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THE DREAM OF DR. MOREAU

SINCE the rash of controversial heart surgeries at the end of last year, organ transplants have become a very serious topic of discussion even among those who are not in the medical profession. Apart from Dr. Christian Barnard's publicity-seeking behavior and his preference for airing his ideas in the mass media rather than in the scientific journals, questions of the morality of such operations in general; of the fine dividing line between life and death; of the physical nature of death itself; and of the very goals of medicine, have now begun to be raised. There is, in short, a restlessness, an uneasiness on the part of many in the face of operations like these. This unrest is good, because it serves to spotlight the very real but often submerged feelings of hostility and moral outrage that modern science and its techniques elicit in morally sensitive people. And modern medicine, despite its aura of benevolence and unquestioned progress, must be included in this deeply felt hostility because it partakes of the peculiarly contemporary alienation from the sources of our being which is the scientific world-view.

The medical researcher, the practicing physician, the experimental biologist, chemist, physicist, the technician, the engineer—all have this world-view in common. The scientific ideal is that of the detached, unemotional observer, coolly manipulating objects (organic or inorganic, alive or dead) and refining techniques for manipulating objects. The scientist breaks the messy chaotic world down into neat, discrete particles to be studied, analyzed, and changed if necessary.

The surgeon is, in this sense, the mechanical engineer *par excellence*, who tinkers with the human machinery, incising here, grafting a bit there, cutting some more here, until he makes it "work" again, or until it fails to work altogether. So often one hears this metaphor used by these engineers of medicine, that the body is a machine: the heart its pump, the lungs its bellows, the digestive tract its waste-disposal system, and so on. The metaphor is extended to all living things. As an American engineer of computerized robots said admiringly, "The dog is a magnificent piece of hardware!"

The popularity of organ transplant techniques comes directly from this attitude. If the body is a machine, its parts, like those of a machine, must be interchangeable. If there is a chemical or immunological rejection of the foreign part, then it must be overcome with massive injections of anti-immunological chemicals into the blood stream. And even if the patient dies, the operation will be considered a success.

Why? In what sense could Dr. Barnard and his American counterparts in heart surgery have deemed successful operations which resulted in the deaths of their patients? Only in that sense that the whole life (and the quality of that life) of the patient was never even considered. The success lay in the spectacular engineering techniques devised by these doctors in transferring a still living heart from one body (presumably dead) to another whose worn-out organ had to be replaced. This is the success—the spectacular technological success of Dr. Frankenstein (the prototype and perhaps ideal of the modern organ transplant researcher), when he infused a semblance of human life into a collage of human parts. That it became a monster did not concern him. The operation was a success.

Now we have researchers talking seriously of brain transplants. Experiments are taking place where brains of monkeys are being kept alive outside of bodies for short periods of time. The technique is infinitely more difficult, but it's being worked on. And we have all heard of the numerous Russian experiments of the last decade or two—dog's heads being grafted onto the bodies of other living dogs.

One's repulsion at the thought of two-headed dogs and other such monstrosities is entirely natural. H. G. Wells, with his gift of prophecy, fictionalized just such grotesqueries in his story, *The Island of Dr.*

Moreau, in which a mad surgeon-scientist tortures dozens of animals into distorted, nightmarish shapes. Inevitably his obsession leads him to seek experimentation with humans. The dream of Wells' Dr. Moreau is to have unlimited ability for manipulation of parts in order to change the aspect of the whole. It is surely mad and inverted. We can imagine a Dr. Moreau creating a race of Calibans to do his slave work.

But can we imagine the utter madness of Moreau or Frankenstein in the benevolent antiseptic surroundings of a real contemporary research laboratory? Yet perhaps it is the possibility of this madness which makes us uneasy about the "successes" of Dr. Barnard. Other real contemporary events add to the growing uneasiness. In Cambridge, R. G. Edwards is experimenting with the transplanting of mouse embryos. He wants to know where (outside of its natural womb-home) the embryo will take root and grow. He grafts the mouse's infinitesimal fertilized eggs in odd places—a male mouse's testicles, a female mouse's kidneys. Yes, he finds, some will grow in these alien surroundings. But they will not be born. He kills them before that event. He is also experimenting with growing mouse embryos in test tubes. They grow there, too, but are "aborted" before term.

One wonders how long it will be before some enterprising embryologist obtains fertilized human eggs (by the same simple technique) and cultivates them in test tubes. And when these grow, how long before they will be aborted? Or perhaps they will be allowed (in the interests of science) to be born out of the test tube. Perhaps the experimenter will be as unconcerned about them as he is about the animals he sacrifices. R. G. Edwards was filmed for BBC TV working with laboratory mice in these experiments. Some were alive and anesthetized, some were dead. In one sequence, he performed a transplant on a dead mouse for the benefit of the camera, and when it was over, casually threw the dead mouse in a corner. It was a gesture of such unfeeling callousness, one sensed that he and his assistants must have killed and disposed of hundreds of such animals each week. In all the laboratories all over the world, how many animals are anesthetized before being operated upon, and how many are killed on what flimsy pretexts? (For that matter, has it occurred to anyone to wonder how many dogs Dr. Barnard has killed in perfecting his spectacular techniques?)

But there are still more sophisticated and easier ways of distorting human (and other animal) bodies than severing, transplanting, sewing. The molecular biologists have discovered ways to alter the essential genetic pattern. Instead of interfering crudely with scalpel and surgical thread, they propose to intervene at the very source—the chromosome which transmits inherited characteristics. In the March 10, 1968 (London) *Observer* there appeared an article condensed from Gordon Rattray Taylor's forthcoming *The Biological Time Bomb,* in which the author calls this kind of genetic surgery "tinkering with heredity." He cites Prof. Joshua Lederberg, a leading American geneticist, as believing "that the first step may be to implant human cell nuclei into animals, perhaps apes, and thus to produce hybrids; the next step will be to push the process further, incorporating organs and limbs of human origin in animals and vice versa, by transplantation techniques." Taylor adds the obligatory warning about the need for taking human values into consideration, etc., etc., and goes on to talk of more such "exciting advances."

As Dr. Robert L. Sinsheimer put it at a recent conference on the future of biology, we are now entering the stage of "intervention and intelligent control of the natural processes" and no longer have to rely on "blind natural selection." This intelligent control he sees as a new hope for the future, implying thus that only the most wise and prudent and benevolent of eugenicists will be allowed to tamper with the human genetic code. And are we to be reassured by statements such as these?

The implications are undoubtedly ominous. Yet we see and read of most scientists (with a few notable exceptions) carrying on such researches with either an ignorantly sanguine optimism, or an uncaring curiosity as to the possible destructive results their new techniques will bring.

Henry Harris of Oxford University, who is experimenting with the fusion of human and mouse cells, commented on the aforementioned television program, "It is not the scientist's function to decide what is done with his discoveries—that is up to society." This from a man who has succeeded, *not* in a morally neutral experiment, but in actually fusing the cells of man and mouse in his laboratory! No one asks him the purpose of this grotesque exercise, of which Dr. Moreau would surely have been envious. It is merely given that wherever and in whatever direction a scientist's curiosity takes him, *there* he must go. It is the first sacred law of science. And note how neatly Dr. Harris severs science from society. He as an experimental researcher absents himself from the body of society, and finds that he has nothing to do with society's morality. Many scientists would probably agree with him in this schizoid attitude. To be curious and to test one's curiosity to its limits is the scientist's main concern. Such is his training that the whole world must become an object for his prodding curiosity and manipulation. And his function thus is not to be human first, but to be a scientist first.

From this heedless dissociation comes all the twisted amorality of the twentieth century's uses of technology: the enormity of the nuclear bombs; the devising and stockpiling of weapons for biological and chemical warfare; the invasion of space with technological-military gimmicks; the introduction of toxic compounds into air, water, and animals; the devastation of the earth's resources; the sterility and dehumanization of urban life; and now, the prospects of "modified" people, of artificial mutation and gene reconstruction. These horrors, absurdities and perversions are the direct result of the scientific world-view so clearly enunciated by men like Henry Harris.

But hopefully, there are also people like the American botanist, Barry Commoner, who speak as human beings first and who seek to cherish nature rather than violate it. In his very important book *Science and Survival* (Gollancz, 1966), Commoner sharply and wisely criticizes the prevailing attitude. He says:

> The separation of the laws of nature among the different sciences is a human conceit; nature itself is an integrated whole. A nuclear test explosion is usually regarded as an experiment in engineering and physics; but it is also a vast—if poorly controlled—experiment in environmental biology. [There is a] web of relationships that ties animal to plant, prey to predator, parasite to host, and all to air, water and soil . . .; a small intrusion in one place in the environment may trigger a huge response elsewhere in the system . . . Sooner or later, wittingly or unwittingly, we must pay for every intrusion on the natural environment.

It is this sense of wholism, of the interaction of all of life, which is now missing and could act as an antidote for the poisoned, detached-from-life, manipulative world-view which has so disastrously dominated scientific thinking in our time. This brings us back to Dr. Barnard, and what is wrong with the reasoning behind his "successes" in organ transplants. It is a reasoning which ignores the natural complexity and interactions of the biological system we call the body, and which sees only the workings of isolated parts. It is a reasoning which would rather tinker spectacularly with these isolated parts than study the causes of the illness itself and seek to treat the causes at their source. It is a reasoning which puts a higher value on one-shot chancey surgeries than on preventive, environmental measures. It is a reasoning which cannot see that the quality of a life is more important than its mere prolongation. And finally, it is a reasoning which cannot understand that the whole of a life *is* greater than the sum of its parts.

BETTY ROSZAK

London

REVIEW
THE STRINGED LUTE

WHEN orthodoxy is tyrannical, doctrinaire, explicit, and imposed with a heavy hand by all official, educational, and socially obedient influences, the problem of the dissenter is often to find sufficient substance and structure to articulate his own convictions. He may feel that what he is told to believe is all wrong, but he has some difficulty in deciding what is right. The power of general opinion, when it has been shaped by all-pervasive thought-control, is so formidable that the man who resists may experience lingering guilt-feelings as well as trouble in formulating his dissent.

In *The Captive Mind*, Czeslaw Milosz describes the processes by which he, a Polish writer, emancipated himself from Dialectical Materialism and its tenet of Socialist Realism in literature and art:

> From outside, it is easy to think of such a decision as an elementary consequence of one's hatred of tyranny. But in fact, it may spring from a number of motives, not all of them equally high-minded, even from a revolt of the stomach. A man may persuade himself, by the most logical reasoning, that he will greatly benefit his health by swallowing live frogs; and, thus rationally convinced, he may swallow a first frog then a second; but at the third his stomach will revolt. In the same way, the growing influence of the doctrine on my way of thinking came up against the resistance of my whole nature.

The influence of the doctrine is insidiously complete:

> Although the Method was scientific in its origins, when it is applied to humanistic disciplines it often transforms them into edifying stories adapted to the needs of the moment. But there is no escape once a man enters upon these convenient bridges. Centuries of human history, with their thousands upon thousands of intricate affairs, are reduced to a few, most generalized terms. Undoubtedly, one comes closer to the truth when one sees history as the expression of the class struggle rather than as a series of private quarrels among kings and nobles. But precisely because an analysis of history comes closer to the truth, it is more dangerous. It gives the illusion of *full knowledge;* it supplies answers to all questions, answers which merely run around in a circle repeating a few formulas. What's more, the humanities get connected with the sciences, thanks to the materialistic outlook. . . .
>
> It would be wrong to assert that a dual set of values no longer exists. The resistance against the new set of values is however, emotional. It survives, but it is beaten whenever it has to explain itself in rational terms. A man's subconscious or not-quite-conscious life is richer than his vocabulary. His opposition to this new philosophy of life is much like a toothache. Not only can he not express the pain in words, but he cannot even tell you which tooth is aching.

We do not quote this passage to beat the already dead or at least dying horse of Soviet ideology—the poets and writers of Russia are making their independence felt with ever increasing daring—but to take from Milosz' analysis the common element in two contrasting social situations. For while in the West there is no heavy-handed, clearly defined intellectual authority, yet there are problems of conformity concerning which it is also very difficult "to express the pain in words,." The West does not have an elaborate doctrinal system of beliefs. It has, instead, what Harold Rosenberg has called the "tradition of the new." Conceivably, the state of mind this represents is inevitable among people with a lot of nervous energy but no authentic norms which they feel in the depths of their being. The void must be filled, and they fill it with the excitement of the "new." The very freedom to celebrate the "new" produces a special difficulty for the man who has a vague "toothache" feeling that something is radically wrong. Simply to object to the "new" makes him sound like a reactionary, and, indeed, many of those who angrily object *are* reacting in fear to loss of the familiar, of what in their youth they learned to "like."

Articulate resistance to the blind adoration of the new is thus more difficult, if perhaps less dangerous, than attack on promulgated dogma.

The new which claims virtue in novelty—that it is more "radical" than anything else so far—is essentially normless and external. Its main appeal may be that it helps people to forget the emptiness at the center.

But is the choice only between normlessness and dogma? Since values which exert a vital influence, which are not materialized in rigid doctrine, are not only hard to come by, but also difficult to speak of, a certain shyness usually attends whatever is said about them. It seems to require a gentle and compassionate voice. Thus Marc Chagall mused a few years ago:

> *Why have we become so anxious in recent times?*
>
> The more audaciously man has freed himself from his so-called chains, the more he feels alone, lost in the multitude, a prisoner of his destiny, . . .
>
> Perhaps I too at times have been beset by doubts. I painted pictures upside down. I cut off heads and hacked my subjects to bits, left floating in the air in my pictures. I did this on behalf of a different perspective, of a different composition, or a different formula.
>
> And little by little our world seems to be a smaller world on which we small ones swarm, clinging to the smallest elements in our nature, until we submerge ourselves in the tiny pieces of nature, even in the atom. . . .
>
> Are there not revolutionary methods other than those in the shadow of which we have been living? Is there not a foundation for Art other than that offered by the decorative art which exists only to please, or by the art of experience, and by that pitiless art whose purpose is to shock us?
>
> It is childish to repeat the truth, which has been known for so long. In all its aspects the world can be saved only by love. Without love it will die little by little.

These are the tender gropings of Chagall's sensibility—less specific than Picasso's assertion that all art since the 1880's has been infected by technological delusions and is now a pursuit of novelty and caprice. Yet Chagall affirms. The observations of Storm Jameson, the English novelist, recall what Milosz said about the revolt of his whole organism. She writes of the sensory bombardment of electronic technology:

> Television wearies me by forcing me to attend to it with the ear I use for external noises and an eye unused to sudden shifts of focus. My nervous system rejects a forced involvement with the nervous systems of millions of my contemporaries. It rebels against the—to me—demoralizing pressure of information thrust on it from all sides.

In this *American Scholar* article (Winter, 1965-66), Miss Jameson finds many writers competing with electronic technique by a wild imitation of its effects:

> The literary rebel who can imagine no other way of outwitting it will turn nihilist. You can see this happening at the moment in the novel, on two levels. On the sophisticated level of the *nouveau roman,* and in the growth, or irruption into daylight, of the pornographic novel. The first is an urbane, highly intellectual and fragile growth. Its most self-explanatory practitioner, Alain Robbe-Grillet, sees human beings as a kaleidoscope of moods, and communication between them little more coherent than a conversation on crossed telephone wires; to pass judgment on their acts, thoughts, feelings, is senseless or impossible. This irrational philosophy lays an ax to the roots of any intelligible vision of reality, so that by an ironical paradox the New Novelists devalue man, rob him of his identity, as fatally as does the most menacing product of technology.

And of William Burroughs Miss Jameson says:

> He is rebelling, yes. It is easy to see against what. But for what? If the author of *Naked Lunch* had wished to cut off at the source the sensual springs of life, could he have devised a surer way? An attack on conventions—which can be gay and salutary and life-giving—begins to shock me when it becomes- an attack on our self-respect and decent self-love. The roots joining a literature of self-contempt and self-hatred to the worlds of Belsen and Auschwitz run underground, but they run.

Few critics have been as explicit as Alfred Alvarez in defining the responsibilities of the artist of the present. He wrote a year ago in the London *Times Literary Supplement* (March 23, 1967):

> The machinery of communications and publicity is now so efficient that we go through styles in the arts as quickly as we go through socks; so quickly, in fact, that there seem no longer any real styles at all. Instead there are fashions, idiosyncrasies, group mannerisms and obsessions. But all these are different from genuine style, which in the past has always been an expression of a certain fundamental coherence, an agreement about the ways random experience can be made sense of. . . . As I see it, the failure of all traditions and beliefs is not an excuse for the failure of the arts, it is their greatest challenge—or irritant. The artist's need to create a new style and language for himself and from scratch means that he is deliberately *using* his art, using it to create his own identity.

One sees from Mr. Alvarez's concluding thoughts why the artist's affirmative feelings become so difficult to express, and why, the more serious he is, the more inarticulate he may seem:

> . . . the obvious truth is that the more subjectively exposed the theme, the more delicate the artistic control needed to handle it. . . . the genuine artist does not simply project his own nervous system as a pattern for reality. He is what he is because his inner world is more substantial, variable, and self-renewing than that of ordinary people, so that even in his deepest isolation he is left with something more sustaining than mere narcissism. In this, of course, the modern artist is like every other creative figure in history: he knows what he knows, and every new work is an attempt to reveal a little more of it. What sets the contemporary apart from his predecessors is his lack of external standards by which to judge his reality. He has not only to launch his own craft and control it, he has also to make his own compass.

There is a striking parallel between this view and what Huston Smith said recently about the effects of modern civilization on the human struggle for individuality:

> The difference between life in traditional and technological societies is that the traditional society gave its members some individuality without allowing them to win much more, whereas the technical society gives its members almost no individuality and permits them to win a great deal.

All of the foregoing provides framing considerations for a critique of the ideas of Marshall McLuhan in the March 16 *Saturday Review*, in an article by Sylvia Angus, who teaches English at State University College, Potsdam, New York. Miss Angus sees Mr. McLuhan as a "pied piper" whose almost total preoccupation with external experience has falsified the role and responsibility of the artist:

> McLuhan has been widely misread and maligned, no doubt but willy-nilly he has brought into everyone's consciousness the disastrous notion that method or medium is more significant than content—that, indeed, content is merely a by-product of medium. It is not surprising that artists in our frenetic age should have latched onto this idea as though it were a life preserver. Few enough these days can come up with significant meanings or comprehensions of their world. How original and avant-garde to put by all that scrounging for ideas and emotions and just to start experimenting with techniques, with surfaces! Perhaps if we pour enough plastic, shape enough paper in new ways, we will find that we are saying something, after all! Perhaps if we just look at surfaces, like Robbe-Grillet, we may eventually penetrate to the other side of the truth.

The justifications for novelty are persuasive enough:

> Our times . . . are grotesquely out of joint, and it often seems that all thoughts are futile clichés, all emotions played-out fireworks. The miracle, however, is that art, like life seems able endlessly to renew itself. The discovery of new forms, new media, is in itself a healthy and life-giving artistic activity. What is unhealthy is to suggest that media are an end in themselves.

But, as Huston Smith says, our society itself gives no alternatives. These must be generated by the artist, out of himself. Miss Angus writes:

> We come at last to the problems posed for the artist by the abandonment of tradition and by the extreme permissiveness of the modern audience. The artist today has a freedom which has never before existed in history. This, surely, is a good thing; nevertheless, it raises a whole new spectrum of difficulties. It is a situation somewhat akin to what happens in a society which achieves complete and universal prosperity. There is no longer hunger or economic despair, but there are *other* problems—more subtly psychic hungers. The artist who is forced to stick to traditional design or to observe social mores is enraged by his bondage and struggles to

> escape, to go around, or to fight back. But the artist of today who is free of these difficulties comes face to face with the hardest problem of all: What is he to do with his freedom? He can no longer complain that he is hampered by convention, so he must, out of the vast possibilities of freedom, produce a meaning bounded only by his own personal limitations. It is a frightening prospect.

How much easier, indeed, the tasks of those who can locate a definite enemy, oppose with counter-doctrines a specific tyranny! There are, as we know, various escapes from freedom. One of them was somewhat melodramatically described by Oscar Wilde, yet also with deep sadness, and with awareness of the alternatives which always exist for human beings, whatever the changing field of life:

> To drift with every passion till my soul
> Is a stringed lute on which all winds can play.
> Is it for this that I have given away
> Mine ancient wisdom and austere control?

COMMENTARY
RETURN OF THE GOLDEN AGE?

BEHIND all ideology lies the idea of the self. Behind all conceptions of the "ideal" environment is the idea of man's capacity to change and to grow. A low estimate of man produces a rigid social system. A high estimate of man diminishes the rule of outside authority.

With the idea of human potentiality as the touchstone, it is possible to find interesting parallels between widely separated efforts to evolve the conditions of human freedom. In *Our Generation* for last September, George Benello proposed a social order in which job and role would be subordinated to equality and shared responsibility. There would still be structure, but relationships within the structure would exert a very different influence through changed attitudes and incentives. As Benello says:

> Where the present organizational style creates a mass of personnel fixed in specialized pigeon-holes, and a status hierarchy with an elite in control at the top, the alternate style would create groups which communicate both vertically and horizontally. . . . The psychological effect on the individual will be to increase both freedom and involvement, rather than one at the expense of the other. Where work based on financial reward reinforces self-seeking individualism and encourages a passive orientation toward authority, work based on functional incentives reinforces responsibility, cooperativeness, and involvement. . . . The worker as producer will not be dissociated from the worker as consumer, or the worker as community member, and thus the project of integrating work more fully with other spheres of living will become possible.

This is the language of Western socio-economic theory, but the psychology is the humanistic principle of the equality and promise of all men. Economic role no longer measures the man. The "system" no longer subdivides human beings, but becomes a loose, non-authoritarian scheme which bends and changes with emerging capacity. "In the end," Benello says, "it is a philosophy of the person, and of human possibility that is in question." A non-deterministic philosophy is needed to develop a social organization that will reflect the growth-processes of human beings instead of frustrating them. "For this," Benello says, "it is not enough to be on the right side, committed to the right philosophy. One must act."

In India, today, "system"-thinking often takes the form of belief that during the *Kali Yuga,* the Black Age, nothing can be done to change things for the better. In a paper published in *Human Organization* (Spring, 1963), Joan Bondurant points out that, in relation to this submission to fate, "the most significant question to raise . . . is who is competent to decide when one age has come to an end and another has begun?" Speaking of the Sarvodaya Movement led by Vinoba Bhave, she writes:

> Redefining, reinterpreting, this group asserts that a new age—*satya yuga* [golden age]—is now upon us and that this age is egalitarian. Vinoba has described his ideal society as one in which functions, qualities and positions are not hierarchical or divided between different categories of men. In a *Sarvodaya* society, he asserts, every individual will have to learn to combine in himself the qualities of a *brahman*, a *ksatriya*, a *vaisya*, and a *shudra*.

To those who say that non-violence can be practiced only in the golden age, Vinoba replies:

> Some people say that in Satya Yuga the State was not necessary and there really was no State at that time. . . . One says that there has been a *Satya Yuga* and the other says that the *Satya Yuga* will come. What do we say.? We say that neither the past nor the future is in our hands. We have only the present in our hands and we want to bring the Satya Yuga in the present. That is the only difference. The *Puranist* [believer in tradition] is a past-Satya Yugavadi . . . The Sarvodayite is a present-*Satya Yuga-kari.*

Miss Bondurant explains the great importance of this last sentence—"for *vadi* means believer in, an exponent of, and *kari* means a doer, or one who brings about the condition." She adds: "We have here, then, a clear and strong non-deterministic philosophy of history."

The parallels are clear enough, but there are also differences. Vinoba speaks out of ancestral Indian philosophy and even cosmology, and he is indeed a "doer." George Benello refines the Western radical tradition with the insights of humanistic psychology, but the "doing," except for various resistance movements, has yet to make noticeable impact on the scene in the United States.

Meanwhile, the paper contributed by A. H. Maslow to *Human Potentialities* (edited by Herbert Otto, Warren H. Green, St. Louis, Mo., 1968) gives suggestive insight into what might be the dynamics of a "golden age" society. Based upon the conception of "synergy" developed by Ruth Benedict some thirty years ago, it illustrates from various cultures the ideal human relationships which prevail when there is high synergy—when the habitual attitudes of people toward one another create endless bonuses for the common good. In the high synergy society, extreme generosity is no longer felt to be self-depriving "sacrifice," but a natural fulfillment which everyone approves, admires and benefits by. Dr. Maslow concludes his discussion of the social applications of synergy—"a not very Western concept"—with these words:

> I would say no Utopia can be constructed henceforth by the knowledgeable person without making peace with the concept of synergy. It looks to me at this time as if any Utopia or Eupsychia (which I think is a better name), must have as one of its foundations a set of high synergy institutions.

What might be the principle behind "high synergy"? Something written long ago by William T. Harris, the first Commissioner of Education in the United States, may give an answer:

> The nature or principle of matter is exclusion; each body excludes all others and is impenetrable. Spiritual being is inclusive, and each soul lives its true life only in communion with others; each avails itself of the experience of all others; each lives the life of all. The truth and goodness discovered by another can be made mine by my self-active participation in it. Spiritual participation does not divide and diminish, but increases rather. My truth grows in me when I impart it to others. Material participation diminishes, the barrel of meal or the cruse of oil if consumed by one cannot be consumed by another.

But in high synergy societies, the basic principle governs and even "material participation" seems to develop a wonderful "loaves and fishes" abundance for the good of all.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

IN BEHALF OF PROLONGED ADOLESCENCE

KENNETH KENISTON, who teaches psychiatry in the Yale University School of Medicine, is widely known as author of *The Uncommitted*, a study of alienated youth in American society. While this book was based upon the attitudes and behavior of Harvard students with whom Keniston had close contact, others in this field generally agree that his findings are basic common denominators for understanding psychological disorders among the young. Speaking of the obstacles to life-long commitment in the present society, Dr. Keniston wrote in *The Uncommitted:*

> A young man who makes such a conscious or unconscious commitment to continual self-transformation is committing himself to an unknown whose shape he can do little to determine. To satisfy psychologically, such a commitment presupposes a deep faith in the social process by which one lets oneself be bent; yet such a radical faith is almost completely lacking among young Americans. When, as now, society is viewed more neutrally the result is a loss of an active sense of self, an increased feeling of being acted *upon*, of being a victim of a social process one can no longer control or even fathom. The virtues of flexibility, openness, and tolerance are noble, but unless they are supported by a firm sense of self, of identity, and of individual direction, it is hard for most men and women to distinguish these virtues from senseless and passive conformity.

In *The Uncommitted*, Dr. Keniston studies the young who fail in this difficult undertaking—who have "a pervasive mistrust of any and all commitments, be they to other people, to groups, to American culture, or even to the self."

Lewis Yablonsky, who heads the sociology department at San Fernando State College in California, known for his authoritative book *The Violent Gang* and for his work with Synanon (his book on Synanon is titled *The Tunnel Back*), points to correspondences between Keniston's subjects and the lower class delinquents of urban gangs. Dr. Yablonsky wrote in *Synanon Magazine:*

> The more richly endowed Harvard boys [Keniston] describes parallel violent gang members, who also ferociously reject a coherent self or ego. Not to do so would entail accepting a role in the community of Man, and this they refuse to do. . . . Somewhat like gang youths who are always trying to one-up each other with wilder and more senseless violence the new-alienated attempt to outdo their fellow students in discovering new proofs for alienation and being uncommitted. They accomplish this by discovering in the literature of Sartre and Marx and others newer and more vehement proof of the nonsense of the prevailing order. According to Keniston:
>
> "They are philosophers with hammers; their favorite theoretical occupation is destruction, reduction, pointing out inconsistencies, chicaneries, hypocrisies, and rationalizations—whatever, in others and themselves."

Next month Harcourt Brace will publish a new book by Dr. Keniston, *Young Radicals: Notes on Committed Youth*, in which he turns to those segments of the youthful population which, as he sees them, have not "failed," but display "an open gentleness and a searching honesty more intense than that of youth in the past." In an article in the Spring 1968 *American Scholar* (based on his forthcoming book), he writes:

> In giving today's American youth this special quality and mood, two movements have played a major role: the New Left and the hippies. Both groups are spontaneous creations of the young; both are in strong reaction to what Paul Goodman calls the Organized System, both seek alternatives to the institutions of middle-class life. Radicals and hippies are also different from each other in numerous ways, from psychodynamics to ideology. The hippie has dropped out of a society he considers irredeemable: his attention is riveted on interior change and the expansion of personal consciousness. The radical has not given up on this society: his efforts are aimed at changing and redeeming it. Furthermore, both "movements" together comprise but a few per cent of their contemporaries. But, although neither hippies nor New Leftists are "representative" of their generation, together they are helping to give this generation its distinctive mood.

From the content of his *American Scholar* article, it seems likely that Dr. Keniston's book will become fully as valuable a source of insight into the

affirmative members of the coming generation as was *The Uncommitted* in regard to its "problem children." The idea is to tell them apart!

A basic realization that grows out of this article is that neither the ills nor the promise of our society can be faced with any understanding unless there is also some grasp of the irreversible character of the psychological changes now going on. It is the *rapidity* of the changes that leaves most people bewildered and anxious. The young, whose experience has been of little else, seem able to accommodate to this pace more easily than the older generation, which remembers past stabilities with longing. Dr. Keniston calls present youth the first "post-modern" generation, meaning those who are coming to maturity in a time of "modernity, affluence, rapid social change and violence." They seem to know, Dr. Keniston says, how to gear themselves to these influences. As he puts it:

> Post-modern youth display a special personal and psychological openness, flexibility and unfinishedness. Although many of today's youth have achieved an inner sense of identity, the term "identity" suggests a fixity, stability and "closure" that many of them are not willing to accept: with these young men and women, it is not always possible to speak of the "normal resolution" of identity issues. Our earlier fear of the ominous psychiatric implications of "prolonged adolescence" must now be qualified by an awareness that in postmodern youth many adolescent concerns and qualities persist long past the time when (according to the standards in earlier eras) they should have ended. Increasingly, post-modern youth are tied to social and historical changes that have not occurred, and that may never occur. Thus, psychological "closure," shutting doors and burning bridges, becomes impossible. The concepts of the personal future and the "life work" are ever more hazily defined; the effort to change oneself, redefine oneself or reform oneself does not cease with the arrival of adulthood.

Much importance should be attached to Dr. Keniston's parenthetical "according to the standards in earlier eras." Adults tend to judge by those earlier standards—what else have they to judge by?—yet the very meaning of the present may lie in the fact that new standards are now being evolved. What we see as "defects" in the young—their apparent inability to settle down, to show a prudent concern for practical matters affecting their future—may be simply one aspect of a growth-process which can find no way of fitting comfortably with accustomed forms of security. Any *real* change is bound to create all sorts of bad "fits" with static institutions and familiar ways of measuring "maturity." A lot depends upon what you "worry" about. An uncertain, "provisional" way of life may seem frighteningly insecure, yet it may keep alive capacities for achievement and development that would be smothered or strangled by adaptation to old standards. This is a time when "nobody knows" the answers, and these young will not pretend. As Dr. Keniston puts it:

> This fluidity and openness extends through all areas of life. Both hippie and New Left movements are nondogmatic, nonideological, and to a large extent hostile to doctrine and formula. In the New Left the focus is on "tactics"; amongst hippies, on simple direct acts of love and communication. In neither group does one find clear-cut long-range plans, life patterns laid out in advance. The vision of the personal and collective future is blurred and vague: later adulthood is left deliberately open. In neither group is psychological development considered complete; in both groups, identity, like history, is fluid and indeterminate. In one sense, of course, identity is always undergoing transformations that parallel the transformations of the historical world.

This seems a practical illustration of the ideal which teachers in adult education have been talking about for at least twenty years—the idea that all of life is for growth. In any event, no one will be able to suppress these attitudes, which are deeply characteristic of the young. And the "postmodern" generation has one more thing in common which may prove the saving of us all:

> . . . the basic style of both radicals and hippies is profoundly opposed to warfare, destruction and exploitation of man by man, and to violence whether on an interpersonal or an international scale. Even among those who do not consider nonviolence a good in itself, a psychological inoculation against violence, even a fear of it, is a unifying theme.

FRONTIERS

Why Not Learn "the Good Things"?

IN an approving discussion of Charles Yost's new book, *The Insecurity of Nations,* Seyom Brown (in the *Saturday Review* for March 23) sums up the author's thesis:

> The nation-state system is the basic cause of national insecurity in the twentieth century. Considerations of national security demand that this system be fundamentally transformed.

What stands in the way? Habits of mind, as much as anything, both author and reviewer seem to think. In the case of professional policy-makers, there is mostly a conscientious "tending to the machinery" of the status quo by men "who see the world as it was in their youth, or as some body of cherished doctrine makes them think it ought to be, or as resentment caused by some personal or national humiliation convinces them it must be." The remedy, the reviewer thinks, involves first of all "the depolarization and further thawing of the conflict between the Communist and anti-Communist alliance systems, the curbing of big-power confrontations and the too-easy resort to threats of force and military escalation as substitutes for more difficult but more constructive forms of diplomatic bargaining."

No doubt. Yet this is still the language of national statecraft. We shall probably have to go on using this language for a while, but it seems obvious that the reason why diplomats are able to ply their trade as conscientious guardians of a really intolerable status quo is that the people of one country are practically compelled by this language to think of the people in an "unfriendly" country in terms of monolithic political abstractions. People submit to the policy of "too-easy resort to threats of force and military escalation" because this seems the only thing possible to do. To what extent, right now, do inhuman abstractions represent for us the people where some kind of communist revolution has taken place? Suddenly, in a few years, an enormous number of human beings have become "forces of evil." An alien ideology has swallowed up their being. It is only by sheer accident that a reader in the United States may come across an account of the people, say, in China, simply as people.

Surely, the first step in "depolarization" must be to restore or establish the capacity to think of people in other lands as human beings like ourselves, so that it no longer, as today, involves a deliberate effort to do so. The average American has no idea how inhumanly reduced his idea of the Chinese has become especially now, when we are fed endless reports savoring the chaos of the "cultural revolution"—unless he happens to read something about them which ignores politics.

For example, in 1962 Dr. Wilder Penfield, eminent Canadian neurological surgeon, and Mrs. Penfield, toured China as guests of the Chinese Medical Association. They visited medical schools and hospitals in many of the larger cities. Dr. Penfield found a remarkable renaissance of Western learning going on. Nobody talked politics to them, although it was known that they were not Communists. He came back from his trip filled with admiration for Chinese science and medicine, and for the qualities of the Chinese people. He had experienced the non-political realities of these human beings. He wrote in summary:

> It has been said that, at the beginning of this Communist regime, pressure was brought to bear on scientists to accept certain ideas and principles in the field of science, with a disappointing result. Whether or not that is true, it is obvious that in the broad field of science and medicine, and in most of the "arts and sciences," there is no isolation. There is freedom of thought and debate in those fields—freedom to seek the truth independently. . . . They use the language of our professions, and they are beginning to make their own contributions. Perhaps it is in science that the brotherhood of man is most clearly established. Scientists have always preferred to take the view that there are no national boundaries.

Well, this last remark is surely true of great scientists, as of other distinguished men. But Dr.

Penfield's report (in *Science* for Sept. 20, 1963) has a fundamentally humanizing effect since it shows how little of the full being of the Chinese is represented in reports of their political activity. There is for example the open-minded attitude of highly trained medical men toward traditional Chinese medicine. It is not simply assumed that ancient practices are "superstitious," but that their value needs testing:

> If the procedure has no value, a clear statement to that effect will then carry weight among medical men, ancient and modern. The so-called traditional doctors are physicians of an ancient school. They are not witch doctors nor are they charlatans. They have textbooks and records of experience. They do not operate, unless penetrating the skin with a needle may be called that. They do administer herbs. They counsel and reassure, and they are remarkably skilled in the treatment of fractures.

Here, at any rate, is no evidence of professional bigotry or doctrinaire assumptions.

A similar moral may be drawn from an article in the *New York Times Book Review* for March 17, by Andre Schiffrin, editorial director of Pantheon Books. Responding to an invitation to visit Havana as guest of Instituto del Libro, Cuba's state publishing house, he found that since the revolution eight million books have been published (volumes, not titles!) every year in Cuba. From Edmundo Desnoes, a young Cuban novelist who was no champion of the Cuban revolution, but is now one of the Institute's leading editors, he was able to get this picture of present intellectual freedom in Cuba:

> The answer: total artistic freedom within the revolution—anything not counter-revolutionary. Literature could not be used directly to oppose Government policy. Yet a work as candid and even critical as Lee Lockwood's *Castro's Cuba, Cuba's Fidel*, was being translated. There is no test for ideological content, and for a Cuban to get his novel or poetry published, he needs only two favorable readers from the appropriate committee of the Writer's Union. The overwhelming majority of new books bear no relation at all to current politics.

This freedom, however, had to be demanded. Cuban writers call the period after the Bay of Pigs the "sectarian period," when Cuban culture was forcibly Sovietized. Actually, nearly all writers severely critical of the revolution have by now left Cuba and the present mood, Mr. Schiffrin says, "suggests a decision not to oppose the revolution as such, much as they may be ready to fight for their literary independence." This, within the limits spoken of, now seems assured:

> The intellectuals succeeded in obtaining from Premier Castro guarantees that artists would be allowed to express themselves as they wished as long as they did not oppose the revolution. And, equally important, the party may not decide ex post facto that a given mode of expression threatens to become counter-revolutionary.

An editor of a Cuban magazine published by the Casa de las Americas told Mr. Schiffrin that American books and magazines are enthusiastically received by Cubans (individual mailings are still legal). The editor said:

> After all, we have received America's cultural influence for a long time and it was not necessarily bad. We used to get everything. That is gone forever; now we would like to get the good things.

Among American authors about to be published in Cuba are Mailer, Bellow, Lowell, Styron, "and, more surprisingly, Kerouac and Schlesinger." The Cubans, Mr. Schiffrin said, "really had no idea what my politics were nor whom I was to see during my unescorted stay." He concludes his report:

> The State Department people had told me that the reason for restricting travel to Cuba is to discourage Cuban exportation of subversion. I suppose that by demanding a Treasury license for importing a book from Cuba, and urging all Latin American Governments to forbid the importation of books altogether, our Government feels that it has contained the ideas in the books themselves.