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THE SHADOW OF THE VIRTUES

THE most searching criticism is being written today by those who recognize facts and failings which the proud achievements of the age conceal from us. This blocking of perception—that is, the concealment of the ugly, the inefficient, and the immoral—occurs whenever the virtues are allowed to become mechanized, when they are thought of as purchasable goods and in this form taken to be the signs and symbols of righteousness, and acceptable justification of egotism. For this is the loss of virtue in the name of virtue. Authentic virtue is subjective. Its substance is in attitude, and only its accidents have noticeable shape, or are definable acts.

Who, indeed, is writing criticism of this sort? Not many are using the language of moral psychology, yet some general conclusions along these lines seem inescapable. Whatever language he uses, the man who speaks effectively to our condition must be one who knows the difference between authentic virtue and its past or casual forms, and is knowledgeable enough to expose the disasters which are maturing in the shadow of preoccupying external achievements. For example, commenting on recent advances of technology, Paul Goodman, who is by no means against it in principle, has this to say:

> Our contemporary practice makes little sense. We have expensive technology stored in specialists' offices and big hospitals which is unavailable for mass use in the neighborhoods; yet every individual, even if he is quite rich, finds it almost impossible to get attention for himself as an individual whole organism in his setting. He is sent from specialist to specialist and exists as a bag of symptoms and a file of test scores.

The moral ground of this comment is plain enough. Goodman continues:

> In automating, there is an analogous dilemma of how to cope with masses of people and get economies of scale without losing the individual at great consequent human and economic cost. A question of immense importance for the immediate future is, Which function should be automated or organized to use business machines and which should not? This question is not getting asked, and the present disposition is that the sky is the limit for extraction, refining, manufacturing, processing, packaging, transportation, clerical work, ticketing, transactions, information retrieval, recruitment, middle management, evaluation, diagnosis, instruction, and even research and invention. Whether the machines can do all these kinds of jobs and more is partly an empirical question, but it also partly depends on what is meant by doing a job. Very often, for example in college admissions, machines are acquired for putative economies (which do not eventuate) but the true reason is that an overgrown and overcentralized organization cannot be administered without them. The technology conceals the essential trouble, perhaps that there is no community of the faculty and that students are treated like things. The function is badly performed and finally the system breaks down anyway. I doubt that enterprises in which interpersonal relations are very important are suited to much programming.

This is a passage from Paul Goodman's latest book, *New Reformation* (Random House, $5.95), in which he looks to a restoration of authentic virtue in men of ability and responsibility as the only hope for modern society. The control and intelligent use of technology, for example, is a responsibility of the technologists themselves, who must now make reparation for the exaggerated claim that the technical approach is a solution for all problems. What will bring balance to the practice of technology? Only the awakening of a sense of human values in the experts in whom others have placed their faith. As he puts it:

> These days, perhaps the chief moral criterion of a philosophic technology is modesty, having a sense of the whole and not obtruding more than a particular function warrants. Immodesty is always a danger of free enterprise, but when the same disposition to market is financed by big corporations, technologists rush into production with solutions that swamp the

> environment. This applies to the packaging and garbage, freeways that bulldoze neighborhoods, high rises that destroy landscape, wiping out species for a passing fashion, strip mining, scrapping an expensive machine rather than making a minor repair, draining a watershed for irrigation because (as in Southern California) the cultivable land has been covered by asphalt. Given this disposition, it is not surprising that we defoliate a forest in order to expose a guerilla and spray gas from a helicopter on a crowded campus.

The externalization of virtue, leading to the celebration of means in the place of ends, honoring capacities instead of intentions, makes the moral life a merely technical affair. The narrow but externally impressive skills of the powerhouse society become objective substitutes for virtue Then, since the modesty of which Goodman speaks is lacking, self-correction becomes either unlikely or impossible and men make the same sort of mistakes over and over again. Finally, a sense of hopelessness becomes the rule As Goodman says:

> But the worst is the metaphysical emergency of Modern Times: feeling powerless in immense social organizations; desperately relying on technological means to solve urban problems caused by previous technological means, when urban areas are technically and fiscally unworkable, extrapolating and planning for their future growth. Then, "Nothing can be done."

Goodman looks for an inward change o£ attitude on the part of intelligent experts of technological means. Technology is our religion, and they are its priests and practitioners. The Reformation of the sixteenth century came when Martin Luther, a priest and practitioner of the religion of that day, saw that there was *nothing else to do.* Can there now be a parallel awakening?

> For instance, the new professional and technological class is more and more entangled in the work, statuses, and rewards of the system; yet this same class—often the same people—is more and more protestant. On the other hand, the dissident young, who are unequivocally and hell-bent for radical change, are so alienated that they often seem to be simply irrelevant to the underlying issues of modern times; they care only for their "gut" issues. The monks keep "improving" the schools and getting bigger budgets to do so, but the schools are in trouble and there is no end of it in sight. The interlocking of technologies and other institutions makes it almost impossible to reform policy in any part; yet this very interlocking creates a resonance and a chain reaction if a determined group—even a determined individual—is indeed insistent. . . . there is everywhere a surge of populism and community action, as if people were determined to have local liberty, even if it makes no sense. A mighty empire is stood off by a band of peasants and *neither* can win; this is even more remarkable than if David beat Goliath. It means that neither principle is historically adequate. It is because of impasses and dilemmas like these that I think we are on the eve of a transformation of conscience.

Whether or not it is appropriate to take *Race to Oblivion,* a new book by Herbert York, for an example of "transformation of conscience," the contents of this volume are certainly evidence of the extreme blindness which results when the manipulative skills, the technical "virtues," of modern weaponry are allowed to replace reliance on the human qualities of human beings. This is not an example we cite with much enthusiasm, since the relativities of military means are not a natural universe of discourse for a MANAS article, yet when, within that area, the policy of a powerful nation reaches "ultimate absurdity," there may be sufficient excuse for taking note of the fact. Here we rely on a review in *Science* (July 31) by W. K. H. Panofsky, and an article by Mr. York himself in *Science* for July 17. Herbert F. York is now Dean of Graduate Studies, University of California, San Diego. Some of his activities before he took this post are listed by Mr. Panofsky in the opening paragraph of his review of *Race to Oblivion:*

> Herbert F. York, physicist, ex-Director of the Livermore Weapons Laboratory, ex-Director of Defense Research and Engineering of the Department of Defense, ex-member of the President's Science Advisory Committee, and ex-member of the General Advisory Committee to the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, has given this book the subtitle, "A Participant's View of the Arms Race." It might also have been called "How I Turned from

Participant to Nonparticipant in the Arms Race and Why." York was active during both the pre- and post-Sputnik eras in the evolution of military hardware, a span during which the potential U.S. and U.S.S.R. casualties in nuclear war changed from the tens of millions to well above 100 million. In retrospect, it was a period of increasing strategic weaponry on both sides and decreasing security for all.

This review and Mr. York's article make plain the monstrous dilemma which reliance on ever-advancing military technology has produced. ABM and MIRV are the key symbols in the development. ABM means anti-ballistic missiles—comprising a system of defense which started out, as Mr. York says, as a means of hitting a "bullet with a bullet"—or, more accurately, intercepting incoming nuclear warheads or intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM's) "one at a time." The Soviets, of course, set to work on developing an ABM system of their own. Both powers also sought to devise attack systems that would penetrate ABM defense systems. The project of figuring out how to get through ABM systems, as York puts it, "provided the weapons engineers and scientists with a still better means of displaying their technological virtuosity." Mr. York explains:

> This extension of the original idea is, of course, the now well-known MIRV, an acronym standing for multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles. It is, I think, most important to note that these early developments of MIRV and ABM were not primarily the result of any careful operations analysis of the problem or of anything which might be described as a "provocation" by the other side. Rather, they were largely the result of a continuously reciprocating process consisting of a technological challenge put out by the designers of our own offense, then followed by a similar challenge and response sequence in the reverse direction. In this fashion, our ABM development program made very substantial progress during the early 1960's.
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> Concurrent with this internal contest, the Soviets were making progress on their own. As early as 1962, Premier Khrushchev and Defense Minister Malinovsky boasted about how they had solved the missile defense problem. By 1965, Soviet progress in development and deployment of an ABM had proceeded to the point where we felt compelled to react. As a result, we decided to deploy MIRV as the one certain means of assuring penetration of Soviet defenses and thus maintaining the credibility of our deterrent.

Later in this article, Mr. York asks:

> If we continue with our MIRV developments, and thus force the Soviets to go on a launch-on-warning system, can we rely on them to invent and institute adequate controls? Do they have the necessary level of sophistication to solve the contradiction inherent in the need for a "hair trigger" (so that their system will respond in time) and a "stiff trigger" (so that they will not fire accidentally)? How good are their computers at recognizing false alarms? How good is the command and control system for the Polaris-type submarine fleet they are now rapidly, if belatedly, building? Will it be "fail-safe"?
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> It cannot be emphasized too strongly that unfavorable answers to these questions about *their* capability will mean diminished national security for *us*. Yet there is no way for us to assure favorable answers. The only way we can avoid the danger to our security inherent in these questions is by eliminating the need to ask them.

And that, no doubt, is the basic reason why Mr. York is no longer a "participant" in the arms race. The "continuously reciprocating process" which displayed, step by step, the "technological virtuosity" of the weapons engineers and scientists, has outwitted itself and reached the point of self-defeat.

For other aspects of this acceleration we turn to Mr. Panofsky's review. He writes:

> After Sputnik, we see a mad rush for new technology, mostly exotic in nature. Interestingly enough, none of these exotic weapons ideas have proved practical, although billions have been spent in exploring them. One of the characteristics of that period was an overexpansion of the aerospace industry, which remains a large problem today. The failure of the exotic technological ideas to produce practical military hardware led to the present period, in which military expansionists complain that "no new weapons systems have been started lately," while the Soviets appear to be in a state of rapid growth. This apparent growth, however, is principally the continuing attempt by the Russians to catch up with

the over-rapid evolution of U.S. military systems which began before and continued beyond Sputnik.

The main point of the Panofsky review is this:

> York's book in effect constitutes a preamble to a final warning that widespread introduction of ABM's and MIRV's will lead to what he calls the "ultimate absurdity in nuclear weaponry." What York means by the "ultimate absurdity" goes beyond the now generally accepted conclusion that the superpowers in expanding their nuclear weaponry at enormous cost have thereby decreased their security. What York points out is that if we are unable to avoid the further arms spiral inherent in the interplay between ABM and MIRV, then the premium on speed of decision whether or not to use nuclear weapons will increase even further. This implies that the question of control of military actions will no longer be simply a contest between civilian and military (or Executive and Congressional!) authority but might become a contest between control by men and control by machines. York points out that even if the required speed of response per se would not require the President to predelegate the authority to fire nuclear weapons to lower echelons of command, or even to a computer, the time for decision-making available to the President would be so short that he himself would have to be de facto "Pre-programmed" to make a predictable decision in the face of apparent enemy action. The evidence relating to such action would be presented to him, but he himself could not have time for critical evaluation of the information. This is the "ultimate absurdity" of which York speaks.

In short, when people collectively believe that the "real" virtues of their society are in machines rather than men, in technique rather than human understanding, the internal logic of this situation eventually produces a climactic development which tends to place ultimate decision in the hands of machines instead of men.

A great many talented, intelligent, and humane persons—men like Mr. York and Mr. Panofsky—are convinced that the decision before the country with respect to ABM and MIRV systems is the most crucial in our history. This decision doubtless represents a crisis in our affairs, but the underlying problem—the shadow cast on our thinking by hardened self-righteousness allowed by external ideas of virtue and good—is really the root of many if not all of the ills of the present. We may get through today's crisis by the skin of our teeth, but there will soon be another desperate situation, and another one after that, and it is childish to suppose that we can survive them all. The only remedy is a basic and widespread "transformation of conscience" along the lines of Paul Goodman's New Reformation.

The brittle modes of thinking which result from the externalization of virtue operate in many ways, and in every case produce dilemmas and insoluble problems. The reader of Richard Sennett's new book, *The Uses of Disorder* (Knopf, $5.95), will doubtless agree that the rigid images of "purity" and "righteousness" often characteristic of dissenting religious cults are by no means only religious phenomena. Mr. Sennett devotes much analysis to showing that these harsh demands for conformity may emerge as stages of arrested development in adolescent idealism. The arrest occurs because of the pain and continuous effort that are now required to remain a moral person and at the same time adapt to the existing society. This arrest is clearly evident in the "youth revolution" of the present, and accounts for Paul Goodman's comparative disaffection with many of the directions the youth revolt is taking. In his first chapter, Mr. Sennett discusses this sort of "purity" as a form of flight:

> The seekers after purity in more religious times seemed revolutionaries to the men around them. The Puritans, or the millenarians of an even earlier era, were impatient with the ills of the temporal world and acted to make it over—or at least the swatches of it they controlled—in their own image. Indeed, today, one of the easy clichés about some young revolutionaries is that their desire for purity in the society and in themselves creates the revolutionary drive.
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> But hidden in this desire to purify one's identity to others and oneself is a conservative tendency. The known in this scheme of identity is so insistently taken as true that new unknowns which don't fit are excluded. Reality cannot be permitted to be other than what is encompassed in one's clearly articulated images of oneself and one's world. The obvious result, then, is that the material for change, change in

> one's feelings, one's beliefs, one's desires, is greatly weakened in a life because new events or experiences are being measured in terms of how well they correspond to a pre-existent pattern. The advent of unexpected experience is not permitted a reality of its own; the fear involved in the identity process prohibits men from feeling themselves free historical beings. Thus does this passion to create a clear self-identity act to conserve the known past in the face of the disturbing present. The historical turn, the event or experience that doesn't fit preconceived feelings and one's sense of place, is deflated in its "truth values." Because of this fear, the more comfortable, the easier dicta of the past are made the final standard of reference.

This is a valuable book, since it gets behind the facades of various opposing positions, showing the common weaknesses in inauthentic conceptions of man's nature. In essence, *The Uses of Disorder* is about the indivisible character of true virtue, which is always subjective and casts no distracting shadows over areas of primary human concern.

REVIEW
ON COMMUNITY PLANNING

WHAT is the reason—justification or excuse—for a city or large town? If we consult what ought to be instead of what is, there is only one sensible reason for an urban center of population, and that is that it gathers together in one place diverse excellences of human experience—qualities not commonly found in association except by plan. The city, in other words, has primarily an educational reason for being.

If this is the case, then city planning, which is a special case of community planning, should begin with a conception of an educational center—a school or college, perhaps a university. If the school is of the right sort, devoted to the needs of the people, there may be very little more to do in the way of planning. The school is the seed, and the community will grow. The people of the school will invent the town. The resourcefulness of genuine teachers will create fields of human activity that will be fruitful for various ways of life, making the community a place of enrichment and learning for all who come there.

One might say, confronted with this idea, that it is no more than dreamy theory, proposed in neglect of the hard facts of man's social and economic life. Yet the development we speak of has already happened, and there is a fairly detailed report on how it worked. The report is Arthur Morgan's book, *Industries f or Small Communities*, first published by Community Service, Inc., Yellow Springs, Ohio, in 1953, and reissued with a new preface in 1962 (available in cloth at $2.50). This book is in part the story of the relationship of Antioch College, of which Dr. Morgan was resuscitator and President, with the town of Yellow Springs. We quote from the first chapter:

> A farmer's village of less than 1500 people, with a very small liberal college, and with almost no industrial life, in the course of two or three decades has become the location of a dozen extremely varied industries, with more than 500 regular employees on its payrolls, and with annual sales of its products of about $7,000,000. In addition, about a dozen economic undertakings including industrial design, an advertising agency, wholesale distributors, contractors and others have developed businesses there. As big business goes in America that is very "small pickings," yet to this small community it means a large increase in the number and variety of ways for its young people to make a living; it means added tax income, a greater variety of personal and cultural interests, and the greater degree of security which tends to be the result of variety of sources of income. It is of interest that all of these little industries are independent, and are locally owned.

Why care about small industry for small towns? For the simple reason that, to survive, towns need industry, and it is just not true that industry must be a giant enterprise. The return to the land which is now taking place needs a stronger economic base than subsistence farming, and the deliberate development of small industry is surely one way to restore strength, diversity, and independence to rural or semi-rural life in the United States. And this sort of restoration must be accomplished through the individual initiative and invention of the people themselves. It cannot be done "for" them. Yet help and example can be provided. In its early years, under the guidance of Mr. Morgan, Antioch College did exactly this. He writes in his Preface:

> There were a number of reasons for the initial development of industrial undertakings in Yellow Springs. With no industrial activity in the community, it became necessary for most young people to leave the area to find satisfactory employment. This condition threatened the community with a trend toward obsolescence. The development of industries would provide both a social and an economic base.
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> At first the development of industries was somewhat related to Antioch College. The revival of the college was more than just an attempt to rescue a moribund institution. It was an effort to give expression to a philosophy of education which had been in the process of development and formulation for 25 years. In general, this philosophy was that education should be concerned with the development

of every important element of human personality and of human interest. In every phase of education and of living, whether in philosophy or literature or science or economic life, while education is helped by knowing *about* things, it is most creative and productive when we actually participate—by exploring, experimenting and practicing our subjects—until we have so mastered them that we actually live by what we have learned. Our practice discloses elements which were overlooked in our theories, and so disciplines and corrects our theories. This is true in most fields. The philosopher who does not live his philosophy probably will fail to correct vital errors. A young person who only studies business administration at college, not only will largely fail to understand what he studies, but will pass his most creative years without opportunity to make his own original contribution.

There was a desire to create industries in association with Antioch College so that students and faculty together might actually learn by the process of exploration, inquiry and development, and by practice at effective operation. Also, it was hoped that this process might contribute to the economic support of the college. A real test of economic competence is Can the undertaking survive and "pay?

Sociologists and reformers may write books about the shortcomings of industry and business, "but what do they know about it, since they never ran a business?" Few efforts to improve the standards of American business can be so effective as actual cases of successful business conducted by wholesome standards. It was one of the hopes of Antioch that its industrial initiative might contribute to these ends. This interest at Antioch suggested similar activity by others who had no direct association with the college.

Thus during a few years most of the present industrial products originated. Even during that period the effort was intermittent and haphazard, because the struggle to revive a tiny college near extinction, when the total annual budget was only about $15,000, took nearly all the available time and energy. The favorable results which did follow reflect the validity of the idea, rather than any marked effectiveness in its execution.

In this book, Mr. Morgan gives the histories of a number of concerns which grew out of this original stimulus by Antioch College. The accounts are no substitute for individual inventiveness and vision, yet they are, when considered in scale, a fine example of what can result from deliberate encouragement of the sort provided by Antioch College. It should be added that after Dr. Morgan withdrew from active participation in the administration of Antioch, the interest in industrial initiative largely disappeared.

How might a new college started in the present profit by the example of Antioch? An answer to this question is provided by a recent essay by E. F. Schumacher, one of the papers submitted earlier this year to a seminar on "The Relevance of Gandhi to Our Times," held in New Delhi. Its title is "The Economics of Permanence." In it Dr. Schumacher says:

> What is it that we really require from the scientists and technologists? I should answer: We need methods and equipment which are
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> (*a*) cheap enough so that they are accessible to virtually everyone;
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> (*b*) suitable for small-scale application; and
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> (*c*) compatible with man's need for creativity.
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> Out of these three characteristics is born non-violence and a relationship of man to nature which guarantees permanence. If only one of these three is neglected, things are bound to go wrong. Let us look at them one by one.
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> Methods and machines cheap enough to be accessible to virtually everyone—why should we assume that our scientists and technologists are unable to develop them? This has been a primary concern of Gandhi's. "I want the dumb millions of our land to be healthy and happy, and I want them to grow spiritually. As yet for this purpose we do not need the machine. . . . If we feel the need of machines, we certainly will have them. Every machine that helps every individual has a place," he said, "but there should be no place for machines that concentrate power in a few hands and turn the masses into mere machine-minders, if indeed they do not make them unemployed."
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> Suppose it becomes the acknowledged purpose of inventors and engineers, observed Aldous Huxley, to provide ordinary people with the means of "doing profitable and intrinsically significant work, of helping men and women to achieve independence from bosses, so that they may become their own employers, or members of a self-governing,

> cooperative group working for subsistence and a local market. . . . this differently orientated technological progress [would result in] a progressive decentralization of population, of accessibility of land, of ownership of the means of production, of political and economic power." Other advantages, said Huxley, would be "a more humanly satisfying life for more people, a greater measure of genuine self-governing democracy and a blessed freedom from the silly or pernicious adult education provided by the producers of consumer goods through the medium of advertisements."

The engineers who teach in a small college could set projects like the one here outlined by Schumacher and Huxley, and try them out in the community, more or less along the lines of Dr. Morgan's example. Efforts like this, if consistently made, could lead to a regenerated life for many people, who would in time inspire others to follow their example. There is nothing impossible or even improbable in this proposal. It is another way of doing what Dr. Morgan has already done. Community planning? Antioch was obviously the best possible plan for Yellow Springs. The college provided guided spontaneity for self-reliant growth.

COMMENTARY
WHAT MEASURES "PROGRESS"?

MORE than a hundred years ago (in 1862), Tolstoy wrote on the subject of "progress" for his magazine, *Yasnaya Polyana*, published in connection with his school for peasant children. In this article, "Progress and Education," he challenged the conventional idea of progress. He began by questioning its familiar measures, as formulated by H. T. Buckle, involving "social and economic progress, the progress of the sciences, the industrial and fine arts, and especially the invention of powder, printing, and roads of communication." Who, Tolstoy asks, decides that this sort of progress leads to human well-being?

> In order to believe that it does, I need that not exceptional people, who belong to an exceptional class,—historians, thinkers, and journalists,—should recognize it as so, but that the whole mass of people, subject to the action of progress, should recognize that progress leads to well-being. We, on the contrary, consistently see a phenomenon which contradicts it. . . . A man who will look at all sides of humanity's life without bias will always find that the progress on one side is purchased at the expense of a retrogression on the other side of human life.

An opponent of Tolstoy's ideas of education had argued that Macaulay proved the case for education in the service of this sort of progress. Tolstoy examined Macaulay's evidence, finding the following "important facts":

> (1) The population has increased, and that to such an extent that Malthus's theory becomes a necessity. (2) There was no army, and now it has become immense; the same is true of the fleet. (3) The number of petty agriculturalists has diminished. (4) The cities have drawn to them the greater part of the population. (5) The land has been stripped of forests. (6) Wages have become half as large again, but prices have increased on everything and the comforts of life have become fewer. (7) The taxes for the poor have increased tenfold; there are more newspapers; the illumination of the streets is better; wives and children are beaten less, and English ladies have begun to write without orthographical mistakes.

Today, except for wife-beating and street illumination, and perhaps wage increases (an arguable matter), progress is beginning to be measured by the success we make in *reversing* these once admirable tendencies! Tolstoy's argument may not be flawless, but he has the best of the debate with Macaulay, here, at least. He goes on to point out that the believers in "progress" are "the educated gentry, the educated merchant and official classes—the leisure classes." These are the ones who profit by it, who enjoy its presumed advantages.

This is Tolstoy's argument from the facts. His argument from principle, on the basis of metaphysical assumption, is briefly put:

> The law of progress, of perfectibility, is written in the soul of each man, and is transferred to history only through error. As long as it remains personal, this law is fruitful and accessible to all; when it is transferred to history, it becomes idle empty prattle, leading to the justification of every insipidity and to fatalism.

Tolstoy's contention is that progress should be measured solely in terms of the quality of individual human beings, not according to the material conditions of life; and especially not according to conditions available only to a favored few.

This argument still goes on, but there are few who side with Tolstoy openly. The popular form of the debate is still on the basis of "facts." In the *Saturday Review* for Aug. 15, for example, Horace Sutton assembles pro and con arguments concerning the super sonic transport—SST—that Boeing has on the drafting board. This enormous airplane will travel at Mach 2 (about 1,400 miles an hour), carry two or three hundred passengers, and fly in the upper atmosphere at an altitude of between sixty and seventy thousand feet. All the familiar "progress" arguments are made in favor of the SST—which will bring great convenience, be good business—and if we don't get on with it the French and the Russians will establish themselves with SST flights before we do.

There are two main objections made to the SST. The one most forcefully offered is that comparatively few people will benefit from these flights, while everyone exposed to the deafening noise the SST makes (equal to fifty subsonic jets) will suffer without choice. The other argument anticipates pollution of the upper atmosphere by moisture, carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides, and "particulate matter." Now being argued back and forth is the question of whether these precipitates might tend to diminish the protective ozone band which exists at that level, without which the full force of solar radiation "would wipe out all life except in the oceans." This likelihood is held to be small, but important to consider. Another warning by geophysicists is that the increase of aerosols—pollution particles—at that altitude could produce an effect similar to that resulting from great volcanic eruptions which spew masses of fine ash into the upper atmosphere, where it remains for years, obstructing solar radiation, cooling the earth and causing crop failures—as it did 1816 in Europe and America after a major eruption. The fact is that the earth has been chilling since 1950, according to a University of California ecologist. Nobody knows—or is sure—why Jets already in use may be doing it. These possibilities are called "iffy," and the editor of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* remarked in a letter to the *SR* (Sept. 5) that "the effect of environmental contamination by these vehicles is largely hypothetical," adding, however, that there ought to be "an accurate assessment of pollutants and their climatic effects before the SST era opens, as it inevitably will."

While the conclusions reached at a conference of geophysicists this summer added to the apprehensions already expressed concerning the danger from aerosols, the claims of the champions of "progress" seem likely to win out, unless the much deeper reform in the very idea of "progress" proposed by Tolstoy rapidly gains strength.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
THE TEACHING COMMUNITY

BOTH Arthur Morgan and Paul Goodman have written extensively on the community as the teacher of the young. Dr. Morgan, who has lived in small towns all his life, once observed how much a boy learns while hanging around a blacksmith shop. There are *still* a few blacksmiths left, and in rural areas similar places, sometimes with friendly workmen, where the young are able to find out at first hand something about the work of the world. Writing in the *New York Review of Books* for April 10, 1969, Goodman declared the virtues of what he terms "incidental education," in contrast to devitalized academic or formal education. In criticism of the latter, he said:

> At present, when formal education swallows up so much time of life and pretends to be practical preparation for every activity, ideological processing is especially deadly. Those who succumb to it have no wits of their own and are robots. . . .
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> Finally, unlike incidental learning, which is natural and inevitable, formal schooling is a deliberate intervention and must justify itself. We must ask not only is it well done, but is it worth doing and *can* it be well done? There is a line of critics from Lao-tse and Socrates to Carl Rogers who assert that there is no such thing as teaching, of either science or virtue; and there is strong empirical evidence that schooling has little effect on either vocational ability or citizenship.

The last batch of evidence on this question is assembled by Ivar Berg in *The Great Training Robbery* (Praeger, 1970).

The idea of "incidental education" is by no means new. As Goodman says:

> . . . in all societies, both primitive and highly civilized, until quite recently most education of most children has occurred incidentally. Adults do their work and other social tasks children are not excluded, are paid attention to, and learn to be included. The children are not "taught". . . . In Greek *paideia*, the entire network of institutions, the *polis*, was thought of as importantly an educator.

Thus the re-creation of humanly scaled communities where simple economic activities go on is essential for the restoration of education. The basic educational philosophy which underlies all ideas of this sort was clearly expressed by Robert Oliver in a contribution to the Teachers College (Columbia) *Record* for December, 1968:

> Over time, the strength and quality of a community depend on an intricate web of reciprocal influences between all its various members. The vitality of the common life springs from the unique inspiration that each person can draw from his daily contact with men who incarnate diverse competencies. . . .
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> Human excellence is subtle and complex; it is not nurtured well in the hothouse of stereotyped virtuosities. Each youth forms his character by observing thousands and thousands of examples. To be sure, for any particular person only a few from the myriad serve as real models; but the capacity of a person to see another as his model results largely because the youth has less intimately examined many other exemplary figures and because, both with and against them, he has formed nascent standards by which he can identify his personal prototypes. In this sense, the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker are the world's most important teachers, for it is in daily contact with mundane, local competencies that the children of all, even the exalted, form their elementary standards. Hence a community should most prize a healthy complement of humble heroes.

We interrupt the flow of Mr. Oliver's discourse with a minor plea for a little "formal" study, in this case of History. In the collection of Arthur Morgan's writings titled *Observations*, there is the following on the importance of the study of history:

> A person without history or knowledge of the past must see the world as commonplace because, except at extreme times, he is going to live among commonplace people who have come to that conclusion. . . . The only way to get the sum and substance of human experience is to reach out beyond the years we have into the years of the past, into the significant experiences of the human race.

This, you could say, would add to the contributions of Mr. Oliver's "humble heroes." But what does he mean by "hero"?

> A hero is a man who takes the effort to be himself. It is surprising that one should speak about "the effort to be himself," for in a very literal sense the only thing that a man can be without effort, thanks to the law of identity, is himself. But on examination such literalness proves deceptive. A man is not one of those static substances to which the law of identity was designed to apply; a man is a perpetual becoming, and to be himself, a man must continually exert effort to become something very special, his self. The self denotes for a man his potential accomplishments by which he can add to the world his unique, personal contribution. The self is always invested with a sense of opportunity, creativeness, and particularity; one sees here something that one can and should do, and one is fired by the excitement of having a function and a chance to show one's excellence in its performance, perhaps to no one but one's self! At the same time, the self is always dangerous, for the pursuit of it carries with it the threat of failure; with respect to it, one is on one's own. Ortega y Gasset put it well in his *Meditations* on *Quixote:* "to be a hero means to be one out of many, to be oneself. If we refuse to have our actions determined by heredity or environment it is because we seek to base the origin of our actions on ourselves and only on ourselves. The hero's will is not that of his ancestors nor of his society, but his own. This will to be oneself is heroism."

Mr. Oliver's reader can't help but wonder where, today, one would look for some "heroes," even humble ones. Inevitably, you think of New England, which nourished a sturdy breed and where a sometimes prickly independence still survives, as travelers find, even today. Could there be a *tradition* of humble heroism? Perhaps not, but the influence of the community life can be in this direction. In her *Vermont Tradition*, Dorothy Canfield Fisher tells a little about the life of Justin Morill, who died in 1899. He wrote the bill that brought land-grant colleges into being in the United States. Morill was a Vermont shopkeeper who retired at thirty-eight, to find that his neighbors wanted to send him to the Senate. A story told by Morill gives a taste of community life in Vermont:

> Religious institutions have not markedly shaped the Vermont way of life. One of the stories often told by the Senator [Morill] was a variation on the theme familiar, in one form or another, all over our State—the disconcerting response to emotional revivalists who in the early nineteenth century swept over our nation during the evangelical movement. The story ran this way: a local "character," curious about what a revival meeting might be, attended one held in Strafford. Towards the end, the brass-lunged, hell-fire predicting revivalist shouted hoarsely at him, "Brother, have you got religion?" To which the Strafford man called back with brisk pride, "Not any to boast of, I can tell ye."

Morill's story seems an apt illustration of what Mr. Oliver says next about the "humble hero":

> It takes effort . . . to be oneself, . . . for each of us is surrounded by ready-made images that are tendered to us by our ancestors and society, two powerful authorities, and these images beckon to us to give them flesh and blood. By so inserting ourselves into the available stereotypes we add nothing to the world, nothing vital, that is, but merely help it to be one of those dull substances that are what they are. . . . the little man finds it hard to assert his heartfelt aspirations against the advice of those content to follow conventional wisdom and smart money. What courage, in its fullest, Socratic sense must a shopkeeper have to risk his hard-won savings to start a local store in a time when supermarkets are the thing! But he is a man who knows that the only thing to fear is the weakness that seduces one into renouncing one's chosen way of life. Perhaps his store will fail, it may endure, it might even flourish—such uncertainties are the stuff of keeping shop and it is not his improbable success, but his having lived in sincere fidelity to his intentions, that makes the man a hero.
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> . . . in the long run wealth and security are merely the sweetening on insentience; the real challenge before each teacher is to realize those unique, personal qualities by which he can become a humble hero to the boy on the block.

FRONTIERS

Desegregation: "Progress Report"

THE article by Willie Morris, "Yazoo . . . Notes on Survival," in the June *Harper's* gave a kaleidoscopic view of the processes of integration in the public schools of Yazoo City, Mississippi, Mr. Morris' home town. His report enriched the reader's understanding of the difference between passing a law and making it work. Willie Morris expressed a cautious optimism concerning the progress of desegregation of the schools, giving his reasons, based on experience, for both the optimism and the caution.

In the *Journal of Human Relations* for the first quarter of this year (published by Central State University, Wilberforce, Ohio), Charles A. Glatt writes "A Letter to My Colleagues" from the thick of the integration struggle. (Dr. Glatt is associate professor of Educational Development at Ohio State University.) Like Willie Morris, Dr. Glatt is a southerner, a native of Louisiana. Early in his letter, he sets out the working conditions of his mission:

> Last May I went into Southern Mississippi to work with the first local district in that state which voluntarily was desegregating its schools. I drove into the town where I was to meet with some other consultants, checked into a motel, and bought a newspaper. (Being "up to date" on what is happening is very important in this work.) The front page carried a story about some local excitement the night before. One of the town's newscasters whose views were considered to be too liberal had been awakened by the blast of a bomb that tore his house asunder. . . .
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> Incidents such as these, thank God, are not common. Maybe because I am somewhat of a coward, however, I have yet to escape completely from anxiety about the possibility of physical harm. You see, dear colleagues, I grew up among dirt farmers, southern rednecks. I am a redneck. I know as a non-southerner can never know some of the intense feelings about racial togetherness that persists among my relatives, my childhood friends, the people who rode the passenger train that I formerly helped run from Vicksburg to New Orleans. The people with whom I work now in desegregation institutes have similar anxieties. One of my close friends in a southern state confided earlier this week that he never ends a day without thanking God that no one has shot at him, dynamited his car, or otherwise sought to end his participation in school desegregation.

School administrators and teachers expected to accomplish desegregation are subjected to unceasing pressure, their children and families made objects of scorn. School boards are losing their liberal members, leaving die-hard racists in charge. "Affirmative policy will not happen so long as these people remain the controlling force on school boards." Other problems reflect new complications which cannot be met by legislative means. For example, in Negro community life, the schools, Dr. Glatt says, "have historically served a broader range of social needs than white schools have." Yet—

> The desegregation of schools has all too often been a one-way street—the movement of black children into white schools. As a result, the cohesiveness given a Negro community by its schools is destroyed. A void is created that in many instances is not being filled. I cannot stress enough how important that is.

Dr. Glatt is *for* desegregation. He is back in the South working to see it achieved. Yet his article is chiefly important in showing how much more is involved in radical cultural change than passing a law. Feeling uncomfortable, he says:

> I hope that overall this letter does not appear to be one-sided. Please believe me. There are some great and wonderful white folks in the South. The separatists are verbal. Decent people are difficult to motivate into action. I believe that most of the social inertia in the South is not a result of weak convictions. It is rather a lack of knowing what an individual or a family or a community can do. You know, it is extremely easy to devise ways to destroy. Building, creating, constructing—these are the difficult tasks.

Yet from the sudden impact of working together, people are learning. While many Negro teachers, Dr. Glatt says, told him in private "that they were quite apprehensive about teaching alongside whites," he also talked to white teachers who were recovering from stereotyped preconceptions. One of these teachers watched

what the black teachers were doing and knew that it was good:

> "I finally decided that since they were now teaching here I couldn't stand the idea that they would also be the best in our school. So I got busy. For me, desegregation was the best thing that could have happened."

Another encounter:

> One lady came to me during a break. "Dr. Glatt, I am the only Negro teacher, and the first one, in this school. . . . Everything seems to be all right except in the lounge. Those white teachers don't even talk to me, they just grunt. And they don't even have the courtesy to call me Miss Perkins. It's just Mary. What can be done about this?"
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> I agreed to bring such behaviors before the entire group for discussion without identifying Miss Perkins. I asked her however, if during the next day (since we were meeting again then) she would simply listen in the lounge and notice what the white teachers were saying to each other. She agreed.
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> The next afternoon Miss Perkins came to me. "Dr. Glatt do you know something? Those white teachers just grunt to each other! One asks a question and the other answers 'Uh huh,' or 'Uh uh.' Maybe they just say 'Ah.' I hadn't noticed that. And do you know something else? They all call each other by their first names, too." Miss Perkins, of course, was expecting to be treated differently and had not realized that she had been accepted simply as another teacher.

The worst problems arise in areas where there has been no psychological preparation for desegregation, or where there is outright resistance. The law may then even work backwards. For example, a county system in South Carolina failed to meet HEW requirements and federal funds were to terminate as a result. It was then announced that ninety-three teachers and teacher aides would have to be dismissed. This led to a state education association report which said 57 per cent of the student population in that county are black, with only seven per cent attending white schools, and an NEA official revealed that "80 of the 93 teachers and aides who face dismissal are Negro."

Dr. Glatt ends his discussion with a "haunting question":

> I received this note from a participant in one of the meetings two or three nights ago: "Dr. Glatt, explain how you went about changing your attitudes about Negroes, and what you are actually doing to help change the attitudes of people in the community where you live?" My answer began, "I was smart. I selected my own parents very carefully."

He is still working on the second part of the question.

Incidentally, six school systems outside the South face loss of funds because their practices do not come up to HEW standards on desegregation:

> They are Middletown, Ohio; Wichita, Kansas; Penn Hills, Pennsylvania; Union Township, New Jersey; Kansas City, Missouri; and Ferndale, Mich. Tow other districts—Waterbury, Connecticut, and Pasadena, California—have been referred to the Justice Department for possible legal action.