VOLUME XXIII, NO. 39
SEPTEMBER 30, 1970

THE INITIATIVE IN GROWTH

IN an article in the *Saturday Review* last spring (April 18), Jerome Bruner spoke of the central problem of our time as arising out of the growing difference between personal and social objectives. This seems accurate. It is certainly accurate as an explanation of the revolt of youth, who find the goals of the United States, as defined by the nation's political and military activities in Southeast Asia, in direct conflict with their own aims and ideals. What are those ideals?

Here, some distinctions need to be made. The sense of frustration felt by young people is much more in evidence than the goals they would like to reach, which are defined mainly by negative reaction to conditions they abhor. A clarifying discussion of this question is found in Richard Sennett's book, *The Uses of Disorder* (Knopf, 1970), in which the author distinguishes between popular oversimplifications of youthful dissent and the underlying reality:

> Were one to follow the wisdom of the contemporary press, the group of adolescents who would seem under the sway of . . . need for a rigid identity would be the young in revolt. Yet the young people whom the press labels as student leaders are actually deviants from the real body of student unrest. These newspaper-created "student rebels" are ideologues, whose political ideas are a throwback to the primitive formulas of the 1930's. A great body of the young are disaffected, to be sure, but their alienation is much more courageous, precisely because they have, in my experience, the integrity to be confused about what they want for themselves. Perhaps because these young people are trying to construct a decent life for themselves without the old, easy guides, the simplicity entailed in press reporting must ignore them. But in good studies such as those by Jack Newfield or Kenneth Keniston, the reader can only be struck by how few are under the sway of the "new fascism," as the press calls it, or under the sway of Progressive Labor Party Dogma. Rather, these affluent radicals are experimenters with themselves, and so are willing to experience painful confusion even in the face of their radical commitment.

How then should we speak of the personal objectives of the young? They are hardly different, in substance, from the longings of a great many people, which are for individual expression, growth, and human fulfillment. It is true enough that the political arrangements of the American people have been praised for generations precisely for the reason that they are supposed to make these private realizations possible, but this means, now, that feelings of deep betrayal are added to those of frustration. There is also a sense of dilemma, for if a democratic social order now produces so many restrictive and unwanted results, is this evidence that the longed-for freedom can be purchased only by giving it up?

It may relieve the confusion somewhat to think of the total human situation in terms of two simple needs or principles, that of *order,* and that of *growth.* For this purpose it is useful to recall the contrast made by Northrop Frye (in an essay in *Higher Education: Demand and Response*) between the Social Contract and what he terms the Educational Contract. It seems evident that, except for its utilitarian functions, the Social Contract was meant to secure the freedom of the people to pursue their own growth in whatever seemed to them desirable directions. The securing agency was the Government or the State, to which the people delegated specific authority and specific powers, the latter to be exercised in behalf of the common good. The final end of the Social Contract is thus a condition of reliable order, and the authority of the Government is to be admitted and defended out of consideration for the value of this service.

The Educational Contract is a much more tacit affair, yet its principles are not obscure.

Growth, rather than any specific goal, is the end of the educational contract. Growth requires freedom; for human beings, growth is a self-induced and voluntary act, so that the sort of order which belongs to the educational relationship is self-rule, and the authority involved is rational and ethical.

The proposition here offered is that the Educational Contract, which is not a legal agreement, but rests on the intuitive consensus of everyone involved, is a far more important relationship than it is given credit for. The proposition is that the social contract continually gets credit for the benefits that grow out of the educational contract, with the result that less and less attention is given to educational relationships, to the conditions natural and good for the learning process. The result is that, in time, education weakens, learning stops, and then we demand more and more of the social contract, on the assumption that it is failing, when the trouble is not there, at all.

At issue is the assumption that a law which represents the consensus of common sense, because it is passed by a legislature, thereby becomes the *reason* for the orderly behavior of people in accord with the provisions of the law, when the really operative reason is the continuing sense of the people. The law only formulates and publishes this sense. A law may or may not embody common sense, but even at its best it is not itself common sense, which is innately intelligent, flexible, and wise—qualities which a system of law can only imperfectly reflect.

We are conducting here neither an attack on law nor a plea for the abolition of government. It is an attack on the assumption that government can compensate effectively for the failure of human intelligence and common sense. This point of view is expressed by Vinoba Bhave, in an interview made by Kumar Satish and printed in the British magazine, *Resurgence,* for July-October, 1969 (reprinted in the *Peacemaker* for Aug. 15, 1970). Asked how he would go about making government better, Vinoba replied:

> It is difficult to make governments better, but if there is any ideal form of government then I would say that the best kind of government is the one where it is possible to doubt whether any government exists at all.
>
> We ourselves should be seeing to the affairs of our own village, or community, or town, or locality, instead of doing just the opposite and handing over all power to the center. The less activity, the better government. An ideal government would have no armies, no police force, and no penalties. The people would manage their own affairs, listening rationally to advice and allowing themselves to be guided by moral considerations.

When Kumar Satish said that this sounded as though Vinoba wanted no government at all, he replied that he wanted self-government. Asked to describe self-government, he continued:

> The first characteristic is not to allow any outside power in the world to exercise control over one's self, and the second characteristic is not to exercise power over any other. These two things together make self-government and people's politics. No submission and no exploitation. This can be brought into being only by a revolution in the people's conscience and mind. My program of giving and sharing is designed to bring it about. I am continually urging that believers in non-violence should use their strength to establish a government by the people and put an end to government by politicians. There is a false notion in the world that governments are our saviors and that without them we should be lost. People imagine that they cannot do without a government. I can understand that people cannot do without agriculture or industry, that they cannot get on without love and culture, music and literature, but governments do not come into this category. I would suggest that all our administrators and politicians should be given leave for two years, just to see what happens in their absence. Would any of the ordinary work of the world come to an end? Would the dairyman no longer make butter or the market gardener not sell vegetables? Would people stop getting married and having babies? If the government were to take leave for two years it would destroy the popular illusion that a government is indispensable.

Another question—why Vinoba does not campaign for a law to socialize the land in India, instead of walking from village to village to persuade the landowners to give their holdings to the village voluntarily—brought this response:

> The spreading of revolutionary ideas is no part of the government's duty. In fact, revolutions cannot be organized and brought about by the established institutions of politics. The government can only act on an idea when it has been generally accepted, and then it is compelled to act on it. We say that in India we have democracy, then the government is the servant and the people are the masters. When you want to get an idea accepted, do you explain it to the servant or to the master? If you put it before the master and he approves, he will instruct his clerk to prepare the deed of gift. That is why I am putting my ideas before you—it is you, the people, who are the masters.

In the terms of our analysis—or proposition—Vinoba is simply reversing the order of priorities as they are now practiced in the world. He is making the needs of the Educational Contract more important than the requirements of the Social Contract. He is urging that the best measure of human progress is the degree to which the educational contract has *replaced* the social contract in human relationships. It is an elementary fact that learning ceases when coercion begins. One could say that the chief value of human association, which is learning from one another, is rendered psychologically impossible by a compulsory relationship, although—and this seems extraordinarily important—there may be a great many kinds of learning that take place in spite of the compulsion, and therefore in association with it, but never *because* of it. In business, for example, it is well known that the best administrators give the fewest "orders." Likewise, the freest countries have the fewest laws. The man with the most freedom has the least need to think or talk about it. So it is that within all formal social structure, the best function is obtained when the laws or rules are, so to speak, forgotten, because their provisions have been made practically irrelevant by the self-government Vinoba speaks of. When it was suggested to him that this is utopian, and he was asked what could be done *now*, he said:

> We should do everything at our command so that the need for a government should progressively diminish. In the final analysis the government would give up all executive power and act in a purely advisory capacity. As the morals of the people improve, the area of the authoritarian government will be reduced and government orders will be fewer and fewer. In the end it will issue no orders at all. The ultimate goal of my movement is freedom from government. I use the words "freedom from government" and not absence of government. Absence of government can be seen in a number of societies where no order is maintained and where anti-social elements do as they please. A society free from government does not mean a society without order. It means orderly society but one in which administrative authority rests at the grass roots level and every member of the community has active participation and involvement. For this reason the purpose of my march is to rouse the people to an awareness of their own strength, to get them to stand on their own feet. I want to see all the village lands in the hands of the village and not under private ownership. And to that end I am trying to get the common people to realize their power and organize it independently.
>
> The establishment of such a participatory, non-bureaucratic self-directing society calls for a network of self-sufficient units. Production, distribution, defense, education, everything should be localized. The center should have the least possible authority. We shall thus achieve decentralization through regional self-sufficiency. I do not expect that every village should immediately produce all its own needs. The unit for self-sufficiency may be a group of communities. In short, all our planning will be directed towards a progressive abolition of government control by means of regional self-reliance. Our goal should be that every individual becomes as self-reliant as possible.

While Vinoba uses the language of extremes more, perhaps, than Gandhi did, the main thrust of his intention is wholly consistent with Gandhian philosophy. The aim is that the voluntary energies of the educational contract or relationships should gradually displace all external controls. Usually, the tendency is in the opposite direction. The "last resort" of coercion in democratic politics

gradually becomes the first and only means of obtaining a desired condition. Vinoba proposes a deliberate reversal of this tendency, involving the gradual erosion of external controls. Nowhere does he propose the static compromise of conventional liberal politics—personal freedom within a fixed legal framework established by the Social Contract. All such compromises are unstable, since actual, working balance requires movement in one direction or the other. If there is not strong and continuous movement in the direction of self-rule, the external controls will inevitably increase until, finally, ideas of self-government and voluntary action are considered to be romantic nonsense, totally beyond the capacity of man.

This is a way of saying that there is no *good* politics which does not seek its own reduction. The good politics continually invites voluntary action to push it out of existence. The only good government, then, is government ready and eager to abdicate from power, wherever and whenever possible. Government should be conceived as a temporary, stopgap measure. Only from this point of view can sense be made of Vinoba's answer to Satish Kumar's question: "Why don't you protest strongly when the government does something wrong?" This was the reply:

> It is true that I do not make such protest, but I do raise my voice when the government does something good. There is no need for me to protest against the government's faults; it is against its good deeds that my protests are needed. I have to tell people what sheep they are. Is it a matter of rejoicing if you all turn into sheep and tell me how well the shepherds look after you? What am I to say? It seems to me that it would be better if the shepherds neglected their duty. The sheep would then, at least, realize that they are sheep. They might then come to their senses and remember that they are, after all, not sheep but men, capable of managing their own affairs. This is why my voice is raised in opposition to good government. Bad government has been condemned long ago by many people. We know very well that bad governments should not be allowed, but what seems wrong to me is that we should allow ourselves to be governed at all, even by a good government. To me the politics of government is not people's politics. We must find the courage to believe that we are capable of managing our own affairs and that no outside authority can stop us.

It is important to recognize that throughout this interview Vinoba is speaking in terms of the values of the educational contract. The realities of human beings and their social life lie in the potentialities of growth. Like Gandhi, who wanted the Indian people to prove their capacity for self-rule through voluntary, independent action—by means of his constructive program—Vinoba is interested in the development of individual strength and authority, qualities which no man can take away from another.

Vinoba is concerned with the inner development which is the essence of being human. In the story of the Greek hero, Theseus, it is told that his father, Aegeus, placed his sword and sandals under a heavy rock and returned to Athens before Theseus was born. When he was still a small boy, Theseus' mother showed him the rock and told him what lay hidden beneath it. "Lift the rock," she said, "and you will find your inheritance." But Theseus, being only a boy, couldn't lift the rock. Each year, he tried. But he also worked to make himself strong. He grew in himself a vision of how it would be when he attained to a man's strength. So, finally, the day came when the rock was no longer too heavy, and the cycle of the hero began.

Theseus' mother spoke in the language of potential reality. If she had failed in this, Theseus would not have *tried.* If he had not tried, he would never have become capable of wearing his father's sword. So it is only the language of vision, of high potentiality, that speaks to the true nature of man. The heroic quality in human beings can develop only if people begin to act *as if* they could do what they *should* do. The discipline of growth is in trial, and the support of the discipline is a beckoning vision. So the language of vision is the natural speech of the Educational Contract.

While the believers in static fact go about weighing rocks and declaring impossibilities, the teachers of mankind speak in the splendid rhetoric of vision, addressing themselves not to what is, but what can be. Yet it will not be unless there is human striving to *make it be.*

It seems clear that every great reform in religion has for its essential purpose the restoration to human beings of the *initiative* for growth. The "gods," in short, are ourselves.

The experts and advocates of the social contract are concerned with present facts. They deal, that is, with matters which, should there be any real human progress, will change, perhaps radically. The teachers who try to spread the terms and declare the vision of the educational contract deal in possibilities and they speak to human attitudes. Vinoba is not really worried about "government," but about human attitudes toward government. Once the attitudes of men become self-reliant, both the responsibilities and the problems of government will rapidly diminish. So Vinoba's language is not the language of static fact, but of human growth. It is the language of Plato's *Republic,* especially in the last paragraphs of Book IX, and of every man who has found a way to solve the "clash of interests" problem in human affairs, which has no solution at all in the familiar terms of the Social Contract, but only in the less visible but living and changing relationships of the Educational Contract.

Finally, it should be admitted that there is no "contract," really, in education and learning. Education is for both teacher and learner the seeing of a portion of one's self in the other. That is what it is, although talking too much about such ultimate matters, like talking too much about freedom, or other precious things, dissipates their substance.

REVIEW
"RISK`' SCIENCE VERSUS "SAFE" SCIENCE

IT is easy enough to gain assent for assessments of human nature which point out the opposite polarities of "Yes, yes," and "No, no" temperaments, which distinguish between the risk-takers and the verifiers, or compare enthusiasts and Platonic visioners in philosophy with Aristotelian classifiers. These differences are too obvious to be denied. But let a man attempt to apply *both* sides of this analysis, showing how prudence ought to be balanced by daring in each individual, how vision and common sense can go hand in hand, and he is likely to have much less success. For then he encounters the institutional consolidations of the conservative, we-must-first-be-sure, and interest-protective tendencies of human nature, whenever he recommends daring in specific instances; or, in counseling caution and the careful testing of programs likely to have a far-reaching effect, he will earn only scorn from the ardent irresponsibles.

All sorts of incommensurables are involved in harmonizing these contradictions. For example, when a friend of Einstein's called the photographic plate of the 1919 eclipse "proof" of his theory, he responded, "Proof! They needed it. I never did." Yet even great admirers of Einstein would hesitate to advocate this attitude as good scientific practice. An intimate study of Einstein's life and ways might make you understand his confidence, yet who but an Einstein could justify it?

Similar considerations apply to the man who shows extraordinary courage in a situation where all familiar indications point to withdrawal. Yet this man dares, and *succeeds.* He quieted a mob, say, or restrained a dangerous psychotic. How did he do it? No one knows. He cannot tell you himself, nor why he decided to attempt it.

It would be better, of course, to consider this sort of question in the framework of far less dramatic situations. A general case might be the institution of science, along with the widespread supposition that the techniques of careful confirmation are all there is to scientific inquiry. "Exactitude" and "certainty" do, after all, convey the feeling-tone of the values associated with traditional scientific practice. A statement is not held to be "scientific" unless it can be shown to be beyond debate. Actually, this view comes very close to being the keynote of the secular salvation doctrine of Western civilization. It has long been assumed that what cannot be demonstrated with certainty is not worth inquiring into, making it routine procedure to rule out or exile from "reality" all ideas, values, and categories of experience which do not submit to treatment in the same manner as the objects studied by the physical sciences. The methodology of these disciplines, in short, became the definer of the real and the knowable.

Who, then, would dare to say that this stance is high-toned and pretentious aberration? With what persuasion could anyone show that subjecting the study of man to these criteria will end in his total dehumanization? Must we then call the restoration to man of the qualities of the unpredictable, the transcendent, the visionary and the heroic a *religious* undertaking, or could it also be seen as scientific?

A paper by Abraham H. Maslow, "Toward a Humanistic Biology," in the current issue of *Fields within Fields* (published by the World Institute, 777 United Nations Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10017), casts an interesting light on all such questions. Early in this discussion he says:

> In the thirties I became interested in certain psychological problems and found that they could not be answered or managed well by the classical scientific structure of the time (the behavioristic, positivistic, "scientific," value-free, mechano-morphic psychology). I was raising legitimate questions and had to invent another approach to psychological problems in order to deal with them. This approach slowly became a general philosophy of psychology, of science in general, of religion, work, management, and now biology. As a matter of fact, it became a *Weltanschauung.*

The gist of Dr. Maslow's contention might be said to grow from his recognition of the fact that man is a goal-seeking, growth-aspiring, responsibility-bearing form of intelligence, as much or more involved in what he is trying to become than in what he presently "is." This makes unambiguous definitions of what he "is" unstable and problematic. It follows that definitions of Man, cast in the precise, objective terms typical of the physical sciences, will almost certainly falsify human nature. To ignore this probability amounts to monumental self-deception, and especially if it is claimed that science is devoted to the "good" of man; and misleading, also, simply in terms of "objective" fact. The facts about man include the direction and vigor of his becoming, which may be infinitely more important than a superficially exact account of his present "status." In this sense, all the sciences relating to man, which include biology, must have a *normative* aspect which reflects man's growth-objectives and goals. As Dr. Maslow put it:

> I think the question of a normative biology cannot be escaped or avoided, even if this calls into question the whole history and philosophy of science in the West. I am convinced that the value-free, value-neutral, value-avoiding model of science that we inherited from physics, chemistry, and astronomy, where it was necessary and desirable to keep the data clean and also to keep the church out of scientific affairs, is quite unsuitable for the scientific study of life. Even more dramatically is this value-free philosophy of science unsuitable for human questions, where personal values, purposes and goals, intentions and plans are absolutely crucial for the understanding of any person, and even for the classical goals of science, prediction, and control. . . .
>
> It is still possible to argue back and forth about autogenesis in evolution, or whether pure chance collocations could account for the direction of evolution. But this luxury is no longer possible when we deal with human individuals. It is absolutely impossible to say that a man becomes a good physician by pure chance and it is time we stopped taking any such notion seriously. For my part, I have turned away from such debates over mechanical determinism without even bothering to get into the argument.

This strong wind of common sense pervades all Maslow's discussions of method with respect to the study of man. It is a philosophical "empiricism" which was for Maslow the first principle of humanistic psychology. Moreover, the study of man, he said, should ask, not "tell." This he called *Taoistic* science or psychology:

> It means nonintruding, noncontrolling. It stresses noninterfering observation rather than a controlling manipulation. It is receptive and passive rather than active and forceful. It is like saying that if you want to learn about ducks, then you had better ask the ducks instead of telling them. So also for human children. In prescribing "what is best for them" it looks as if the best technique for finding out what is best for them is to develop techniques for getting *them to* tell us what is best for them.

Finally, if man is by nature a striving and becoming being, then it is only reasonable to select for observation the best specimens, the most successful strivers, you can find. Maslow did this in his research with self-actualizing subjects. He found it not so terribly difficult to decide who are "good" people. What else was there about them that may be important to recognize and understand?

A rock is a rock is a rock and Galileo and Newton may have given the last word on how it behaves when tossed in the air. But man is not a rock, he is not a *thing.* He is at least *partly* a law unto himself, his behavior is subject to some self-determination. A science of man must begin with this idea:

> What this kind of research design means is a change in our conception of statistics, and especially of sampling theory. What I am frankly espousing here is what I have called "growing-tip statistics," taking my title from the fact that it is at the growing tip of a plant that the greatest genetic action takes place. As the youngsters say, "That's where the action is."

If you want to know what makes good men, study the good ones to understand their make-up.

It seems of the essence of the scientific spirit to declare:

> On the whole I think it is fair to say that human history is a record of the ways in which human nature has been sold short. The highest possibilities of human nature have practically always been underrated. Even when "good specimens," the saints and sages and great leaders of history, have been available for study, the temptation too often has been to consider them not human but supernaturally endowed.

This last is the terrible excuse mediocrity makes for being devoid of excellence; and it is also the Grand Inquisitor's apology for insisting on a low estimate of mankind.

Dr. Maslow's paper is a long one and deserves reading in its entirety. It is very good evidence that a scientist can at the same time be a warm, enthusiastic human being and a philosopher concerned with ultimate questions. The following is sufficient evidence of this:

> If, as I think has been demonstrated sufficiently, the human being is a choosing, deciding, seeking animal, then the question of making choices and decisions must inevitably be involved in any effort to define the human species. But making choices and decisions is a matter of degree, a matter of wisdom, a matter of effectiveness, and efficiency. The questions then come up: Who is the good chooser? Where does he come from? What kind of life history does he have? Can we teach this skill? What hurts it? What helps it?
>
> These are, of course, simply new ways of asking the old philosophical questions, "Who is a sage?" "What is a sage?" And beyond that of raising the old axiological questions, "What is good? What is desirable? What *should* be desired?"
>
> I must reassert that we have come to the point in biological history where we are now responsible for our own evolution. We have become self-evolvers. Evolution means selecting and therefore choosing and deciding, and this means valuing.

This is the sort of science, and education in science, that has some hope of reshaping the direction of present human undertakings—which most people agree must be done.

COMMENTARY
MORE FROM VINOBA

OTHER sections of Kumar Satish's interview with Vinoba Bhave, not quoted in this week's lead article, draw on history in both the East and the West for evidence of the uselessness of relying on government to accomplish fundamental social reforms. To the claim that revolutionaries seek power in order to bring revolutionary changes to society, he replied:

> . . . the authority of the government is incapable of bringing about any revolutionary change among the people. The day revolution gets the backing of the government it declines, becomes bureaucratic, institutionalized, and conformist. A very good example is the Russian revolution. You can see how revolutionaries become power-mongers and office-seekers. Similarly, the decline of the Buddhist faith in India dates from the day when it received the backing of governmental power. When the Christian faith was backed by the imperial power of Constantine, it became Christian in name only. The power of religion practiced by the first disciples of Christ was seen no more and hypocrisy entered the life of the church. In our own country history shows that when the movements of revolution and religious reforms won royal favor they were joined by thousands who were not really revolutionaries but merely loyal devotees of the ruling king. Therefore, do not allow yourself to think that revolutionary thinking can be propagated by governmental power. On the contrary, if there should be any genuine encounter between them, revolution would destroy the power of the state. The two can no more exist together than darkness and the sun. The exercise of power over others is not in accordance with revolutionary principles. It is clear from a study of history that real social progress has been due to the influence of independent revolutionaries. No king exercised the influence which Buddha exerted and still exerts on the life of India. The Lord Buddha renounced his kingdom, turned his back on it, and after his enlightenment the first person he initiated was the king, his own father.

On the question of the "conflict of interest," Vinoba said:

> It is impossible for the real interests of any one person to clash with those of others. There is no opposition of interests of any one community, class, or country and those of any other community, class or country. The very idea of conflict of interests is a mistaken one. One man's interests are another's, and there can be no clash. If I am intelligent and in good health, this is in your interests. If I get water when I am thirsty it benefits not only me but you also. If we imagine our interests conflict, it is because we have a false notion of what constitutes our interests.

These are the principles which would prevail in a social order voluntarily maintained by human intelligence. It is time that they were taken seriously. The initial cost may be high, as men now compute the risks of such a venture, but the cost of ignoring these realities will surely be far higher.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
PROTEST AND EDUCATION

ANYONE who has spent much time living in an essentially "protest" situation knows that those who emerge as leaders are likely to be different from the persons who would be most useful in a constructive or community-building project. The "protest" leader is often something of a rabble-rouser, able to dramatize what is *wrong*, and since the question of what would be "right" tends to seem academic, it gets little attention.

"Builder" types are usually quiet persons. They like to work, and they do their best in cooperative relationships. Having to protest usually embarrasses them, and while they will sometimes do it, they wish they didn't have to. They would rather get on with what seems to them the useful work of the world. It is a very rare man who sees these two aspects of life in balance, who schools his feelings and inclinations to keep them in balance, no matter how distorting the pressures of the times.

Probably the best example of such a man is Gandhi. While he became famous as a "protester" and an inspiring leader of civil disobedience, he tried to make plain that his political activity was never more than an effort to open the way to constructive work. The study of his life as a project in balance between resistance and cooperation would be an enormously instructive program in "social studies." Horace Alexander's book, *Gandhi Through Western Eyes* (Asia House), would be a good introductory text.

Another way to get at this problem would be to examine the decision made by Socrates in the *Crito.* Socrates certainly qualifies as a protester, yet his commitment to building and cooperation is starkly illustrated in this dialogue by his decision to suffer the penalty of death at the hands of Athenian law. How could he flout the law of Athens, he asked Crito, when all his life he had learned from his beloved city?

Was Socrates then a "conformist," no more a protester? The question is important because reflecting upon it helps to reveal that all acts of protest obtain their strength from *some* cooperative ground. The community Socrates criticized so vigorously also supported him, had nurtured and taught him. Discussing this, Robert Oliver remarks:

> . . . the whole force of [Socrates'] argument depends upon the recognition by each person that certain principles had been his educators, that by means of these he has defined the very essence of his being. The Socratic argument does not justify slavish acquiescence to the powers that be, no questions asked; previously, Socrates had risked his life by refusing to execute a command by the thirty tyrants that he considered illegal. The Socratic argument is more profound; it explains why at certain times certain principles merit unswerving allegiance and why at other times other principles deserve the deepest scorn. One can be a Platonist and still believe in the right to rebel, namely to rebel against those principles that fail to educate. Herein lies the growing debility of the state.

The *Crito* presents the problem of balance between protest and cooperation in a book. Gandhi's life presents it in the extreme historical situation of modern times—against the background of the evil of war. What is "balance" in the struggle against war? This is a very hard question to answer, since there are so many opinions on the subject, with various supporting arguments. To study the problem of war through the filter of a particular national outlook, or with the reservation that the survival of a certain government is more important than the abolition of war, may make the solution of the problem quite impossible. Social studies might begin by pointing this out to the young.

Can such studies be pursued without political prejudice? Perhaps not, but surely the attempt ought to be made. The motto of the War Resisters League, "Wars Will Cease When Men Refuse to Fight," seems about the only thing you can say about the abolition of war which is at once a fact and without political prejudice. However, it

is equally obvious that if all or many men *did* refuse to fight in wars, there would be vast political consequences. The present sort of nation-state, obviously, would cease to exist. What might take its place remains a large and complicated question. Yet it is often argued that *any* society which rejects organized killing—with the positive qualities this implies—would be better than the one we have now. In the present, as the horror and destructiveness of war grow, strength is added to this argument every day.

A pamphlet that could be used in the schools on this great question is *War Resistance in Historical Perspective,* by Larry Gara. Copies are 55 cents and may be ordered from Pendle Hill Publications, Wallingford, Pennsylvania 19086. The author, who teaches history and government at Wilmington College, Ohio, served a three-year prison sentence for refusing to register for the draft during World War II. He was convicted a second time in 1949 for counseling a young man to refuse to register. His pamphlet is a brief historical account of war resistance through the centuries. As he says in an early paragraph:

> Some of the features of mid-twentieth century war resistance which have deep historical roots in the United States are pacifist conscientious objection; often with a religious foundation such as Quakerism selective conscientious objection, which singles out a particular war rather than rejecting all war in the abstract, associating anti-war activity with a more ambitious program to remodel society along more nearly perfect lines, opposition to conscription as an instrument essential to war, and the attempt to create a movement against war which will grow in power and influence until its members achieve their goals of a world without war.

Interestingly, the members of the various utopian communities founded in the nineteenth century, or earlier, were often opposed to participating in war. This was true of the Shakers. The male members of the Oneida Community refused to fight in the Civil War, and Adin Ballou, founder of the Hopedale community, wrote *Christian Nonresistance*, a widely influential book. Many socialists and members of the IWW refused to fight in World War I. In those days, socialism was expected to lead to the abolition of war. The temper of the non-religious objectors to the first world war reflects a philosophical sociological conviction:

> Ernest L. Meyer, one of the political resisters of the first World War, wrote a classical description of his experiences. His book, *Hey! Yellow-back!*, became a basic sourcebook for some of the objectors of World War II. In it Meyer wrote: "There are times when the individual must withdraw himself from the state, if he feels his deepest convictions of right and wrong are invaded. This is one of those times. I cannot aid in the destruction of life when I feel that no happiness is gained by it, or no honest cause advanced." Meyer also told of a dream he had of a time when the war objectors would no longer be a "miserable handful" but rather "a clamoring host," powerful enough to inspire men to "spike their guns and refuse longer to serve the warrior imperialists who have betrayed them." Meyer added that if the dream should prove to be idle, "Well, then, in our defeat we have sacrificed no other lives. But if the dream of the militarists should prove a delusion? Ah, what blood is on their heads."

Larry Gara concludes his comment on the anti-war activity of the present by saying:

> Many years ago Professor Merle Curti, a noted historian of the peace movement, wrote that the early leaders of that movement were heroes and that "some day they may be mentioned in school textbooks along with the leaders of war." Perhaps that day has now arrived.

"That day" might come sooner if teachers make use of pamphlet material such as Larry Gara's study of War Resistance.

FRONTIERS

Changes in the Air

LITTLE by little, the initiative for constructive change in America is being taken out of the hands of Establishment interests. Innovation, after all, has never been the function of the Establishment, which contributes only a stabilizing influence to society, and even this loses its merit when resistance to change becomes a ruthless indifference to human welfare. In a country like the United States, where communications involve expensive high technology and are controlled by powerful economic groups, basic reforms often depend upon the development of independent channels for the spread of information. This means the appearance of all sorts of unorthodox publications that will challenge conventional authority. If they do this effectively, and can survive, in time they oblige the established press to give attention to the issues raised. And then, even though the protests are often diluted by the bland style of the commercial media, the processes of change begin to gather strength.

Something like this is happening, today, in the area of transportation. There is now a vast spectrum of resistance to the internal combustion engine which the big automobile manufacturers are so reluctant to replace. The news of air pollution, which until a very few years ago these manufacturers either denied, minimized, or ignored, is getting around. The Nader Study Group Report, *Vanishing Air* (Grossman paperback, 95 cents), is filled with evidence of how the repressive tactics of these manufacturers have been applied. At the same time, literate young men and women a year or two out of college, often persons who have been active in some phase of the youth revolt or the New Left, are starting new papers and magazines, of which there are now hundreds around the country. One of these, *Earth Times*, edited by Stephanie Mills, is professional in appearance, well written, and may survive if it gets enough subscribers. Devoted to restoration of the natural environment and related issues, this tabloid-style monthly, published at 625 Third Street, San Francisco, Calif. 94107, is $5.00 a year. An editorial in the July issue ends:

> Just as the children of the Fifties knew instinctively that those dumb fallout shelters were going to be a drag if they worked at all, the children of the Sixties and Seventies know that all the smog control devices in the world aren't going to get them out on the playgrounds again. And that the restructuring had better begin now if we're going to survive.

An article in this issue of *Earth Times* tells about Frank Herbert, a Seattle newspaperman and science fiction author (he wrote *Dune*), who nearly two years ago decided to inaugurate a personal boycott of the internal combustion engine. At the time he was meeting with a group of people concerned about smog in Los Angeles:

> "We kept coming back to the internal engine as the culprit," he said. The room was filling up with a sense of frustration and anger when Herbert jumped up and swore he was never going to buy another new internal combustion engine. Another member of the group stood up and took the pledge. Then somebody said, "Let's start an organization."
>
> "No, let's not," Herbert said. No organization, no name, no officers, no dues, and no newsletter. Just separate individuals serving notice on Detroit that the time is coming.

Herbert now thinks that at least a hundred thousand people have made up their minds and sent "a loud, clear message to Detroit—get rid of that engine!"

Herbert has been investigating steam engines. He says a Dobel engine made in Santa Rosa (Calif.) has 500,000 miles on it, and he is looking at others. "You can burn just about anything in them," he says.

> "The secret is *external* combustion. The combustion takes place in the presence of all the oxygen the flame can use." The result is an absence of partially consumed hydrocarbons.

Meanwhile William P. Lear, an industrialist who has been experimenting with steam engines at

his plant near Reno, Nevada, says that his researchers have developed a fluid to replace water (or freon) in a steam turbine that will be noiseless, have one moving part, cost $300 to make in mass production, and run on low grade gasoline or diesel fuel. It warms up in 20 seconds. Two of these engines, he says, are needed for an automobile, one to drive the car and the other to run auxiliary equipment—fan, vacuum brakes, power steering, air conditioning, etc. He is now making tests in buses and standard cars.

Why are such people—both critics and inventors—getting a hearing? Because air pollution has generated so much attention from protest groups that the conventional press is having to report what they say. In a round-up story in *West* (Los Angeles *Times* supplement) for last Nov. 30, people like Stephanie Mills and Gary Snyder and a Berkeley *Barb* writer are quoted. Also Dr. Kenneth E. F. Watt, of the Institute of Ecology at the University of California, Davis, who said:

> Emphysema, lung cancer, cancer of the liver and strokes can, it seems, be related to pollution. The emphysema mortality rate has risen about 12% a year during the past 20 years. . . .
>
> If pollution keeps building up in the Los Angeles basin by the winter of 1975-76 it will be at levels where we can expect mass mortality incidents. . . . New smog control devices, even the 1968 variety, are only effective for the first 8,000 miles. Then their effectiveness drops sharply . . . very large numbers of people may have been committed to die long before the first evidence shows up that something is going wrong.

The young reformers are endlessly inventive. Two years ago students of the California Institute of Technology and of Massachusetts Institute of Technology put on a "Great Electric Car Race" to focus attention on air pollution. An other student-sponsored race from Boston to Pasadena, completed on Aug. 31 of this year, was a much larger affair. This time the engines could be any which met the federal emission (pollution) standards set for 1975. There were forty-seven entrants, including modified internal combustion engines, electric, hybrid electric, and steam and gas turbines. Some 1500 students spent the summer preparing cars to enter the race, according to the Los Angeles *Times* (Aug. 24). Conventional car manufacturers provided some of the vehicles, and even the Ethyl Corp., maker of lead additives for gas, supplied a new car equipped with a "lean-reactor" system which Ethyl claims will meet the requirements! Commercialization, however, is barred by the Committee sponsoring the race, and the entrants were supposed to do their own adaptation (with *some* help allowed), and all their own repairs en route.

An early report revealed that thirty-seven cars finished, thirty-two of them with modified internal combustion engines equipped with expensive pollution-control devices (platinum catalysts are involved). The over-all winner was the Wayne State University (Mich.) entry with an internal combustion engine using unleaded gas. The five cars having other type engines included one turbine, two all electric, and two hybrid electric (with gasoline engines to power generators). One of these hybrids came in sixth in the race. None of the steam-powered cars lasted more than a day, probably because they were put together too quickly.

These results, however, are not likely to be significant in the long run. What matters is the likelihood that some of the best technical intelligence of the years to come is already focusing on this problem. And if a solution is not found soon, Frank Herbert's "final answer" will still remain: "We figured out that you could get to downtown Los Angeles from Burbank in half the time if everybody rode bicycles on the freeway."