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UTOPIAN PROPOSAL

THE fear of publishers that various copying devices, now in widespread use and constantly improving in efficiency, may soon be a serious threat to the owners of writing as a form of "property" is evident in the wording of the copyright notice which has been commonly adopted. It reads: "No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photo-copying and recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher." In a rather urbane discussion of this question, in which he notes a general decline in the respect for "property," William Jovanovich of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., a well known publishing firm, sums up the cause of the anxiety (Spring *American Scholar*):

> Published writing is, nonetheless, still a property, just as other forms of information are regarded legally as property that can be created, owned, sold and resold. And xerography is still a ready means by which one can break the law, since it can be used to reproduce a work without recompensing properly its author (or performer) and publisher (or producer).

Looking for the origins of the copyright law, Mr. Jovanovich found its beginnings in England in 1710. He cites the opinion of a scholar that two factors were involved: "the acceptance of Locke's philosophy of property and law, and the exceptional profitability of printing and publishing during the early eighteenth century." Locke held that the primary role of governmental authority was the protection of property; accordingly, since what a man wrote was certainly his property, to protect his right to its worth seemed an eminently sensible idea.

This is but one of a great many ideas which have gained their propriety and appearance of being practical from moral conceptions belonging to the time in which they are adopted. One thinks not only of John Locke, but of Adam Smith, of John Stuart Mill, and of various customs and expectations in social and economic relations which technological change has adversely affected, sometimes to the point of making them seem ridiculous. Actually, most of the tough-minded books of social criticism published in recent years have been devoted to showing how and why once "sensible ideas" are no longer either sensible or workable. Consider, for example, what C. Wright Mills says in *White Collar* concerning "The Transformation of Property:

> What happened to the world of the small entrepreneur is best seen by looking at what happened to its heroes: the independent farmers and the small businessmen. These men, the leading actors of the middle-class economy, are no longer at the center of the American scene; they are merely two layers between other and more powerful or more populous strata. Above them are the men of large property, who through money and organization wield much power over other men; alongside and below them are the rank and file of propertyless employees and workers, who work for wages and salaries. Many former entrepreneurs and their children have joined these lower ranks, but only a few have become big entrepreneurs and not much like their nineteenth-century prototypes, and must now operate in a world no longer organized in their image.

This is a broad analysis of what happened to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ideas of security and freedom through property rights during the twentieth century. To it ought to be added another passage from Mills, giving the psycho-social picture:

> Images of white-collar types are now part of the literature of every major industrial nation: Hans Fallada presented the Pinnebergs to pre-Hitler Germany. Johannes Pinneberg, a bookkeeper trapped by inflation, depression, and wife with child ends up in the economic gutter, with no answer to the question, "Little Man, What Now?"—except support

> by a genuinely proletarian wife. J. B. Priestley created a gallery of tortured and insecure creatures from the white-collar world of London in *Angel Pavement.* Here are people who have been stood up by life: what they most desire is forbidden them by what they are.
>
> *Kitty Foyle* is perhaps the closest American counterpart of these European novels. But how different its heroine is! In America, unlike Europe, the fate of the white-collar types is not yet clear. A modernized Horatio Alger heroine, Kitty Foyle (like Alice Adams before her) has aspirations up to the Main Line. The book ends, in a depression year, with Kitty earning $3000 a year, about to buy stock in her firm, and hesitating marrying a doctor who happened to be a Jew. . . . But twenty-five years later, during the American postwar boom, Willy Loman appears, the hero of *Death of a Salesman,* the white-collar man who by the very virtue of his moderate success in business turns out to be a total failure in life. Frederic Wertham has written of Willy Loman's dream: "He succeeds with it; he fails with it; he dies with it. But why did he have this dream? Isn't it true that he had to have a false dream in our society?"

So, there are two sides to the breakdown and failure of "sensible" ideas. First, they no longer work in a practical way, because the circumstantial relationships on which they depend no longer exist, or have radically changed. Second, being superficial, their practical failure is taken far too seriously—as though crucial moral issues were involved. There is a great to-do about essentially trivial matters, leading, finally, to a revolution or revolt based mainly on disgust and contempt. Mr. Jovanovich seems to give some attention to this development in his brief essay on xerography:

> Western society has for several centuries doted on two notions: the belief that individual art is the highest form of culture, and the faith that general literacy benefits alike the rich and the poor, the high and the low. Together these notions presume that culture is sustained by teaching the thoughts and demonstrating the artistic style of a few people to large numbers of people. But now, as the twentieth century approaches its final quarter, different notions are being put forth. Culture is being redefined. Communal or tribal arts are admired. Instinctual knowledge is valued as a counterpoint to rationality. It is argued that the youth of each generation should not be taught by the models of dead or dying generations. Perhaps quantifying is converse to our best ends. Perhaps many people should write—the more the better. Perhaps less attention should be given to the popularity of single works.

The redefinition of culture is certainly called for, but "instinct" can hardly be a sufficient guide in this. In a time of change, conventional standards of excellence are abandoned, and the confusion which immediately follows soon makes public display of the scarcity of independent judgment. This has always been the case; loss of conventional guides only reveals the fact. Mr. Jovanovich shows, for example, that the habit of thinking of writing or published materials as a form of marketable property has persuaded most people that writing which has no price put on it is not worth reading. He relates a story told by Bernard Shaw about Tolstoy. When the Russian novelist resolved to live the simple, unacquisitive life and refused further royalties from his works, their sale fell off immediately.

Evidently, we are not really in any shape to "redefine" culture. Culture arises out of a spontaneous consensus of excellences contributed by many men, or by a strong nucleus of those who generate standards out of their own lives. These individuals must enjoy a certain hospitality from their times, or "culture" cannot come into being. Take for example the very real problems of the creative artist in a commercial civilization. How shall he "survive" without compromise? This is a man convinced, as John Sloan, the American painter, said, that "It may be taken as an axiom that the majority is always wrong in cultural matters." Should he have a subsidy from the State? Who selects the artists deserting of subsidies? How large should they be? There is something essentially sticky about contractual provisions for artists, and similar difficulties apply to all the professions, especially to those which have a visionary aspect or potentiality.

Quite conceivably, such problems will never be solved, or even understood, if we argue about equitable "property" arrangements.

The modern yearning for communal or tribal arts may amount to a vaguely intuitive recognition of the futility of trying to patch up the existing social arrangements with some sort of ethical rationale. The true artist, likewise the true teacher, healer, philosopher, poet, or craftsman and builder, has no natural place or role in an acquisitive society in which values are judged by saleable property. He is forever miscast, and for him to live what we call a "normal life" will probably condemn him to malfunction in deeper human terms. Only by understanding how this works, and learning to cope with it without bitterness, can the artist preserve his inner wholeness.

In a time of change, it is better to try to conceive of the ideal social situation and to work toward that—or according to the principles that would then prevail—since doing what is merely sensible is an "adjustment" approach which will work only under stable conditions. We might, then, look more closely at the idea of a tribal life or society, since this form of association has already shown its appeal. We are not really "tribal" people, any more, and it would be easy to make fun of the suggestion, yet there may be something of value to be learned from tribal ways. It can hardly be accident that when A. H. Maslow was looking for illustrations within his own experience of something resembling the "high synergy" society discussed by Ruth Benedict in an unpublished paper—a society in which the interests of the individual are the interests of the whole, or work out this way in practice—he recalled the time he spent among the Blackfoot Indians of Canada. In his presidential address to the New England Psychological Association in 1963, Dr. Maslow said:

> I remember my confusion as I came into the society and tried to find out who was the rich man and found that the rich men had nothing, and when I asked the white secretary of the reserve who was the richest man, he mentioned a man whom none of the Indians had mentioned—that is, the man who had on the books the most stock, the most cattle, and most horses. When I came back to my Indian informants and asked them about Jimmy McHugh, how about all his horses, they shrugged with contempt. He keeps it. And they hadn't even thought to regard him as a wealthy man. White Head Chief was wealthy even though he owned nothing. What were the rewards for this? In what way did this virtue pay? The men who did this, who were formally generous in this way were the most admired, the most respected and also the most loved men in the tribe. I think if we can get ourselves into this position, if we can feel ourselves into this, I think we can understand it, get the feel for it. These were men who benefited the tribe. These were the men whom they could be proud of. These were the men whom it warmed their hearts to see working, to see walking around.

It is not too much to say that, *underneath* the standards of a purchase-price system of values, many people already "feel" what Maslow is talking about. There are lots of men running small businesses who have to remind themselves every morning that they are *supposed* to make a profit. There are plenty of commercial artists who begin to feel like human beings only when they are able to forget about the money and get to work on the project they have taken on. There are a great many people who, if they knew cultural history, might wish that John Locke and Adam Smith had never been born, or had at least kept still, since the whole idea of *property* seems to have such exaggerated importance in the value system of our civilization. They conform, they do some pretending, and they may even talk about being "practical," but this is because they think it's expected of them and because they feel responsible for the welfare of their wives and children.

What has the cult of property values done to the arts? One thinks, here, of those great artists, the ancient Greeks, who had no word for either "art" or "artist" as we use these terms. *Techne* is the skill of the artisan. The artists of those days, apparently, were all craftsmen. This seems an exceedingly healthy situation. Men made beautiful things because it delighted them to do so. The beauty was a transcendent part of their skill or craft.

When it comes to writing, the question is more difficult. For simplicity's sake, we might propose one sweeping reform as a remedy. (After all, in the design of a Utopia, it is legitimate to choose its features arbitrarily.) Why not, then, abolish the property value vested in writing? This would probably reduce the amount of printed matter which appears each year by at least 95 per cent. A distinction could be made between the "creative" and the drudgery aspect of writing, since everyone should be paid for bread labor, but there is really no way to put a price on the creations of the mind. If a man knows some truth, he ought not to want to sell it, any more than a spiritual teacher should set up in business. Financial considerations, in relation to things of the mind and spirit, are simply absurd. Could there be any more efficient way to spread corruption and the distortion of values among the people?

If a man wants to spend all his time working at his art or his writing, then he might accept the same responsibilities and limitations that the old caste system of India once imposed on the Brahmins—they were supposed to rely entirely on the gifts of the people for their support. A man would have to be both dedicated and very good at his chosen work, before he would dare to make such a choice. Half-way houses or compromises on the way to this ideal might be tolerated. For example, in the Kibbutzim, a man who wants to do, say sculpture, and demonstrates his ability to the members, is allowed to devote half his time to the art, but the rest of the time he works in the support of the community, the same as anybody else.

There would be various fringe benefits, one being collapse of the barriers between the so-called "intellectuals" and the rest of the population. Elitism would disappear and cultural excellences might gain a natural foundation in community life. Folk arts might have a renaissance and the life of students would become a lot easier, since there wouldn't be so many new books to read. The "latest thing" would no longer be important.

A plan like this could not of course be enforced. Its application would depend on recognition that the creative belongs to a region where "enforcement" makes no sense. Actually, nothing that we really need can be enforced. High culture is the efflorescence of the free lives of free men, and getting it started is surely not a task that can be turned over to coercers. The good that men do for one another needs to be done freely, or it will not be good. Only the commercial lie and the worship of property have obscured what ought to be common knowledge. Yet it is not really a new idea. There have always been men who did things freely—inventors who refused to patent their creations because they wanted them to be easily available to all. People called them dreamers and fools, saying that others would take out the patents, and no doubt others did. But actually, claiming exclusive rights on an idea is like building a fence around a spring in the desert and charging people for a drink.

But everything, it will be said, has been going that way for so long! That's only partly true. The major institutions of society have been going that way, but inside most human beings are little cores of resistance to the way things have been going. In every profession, in every walk of life, there have been those who outwardly conform to the inverted standards, but remain as human as they possibly can. If oases of overt change appear, they will migrate to them, one by one. It is quite conceivable that the brilliant technologists—or some of them—who are the whipping boys of present humanist criticism, would find challenge in the idea of turning their skills toward serving the needs of an ever more simplified society, instead of one that keeps on growing more and more complex.

There are always ways to be good human beings. In a culture like ours, it may take a great deal of ingenuity, and sometimes some courage, but it's not impossible. It is always possible to

think through to some acceptable model of a good society, and to keep its image bright, at least in the mind; for then, opportunities arise for putting some phase of the ideal into practice. The object is to establish *momentum* for movement in this direction. A propertyless society is a splendid idea, but just now a great many people are wrapped up in their possessions and fear to lose them. Gandhi's idea of momentum away from this fixation was in the idea of trusteeship—the man who uses his property for the general benefit. He doesn't waste it; he doesn't scatter it wildly; he *uses* it with all the intelligence and circumspection he once employed in accumulating it. There are some men like that who are not the prisoners of their possessions; and there are others who have little, but are very rich in the sense of White Head Chief of the Blackfoot Tribe. Such men live above the external forms of their times, and only such men can *change* the habits of their time. There are thousands of ways to make a beginning.

REVIEW
WHO SHOULD WRITE HISTORY?

ONE has only to read a book concerned with education published twenty-five years ago—even a good one such as Jacques Barzun's *Teacher in America*—to realize that in the brief span of a quarter of a century the world has moved into a very different age. Mr. Barzun is sagacious, civilized, witty, and while he has much fault to find with higher education he seems basically undisturbed. He is haunted by no urgent and unanswered questions. His counsels would have some use in any age, and they are pleasurable to read today, but he leaves untouched the problem of what to teach in a time like this—concerning, for example, history, when nearly all the makers of modern history are being brought to trial.

Mr. Barzun thinks highly of James Harvey Robinson and Carl Becker, as well he may, since these were historians who set out to make historical studies readable, yet today scholarly objectivity and Olympian relativism are also on trial. We are compelled to ask ourselves, as they were not, about the *meaning* to be sought in history, for one by one the meanings we have taken for granted are dissolving before our eyes.

In a little book compiled by the National Science Teachers Association, *Science Looks at Itself* (Scribner's, 1970), one of the contributors, Roy A. Rappaport, a cultural anthropologist, offers material which leaves the reader with nothing but questions. In a paragraph introducing a survey of the ruin which man has been working upon this planet, Mr. Rappaport says:

> One of the premises of anthropology is that, whatever else he may be, man is an animal. As such, he is bound indissolubly to his environment. He has the same needs as other animals, and his populations are limited by similar factors. The notion that man has freed himself from environmental limitations through the conquest of nature is not simply a misunderstanding or an analytic error. It is something more dangerous, for it leads to actions which must in the long run be disastrous. The attitude engendered by this belief is reminiscent of what the Greeks called *hubris*, an arrogance so great that it led men to challenge the gods and led the gods to respond by destroying them.

Man's very successes in manipulating his environment have led him to believe that he can do *anything,* and Mr. Rappaport wonders if these triumphs of domination have produced an ultimately self-destructive tendency in the advanced societies. Primitive peoples, he points out, who lacked the aggressive drive of modern man, balanced their ignorance with *respect* for nature, which gave sanity to their enterprises. Technological man, however, regarding primitives as victims of superstition, mistook his capacity to do what he pleased for the right or even the compulsion to commit excesses in all directions.

So, Mr. Rappaport proposes at the end of his discussion, we must learn and practice restraint. This seems a way of saying that we don't make very good animals. More to the point might be an inquiry into what we are in addition to being animals. If we knew more about distinctively human activities, we might not make such a mess of the physical side of our lives. Actually, part of the *hubris* of the time is found in the shallow assurance of confident orthodoxies, the egotisms of church and state, and the claims of "scientific progress." Mr. Rappaport speaks of this:

> . . . the religions of primitive peoples—often predicated upon a respect for ecosystems which the worshippers do not understand—are more farseeing than those of the Judeo-Christian tradition, which propound the absurd notion that everything on earth was created for man's enjoyment or use. . . . Because private enterprise in all its vitality and diversity was instrumental in the development of our country, Americans have sanctified enterprise and allowed it to continue to direct development. But when "development" means achievement of the self-interest goals of private industrial organizations and when it employs our increasingly powerful technology to do so, it becomes a euphemism for environmental destruction.

To *settle* the question of authentic human purpose is not the objective, since this would verbalize an undertaking which calls rather for

awakening and growth. The problem is to keep the question open and avoid formulation of easy or superficial answers, such as have led to the closed systems and societies in the past. But how should the question be set?

This is a task which, in the present, might best be given to artists and poets. It is the problem of history. Ever since reading Octavio Paz's *The Labyrinth of Solitude* (Grove paperback, 1961; see Review for March 10), we have been wondering if it might not be a good idea to ask the poets to take charge of history for a while. Paz is a Mexican poet and his book is a study of the Mexican mind. Lately we have been reading it again, as relief from the rather heavy anthropology in *Sons of the Shaking Earth* (University of Chicago Press, 1959) by Eric R. Wolf. The Wolf book is the story of Middle America from the speculative beginnings of its settlement by Asian migrants who came from Siberia to Alaska. The early chapters seem pretty unreal to the reader, since they deal mainly with "long-headed" and "round-headed" peoples. Not until the author gets to the time after the Spanish conquest does one begin to feel that human beings like himself are involved in these tragedies and dislocations. In one place Wolf writes:

> It is one of the ironies of the Spanish Conquest that the enterprise and expansion of the colonists produced not utopia but collapse. Like Tantalus reaching in vain for the fruit that would still his hunger and thirst, the conqueror extended his hand for the fruits of victory, only to find that they turned to ashes at the touch of his fingers.
>
> All the claims to utopia—economic, religious, and political—rested ultimately upon the management and control of but one resource: the indigenous population of the colony. The conquerors wanted Indian labor, the crown Indian subjects, the friars Indian souls. The Conquest was to initiate utopia; instead, it produced a biological catastrophe. Between 1519 and 1650, six-sevenths of the Indian population of Middle America was wiped out; only a seventh remained to turn the wheels of paradise. Like the baroque altars soon to arise in the colony, the splendor and wealth of the new possessions but covered a grinning skull.

There was also a massive displacement of human purposes:

> But the Conquest not only destroyed people physically; it also rent asunder the accustomed fabric of their lives and the pattern of motives that animated that life. Pre-Hispanic society and the new society established by the Conquest both rested on the exploitation of man by man; but they differed both in the means of their exploitation and in the ends to which it was directed. Under the Mexica, a peasantry had labored to maintain a ruling class with the surpluses derived from the intensive cultivation of its fields. But these rulers, in turn, were the armed knights of the sun who labored through sacrifice and warfare to maintain the balance of the universe. In the face of divergent interests, such a society possessed both a common transcendental purpose—to keep the sun in its heaven—and a common ritual idiom for the articulation of that purpose. The society produced by the Spanish Conquest, however, lacked both a common purpose and a common idiom in which such a purpose could be made manifest. It not only replaced intensive seed-planting with intensive pursuits; it also sacrificed men to the production of objects intended to serve no end beyond the maximization of profit and glory of the individual conqueror. Moreover, each group of conquerors—ecclesiastic, official, colonist—pursued a separate and divergent utopia.

These passages in Wolf establish the question to which Paz devotes his perceptive and endlessly suggestive book. "The history of Mexico," he writes, "is the history of a man seeking his parentage, his origins." This search is the meaning of his life:

> He wants to go back beyond the catastrophe he has suffered: he wants to be a sun again, to return to the center of that life from which he was separated one day. (Was that day the Conquest? Independence?) It is a form of orphanhood, an obscure awareness that we have been torn away from the All and an ardent search: a flight and a return, an effort to reestablish the bonds that unite us with the universe.

This is what a man longs for, and for the Mexican the need has been objectified in his physical as well as his metaphysical plight. In one sense, therefore, the Mexican has had the advantage over his neighbors to the north, who

are only now beginning to suspect that they are lost and alienated beings. Human identity may remain obscure, but the human condition is today becoming more and more manifest. Hence the importance of the poets, who devote their lives to giving an account of the human condition. For this reason, poets might do better than historians in discerning the meaning of history. In his last chapter, Paz writes:

> Solitude—the feeling and knowledge that one is alone, alienated from the world and oneself—is not an exclusively Mexican characteristic. All men, at some moment in their lives, feel themselves to be alone. And they are. To live is to be separated from what we were in order to approach what we are going to be in the mysterious future. Solitude is the profoundest fact of the human condition. Man is the only being who knows he is alone, and the only one who seeks out another. His nature—if that word can be used in reference to man, who has "invented" himself by saying "No" to nature—consists in his longing to realize himself in another. Man is nostalgia and a search for communion. Therefore, when he is aware of himself he is aware of his lack of another, that is, of his solitude.

The young can understand what Paz is saying. History as he deals with it is a *uniting* art. He concludes his study of Mexico with these words:

> The Mexican hides behind a variety of masks, but he tears them away during a fiesta or a time of grief or suffering, just as the nation has cast off all the forms that were stifling it. However, we have not yet found a way of reconciling liberty with order, the word with the act, and both with the evidence—-not supernatural now, but human—of our fellowship with others. We have retreated now and then in our search, only to advance again with greater determination. And suddenly we have reached the limit; in these few years we have exhausted all the historical forms Europe could provide us. There is nothing left except nakedness or lies. After the general collapse of Faith and Reason, of God and Utopia, none of the intellectual systems—new or old—is capable of alleviating our anguish or calming our fears. We are alone at last, like all men, and like them we live in a world of violence and deception, a world dominated by Don No One. It protects us but also oppresses us, hides us but also disfigures us. If we tear off these masks, if we open ourselves up, if—in brief—we face our own selves, then we can truly begin to live and to think. Nakedness and defenselessness are awaiting us. But there, in that "open" solitude, transcendence is also waiting: the outstretched hands of other solitary beings. For the first time in our history, we are contemporaries of all mankind.

Perhaps this is the meaning of the present, and of present history—that there can be no understanding of it except in behalf of both the world of nature and all mankind. If this is so, then very nearly all history will have to be rewritten. This may be the time to begin.

COMMENTARY
PLAN FOR "LIBERAL EDUCATION"

IF one turns from Robert McClintock's discussion of the meaning of liberal education to Ivan Illich's "network" scheme of alternatives in education, it becomes plain that Illich is working for the revival of liberal education and has practical plans for bringing it about. In one of his Ciclo lectures, printed in the *New York Review of Books* and in *Cidoc Cuaderno* No. 1013 (Centro Intercultural De Documentation, Apdo. 479, Cuernavaca, Mexico), he says:

> The planning of new educational institutions ought not to begin with the administrative goals of a principal or president, or with the teaching goals of a professional educator, or with the learning goals of any hypothetical class of people. It must not start with the question, "What should someone learn?" but with the question, "What kinds of things and people might learners want to be in contact with in order to learn?"
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> Someone who wants to learn knows that he needs both information and critical response to its use by somebody else. Information can be stored in things and in persons. In an educational system, access to things ought to be available at the sole bidding of the learner, while access to informants requires in addition others' consent. Criticism can also come from two directions: from peers or from elders, that is, from fellow learners whose immediate interests match mine, or from those who will grant me a share in their superior experience. . . .
>
> Educational resources are usually labeled according to educators' curricular goals. I propose to do the contrary, to label four different approaches which enable the student to gain access to any educational resource which may help him to define and achieve his own goals.

These four approaches include (1) Reference Services to educational materials of every conceivable kind, beginning with libraries, museums, etc., and not excluding field trips and apprenticeship opportunities; (2) Skill Exchanges through which persons can swap their knowledge of one thing for the chance to learn something else; (3) Peer Matching—a means of helping people with the same interests to find one another to pursue their learning activities in association for mutual benefit; (4) Reference Services to Educators-at-large available as teaching professionals, which would list addresses and self-descriptions along with "conditions of access to their services." Such professionals could be chosen, Illich suggests, "by polling or consulting their former clients."

This program frees the learner of institutional guidance and control and allows him to seek and obtain the education he wants and will work for.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
A LIBERAL EDUCATION

IN the February issue of *Teachers College Record* (Columbia), Robert McClintock, who teaches history and education, discusses the meaning of "liberality" as applied to the liberal arts. He finds in this questioning a key to the unrest and disorders on the campuses of the United States. While moral horror at the war in Vietnam, disgust with the commercialism of the times and the misuse of natural resources, and outrage at the injustice to minority groups cover the factors usually named to explain the student rebellion, it is necessary, Mr. McClintock feels, to look more deeply at what has happened to higher education in America. Two things, he says, have occurred. In the process of more than a hundred years of theorizing, educators have convinced themselves that students are plastic material to be shaped by wiser and older heads who know what students ought to study and how they should turn out. The second development is the power that the educational authority, system, and way of looking at things have gained over public thinking generally.

The manipulative attitude toward students, which is only a general attitude toward human beings applied to youth, is now common throughout society, making the problem much more than an "educational" one. Toward the end of his paper, Mr. McClintock sums up in broader terms:

> In most countries the younger generation has gained from the Cold War two fundamentally common experiences. Whether capitalist or communist, Arab or Jew, black, white, yellow, or red, we have grown up in a rhetorical din in which every mode of communication, the hot and the cool, the electronic image, the printed page, and the spoken word, all reiterated that "our" way of life is man's highest embodiment of man's highest ideals: dignity and freedom, benevolence and love. Yet whether capitalist or communist, Arab or Jew black, white, yellow, or red, we have all grown up with an intimate, extended involvement in an educational system that increasingly entails the practical rejection of those great ideals, that increasingly sets the tone of the actual communities in which we live. Students everywhere seek to communicate their awareness, which stems from their immediate experience, of this contradiction between the aspirations of modern life and its characteristic practices within the omnipresent educational institutions.

Modern education has forgotten the basic assumption of *liberal* education: the autonomy of the student. This means not so much that education frees the man, but that it is the sort of education suitable for the free. It is liberal because a free intelligence can use it to advantage, while it has little meaning to one who is unfree. The liberal arts were for men who wanted to use them to make themselves freer, more independent. (This recalls Tolstoy's definition of education: Equality. A good teacher makes the student equal to himself and therefore free of him.)

A young man, a student, aware of his autonomy as a human being, seeks competence. He looks to education, not to "mold" him or reshape him, but to supply the disciplines which will enlarge the scope of his autonomy. This was once the general view:

> In ancient times this discipline came through grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music. But these subjects were not sacrosanct: The liberal arts were thought worthy of free men because a man who had mastered them could apply himself to any other subject without dependence on teachers.
>
> With the liberal assumption of the student's autonomy, the teacher accepted an important but highly circumscribed function: the self-effacing task of making himself unnecessary. Pre-Rousseauian pedagogy is incomprehensible without realizing that its aim was not to make the teacher more effective, but to make him less important. Formal pedagogy was to help the student arrive as quickly as possible at a point at which he no longer needed instruction. Thus the medieval scholastic, John of Salisbury, asked why some arts are called liberal, gave this unequivocal answer: "Those to whom the system of the Trivium has disclosed the significance of all words, or the rules of the Quadrivium have unveiled

the secrets of nature, do not need the help of a teacher in order to understand the meaning of books and to find the solutions of questions."

This, then, is the meaning of "liberal" in the expression, "Liberal Arts":

> In sum, the liberal arts presumed that a free man would want to master the tools of learning in order to proceed unhampered by dependence on others in his personal pursuit of competence. The liberal studies in no way caused men to be free, but were an occasion at which free men could develop their capacities for independently seeking their personal concerns. The belief that every man is innately free and has the capacity to cultivate his character was the characteristic liberality of the liberal arts. The liberal tradition has been synonymous with trust in the student: in it the educator premised his efforts on a recognition of the student's moral and intellectual freedom. The spiritual independence of the student was so essential that the great teachers of the tradition avoided docilely passive students and taught with acerb criticism intended to awaken their listeners' self-awareness. In the liberal tradition, philosophy, a conscious effort at self-formation, begins only when a free man recognizes his mortal limitations and becomes aware of his personal possibilities.

Changes in the curriculum can in no way alter the fundamental assumption of liberal education; so today, as in the time of Socrates and Plato, or in the view of John of Salisbury—

> Liberal pedagogy simply assumes realistically that educational responsibility and initiative reside in the person becoming educated; after all, the student must live with the ideals and skills he thus acquires. Therefore, students are now asking a proper, significant question. As education has become a definitive function of the community, have educators maintained the liberal assumption as the foundation of their activities? Do teachers assume that the students to whom they offer instruction are free, autonomous beings?

Mr. McClintock finds that, on the whole, the liberality of liberal education has been abandoned for conditioning theory and indoctrination, with total responsibility for education resting on educators. Looking at the history of educational theory, he says:

> Exactly when educators rejected this liberal premise is moot. But since mass education developed, the dominant problem for educational theorists has been to ensure that students will learn what teachers try to teach. Thus early in the nineteenth century the influential German pedagogue, J. F. Herbart, denied that education as he defined it was compatible with the doctrine of transcendental freedom, the axiom of the student's autonomy. Herbart believed, as do countless others, that it was impossible to educate if the student was already fully free, for in education the student was molded by the teacher, who should sagely shape the inchoate child into an autonomous adult.
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> Educating a free being seems impossible, however, only to those who have conceptually separated an education from the person who acquires it, and have made the education into something that is done to the student, not something the student does to himself. Be that as it may, with the denial of the student's autonomy, paternalism flourished. Having defined education as the molding of a plastic pupil, Herbart logically made "the science of education"—the science by which the teacher could ensure that the child would learn what the teacher sought to teach—into the major problem of pedagogy.

One may say that this is now being taken care of by the student revolt—that paternalism is indeed at low ebb on the campuses of today, and that there will be less and less of it as time goes on. Here Mr. McClintock makes an important distinction. It is quite true that the students are successful in throwing off *social* paternalism, but this new freedom may have no effect at all on the *intellectual* paternalism of the faculty and administration. The root of the abuse of power and authority lies here, and the change that is needed is a fundamental reform in thinking concerning the nature of man. Students are low-rated and made to feel the oppressions of arbitrary authority for the reason that human beings are low-rated and regarded as having to be shaped by external influences guided by the better informed and correctly oriented. That is why merely unburdening the faculty and administration of their "parental" responsibility for students' personal lives will not touch the core of the problem.

FRONTIERS

The All-or-Nothing Tendency

THE greatest obstacle to peaceful and intelligently ordered social change is almost certainly due to what Abraham Maslow, in his new preface to the Viking paperback edition of *Religions, Values, and Peak Experiences,* calls the polarizing tendency in making judgments. People too easily forget or fail to recognize that nearly all human beings have in them both visionary and plodder aspects, and have need of establishment orderliness as well as go-for-broke daring. While it may be true that in any given individual, one set of qualities will predominate, the ideal is a person in whom both sides of human nature find balance and mutual support.

The hunger for certainty, plus moral and intellectual laziness and the fear of taking risks, lies at the root of the polarizing tendency. Take for example the expression, "He Judges by appearances." This is usually intended to indicate a superficial thinker, but with some substitutions it can suggest something quite different. If you let certain appearances—*i.e.,* objective attributes—become the defining elements of reality, and reduce them to abstractions such as mass, weight, physical dimensions, etc., then judging by appearances becomes approved scientific practice. The acceptability of this approach may reach a point where its practitioners say that if the method of objective measurement cannot be applied, the inquiry is frivolous and its object unreal.

What is gained by this method? Exactitude in scientific knowledge and its rewards in manipulative power are gained. What is lost? Nothing is lost, so long as no one pretends that this sort of knowledge includes all that men can know. But when the achievement record of technology is mistaken for the path of human progress, then so much has been lost that it can hardly be calculated. Not only has culture as a whole been polarized by a grossly narrow and externalized idea of truth, but the reaction of extreme dissent is bound to be equal and opposite. Inevitably there develop extravagant cults of subjectivity to match the worship of objectivity, followed by all the psycho-social phenomena of coterie, schism, and partisan allegiance now become so familiar as to be regarded as quite "normal" in human affairs.

This polarization process could be called a vulgarization of method to the point of sterility and dehumanization. Why does dehumanization result? While the gamut of human experience presents areas where subjective content is at a minimum, making judgment by "appearances" simply common sense, in other areas the denial of subjective content amounts to deliberate suppression of whole regions of reality. It was Maslow's lifelong concern to show that these natural fields of subjective awareness and experience are open to scientific study, and are fully as important as the world of "objective" phenomena, although corresponding disciplines of subjective inquiry need to be evolved.

Excesses in either direction lead to polarization and the party spirit, and angry denunciations of the "other side." But there is in reality no "other side." There is rather a human nature which operates at numerous levels to perform various functions, some of them practical, ordinary, and routine, and some of them innovative, creative, and pioneering.

Consider another polarity: what are called "establishment" policies versus radical action and utopian idealism. What is wanted is leaders who are moved by a vision of what ought to be, yet at the same time have a thorough-going grasp of the needs of the day-to-day functioning of the human community. This is almost the same as saying that authentic idealists will be found to be excellent housekeepers. That, really, is all that the establishment is, intrinsically or functionally—the institution of the housekeeping arts.

Establishment functions do not become important until they are neglected, but then they become very important indeed. The reaction

against the establishment, today, is mainly a result of the vast exaggeration of housekeeping functions, which has arisen out of what can only be called the characteristic materialism of the modern age, in which the conveniences and luxuries of physical existence have gained so much prominence that the human spirit has been dwarfed and corrupted by a religion of "things." Since the Establishment includes all the institutional arrangements devised to keep the housekeeping functions going, it has quite naturally become the symbol of this corruption.

Yet there can be no society without housekeeping functions. Have there been any leaders in recent years who combine vision with practical housekeeping sense in the way here suggested? We can think of two. One is Arthur E. Morgan, whose life has been one long career in reform, always in combination with practical community building. Then there is Cesar Chavez, the leader of the Chicanos and other farm workers who are involved in the labor movement in California agriculture. Chavez is basically a community-builder, too, and in a situation less humanly desperate would certainly be recognized as much more than a labor organizer, which is only the external "appearance" of his career.

Polarization, then, comes when people seek to avoid hard thinking and independent judgment, and take superficial classifications of ideas, practices, and principles as accurate measures of their content. As Maslow puts it:

> Most people lose or forget the subjectivity religious experience and redefine religion as a set of habits, behaviors, dogmas, forms, which at the extreme becomes entirely legalistic and bureaucratic, conventional, empty, and in the truest meaning of the term, anti-religious. The mystic experience, the great awakening, along with the charismatic seer who started the whole thing, are forgotten, lost, or transformed into their opposites. Organized Religion, the churches, finally may become the major enemies of the religious experience and the religious experiencer. . . .
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> But on the other wing, the mystical (or experiential) also has its traps which I have not stressed sufficiently. As the more Apollonian type can veer toward the extreme of being reduced to the merely behavioral, so does the mystical type run the risk of being reduced to the merely experiential. Out of the joy and wonder of his ecstasies and peak-experiences he may be tempted to *seek* them, *ad hoc*, and to value them exclusively, as the only or at least the highest goods of life, giving up other criteria of right or wrong. . . . In a word, instead of being temporarily self-absorbed and inwardly searching, he may become simply a selfish person, seeking his own personal salvation, trying to get into "heaven" even if other people can't, and finally even perhaps *using* other people as triggers, as means to his sole end of higher states of consciousness. In a word he may become not only selfish but also evil.

These excesses, naturally enough, fortify the polarization, justify the opposition, and tighten the hard knots of self-righteousness in all sectarian divisions. It is then that simple balance is made to seem mere middle-of-the-roadism, or evasive compromise. In such circumstances, the affluence of an affluent society may prove its greatest misfortune, since it permits the indulgence of irrational extremes.