁴⁴ In 1938 Gandhi again declared:

Man's nature is not essentially evil. Brute nature has been known to yield to the influence of love. You must never despair of human nature.⁴⁵

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(To Be Continued)

43. *Young India*, October, 1931.
44. *Harijan*, October, 1938.
45. *Ibid.*, November, 1938.

NOTES

1. *Dilemmas*, Gilbert Ryle, p. 64-5.
2. *Harijan*, October, 1938.
3. *Young India*, July, 1921.
4. *Autobiography*, p. 317 (2nd edition in one volume).
5. *Yeravda Mandir*, p. 81.
6. *Ethical Religion*, p. 56.
7. *Harijan*, April, 1938.
8. *Ibid.*, February, 1935.
9. *Young India*, August, 1920.
10. *Harijan*, August, 1940.
11. *Amrita Bazaar Patrika*, August, 1934.
12. *Young India*, September, 1924.
13. *Harijan*, April, 1938.
14. *Diary of Mahadev Desai*, p. 247 (July, 1932).
15. *Young India*, December, 1924.
16. *Ibid.*, July, 1926.
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Diary of Mahadev Desai*, p. 252 (July, 1932).
19. *Young India*, December, 1924.
20. *Ethical Religion*, p.55.
21. *Gandhi's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44*, p. 69.
22. *Young India*, November, 1931.
23. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, volume 4, p.353 (October, 1938).
24. *Harijan*, May, 1940.
25. *Ibid.*, May, 1936.
26. *Autobiography*, p. 337.
27. *Harijan*, August, 1936.
28. *Diary of Mahadev Desai*, p. 113 (May, 1932).
29. *Young India* October, 1928.
30. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, volume 4, p. 13.
31. *Harijan*, June, 1935.
32. *Ibid.*, April, 1936.
33. *Ibid.*, November, 1936.
34. *Ibid.*, March, 1936.
35. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, volume 7, p. 267 (October, 1946).
36. *Harijan*, June, 1936.
37. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, volume 7, p.43 (January, 1946).
38. *Ibid.*, p.86-7 (March, 1946).
39. *Ibid.*, volume 5, p. 17 (December, 1938).
40. *Young India*, December, 1926.
41. *Ibid.*, February, 1927.
42. *Autobiography*, p. 216.

REVIEW

THE PROCESSED MAN

YOU may recall Don Marquis' "funny" story of the man who found himself, after death, in the paradise his many frailties had made him despair of attaining. A tour of the celestial premises, conducted by an urbane but unidentified host, soon showed that here indeed was a place where the residents could have anything they wanted, simply for the asking. What greater security or happiness could be imagined? Entranced, our dear-departed wished away, always receiving what he asked, until finally he ran out of desires. Then, overtaken by boredom, he became dissatisfied and petulant. He wanted to know why, if this was Heaven, his existence should so definitely pall, brashly adding that things might be more interesting in Hell. "Just where do you think you are, sir?" asked his host, with quiet reserve.

So it may be with an increasing number of men and women in the Affluent Society. Certain aspects of life can be made smooth, as material security is guaranteed, as "organization man" salutes organization man in a planned meshing of the gears of economy and culture. (You *can*, of course, worry about atomic warfare, but there really doesn't seem to be much you can do about that—not much that is different from what everyone else is doing or not doing.) But the perceptions of such social analysts as Erich Fromm and David Riesman are now striking a responsive chord among numerous people. Current novelists find that irony directed at the man in the gray flannel suit, or the man pulled as on strings by the hidden persuaders, is extremely salable. A recent example is a novel constructed at the tireless typewriter of John D. MacDonald, who is often billed with good reason as a "master of suspense and intrigue." In an early chapter of *A Key to the Suite*, MacDonald's latest, we encounter the leading character, an executive, just prior to disembarking from a plane to attend a business convention. Once a practical engineer, Hubbard has been promoted to administrative and

personnel work and is beginning to assume a new demeanor as a kind of hatchet man for his company. Yet at the opening of the book he is still aware of how dull processed people can be. He reflects on the perfected façade and the vacuous hospitality of the airline hostess:

The gentle hand of a girl pressed him awake, and he looked up along a tailored arm at the gloriously empty smile of a stewardess. "Fasten your seat belt, please."

When he straightened in the seat and began to grope for the ends of the belt, she resumed her tour of inspection, looking from side to side, waking other sleepers. It would have to be a surgical technique, he decided. Their smiles are all too alike. A few minutes of deftness with the scalpel, cutting the frown muscles loose, rehooking the nerve circuits, and you would limit each of them to just two expressions—the habitual superior blandness or the dazzling smile. Perhaps with true corporate efficiency they had hooked the smile to the vocal nerve complex so that they could not speak without smiling. "Prepare for ditching," would be said with the same smile as, "How would you like your fillet, sir?"

But of course they had not yet been able to do anything about the expression of the eyes. They all looked at you with the same aseptic, merciless disdain, then walked away, germless Dynel hair a-bounce under the trig cap, tennis hips swinging the military worsted skirts. . . .

Later, as the spark of originality which Hubbard once possessed is dampened by the sweet spray of success, his wife, who loves him, attempts in a letter to show him what is happening:

"Forgive me, but this administration thing you are in and have been in for at least two years seems to me to be the manipulation of human beings. Granted that you rearrange groups of people so they are more effective, and possibly happier, but it is nothing you can be particularly idealistic about.

"You have a thirst for knowledge, darling, and you seem to satisfy it best with tangible things. Now that you are dealing with these intangibles, you are changing. I do not know how to say it without hurting you or angering you, so all I can say is that you are losing a kind of innocence which was always dear to me. I think you take the wrong kind of pride in what you are doing. You are learning how to push

the little buttons which make people jump, and you are becoming cynical and skeptical about people. It is a kind of 'watchfulness' which I see in you. Your smile is the same and you seem to talk in the same way, and people like you as readily as ever, but you are on guard, even with me. I think you are becoming a political man, and once again I must sound childish to you as I say that I do not like the by-products—the compromise, subterfuge and so help me, the 'use' of human beings. I am not accusing you of some enormous wickedness. But I think the kind of work you are doing now will change the essential texture of you, will harden you in ways I cannot clearly understand."

We have an old clipping from the *Wall Street Journal* (Nov. 22, 1961) which makes encouraging connectives with MacDonald's story. Under the heading, "Individualist Displaces the Organization Man in Many Corporations," a staff reporter describes a remarkable reversal in policy by Chance Vought Aircraft in Texas:

A few years ago the personnel director of Chance Vought Aircraft, Inc., suddenly withdrew a lucrative job offer he had made to an experienced 40-year-old executive employed by a competitor. Though the executive appeared highly qualified and was a leader in his field, the results of a personality test supposedly had revealed him to be "emotionally unstable and insecure."

Today there's not a personality test to be found in Chance Vought files; in fact, the results of all such tests given in the past have been deliberately burned. Moreover, the once rejected executive has since been hired and has risen to the ranks of top management at Chance Vought, now a subsidiary of Ling-Temco-Vought, Inc.

That transformation in Chance Vought's thinking about what it takes to make a good executive is being duplicated at many other companies around the nation these days. For years, such tools as the personality test, the "human relations clinic" and group decision-making sessions have been important parts of corporate life as many firms have sought to develop the type of executive that has come to be known as the "organization man." But now there are signs an increasing number of companies are becoming disenchanted with the conformity-minded organization man and instead are placing new stress on individuality and originality in executives. While such men may on occasion ruffle feathers in

management ranks, the companies are concluding their contributions generally more than compensate.

"We just decided it was time to stop trying to fit everybody into a mold," explains Gifford K. Johnson, blunt-speaking president of Ling-Temco-Vought. "There's plenty of room in our company for the bold, brash individual who's willing to be set apart from the herd. Besides, you'd be surprised how many different individuals can handle the same job well."

"More than ever before industry is seeking men of originality with the courage to approach problems from an unorthodox standpoint," echoes John L. Handy, an executive recruiter in New York City.

What is obviously lacking in the carefully controlled arrangements of many big corporations and in the homes of their "well adjusted" executives is the occasional flare of a Promethean fire. Apparently Chance Vought and a few other companies have realized that it is not wise to try to do without it, and that "maverick managers" are the ones who often see more clearly—simply because they see by a different light.

Of six hundred high-level executives recently interviewed in a survey of the "organization man problem," the Opinion Research Institute of Princeton reports that only 37 per cent felt that it was valuable to avoid conflicts of opinion. Plainly, there is no security and happiness in Heaven, nor in Walden II either! The current enthusiasm for the first Walden, by Thoreau, indicates an almost popular realization that you can't ever be secure anyway unless you discover who and what you are and accept the fact that a man is not a man without a bit of Prometheus in his soul.

COMMENTARY

NIETZSCHE ON PEACE

LIKE most people who are on the lookout for signs of genuine peace-making, we share with the writer of this week's *Frontiers* his hope that Brock Chisholm's analysis marks the beginning of a new "trend." It is only fair, however, to acknowledge that this kind of thinking, if it is a trend, had an articulate prophet in Friedrich Nietzsche. This becomes plain from a quotation from Nietzsche which appears in *Liberation* for June. The following is taken from *The Wanderer and His Shadow* (*The Portable Nietzsche*, Viking):

. . . all states are now ranged against each other; they presuppose their neighbor's bad disposition and their own good disposition. This presupposition, however, is *inhumane*, as bad as war and worse. At bottom, indeed, it is itself the challenge and cause of wars, because, as I have said, it attributes immorality to the neighbor and thus provokes a hostile disposition and act. We must abjure the doctrine of the army as a means of self-defense just as completely as the desire for conquests.

And perhaps the great day will come when a people, distinguished by wars and victories and by the highest development of a military order and intelligence, and accustomed to make the heaviest sacrifices for these things, will exclaim of its own free will, "We break the sword," and will smash its entire military establishment down to its lowest foundations. *Rendering oneself unarmed when one had been best-armed*, out of a height of feeling—that is the means to real peace, which must always rest on a peace of mind. One trusts neither oneself nor one's neighbor and, half from hatred, half from fear, does not lay down arms. . . . Our liberal representatives, as is well known, lack the time for reflecting on the nature of man: else they would know that they work in vain when they work for a "gradual decrease of the military burden."

Nietzsche differs, of course, from Brock Chisholm in his choice of words and his emphasis. Nietzsche says we need to abandon the military establishment in order to find the means to real peace. Chisholm says we shall make ourselves dangerously ill unless we stop relying on military resources for security. Nietzsche speaks as a

moralist, Chisholm as a psychiatrist, but with little difference between them.

What may puzzle some readers is Nietzsche's surprising statement at the end of what we have quoted—that "gradualism" in disarmament won't work. But this idea usually comes first as a flash of intuition to individuals. An individual can never be a half-hearted soldier or a half-hearted war objector. It is sensible to compromise in relation to some forms of human activity, but in war compromise is ridiculous.

Of course, the behavior of societies is different from the behavior of individuals, but here the responsibility falls upon those who attempt to act for their societies: Do their ideas of the ends to be achieved lead logically to fiasco, or to the condition of authentic peace? Do we seek a slow progress toward an intelligible goal, or are we content with moving toward a condition that contemplates permanent ambivalence and indecision, excusing this folly with the argument that a "gradual decrease of the military burden" is all that is possible, at best?

There is profound sense in what Nietzsche says, if we are willing to look for it.

CHILDREN

. . . and Ourselves

REVERENCE IN THE CLASSROOM

EDUCATION AND THE COMMON GOOD, by Philip H. Phenix, professor of education at Teachers College, Columbia University (Harper, 1961), is an unusual volume. To begin with, the reader hardly expects a searching discussion of the essentials of religion by a professor at Teachers College. And Prof. Phenix's discussion is definitely "paraprismatic." His work (including the bibliography) suggests a wide range of reading and absorption by the author, with special attention to the diverse insights of such contemporaries as Paul Tillich, Hannah Arendt, Ortega y Gasset, David Riesman, and Erich Fromm. The last chapter speaks of the need for "reverence," requiring a matured philosophical understanding on the part of the teachers. It is our intention, here, to present various paragraphs from the summing up of *Education and the Common Good*. First, in order, should come Prof. Phenix's definition of religion:

A religious person is one who in intention and in deed is devoted to the supreme, the infinite, the perfect, the true, the completely excellent, regardless of the words, acts, or institutions through which he expresses his dedication. This is not to say that all doctrines, rites, and social organizations are equally true or serve equally well as channels for the ultimate. Some forms are more easily turned to idolatrous and irreligious purposes than others. Actually, many ideas and practices that purport to be religious contradict the fundamental requirement of every religious symbol that it at one and the same time reflect the ultimate and affirm its own finitude.

From this high ground Prof. Phenix affirms that every teacher should be, in an important sense, a "religious" instructor—regardless of his specialty:

Analysis invites the conclusion that the central task of education is religious conversion. This is not to be understood in the conventional sense, as securing commitment to a specific organized church or acceptance of one of the traditional creeds. What

is meant is the inner transformation of purpose and motive. . . . This central religious task is inherent in all teaching, regardless of the field of study. It is the end that should govern instruction in mathematics and in literature, in mechanical arts and in modern dance, in biochemistry and in law. Every study, theoretical and applied, elementary and advanced, formal and informal, is an appropriate vehicle for teaching the fundamental lesson of loyalty to what is true, excellent, and just. Every institution of education—the home, the school, the church or temple, the industrial shop or laboratory, the museum or library, the mass media—can be and ought to be an agency of religious instruction, engaged in the one saving work of emancipating persons from bondage to selfish desires and idolatrous attachments and of directing them toward the life of devotion to that in which their being and well-being are grounded.

Many readers of MANAS are sufficiently agnostic to feel extremely dubious concerning any use of the word "God" in the public schools, and are likely to be opposed to the inclusion of the words "under God" in the current version of the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. From the agnostic point of view, Prof. Phenix offers a charitable, if not "soft," interpretation of God, which might well become the subject of further discussion. "What of teaching religion in the public schools?" he writes. "Surely," he continues, "no state religion ought to be taught. This is clear from the First Amendment to the Federal Constitution, in which the Congress is denied the power to make any 'laws respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.' Such a regulation is necessary if the ultimacy of religion is to be preserved. Since government is necessarily finite and fallible, it cannot define the object of ultimate loyalty. The state must be 'under God'—that is, subject to the higher judgment of righteousness-in-itself; the state is never itself the true standard of perfection. Freedom of religion is an essential feature of democracy, since the state is not an end but a means." But if this can be regarded as an apology for any of the Christian versions of God, it should be noted that Prof. Phenix is "pare-Christian" as well as "paraprismatic." He writes:

The many ways in which religious faith has been expressed should be recognized. But, first, each student should be taught to understand and appreciate the religious tradition in which he was reared, and to see how it may be used maturely and responsibly as a vehicle for ultimate devotion. Included among these religious traditions should be ones of protest as well as of affirmation. Thus, many critics of religion—self-styled atheists and freethinkers—are frequently more devoted to ultimate truth and righteousness than are the nominal adherents of the more traditional religions.

Along with this deepening of faith through each student's own heritage should go a broadening of perspective through continuing conversations with persons of other traditions. It should never be assumed that all of the historical religions are equally good or that a person should always remain within the tradition to which he was born. Religions differ greatly in the power and purity of the devotion they evoke. It is within the province of public schools not only to see that students are correctly informed about religious matters, but also to provide a setting in which older young people may learn to recognize and sift out irreligious and idolatrous tendencies and perversions in the various religious systems of mankind. They should be encouraged so to grow in knowledge and power of discriminative judgment that each person will at length be competent to choose for himself the form of belief, celebration, and conduct that best expresses and sustains the dedicated life.

While the general principles stated in this volume are above reproach, there are times when meaning seems left behind by abstraction. For example, we are not sure of what the author intends by saying that the "supremely worthwhile transcends all human comprehension":

The content of such public religious instruction should be twofold. First in every domain of teaching the following essentials of religious faith should be emphasized and demonstrated in the teacher's own outlook: that the world, man, and his culture are neither self-sufficient nor self-explanatory but are derived from given sources of being, meaning, and value. That the supremely worthwhile is not finite or limited but transcends all human comprehension and every human achievement. That the life of selfish ambition, the struggle for authority, acquisition, and success, and attachment to finite goods lead in the end to misery, conflict, guilt, despair, boredom, and frustration. That every individual has a personal

calling to turn from following after desire to a life of loving and grateful dedication to what is of ultimate worth.

FRONTIERS Ingredients of Peace

DR. BROCK CHISHOLM, a Canadian psychiatrist of eminence, and a former Director General of the World Health Organization, last month told the delegates to an international conference on Health and Health Education (held in Philadelphia) that the familiar methods of gaining "security," based upon past experience, will no longer work. "The signals," Dr. Chisholm said, "have been switched." Explaining, he continued:

We will no longer be rewarded by feelings of security for increasing our ability to kill. The more we develop that ability, the more we are insecure and frightened.

He suggested that health authorities "might well concern themselves about the very widespread mental and social ill health which produces persistent efforts to use obsolete behavior patterns which have become very dangerous, even suicidal," and added: "The mature way of dealing with new situations and threats is not to seek answers from our ancestors, but to try to understand, with the help of all the techniques now available all the factors which make up the new situation."

Dr. Chisholm's analysis is itself something of a "switch" from the usual arguments against building big armaments for war. The moralists have told us it is wrong to prepare for aggressive war because of what this signifies concerning our intentions toward others. The nation that arms heavily is getting ready for conquests, it was said. And the answer to that was always: "Nothing of the kind; *we* are arming for defense." As we know, this reply usually dissipated most of the moralists' objections.

But Dr. Chisholm objects to military preparation, not because of its threat to others, but for what it is doing to us. The "enemy," actual or supposed, does not even enter into his calculations. By this means, he proposes, we may

destroy ourselves through mental and social ill health without a shot being fired against us.

Well, you could say, hopefully, that Dr. Chisholm's estimate of what the nuclear arms race is doing to us may be the beginning of a "trend" in fresh insights on war. It is possible, he is suggesting, that the subjective consequences of preparing for war are worse than the objective consequences of fighting one.

Reflecting on Dr. Chisholm's recommendations, one is led to realize that they imply a far-reaching break with the past, a virtual revolution in ordinary human attitudes. If we are to do away with the expectation of finding security in military might, there will also need to be a reduction in self-righteousness and the other qualities in human beings which make them vulnerable to feeling threatened. It is not easy to find a good example of a man who is without self-righteousness, yet has taken a strong position, but one of the most encouraging things about the present-day peace Movement is the evidence it affords of what seems a spontaneous emergence of this combination of traits. Few of the generation of youthful pacifists now active in the struggle against war exhibit the cocksure certainty of the radicals of thirty years ago. Take for example the statement of Harold Stallings, skipper of *Everyman I*, when brought on June 8 before a federal judge in San Francisco to receive a sentence of thirty days in jail. Stallings said to the Court:

Nothing said here should be misconstrued as in defense of, justification for or in mitigation of any penalties that might result from any of my acts. I say this not because I am so sure of the absolute validity of my acts and motivations, but because I am on a path the walking of which is becoming more important to me than its destination.

I feel that I have let some misconception about myself grow in this courtroom.

While this may seem overly personal and irrelevant in a courtroom, it is the only thing I know. The word used in introducing the various members of this proceeding into the record seems appropriate—

"Appearances." I feel I have been presenting various appearances:

Yesterday Al Wirin and Marshall Heslep called me Captain Stallings. And up came the image of the self-sufficient seafarer striding the deck, facing the storm. It did not even hint at the cowering, afraid, sea-sick guy unable to even think for his own fear, willing to have his friends endanger themselves on that boat before himself.

Words like "conscience," "morality," "Quaker" have been used. Up come images of the gentle religious, the otherworldly searchers after truth and salvation, the man whose ear is constantly tuned to the beat of that "distant drum." Nowhere does it suggest the self-seeking, greedy child—the guy who postures and grimaces—the one who delights in hiding from tough daily decisions behind a facade of big words and then runs to escape the consequences of his own indecision. . . .

I've said enough about this to make clear that I am in some ways aware of what must be patently obvious to all: that this "appearance" that has been floating through this proceeding on grand words is a cardboard figure. And I would not have this facade be a question of anyone else's motivations or actions.

Now how can this man have any justification for being here under these circumstances—why doesn't he run in shame from the hypocrisy of presenting himself here?

Simply because I am a man. Precisely because I have bound up in me an obvious, real propensity for evil and genuine yearnings after goodness.

(Marshal) Cecil Poole's question yesterday always hits me with fresh new import. "Hal Stallings—are you flagrantly doing what you 'durn well please'? Where did you get the right to think you alone might be right?"

I don't *know* that I'm right in any sense, I have neither divine nor human, neither internal nor external assurance that I'm right in any grand sense. I can't even see tomorrow let alone the future.

Here is the paradox I find in myself: Recognizing (with reluctance if I'm honest) that I am terribly human—with all the conflict generated by my dual bents—with all the confusion this means—I have had to try to act.

I have tried to indicate my weakness, my propensity for selfishness.

There is another side. I have yearnings and partly they brought me here.

What do I aspire to?

I yearn to once in a while put some other human's comfort and safety before my own. I can't tell why any more than I can explain my greedy self-seeking bents but sometimes I yearn to love another person as much as I do myself.

How do these yearnings apply here?

I yearn sometimes for a world where I can feel truly confident that my three-year-old who tells me in wonder and expectation that he wants to be a "builder" and build a home for his mother and me has a real chance to grow to be that builder; that at the very least I have done everything I can to protect that future.

I yearn not to remember when I put my kids to bed that there is a mother in Hiroshima putting her children to bed—*their* father dead—killed by radiation—killed in my and my children's "defense."

Once in a while it comes hard into me that there are fathers all over the world who have heard it said in my name that for various reasons if the situation so develops I will burn up their homes and their families. I yearn to tell them different. Some times I yearn to go unarmed to them and promise with my whole heart that no matter what may come into my hands, no matter what the threat to me or mine, they are safe to love in the same world with me.

I'm at the end.

Why have I taken your time with this personal confession?

Pretentious as it may seem and as I feel—I feel that I have acted out of my humanness. Out of the seeds which are in us all.

I hold no contempt for law, this court, or any person involved. I have every reason to respect all three.

Yet I have come to that place where there are no alternatives—What may seem terribly complex to some seems terribly simple to me.

I must not kill or hurt or threaten to kill or hurt.

I must not insofar as I have any power let any be killed or hurt.

These bomb tests and the getting ready for war are killing and hurting.

I must go in weakness and confusion to put myself in the path of that killing.

I know something of the possible penalties. I hold no hostility for anyone.

Judge Sweigert, your decision and any penalties which come however severe I'll try my best to accept in the same spirit of good will with which you've accepted what I feel I must do.

Every man must do what every man can do—and I keep feeling that the goal for me personally is to come to respect and love each man who is doing out of his own heart what he can—whatever his way.

This statement, it seems to us, embodies ideas and feelings which are appropriate for everyone in the world, these days. If statesmen would admit how little they understand the tasks before them, in a similar mood of honest inquiry, we would soon arrive at what Dr. Chisholm called the "mature way of dealing with new situations and threats."