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WHAT HAS GANDHI TO SAY TO US?

[This article is the text of a talk given by Horace G. Alexander at a Gandhi Commemoration Meeting held at Friends House in London, in March of this year. Quaker concern for the Indian independence movement began as long ago as 1930 and Mr. Alexander, an English Quaker, is one of those who, over many years, has given illuminating voice to the meaning of Gandhi's mission. His connection with Gandhi dates from 1928, when he spent a week at Gandhi's ashram at Sarbamati. There was a close relationship and personal friendship between these two, based upon common objectives and mutual understanding.]

THERE are, I suppose, two ways of celebrating a great man's centenary. Either we can take him off his pedestal for the moment, admire his great qualities and say how much he did to enrich the human race; then, having dutifully done this, we put him back again, if possible a little higher up and further out of reach than before and conveniently forget about him; or, we may bring him right down from his pedestal, examine his life more carefully than before, in the light of a rather longer perspective, and keep him well down among us to inspire us in facing the world's problems. In the case of Gandhi especially, the only valid way to celebrate his centenary is the second. Already he is in danger of being regarded too much as a mere figure on a statue, far off above our heads, for ever on his Nelson column. Our job during this centenary year is to bring him down to earth again, as a living man among men, which is the only thing he ever wanted to be. I am tempted to say: Let us strip him of his Mahatmaship and look at him, if we can, as plain Mr. Gandhi, plain Mohan, if you like.

Having said this, let me hasten to add that I am not intending to spend my time in the popular pastime of debunking. As perspective lengthens, I find that Gandhi's greatness grows upon me; it does not diminish. Of course he had his human failings, his errors of judgment and all the rest, like any other man. But these need not concern us specially today. What we want to see, as far as we are able, is the long-term value of his way of life and of the principles he tried to live by. And if we are honest in looking at him, we must be prepared for some shocks. He was always, and must always be, a disturbing man, who tries to shake us out of our complacency.

For those who are disposed to think that Gandhi was a superman, one who is impossible to follow, let me remind you of how his public life began. We tend to identify him with India, forgetting that for nearly twenty years he lived and worked in South Africa; and I sometimes think his South African achievements were the most remarkable in the whole of his long life.

In South Africa, Gandhi achieved an extraordinary degree of unity and discipline in a small community of Indians, who would have seemed to be very poor material for a prolonged battle against a hostile Government. They were poor; they had no common language or religious faith; they came from many different parts of India; they were far from their ancestral homes; they were accustomed to being trampled on. That Gandhi was able to unite them into an effective non-violent army to defy the South African Government is, no doubt, clear evidence that he was a very unusual man. But even more remarkable, surely, is the fact that they could achieve such faith, not only in him, but in themselves, that they took imprisonments and beatings and other repression with dignity and without flinching. To be sure, most of those involved in the satyagraha in South Africa were men and women who were accustomed to a harsh life. They could put up with fresh buffetings more readily than middle-class, educated people, who are accustomed to a respectable life, and shrink from being trampled on and beaten up. In India,

too, Gandhi's most loyal followers were often poor and illiterate villagers, rather than sophisticated townsmen.

Perhaps the main thing to learn from Gandhi's early satyagraha campaigns is that even people who seem to suffer from a "slave mentality" can learn to stand up to overwhelming power. Years before I ever visited India or met Gandhi, an Indian student whom I happened to meet in the train in England said to me: "The great thing that Gandhi has done for us is to show us how to stand up on our own feet. He has put backbone into us." I think Gandhi wanted all men to believe that, if they have faith in some great cause, they can suffer for it, they can fight for it; they must not think they are not strong enough. "You are as strong as you think you are," he would say. "You are as strong as I am."

This faith in the ordinary man meant also that he was determined that the India of his dreams—let us rather say, the world of his dreams—should be a world that offered the possibility of a good life to all; not just to the majority, but to all. India has a word "sarvodaya," which signifies the welfare of all, the service of all. Those who still try to be loyal to Gandhi in their public work carry this word on their banner. It is the Indian equivalent to the title of Ruskin's famous essay, *Unto this Last.* It is all very well to have a welfare state, which provides for the old and the needy and the disabled. But legal measures of this kind, however good and necessary, are not enough. There will always be loop-holes, however good the legislation, however human the administrators may be. In the society of Gandhi's dream, there will always be those who are seeing to it that the most needy are provided for: that none shall be forgotten or shall feel to be lost and forgotten. *Unto this Last,* even the least deserving, even those who seem to be total misfits: someone must care for them. Majority democracy is not enough. Majorities can tyrannize over minorities. Canada is a highly civilized country; but even Canada finds the Dukhobors almost impossible to tolerate. They do not fit easily into the normal life of a western democracy. Some of their principles put them outside the pale. They are stubborn and unyielding. Then who will be concerned for the Dukhobors? Or, nearer home, who will care for the Gypsies? These people, whether individuals or groups, who refuse to fit into the accepted pattern of life, are a great nuisance to governments; and their ways of life are often detested by their neighbors. From the Gandhian point of view the test of our humanity is found just here. Can we find a place in our human family for the misfits, just as a loving parent will care perhaps most of all for the difficult and awkward child?

This leads us to a further point: the illusions of power. Gandhi spent most of his life in politics; but he never thought the actions of Governments were the most important thing in the world—as a great many people seem to think today. I have been tempted to call Gandhi an anarchist; and this is a fair description if we define an anarchist as one who believes that that country is the happiest where the central Government intervenes the least, or perhaps one should say where its intervention is needed least. I like to recall that, when Gandhi was in London for the Round Table Conference in 1931, he was so favourably impressed by the two Scotland Yard detectives who looked after him that first he asked them to accompany him across Europe till he left Italy by ship and he also invited them to come to India after independence to reorganize the police there. Why? I wonder. I can only guess at the answer. First, it is clear that his anarchy, if we can call it that, did not go so far as to want to abolish police altogether. Armies he wished to abolish, but not police. I think he was impressed by the London police because he saw in them men whose chief job in life was not to terrorize the people into good behavior but to help in the smooth running of the whole machinery of civilized life. And unless you are prepared to abolish factories completely, and revert to a purely rural life, without machines, city life is inevitable, with many

of the complexities of what we call modern civilization. It is sometimes thought that Gandhi was so much a medievalist that he was eager to abolish all machines and all cities. This is a mistake. True, his emphasis was all the time on rural life and on the primary producers of food and clothing. To him, they represented the foundation of any healthy economy, and therefore it should be the duty of every political leader to make sure that the rural community was healthy and not neglected in favour of the more clamorous city dwellers. But he did not try to put the clock right back to a pre-industrial age. He knew that modern civilization in some form or other must go on. So he wanted all those whose job it is to keep the wheels of civilization going round to be concerned, not so much just in upholding law and order, but rather in the more humane task of serving the community.

"Service"; that is surely the keynote of Gandhi's public life. He was the Indian equivalent of the European Mazzini, who spent his life pleading with his fellow-countrymen to put duties before rights. Gandhi said, again and again, that a man only earns rights as he fulfils his duties to the community. But the emphasis on rights, stemming largely, I suppose, from the battle-cries of the French and American Revolutions, and in no way lessened by the Russian Revolution, continues to dominate most western thinking. A follower of Gandhi, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, who became the first President of free India, wanted the new Indian Constitution to include provisions by which no man or woman could stand for election to India's Central Parliament or other elected assemblies unless he could show that he had spent some years in useful service to the community. But he was overridden. He was told that no constitution had any such provision, and that it would be impossible to draft. Anyway, it did not happen. It might be interesting to work out how many of the elected leaders of western democracies would qualify if such a law were generally enforced. Many would, no doubt; but not all, and not necessarily those who make the most noise in politics.

When Gandhi was asked at a meeting at Chatham House in 1931 how he justified his claim to represent the dumb millions of the Indian villages, all of them, without any question of religious, linguistic or caste divisions, he replied, simply: "By right of service." Anyone who has followed the itinerary of his endless tours through the villages of every part of India, and the intimate association he was able to establish with the village people and their problems, will understand what he meant.

Service, not power, was central to Gandhi's whole political thought and life. Let those who cared for power seek after it. For him it was enough to be allowed to spend his life in the service of the needy. And this leads us straight to his passion for non-violence.

The fact that we can find no better expression than this awkward word, non-violence, for what to Gandhi and other Indians of this generation is basically a wholly new approach to political life is due, no doubt, to the fact that the philosophy that inspires this Gandhian ideal is very foreign to all our traditional ways of thinking. We of the west are still, I suspect, far more completely slaves of the old Roman tradition in politics than we readily admit, or, indeed, are at all aware of. We take for granted as axiomatic in our thought ideas which Indian tradition is inclined to question. Power, we assume, is the necessary foundation of all political life, and ever more must be so. Power, we see, can be more or less civilized, but it remains the bedrock. Therefore, we magnify the virtues of obedience to authority, of discipline, of loyalty. Blessed, we say, is the nation that can count on these qualities in its citizens in times of stress. But perhaps, after all, there are other qualities that can replace these martial qualities, and can provide as good a cement, or even a better one. A hundred years ago it was taken for granted that, in family life, the father could and should lay down the law; even his wife was often expected to obey him.

And, as to the children, obedience to parental authority was to be unquestioned. Today, this parental authority is breaking down, sometimes to make way for sheer anarchy, but sometimes also in favour of a closely knit family tie of mutual respect and genuine love, a much stronger tie than the old one could ever be. So, even in the west, at least in the sphere of the family, new values are coming into vogue. This is not the time to consider where they have come from.

Anyone who is seriously interested in the differences of cultural pattern in these matters may learn something from the recent writings of a devout Roman Catholic, Father Bede Griffiths, in his book called *Christian Ashram.* Let me give one illustration, which I found very arresting and suggestive. Western Christians, or at least the members of the traditional Churches, when at prayer, go down on their knees in obeisance; they also fold their hands together in exactly the same way in which a feudal serf would approach his human master, in lowly supplication. God demands total obedience. Hindus, on the contrary, and many Indian Christians too, stand in prayer, with face lifted to the sky, and arms extended up and out, thus opening themselves with joy and wonder to the life-giving forces that will stream down upon them from the Creator of light and life. No mighty power here, demanding obedience, but a sense of light and hope and healing. Which of these postures—humble obeisance before the overlord or open arms to the source of light—is more appropriate to those who claim to be followers of Jesus of Nazareth I will not argue.

But what, it will be asked, has all this to do with the realities of political life? Family life, religion, how are these connected with politics? Surely the harsh reality of politics must be faced: politics is based on power, military and economic, and the only realism consists in a full recognition of this fact. Yes, politics as we know them today certainly are power politics. But Gandhi has some important things to say at this point. First, he was convinced that all life is one: that you cannot order one part of your life according to one scale of values, and another section according to other values. So long as all life was authoritarian, family life, social life, politics, religion, man was able to live at peace with himself, and society could be reasonably stable. But once you decide that family life must be ordered by values of mutual respect and understanding between man and wife, and between parents and children, you will find that sooner or later—and the sooner the better—social and political life must be affected by the new ideas too.

Gandhi was in politics all his life. You may say, if you will, that he was a realist in politics; but in the ordinary sense of the term, he was no realist at all. He refused to recognize that naked power was the final arbiter in political life. Albert Einstein, who was a great admirer of Gandhi, once commented that Gandhi's great contribution to our time lay in his determination to moralize politics. Gandhi himself constantly insisted that the same moral law must be applied in politics as in private life; and throughout his own political life he tried to do just this. He habitually thought the best of his political opponents, and treated them as if their motives were as pure as his own. His generosity towards his political opponents frequently exasperated his colleagues, who thought such behaviour unrealistic. Again and again, even when the crowds in India were shouting "Mahatma Gandhi ki-jai" (Victory to Mahatma Gandhi) he found himself utterly lonely even among his close colleagues. Even when they seemed to be using the same language, they meant different things.

Thus, whereas his colleagues were men of peace, in the same sense as a great many other statesmen of our age, ready to disarm as soon as their dangerous neighbors would also disarm, ready to do all the right things as soon as all the rest of the world was ready to be moral, Gandhi's peace principles were of a different order. He was not one who was prepared to wait for all the

world to disarm together; he believed that reliance on armament for defence was evil, whatever the rest of the world might say or do. He was for immediate disarmament by India as soon as independence was achieved, whatever the menace from Pakistan or from China or from any other direction. He knew well that India was not ready for such drastic policies; this new political morality was no more widespread among politically conscious Indians than it was among other nations and peoples; so he must remain a lone voice, perhaps at the best a voice of a rather uncomfortable conscience, not often attended to.

But, if we are going to take Gandhi seriously, this is just the place where we cannot neglect his view of life. Anyone who dares to face the truth about the political life of the world today must recognize that we are in mortal danger of total destruction. This is such an uncomfortable thought that most of us spend most of our time pretending that it is not true, or turning to look the other way. Yet the world *is* in danger of destruction through violence. Very well, says Gandhi, then try to be non-violent. It sounds like a simple and logical remedy; too logical for most people, and by no means as simple as it sounds. For we are to be non-violent in thought, word and deed. And at the same time we are to be so full of courage that we refuse to bow the knee to insolent might, wherever the authority may be that orders us to do what we see to be evil: whether it comes from our own chosen leaders or from others.

There are many objections to this way of non-violence. To those who are continuing to suffer from the oppression of the indolent rich in South America, or from the dominance of the white man in South Africa or elsewhere, it seems to be merely a comfortable proposal coming from middle-class western white men who are themselves living in the comfort of a system based on violence, and who do not want their way of life to be undermined by violent revolution. As one whose support of non-violence is certainly open to this rebuke, I can only say: Don't listen to me; but do at least try to attend to all that Gandhi had to say and to the message of his life. He was *not* a middle-class white man, benefiting from the results of centuries of "capitalist imperialism." On the contrary, he was the leader of a people of dark skin, who were suffering from the dominance of the white man. In South Africa, especially, as we have seen, the Indians he led in their prolonged and at least partially successful battle for equal treatment, were in no sense upper-class or bourgeois; they were among the humblest, most downtrodden communities in the world. Yet they learnt the discipline necessary for an effective and prolonged non-violent fight. Non-violence is most emphatically *not* the feeble weapon of those who have not the courage to give their lives or to suffer hardship. Its discipline is, if anything, more strict than that of the soldier. It is surely harder to stand up to beatings unarmed and refusing to hit back than to go into battle with guns ready to kill the enemy. But the South African Indians did it; and in India, as we have seen, it was the peasants, rather than the educated middle-class, who were Gandhi's most stalwart followers. It must certainly be admitted that the satyagraha campaigns in South Africa achieved very little. In so far as Gandhi's non-violent campaigns in India were effective in bringing self-government and causing the withdrawal of the British, it may be said that the number of Indians was so overwhelming, compared to the number of the British, that sooner or later the mere force of numbers was bound to be decisive.

On the other hand, who can say that violent revolution is a manifest success? Whatever one may think of Ho Chi Minh and his colleagues, their persistence in fighting is achieving the utter ruin of the country and inflicts untold misery on the civilian population of all Vietnam. Might not a non-violent opposition to their enemies in the South have been more effective with far less misery? So, too, if we look at the picture of Biafra and other war-torn lands. Is it not time to think again, quite fundamentally, about the

relation of means to ends? Does violent revolution really lead to the well-being of the masses? Is there not a better way?

Surely at the very least, anyone who cares for the survival of man on this planet should give serious and prolonged attention to Gandhi's political philosophy and to his life before concluding that his non-violence is of no significance.

If we conclude that the time has come to take Gandhi seriously the first place where his principles should be brought into focus is in education. Has he in fact anything of special significance to say in this field? Gandhi himself gave much thought to education, and as a result of his initiative, a committee for reforming the school system of India was established long before Indian Independence. The chairman of this committee was the present President of India, Dr. Zakir Hussain. The Hussain report has led to what is known in India as basic education. Schools that adopt basic education use craft-work as the foundation, and link all their head work closely to this. Thus, learning by doing and learning by head work develop side by side. Modern India also owes much to the educational initiative of Rabindranath Tagore, who encouraged the children at his school to follow their own interests in an environment of natural beauty, working under the trees rather than in cold dark buildings.

This is not the time to discuss the merits of basic education or of Tagore's genius in education. But it may be said at once that they are in some sense an eastern parallel to the kind of education that modern western pioneers, from Rousseau to Montessori, have been fostering for the past two centuries. Reverence for the personality of the child is at the heart of all such efforts. Yet we can hardly deny that the earlier tradition of education in the west is still widespread; that is, the system of the old English boarding schools, for instance, where the word of the schoolmaster was absolute law, and the duty of the pupils was to obey and to conform to a strict pattern of behavior, stemming from feudal principles. And until the average size of classes in the west is greatly reduced, and until the bogus of competitive examination is removed, it is difficult to see how the principles of either Montessori or Gandhi can be realized. Probably many parents in the west need to learn from India the intuitive regard for children as children which is demonstrated by the fact that Indian children rarely need to cry, and when they do cry it is usually because of pain and not in response to parental scolding.

When children grow up in an atmosphere that gives them every encouragement in self-expression, and with a sense of full security, then perhaps they will find it natural to live what we may call non-violent lives. Aggression will decrease, hostility will disappear.

The recent revolt of the students in many western lands seems to be, in part at least, a revolt against the acquisitive basis of society, and against the violence that aggressive greed inevitably breeds. In this sense it should surely be welcomed as an effort to turn away from the evil traditions of the past, and to discover a new scale of values which puts compassion above self-assertion. Perhaps in some degree this revolt may be due to the invisible but pervasive influence of the life of Gandhi.

To sum up: Gandhi calls us to a review of the values that have been dominant in western society, and which are in danger of destroying the world. These values are still dominant especially in economic and political life and this western pattern, quite as characteristic of the Communist world as of the democratic countries, is in danger of spreading all over the continents of Asia and Africa. It is the who]e world that needs to stop and think again, attending to the prophetic voice of Gandhi. Truth and non-violence, the two principles by which Gandhi lived, provide something much more than a new technique for politics; they provide a new foundation for the life

of human society. We must re-examine our basic assumptions.

Gandhi was one of the friendliest of men; he delighted in the society of all those who came to see him. Through his writings we may still in effect sit down with him, and discuss the fundamental ends of life. But if we decide to take him seriously we are likely to find him an uncomfortable companion. He may convict us of being thieves and tyrants. But, even if his diagnosis of the ills that afflict our world is severe, he offers us a magnificent remedy. Our job now is to translate Truth and Non-violence into language that means something real to the people of the West, and then make it our own by living up to it.

HORACE G. ALEXANDER

REVIEW
MAX BORN—PHILOSOPHER OF SCIENCE

A RIPE wisdom rewards the reader of Max Born's latest and probably last book, *My Life and My Views* (Scribner's, 1968), a collection of essays by an extremely versatile and civilized man. Born in 1882, Max Born was practically a grown man at the beginning of this century. He has therefore personal memories of the entirety of what may have been the most rapidly changing period of modern history. As a mathematician and eminent physicist, he knew all the great scientists who took part in the recent transformation of conceptions of the physical world, and he taught many of the men who are now leaders in their fields. Not being attracted to nuclear physics, he avoided connection with the development of the atom bomb, but as a member of the general scientific fraternity he accepts responsibility for an evolution he regards as having been inevitable. In the chapter, "Man and the Atom," he writes:

> The man who directed the production of the first uranium bomb, Robert Oppenheimer, tried to prevent the production of the hydrogen bomb, but without success. He was expelled from the Atomic Energy Commission of the American government. The principal promoter of the hydrogen bomb was Edward Teller, who not only developed its theory but also agitated for its production. Thus he has inscribed his name in the book of world history—whether on the debit or on the credit side the future will reveal. Teller's own justification of course, is this: if we do not make this bomb the Russians will. As a matter of fact, the first H-bomb explosion in Russia took place only a short time afterward. Both of these men, Oppenheimer and Teller, as well as Fermi and other participants in this work, including some of the Russian physicists, were once my collaborators in Göttingen long before all these events, at a time when pure science still existed. It is satisfying to have such clever and efficient pupils, but I wish they had shown less cleverness and more wisdom. I feel that I am to blame if all they learned from me were methods of research and nothing else. Now their cleverness has precipitated the world into a desperate situation.

In another essay, "Development and Essence of the Atomic Age," Born's skill as a teacher becomes apparent. In a very few words, he traces the history of atomic theory from the days of the Greek atomists, starting with Thales, but especially Leukippos and Demokritos, to the discovery of fission in 1938 by Hahn and Strasmann. In his view, the terrible weapons which resulted from this discovery make necessary the abolition of all war. There is no possibility of "control" of the production of nuclear weapons so long as war itself remains a policy of nations, and even "conventional" arms, Born says, "have ceased to be honorable weapons used by soldiers against soldiers; instead they have become means of indiscriminate destructions . . . they destroy the most noble and irreplaceable achievements of civilization."

Further:

> From the moral standpoint the decisive step toward modern barbarism was the concept of total war. Even without atomic . . weapons, the prospect of the effects of using ordinary bombs, in combination with chemical and bacteriological weapons, is appalling enough.
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> Prohibition of atomic weapons alone is not justified, either morally or by the actual facts. The human race can only be saved by renouncing the use of force once and for all. Today fear has produced a precarious state of peace. The next aim must be to stabilize this peace by strengthening the ethical principles which alone can secure the peaceful coexistence of man. Christ has taught how man ought to behave toward man. The nations have up to now acted—and the churches have not objected to this attitude—as if these commandments were valid only within their own borders, but not in regard to their relations with one another. That is the root of the evil. We can only survive if in the international sphere distrust is replaced by understanding, jealousy by the will to help, hatred by love. In our time, before our eyes, the doctrine of nonviolence has been victorious in the hands of a non-Christian, Mahatma Gandhi, who liberated his country without war (and I do not think that he would have acted differently if his adversaries had not been the well-meaning British, but any other nation). Why should it not be possible to follow his example?

The intellectual clarity of which Born is capable is illustrated by his discussion of "space travel." While there are, as he points out, a few scientists who profit from information obtained through artificial satellites, the cost of flights into space is out of all proportion to their value to mankind in general. In 1958 he remarked that "space travel is a triumph of intellect but a tragic failure of reason," a judgment he later amplified (in 1961) by saying: "Intellect distinguishes between the possible and the impossible; reason distinguishes between the sensible and the senseless. Even the possible can be senseless." Called a "pessimist" for this expression, he replied:

> I am no such pessimist. I believe that humanity, once altered will shake off the reign of technology and the boast of being all-powerful, and will return to real values, sensible and necessary; to peace, to human love, to humility, to reverence, to contentedness, to high art, and to true science. The present so-called space travel seems to me not to be true science. Even the name is a deception. The thing has nothing to do with the immense spaces of the universe.

Born's paper on the scientific mode of thinking may be taken to show that, except for technique, science is the practice of intensified common sense. He discusses the need of the researcher to formulate hypotheses which can be subjected to verification. This seems so obvious as to hardly need notice, but Born shows that loss of contact with experimental reality can easily happen in the progress of a particular scientific investigation. A theory, therefore, must have the quality of "decidability." He illustrates:

> Bohr's theory of the orbital motion of electrons in the atom had, after a splendid beginning, gotten into difficulties. Heisenberg observed that the theory worked with quantities which were fundamentally unobservable (electronic orbits of definite dimensions and periods) and he sketched a new theory which used only concepts whose validity was empirically decidable.

Especially valuable is Born's description of the course by which man's subjectivity has re-entered the scientific conception of the universe. He uses Goethe's maxim, "There is some unknown regularity in the object which corresponds to the unknown regularity in the subject," as foundation for understanding the use of mathematics in science, then shows that Bohr's principle of complementarily requires the investigator to choose only one, partial way of studying a physical system if he wishes to preserve "classical" or Newtonian objectivity. So, for scientific knowledge of atomic processes—

> Different, mutually exclusive but complementary experimental arrangements are needed. The experimentalist has the choice which of them to employ. Thus a subjective trend is reintroduced into physics and cannot be eliminated. Another loss of objectivity is due to the fact that the theory makes only probability predictions, which produce graded expectations. From our standpoint where subjectivity is primary and the possibility of objective knowledge problematic it is not surprising that the rigorous separation of subject and object is not possible . .

Born finds that such developments make an opportunity for physics to teach a lesson to philosophy:

> Philosophy has always, and still is, inclined to make final, categorical statements. Science was strongly influenced by this tendency. The early physicists, for example, considered the determinism of Newtonian mechanics of particular merit.

But today's science, based upon mathematical structures, having no conceivable objective models, and involving probabilities instead of certainties, sets an example for philosophy:

> This relaxation of the rule of thinking seems to me the greatest blessing which modern science has given us. For the belief that there is only one truth and that one is in possession of it, seems to me the deepest root of all that is evil in the world.

Perhaps the European philosophers known to Born demanded "final, categorical statements," but if he were to turn to, say, the *Diamond Sutra*, he would find a philosophical text in which the "complementarity" of all human cognition is made the primary assumption of inquiry. But for Born

the "uncertainty" of objective knowledge becomes the basis of a moral renaissance:

> Today, the belief in the possibility of a clear separation between objective knowledge and the pursuit of knowledge has been destroyed by science itself. In the operation of science and in its ethics a change has taken place that makes it impossible to maintain the old ideal of the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake which my generation believed in. We are convinced that this could not lead to any evil since the search for truth was good in itself. That was a beautiful dream from which we were awakened by world events. Even the deepest sleepers awoke when, in August 1945, the first atom bomb fell on Japanese cities.

As Bernard Cohen of Harvard says in his introduction to this book, Born was "first among major scientist-philosophers to see the emptiness of positivism as a guide to our understanding of science and of our world." *My Life and my Views* shows that the new view of the meaning of science, already given systematic expression by Michael Polanyi in *Personal Knowledge*, is a deepening attitude of mind on the part of the best scientific thinkers of our age.

COMMENTARY
"WHO IS THE SUCCESSFUL MAN?"

AN article in *Business Management* for April makes it reasonable to wonder if the psycho-social revolt against "business as usual" has reached the Mirabeau stage. Mirabeau, it will be remembered, was the nobleman who guided the French Revolution through its early stages. As an aristocrat, his leadership was symbolic of the fact that many of the thoughtful men of the time, including members of the ruling class, knew that the hour had come for basic change. The revolution was made in the salons of Paris as well as on the streets.

So, when *Business Management* publishes an article, "Is the Rat Race Really Worth It?"—an account of the nervous strains, pretense, and precarious security endured by business executives—it is fair to ask whether the intelligent men who find themselves captives of this system are not ready for something else.

The writer of this article, Jules Archer, feels able to make unhedged generalizations such as the following:

> Fear of a failure spurs many men into a compulsive scaling of the ladder, apprehensive that if they stop moving upward they will start slipping downhill. At each higher rung they adopt new protective coloration—habits, dress, style, opinions, car, address, names dropped—required by the appropriate corporate echelon. They attempt to demonstrate not merely executive competence but also the credentials of social acceptability. Discarded on the rungs below are friends, ideals and tastes now denigrated as liabilities.

An advertising man's wife told Mr. Archer:

> "I shouldn't really complain in view of the way we live but our future is still built on quicksand. What union is going to picket if my husband is suddenly dumped by the agency even though he has done his level best and worked so hard I do not see him from one month to the next?"

Another generalization:

> Chronic anxiety is endemic in the seats of power. Apart from the burden of heavy responsibility, both in terms of business decisions and an expansive standard of living, the executive knows that nothing is so slippery as the top of the hill. Added to this anxiety is the exhausting burden of a relentless work week, month in month out. It is hardly surprising that many executives who talk about eventually retiring to the good life never make it but die young in harness. . . .
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> Studies show that the higher an executive climbs, the more dissatisfied his wife becomes, and the greater the emotional stress on his home life. Many wives, baffled by a steadily rising standard of living that only seems to alienate them increasingly from their husbands, become unsure of themselves and what they really want. The platitude of "getting ahead" as a life goal seems suddenly meaningless.

An officer of a large life insurance company said to Mr. Archer:

> "The basic problem is that most executives run scared. Some do not dare relax, not only at home but at the office. The poor slob who is afraid he might miss something if he goes home is the guy who lacks confidence in his own ability and lives under a Damocles' sword."

A Yale graduate explained that he and his friends would not go into business, even to avoid the draft:

> "A lot of us are turning down jobs with defense industries that would give us exemptions. We are simply not naïve about the rewards of selling out. A lot of us feel life is too damn brief to waste it in an up-tight race for money and status."

"It is," says Mr. Archer, "the rare executive who suddenly stops dead in his tracks . . . jams on his hat and drops out of the rat race, never to return," but young men who will not even get into it are not rare at all. Of the bright and talented, they are a noticeable majority, "studies show." And now it is not just the young who feel this way. As Mr. Archer puts it:

> More executives and their families today are beginning to question the whole American ethic of success and its *raison d'être.* Who is the successful man—and why?

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
A "YOUTH" ANTHOLOGY

THERE are lots of ways of dipping into the maelstrom of modern youth and coming up with samples of what they think and say, but Jesse Kornbluth's *Notes from the New Underground* (Viking, 1968), is probably the best collection up to now. This is a big book (300 pages) of extracts from the "underground press," and the comments of the editor, a twenty-two-year-old who graduated from Harvard last year, are as revealing as any of his selections. We all know that there is flotsam and flim-flam in the expressions of youth, but Jesse Kornbluth's book enables the reader to recognize the truth and moral power that are also there.

With material like this, formal review is practically useless. What is offered in this book shows the beginnings of a new literature and a new spirit in human affairs. The content is hardly political, in the familiar sense, although some political language is used. There are sections on the Beatles, the hippies, the diggers, the drug culture, and resistance to the draft. Older "Joan of Arcs" like Paul Goodman—and pied pipers like Allen Ginsberg, Gary Snyder, Timothy Leary, and Alan Watts—have their say, but the valuable contributions are from the young.

Of most importance, perhaps, for understanding the contents of this volume, is appreciation of the growing unreality of the world in which these young people find themselves—a world created very largely by the mass media. The following is from an article in *East Village Other* by Allen Katzman:

> When we reach across to twist the dials of our set or touch the black encrustation of alphabet soup called words that appear daily on cheap paper, how can we say where we end and it begins? When we bite into that first morning's bit of toasted bread and stare at our everyday reality of digestible events, who's to say we are not more addicted to this mental feast than we are to breakfast? And who's to say that the thing being devoured and the devourer are not one and the same, that we are not fodder for a greater feast called Media? . . .
>
> It's all a game, the mulberry bush of the frantic fact, and we go round and round until we are hypnotized by the dynamics of it all or fall to the ground in a heap of exhaustion. . . .
>
> What is real and what is not remains a mystery to us. For those of us who know, and they are few, the game is just that—unreal—and will remain so unless we ourselves catch these specters off camera, away from the game struct called media in a private moment of nakedness where what they mean is what they say, and maybe then it will all be real.
>
> What it all boils down to is one large pseudo-event, you might term it, the hype of the year. It is our inheritance as children of the media, the TV teener and boppers, and it is an inheritance we are learning to use at a faster rate than do our parents who spawned it.

Wayne Hansen, a young man who with three hundred others abandoned his draft card, wrote for the East Coast *Avatar:*

> Those of us who yesterday said no to the laws of this country at the same time said yes, everlasting yes, to the spirit of America. We are the true Americans, reborn at a time when it is almost a crime to be truly American. Those creeps who drove by the church in a Cadillac waving an American flag and calling coward, why, they don't even know what it is to be an American. I say it is a crime for them to misuse such spirit, only the raggle-taggles of it is theirs, because while we burned those cards with our hands, we carried that spirit in our hearts, but while they carried that symbol in their hands, they trampled that spirit long, long ago, when they did not continually work to keep it alive. Oh, maybe they had it once, reciting the pledge of allegiance in a second-grade schoolroom or jammed in a foxhole in Italy with shells bursting over their heads, but they have died to it and it is dead in them and they are still like a branch cut from a tree whose dry leaves still rustle in the wind—they have no source of life. We might thank them for having done well once, but we cannot respect them, for they no longer do.

The following is by Kurt Abram, contributed to *Kaleidoscope:*

> The revolution permeates the world. One of the goals—unity. In the realm of ideas the revolution

deals with synthesis. In human relations the revolution deals with integration and love.

Things to be dispersed are:

NATIONALISM, by reason of its separative nature.

GLAMOUR—building the haze around the personality, the glamour of occupation, the glamour of many friends, the glamour of fine taste, the glamour of belonging to this or that group, the glamour of being avant garde, the glamour of revolution—all this has to be dispersed.

MATERIALISM, accumulation and attachment to these things, for obvious reasons.

SEPARATTVE THINKTNG of every kind eventually has to go.

The revolution begins with individuation, in order to make one fit for revolution, because revolutionary activity denotes first power and then sacrifice. The process of individuation, therefore, must take place first, that power will not corrupt and eventually destroy the vehicle itself. And only the individual is capable of significant sacrifice.

The revolution permeates all levels, all classes, all outer departments. There is no voice proclaiming revolution. There are many voices proclaiming many aspects of the whole revolution.

So we can become less separative in our thinking and work with groups and individuals at many levels.

Love is difficult. We see it now as a necessity in the world. Therefore, we see it now as the will to love.

It deals with a shift from personal possessive to impersonal all-inclusive. The word "impersonal" falls hard. It denotes detachment. It denotes not bearing the usual fruits—like lovers and friends who say good words. Impersonal love is a no-strings-attached "free" love. A love that gives . . . a very quiet love that gives courage to do the work oneself. . . .

No life's plan among the old forms can be charted. At best the immediate step is known. We work in the dark. . . . The battlefield of emotional desire is projected outward and confounds the revolution. Emotion and desire, once thought the very breath of the creative nature, are now seen as hindrances. With great effort one by one the illusions we vitalize with desire are relinquished, dispersed, smashed.

And the revolution goes on. . . .

Paul Williams writes in the *Village Voice* about the appearance and the disappearance of the hippies. Kids said, "This society stinks. I'm getting out." That's how it began:

> Quitters? Well, would you repair a building if eighty per cent of the wood in it was rotten? Or tear it down and construct a new one? While you're making up your mind, you might at least get out before the place collapses on your shoulders. . . .
>
> So the kids started dropping out. And; they wore long hair and beads and all so as to be different from the world they left behind, yeah, but they did it even more so they'd know they weren't alone. Every long-haired kid was another friend to support you when you felt like a That in a world of This. And if there would only be enough of us—and there seemed to be more every day maybe soon we could feel secure enough to go out and start building our own thing in this world full of strangers.
>
> And the media coverage? A drag, but a good thing—all those teenagers reading *Look* magazine, and we need all the recruits we can get.
>
> So what happened? Nothing important; don't worry, nobody's dropping back in. Nobody who meant it in the first place. But the "hippie" is gone, or going, because the hippie has been overexposed. He's received so much attention from American society that he—the label—has become a part of that society. Gotta get a new label, or none at all, this time.
>
> Consider an actor, sick of his part, sick of the melodrama he's stuck in. I'm getting the hell out, he says, and he walks out the stage door onto the street. He's just about gone a block when the curtain starts to fall and he hears applause—he realizes that the stage was larger than he thought, he's still in the play, his part is The-Disgruntled-Guy-Who-Walks-Out.
>
> So we've got a problem. How do you drop out far enough, without geographically leaving the country you were born in and love? . . .
>
> As for saving the world, looks like we gotta find another act. Something that'll do more than show our contempt for this nuthouse. Something, maybe, that'll show people the reality outside the nuthouse, the real world we could all be working to achieve.

> Bring back reality! But not as a goddamned slogan. We don't need another label—but you can be sure that's the first thing we'll get.

Well, these are some of the high spots in *Notes from the New Underground.* There are others. But no book, not even this one, can reveal the coming generation in either its wholeness or its dividedness and contradiction. The most that can happen is that the reader may begin to gain a vague feeling for what is going on.