

## BEYOND THE LAW

THESE are days in which the once vigorous confidence of men in the principles of the secular society is wearing thin. The "liberty" so ardently proclaimed by the eighteenth-century *philosophes* has become a limp banner miscellaneously stained by partisan spokesmen. Its purposes are so narrowly conventionalized that about all that remains of its splendor is a rhetorical ring. The ideal of fraternity, while still cherished by many men, exercises no noticeable restraint on the application of technological skills to military slaughter. And the unquiet desperation of urban riots and student protests gives voice to denunciations of the inequality in ordered social relationships.

What has gone wrong? No man of humane intelligence is ready to abandon the great conceptions by which the secular society was shaped. The ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity still rule in all thinking about social ethics, but now we praise and declare them in a mood of despair instead of high expectation. The social systems constructed to embody these principles have turned against them in so many devious ways that the best efforts of men to serve them often lead to new falsifications. Have we made some mistake so deep lying that it universalizes its disorder in whatever we do? Can we identify that mistake without permitting our analysis to degrade into some form of hackneyed political criticism? This will be difficult to do in an age when thought can attract no wide attention unless it is politically partisan.

Now it may be right here, in this insistence on political application, that our basic trouble lies. For the passion for law-making and political system-building results, sooner or later, in the establishment of certain popular fictions about man and his life in society. These fictions are held to be socially necessary, and therefore

pragmatically true. Quite possibly these fictions, and not the ideals of the secular society, are what is breaking down.

Take for example the foundation secular principle of the separation of church and state. The virtues of this separation are self-evident. From any impartial point of view, the defenders of separation are unmistakably right in their contentions. How do we know they are right? They are right because the historical record of theocracy can be shown to be filled with intolerable tyrannies. No argument.

But it does not follow from this empirical support of secularism and separation of church and state that religious thought has no importance or will not continue. Practical secularists know this, of course. They simply argue for freedom of religion, contending that religious activity should never lead to sectarian control in public affairs.

Practical difficulties remain. Moral philosophy and religious teachings overlap. Political systems claim a moral ground. The very ideas of liberty, equality, and fraternity spring from ethical inspiration. Even atheism, as Paul Tillich pointed out, has a religious aspect, and the United States Supreme Court, in a recent decision affecting conscientious objectors, declared that free-thinking philosophical convictions must be regarded as having the same standing before the law as "religious training and belief." Meanwhile, dozens of writers have drawn attention to the parallels between authoritarian political states and the rule of theocratic empires in the past.

What then does the secular state attempt? In practice, it endeavors to prevent the religious acquisition of political power or coercive authority, and to foster, as well as it can, a generalized morality which derives its authority

from reason and its sanctions from non-theological rules.

In itself, this arrangement may be said to be "ideal," so far as lawmakers are concerned. But the question which must be asked is whether the assumption that essential human problems can all be settled by law is a creeping delusion that comes to dominate the thinking of secular lawmakers. The obsessive concern with ideology and the insistence on political action as the only important means for improving the human condition are evidence of one of the fictions we spoke about earlier—the assumption that final human good can be defined in political terms. Any definition concerned with final good requires the postulates of religion or of religious philosophy. So, from this assumption by secularists, schism is built into the secular society.

What, actually, is the secular state? It is an ordering social institution which declares its neutrality on all questions not directly concerned with the public safety and the general welfare. It will not interfere with the lives and opinions of men, save in behalf of these practical ends. Many of the principles of the secular state are found in a passage in John Stuart Mill's essay on Liberty. He wrote:

The object of this essay is to assert one very simple principle, as entitled to govern absolutely the dealings of society with the individual in the way of compulsion or control whether the means used by physical force in the form of legal penalties, or the moral coercion of public opinion. That principle is that the sole end for which mankind are warranted individually or collectively in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number is self-protection; that the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community against his will is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. He cannot be rightfully compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because in the opinions of others to do so would be wise or even right. These are good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him or persuading him, or entreating him, but not for

compelling him, or visiting him with any evil in case he do otherwise. To justify that, the conduct from which it is desired to deter him must be calculated to produce evil to some one else. The only part of the conduct of any one for which he is amenable to society is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself his independence is of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own mind and body, the individual is sovereign.

This is a view which, by reason of its crucial moral derivation, we dare not give up, but it is also a view, by reason of many practical failures, we are now obliged to look at very closely—or, rather, from a stance different from the one which gives it emotional but uncritical support. It is easy to assent to Mill's principles on intuitive grounds; why, then, do they work so poorly?

In a world inhabited by imperfect men, some failure, no doubt, is inevitable. The question is, would less failure become possible if we reformulated the problem?

For example, the context of the discussion is the political issue of the state's right to coerce. Mr. Mill would limit that right. What is the intent of social control? The securing of behavior that is socially tolerable or acceptable. What is the principle of limit to control? The intuitively given importance of individual liberty.

Now liberty is really an incommensurable value which always has its wings clipped by definition. If we actually knew all that liberty or freedom implies for human beings we would be so wise that we would have no social problems at all. Politics, however, as we say, is a practical matter, so, for the purposes of social arrangements, we give a pragmatic, working meaning to liberty and make our laws.

But the transcendental content of freedom is neither contained nor exhausted by such political limitations and securities. There are other ways of considering its meaning.

The role of the State, practically speaking, is control. At best it is traffic-management and channeling. But there are other institutions—

schools, for example—whose role is almost opposite. Schools are intended to *literate* human beings—that is, unfold their capacities in ways that will enable them to taste the possibilities of freedom more extensively. Schools also teach the disciplines of mutuality, of cooperation and sharing. A human being, enlarged and matured by education, has more freedom than an ignorant man because he is able to avail himself of many more potentialities of action, much wider ranges of choice in the exercise of his powers.

In education, there is also a principle of necessary order, but it is not coercive. For the student, discovery of the use of limits gives precision to his knowledge. So, in the context of education, the import of the question of freedom versus order is radically changed. Managing the subtle balances between these two principles is the essential process of growing into maturity, and education is the collaborative art which helps individuals to learn this management for themselves, so that they eventually become independently good at it—which is to be *free*.

Coercion plays absolutely no part in education; it appears only when there is some perversion or breakdown in the process of education. This hardly needs argument.

The natural teacher never imposes arbitrary limits on his students. A reasonable limit gains personal adoption by the students. The teacher may intimate the necessity of limits, but he does not impose them. Any course of study will require some boundaries, in order to achieve a focus, but education does not begin until the student sees the function of the boundaries and begins to decide for himself when to stay within them and when to go beyond them. An arbitrary limit accepted by the student would not give him a genuine form to work in—but only a pseudo-form, a context of indoctrination. Some day, if he has spirit and intelligence, he will abandon that form as a barrier to his growth.

All this is elementary. We know it from our intuitions about human growth and our experience

in education and in human relations. But putting this knowledge to work in teaching involves endless delicacies, gentle encouragement, patience, and severe regulation of one's bursting eagerness to help people along.

All this is elementary, absolutely certain in respect to human development, yet it has nothing to do with coercion, nothing to do with politics, nothing to do with well-considered organization for opposing or controlling tyranny. But it has everything to do with what we call the good society. Unless these educational realities form the foundation of social life in individual relationships, there cannot be a good society. This, too, is elementary.

Here, then, is the focal trouble with John Stuart Mill's essay on Liberty. It ignores the primary sources of goodness in human life and concentrates on the secondary considerations of political forms. Most of modern thought similarly concentrates on secondary considerations. And that is why the "ideal" political forms, logically described and brilliantly defended, produce so many terrible dilemmas. Our exhaustive deliberations concerning these forms neglect the all-important fact that every political system—good, bad, indifferent—floats in a sea of primary human relations which coercion can never order or get at, except smotheringly and destructively. Political thinking by-passes the very springs of all the primary good in human life. Then, when we experience so much pain from political failure, we conclude that we must remedy our politics with a better system, when the fact is that our real difficulties are not political at all. The trouble originates in our lack of attention to the uncoercive disciplines.

It is difficult to obtain agreement for this view because there is so much pain generated by politics. But to accept political diagnoses for the pain is to accept a static, depressed estimate of all men. It is to reject the idea of *human* progress, as distinguished from the external forms of social or political progress. Today, at last, we may be in a

position to recognize this mistake, simply because recent history has proved how little we really know about the meaning of progress.

It is of course a cliché of do-nothing passivity to claim that education is the alternative to political activism. But a basic complaint of all political critics of modern society is that our education is no good, either. And it is certainly a fact that modern Western education has been the chief agency for creating faith in the fiction that politics will solve all our problems. Only an education independent of ideological fictions can serve our need.

But the need for social controls is *real*, isn't it? Of course. In political dialogue, you do not argue this question unless you are an anarchist. The crucial point, however, is that the problem of coercive control is always allowed to absorb our energies *too soon*. And when this happens in education, it is always fatal. The teacher who jumps to control of his students, interrupting tentative efforts of their own at self-limitation, becomes an anti-human force, a destroyer of education. He is abolishing or limiting freedom when he doesn't *need* to. You could say of such a teacher that he has been infected by the political approach to life, obsessed by the last-ditch necessities of coercion. He may not know any better. But he makes the invasions of political control more and more likely, and perhaps "necessary," with every interference with the self-discovery and self-control of his students. Every act of arbitrary control in education is a self-fulfilling prophecy of human defeat, generating the necessities of future coercion.

The problem of freedom and order can never be settled at the level where the cause of true human freedom *is already lost*—the political level. The more you try to establish freedom at that level, the more you fence it in. And the more it is fenced in, the bitterer the disputes of political rivals with one another. How else can things go, when you discuss freedom only in terms of controlling it by coercion?

It is interesting to look at a long-neglected criticism of Mr. Mill by one of his contemporaries. We have for review James Fitzjames Stephen's *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*, first published in 1874 and now reissued, with R. J. White as editor, by the Cambridge University Press (1967, \$7.50). According to the jacket:

Stephen's work is written as a systematic denunciation of John Stuart Mill's political thought. It is thus of great importance in the history of Utilitarianism, and also as the most forthright and systematic of the Victorian attacks on Democracy. Against Mill's hopes for an educated populace, Stephen insists on the prime need for coercion. He denounces Mill's concept of Liberty as destructive of the social order and denies that the concept of justice has any necessary connection with the ideal of social equality.

This introduction is enough to make you wonder if Stephen is worth reading at all. But the fact is that his arguments are brilliant, and even persuasive, since he attacks Mill with all the realities of social experience which contradict the fiction that social control through secular political power is sufficient to solve human problems. In one place Stephen says:

I believe it to be simply impossible that legislation should be really neutral as to any religion which is professed by any large number of the persons legislated for. He that is not for such a religion is against it. Real neutrality is possible only with regard to forms of religion which are not professed at all by the subjects of legislation, or which are professed by so few of them that their opinions can be regarded as unimportant by the rest. English legislation in England is neutral as to Mahommedanism and Brahmanism. English legislation in India proceeds on the assumption that both are false. If it did not, it would have to be founded on the Koran or the Institutes of Manu. If this is so, it is practically certain that coercion will be exercised in favour of some religious opinions and against others, and the question whether such coercion is good or bad will depend upon the view of religion which is taken by different people.

A little later Mr. Stephen considers what the secular authority must say to a religion claiming divine authority for its teachings:

Your creed is, no doubt, divine, and you are the agents of God for the purpose of teaching it, but liberty of opinion is also more or less divine, and the civil ruler has his own rights and duties as well as the successors of the Apostles. But, convenient as this is, it is a mere compromise. The theory is untrue, and no one really believes more than that half of it which suits him. If spiritual means that which relates to thought and feeling, every act of life is spiritual, for in every act there is a mental element which gives it its moral character. If temporal means outward and visible, then every act is temporal, for every thought and feeling tends toward and is embodied in action. In fact every human action is both temporal and spiritual. The attempt to distinguish between temporal and spiritual, between Church and State, is like the attempt to distinguish between substance and form. Formless matter or unsubstantial form are expressions which have no meaning, and in the same way things temporal and things spiritual presuppose and run into each other at every point. Human life is one and indivisible, and is or ought to be regulated by one set of principles and not by a multitude.

What a pity this was not said by Mr. Mill instead of Mr. Stephen! If Mill had said it, it would have been a solid brief for the cultivation of those pre-political virtues on which all good politics must depend—for the evolution by individuals of those self-regulated forms of free action which solve the problem of content and form, of freedom and order, before its contradictions and failures reach the morally blind jurisdiction of the body politic. For that unity of being, that balance between spirit and matter, cannot really be achieved at the political level except by the coercion and control of the thoughtless majority by the wise minority in which Mr. Stephen believes. In short, we cannot ever use in freedom, fraternity and equality the truth Mr. Stephen declares, without *taking it out of his hands as a legislator*.

For he is, after all, determined to coerce. As he says:

The real difference between Mr. Mill's doctrine and mine is this. We agree that the minority are wise and the majority foolish, but Mr. Mill denies that the wise minority are ever justified in coercing the foolish majority for their own good, whereas I affirm that

under circumstances they may be justified in doing so.

And, alas, Mr. Stephen has the evidence of immoral and unprincipled history on his side. Whatever the political ideals declared, minorities do work their way to partisan control, and the only value a constitution and the rule of a secular state can show for their claims is in serving as a not too efficient *brake* on this tendency.

Mr. Mill is really defending an educational principle, but at the political level. No coercion is a rule in teaching. But he presses this principle into service in an area of life where coercion gets all its working definitions—where, inevitably, his principle withers and dies. That principle can grow strong only in the circumstances of unqualified hospitality to freedom; and it will grow strong, also, only under deliberate, individual self-development by human beings. A people in whom the discipline of freedom is strong enough can overcome the rule of coercion, but only by *not needing it*. This is not an ideological consideration.

Mr. Stephen, in turn, is really misapplying the philosophic content of "whole-man" education, bending its radical and unbreakable unities into an argument to defend coercion at the political level. This is an abuse of reason.

Neither in theory nor in practice can either view succeed.

Lawmakers will of course go on making laws, and anarchists will of course go on opposing them, while the failure of existing laws will continue to create demands for greater legislative severity. There is no way to prevent these monotonies of history. What can be done, however, by those who understand such difficulties, is to give all their efforts to the resolution of dilemmas of freedom and order within the unity of individual human beings, knowing full well that when these dilemmas extrapolate to politics, there can never be anything more than stumbling, faulty, expedient, and finally

very cruel ways of meeting the problems they create. The fiction that politics can deal with these problems is doubtless the greatest delusion of our age.

This is not to suggest that the making of good laws has no importance. But it seems obvious that *wise* laws can be made only by men intelligent enough to see that no people on earth can be legislated to either individual or collective salvation; that laws cannot direct the creative potentialities of human life; that coercion dare not intrude upon the *becoming* of good men, which is a process entirely separate from the control and prevention of bad behavior.

There is hardly a humanist jurisprudence, although there can be humanist *influence* on jurisprudence. The issue turns, quite simply, on faith in man, on understanding how he grows and becomes better and wiser, and on recognizing the transcendent importance of giving growth a higher priority than control.

## *REVIEW*

### THE FRUITS OF VISION

THERE are two kinds of utopians. One pours all his hope for a better future for mankind into outlining plans of social organization which, if carefully followed, are supposed to harmonize human relationships and create patterns of activity which will have a regenerating effect. When these plans are tried, they generally fail, but there is always the explanation that their application was faulty or incomplete, or that compromisers and revisionists have perverted the original intentions. There are endless reasons to be found for the failure of a plan.

The other utopians think differently. They are more interested in an immediate practice which seeks to transform existing social arrangements from within. They regard ideal forms as something to be evolved, not imposed. They take cognizance of the realities of human nature and study the means to its improvement. They believe that no one makes any *human* progress by being pushed or pulled into some preconceived pattern of behavior.

At issue in this comparison are the delicate balances between planning and human growth. If these two aspects of progress do not knit and mesh together, nothing good can happen, and anger and conflict commonly result. The coordination of these aspects of progress is sometimes inadequately generalized by the term "leadership." Human leadership is never perfect, nor are the working solutions of coordination predictable or clearly understood. Certain core mysteries of the nature of man are involved, and we shall need to know a lot more about what we call creativity, science, art, and education before attempts at objectifying definition can be successful. Premature definition usually closes out the possibility of genuine discovery of what is involved in man-in-society.

Meanwhile, the spur of intuitive longing in human beings able to pursue social experiments may be the best guide in reflections on utopian possibilities. We have, for example, for review an article in the first issue of a new English magazine, *Help*, on the Scott Bader Commonwealth. The

account which follows is based on the *Help* article and on the materials prepared by the Commonwealth to explain its structure and purposes. The fundamental facts:

Scott Bader & Co., Ltd. is staffed by some 350 people engaged in the manufacture of resins and plastics intermediates, situated in the village of Wollaston in Northhamptonshire, England. It is identified as a *third way* in industry, neither capitalistic, nor state-controlled. It was formerly an ordinary private company owned by Ernest Bader and his family. In 1951, Ernest Bader began to transform his theories of industrial common-ownership into reality, and, by 1963, the whole of the shares in the business had been made over to a body known as the *Scott Bader Commonwealth*. This body thus became the "holding company" of Scott Bader & Co., Ltd., owning all the shares in one inclusive certificate.

All staff over the age of 21 who have been with the firm at least a year are eligible to join the Commonwealth. As members, they become co-owners of Scott Bader and are equals, regardless of their positions in the manufacturing firm.

Originally a Swiss, Ernest Bader came to England in 1920. A fad for children's celluloid windmills gave him a start in the plastics business. By 1951, he "had carved out a major share in the new polyester resin industry, with all its applications to fibre glass." The *Help* article says:

Bader is one of a disappearing breed of individualists. Quaker, pacifist, successful entrepreneur, he could have been a millionaire. And yet now, at 78, he can still be found racing across the lawns at his Wollaston factory to beat the queue for the works canteen ("That's democracy, you know"). . .

He gave away his fortune for basically religious reasons. He had been intensely moved by the suffering of two world wars and compared this with the greed and avarice of industry in peace time.

When he handed over his shareholding to the new Scott Bader Commonwealth, he wrote his philosophy into the constitution. The factory would supply no raw materials to the armament industry. (This has cost them some substantial contracts.)

The community would be based upon Christian ideals of service. Work would be made meaningful and without exploitation. Profits, after allowing for

necessary reinvestment, would be divided equally between the workers and charity.

Well, we could go on with description of the internal structure of the Company and the Commonwealth, but this information is too complicated to be summarized, and the important matters aren't really covered in this way. The *Help* story dramatizes somewhat the slow process by which Ernest Bader is gradually relinquishing control over company decisions—after all, the vision of the undertaking is his and he wants to see it continue—and reports the good-natured if sometimes heated frictions that develop between the old regime and the new. There is this, for example:

Now that Bader is moving off the centre of the stage, things are beginning to happen that are by no means all to the old man's liking. The Community Council, the central body representing the 350 workers (and distinct from the Board of Directors, which runs the company) is moving steadily away from Bader's thinking, and evolving its own philosophy. Bader himself is a worried man. "You find us at a crucial point when people want more and more for less and less commitment."

"That's absolute rubbish," the sales manager retorted. "We've got a better spirit than ever before. Let's put it like this. EB started the Commonwealth. It was his little child. It is now an adolescent, and because it's starting to get independent, he's getting worried. Once it starts to grow you can't hold it back. I don't blame him. I think anyone would feel like this. He made the company. He got through the notion and did what he did. He must accept what is happening, but he is worried."

"It's an old man seeing a dream child grow up. I would be just as bad, maybe worse."

Another man, whose job is to promote Commonwealth ideals, said of the people who work in the plant: "They join because it's a good job, not because it's Scott Bader." The *Help* writer comments more generally:

The trouble with this kind of thinking is that so much of the Bader story is unrepeatable. People just don't go around giving away £600,000. And very few leaders are cast in the Bader mould. As one of the fiercest democrats in the company put it: "The sheer authoritarian dictatorship of Ernest Bader brought us to where we are. The community will flourish better

in the post-Bader era. But it could never have got here without him."

Well, we could end with some commonplace about eternal human nature, but this would overlook the real importance of the story. After all, the enterprise Ernest Bader got going is something new in the relations of men in economic undertakings. Employee ownership of business is very rare, and there have probably been more failures than successes in such experiments. For some reason or other, the Bader company continues to be successful and grow, and encounter with the vision of Ernest Bader is a daily experience for the people who work there. *Some* of that vision will continue. And it might spread in other forms. Even if the employees are not a bunch of junior Ernest Baders, but just like the idea of a good job in pleasant surroundings, working there is an open invitation to their moral inventiveness. And if they *were* junior Ernest Baders, they wouldn't be working in that plant at all, but would be off somewhere else starting some equally incredible project of their own. The human problems and frictions that turn up in the course of the Company's development, under the general direction of the Commonwealth, are hardly "bad things," or evidences of poor planning, but, almost certainly, the sort of growing pains inevitable in all such situations—if they didn't have them at Scott Bader, the place would be either dying or very sick.

What about the "watering-down" of the original ideal, as time goes on? In answer you might say this: Watering down may happen; but a new kind of thinking has been seeded in a lot of people, and if the old mother tree gets barren or tired, it doesn't matter. All good things have their seasons of productivity, and, quite possibly, the Bader enterprise will have one that is longer and more fruitful than most. We can be thankful for that. Meanwhile, Ernest Bader, with some help, has proved that altruistic motives guided by hardheaded sagacity can survive in business, spread its inspiration, and do a great deal of both planned and incidental good. The Scott Bader Commonwealth is probably one of the best laboratories around where you can study the subtle relationships between planning and growth in a going concern.



## *COMMENTARY* ACCORDING TO RULES

IT is a scene which, once witnessed, you never forget: A child filled with incredulous horror from seeing the hurt he has done to a playmate without meaning to. Frightened, he looks around for Mommy's enfolding compassion.

Much worse are the disasters brought by men who don't really know the consequences of their utopian proposals, and who are no more able than a child to control the effects of their mistakes. Sometimes these men are tough-minded freethinkers who don't believe in God—no Mommy—but they are as ready as little children to involve entire populations in programs of unpredictable result. They calculate the theoretical good, dismissing the risks. They are great generalizers. Nothing is any good unless it is perfect. They don't understand Blake's principle of bounds. "Truth has bounds, error none."

If Hell is paved with good intentions, social chaos grows from vague utopian dreams. These men want a chemically pure soil before they will begin to plough and plant—but let them find such a field in nature. Let them visit Point Lobos (Carmel, California) and have a look at the cypresses growing out of cracks in the rock. Nature uses existing materials, not imaginary ones. It is the same with society.

This is the kind of reasoning which supports the work of men like Ernest Bader. He probably made mistakes. We don't know what they are, and don't need to: *all* men make mistakes. (Even utopian administrators make mistakes after they reach power: that's what the Russians say about Stalin—he made a few little mistakes.) Of course, sometimes you do have to knock over old structures, but then you're supposed to know the tab and be ready to pick it up. And a businessman, if he gets a wonderful kind of religion (Bader, in this case), is still a businessman. He knows the necessity of bounds. He's used to picking up the tab. He knows the

importance of shouting *Stop*. Of course, he may do it too often, since a man like that gets nervous. After all, now he's playing in a game where rules are regarded as unimportant—dull restraints on wonderful good intentions. And the game is played on a field where irresponsibility is often regarded as the principle of virtuous action, and where the officials—the Great Ideological Thinkers—are fake mummies with supernatural powers obtained from the Historical Process. He probably keeps saying, "Let's make something good out of this, and then we'll see about your revolution. Maybe we won't need one." Sounds pretty reactionary. Sort of safe and sane. No spilling of blood.

# CHILDREN

## . . . and Ourselves

### ACT OF CREATION

SINCE the shop which prints MANAS does work for museums and often involves graphic designers in the preparation of catalogs and brochures, it is not uncommon to find an artist nosing around in the back shop. A practical printer is inevitably puzzled by what attracts the artist—as, for example, the "strike sheets" of a lithographic color job, on which the images of a multi-color design have scummed or been blurred and streaked with wash-up fluid, or have become wild palimpsests from being used to "warm up" the press on various unrelated jobs. The artist sometimes sees wonderful effects in these sheets. For him they are *objets trouvés*, and he may happily carry dozens of them home for his own indescribable uses.

On one occasion a designer looking for new materials to use in sculpture began to wonder about the possibilities of the comparatively soft linotype metal. The linotype machine is equipped with a melting pot which keeps the metal (mainly lead) molten until it is cast, and its behavior in this state interested the designer. So he took some home and experimented. A few days later he brought it back, disappointed. He found, he said, that the transition from fluid to solid was too sudden. He had hoped to arrest the change in an intermediate, plastic stage, enabling him to *work* the metal, but it turned hard too quickly. It was not, he said, a good material for art because it couldn't be *controlled*.

It may be a jump from this sample of a problem in making things to a communication we have on "The Will To Form," by Robert A. C. Stewart (lecturer in education at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand)—yet there is a connection. The linotype metal was an external obstacle to the artist's intentions, but Mr. Stewart considers the same or similar difficulties as issues of internal decision. He begins by quoting a classical statement of what is involved:

"Reality is a thing of infinite diversity, and defies the most ingenious deductions and definitions of abstract thought, nay, abhors the clear and precise classifications we delight in; Reality tends to infinite subdivisions of things, and truth is a matter of infinite shadings."

So writes Dostoevsky.

Yet man is filled with the will to form—he must seek to make sense of his universe. He must categorize and organize—he must make clear and precise classifications. He has a need to find harmony and build order.

It can be said that the first steps in the development of modern scientific understanding have involved this classification and categorization.

It does not take long, however, to discover that there are highly significant exceptions to every possible categorization.

Man's urge to form, and to find harmony and order can be used to create a basic framework. But this same urge can also create for himself a prison in his daily life. Man can establish a system that puts the fragments of his life into a rigid order. But this very order can hold the many aspects of his being apart, and prohibit him from a lively awareness of the enormous complexity of reality.

The need is for man to accept the value of basic organization and classification, yet to maintain an awareness and sensitivity for that which defies categorization. Systematic order should be a servant, not a master.

This is the meaning of Kierkegaard's protest against the compartmentalization and inner breakdown in the Victorian period. The Victorian man saw himself as segmented into reason, will and emotions, as do some people still today.

One very interesting result from studies of people undergoing psychotherapy has been that as the person gains in self-respect, he becomes more tolerant of aspects of himself which do not fit a pre-conceived pattern. Because he feels more able to tolerate inconsistencies in himself, he becomes more able to tolerate imperfections and inconsistencies in others. He comes to like other people for this uniqueness.

The hope is that we will be able to combine our ability to categorize and organize, with a continuing sensitivity for the infinite diversity of Reality.

We began with a practical illustration of the artist's problem of form-making. Mr. Stewart discusses it in terms which recall William Blake's heroic attempt at resolution, as both artist and philosopher. The artist, if he is to make anything, must set bounds. What shall determine them? That is the great question.

Harold C. Goddard writes suggestively on Blake's views:

Reason, he declares, is the Great Divider. Aristotle, who, if anyone, ought to know, defines it in the same way, as the setter of bounds. Now Blake, who almost deified form, is no enemy of bounds, provided they are imposed from within. He hated nothing on earth as he did the blurry, the indefinite, the merely general. "The great and golden rule of art, as well as of life, is this," he says: "That the more distinct, sharp, and wirey the bounding line, the more perfect the work of art." "Truth has bounds, Error none." "Nature has no Outline, but Imagination has." But the tyranny of bounds imposed from without is an entirely different matter:

A Robin Red breast in a Cage  
Puts all Heaven in a Rage.

Art for Blake flows into ethic. He was devoted to the precise bound, the explicit form, because he hated the sterile generality. Mr. Goddard quotes from him:

"Labour well the Minute Particulars, attend to the Little-ones." "He who would do good to another must do it in Minute Particulars: General Good is the plea of the scoundrel hypocrite and flatterer." "General Knowledge is Remote Knowledge; it is in Particulars that Wisdom consists and Happiness too." "To Generalize is to be an Idiot. To particularize is the Alone Distinction of Merit."

So, to Blake, as Mr. Goddard says, "a vision, a work, of art, and life itself are each an organization of cells."

But Blake was never himself the captive of "minute particulars." How does the artist learn to free himself from such confinements while at the same time using them? In *Education of Vision* (edited by Gyorgy Kepes—Braziller, 1965), Anton Ehrenzweig has a lucid passage on how Stanley Hayter, the pioneer of modern engraving

methods, overcame in his teaching the mechanical professionalism of traditional engraving:

He [Hayter] would tell his pupils to work in successive stages without pre-planning the whole composition. Each stage introduced a new motif or new technique. They were first to invent a single motif, then balance it with a counter motif that gave enriched meaning to the first, and add step by step new ideas and techniques. There was a mysterious logic and cohesion between these stages. Each step was equally crucial for the final all-over structure, even though its relationship to the end-result could not be precisely visualized. If the student took the right step, it would enrich and quicken the flow of ideas, while the wrong step brought the whole process to a premature standstill. The student had to acquire a capacity for making the right choice though the information needed for that choice was not at hand.

Well, Dr. Ehrenzweig continues his discussion in the language of depth psychology, but the essentials of the creative process seem already clear. Hayter's method is a serviceable analogue of every sort of disciplined origination. It objectifies without mechanizing what every artist and thinker must learn to do. And it doesn't "explain away" the intrinsic wonder of the act.

## *FRONTIERS*

### The Means is the End

BLACK LIBERATION: by nonviolence or by revolution? Peace in Vietnam: by negotiations or by escalation and total submission? Democracy for all: by ballot or by war? On and on, day by day, go the needs of man, and on and on go the apparent choices we have of attaining these sometimes lofty and enlightened purposes. But are the goals in sight? Is the end even to the questions of how to secure those goals anywhere in sight?

Such high goals have preoccupied man's mind for centuries, but his hands have been occupied in less lofty pursuits. Mankind has yet to have secured any of those purposes. Do we think of this age as being the one to realize such goals? I'm sure some do, but how?

With the discussions of peace, equality, freedom and the like, go questions of means to those goals, and it is here that I would like to stop for a moment to look at, and to attempt to shed light on, the so-called means that lurk in the shadow of every lofty purpose. Mankind appears to have a general fault in that no matter what ideology men espouse, they become so engrossed with the forest of ideological superstructure they cannot see the rotten trees that support the so-called means.

The devising of a means to an end often erroneously suggests: (1) that the means is separate from the end, and that there is a process which is itself divided into a beginning, an end, and a means to reaching that end; (2) that the means has meaning in itself; (3) that there could be a frustrated or suspended means, and an unfulfilled end; and (4) that the means can justify the end, or *vice versa* that the end can justify the means.

An athlete's career gives the illusion of a process whereby he begins his career; he trains and competes, and generally applies his so-called

means toward a specific end. If while in his prime the athlete runs a 4.42 minute mile, you would say that his prior training and practice miles were a means to attaining his record speed. But if in the years after his prime he continues to train and compete, but is unable to match his earlier record, you would not agree that his training was a means to those slower speeds. To extend this example further, let us say the athlete ran a 5.01 minute mile one year prior to his record time. Again you would agree that his training to that point was a means to that speed, his best until then; but was his training a means to only the faster and not the slower speeds? One race or training exercise is not the means to the following, for each time the athlete ran, he ran a certain speed, and each time he completed a beginning, means, and end. That his explicit purpose for running was not always realized, does not mean the end was not realized. The end is implicit in the act and not in the purpose. It falls to the doer to perform specific acts appropriate to his explicit purpose, or to alter his purpose with the potential of his acts. It is here that we have the true division: between what a man does, and what he intends to do.

In the case of the athlete, it would be easy to detect inconsistencies in his intentions and his accomplishments. One has only to compare his intentions with his performance. But what of other careers—what of soldiers, politicians, teachers, or bishops? (Or do we really want to take a good look at these careers?) According to these offices and the men who fill them, their purpose is the good of mankind, each in his own way. But do they protect us from the enemy? Do they justly govern the community? Do they love wisdom and truth? Do they administer to the spiritual needs of man? Do these men and offices perform acts appropriate to their explicit purposes?

An act is a function and is characterized by substance and evidence, *i.e.*, that which can be seen, smelled, felt, heard and or tasted. The substance and evidence of the act are complete in

themselves yet without intrinsic meaning. It is man who gives acts meaning and decides number, kind, and quality according to his purpose, not because there are implicit-to-the-purpose meanings present in the acts themselves. It is man who either matches or mismatches the act's substance and evidence with his purpose. This is seen in the example of driving a nail into a piece of wood. The first time you strike the nail you have driven it a certain distance into the wood. That distance may be sufficient to your purpose, or you may want to strike the nail ten or fifteen more times until its head is beneath the surface. The number of times you strike the nail, the tool used, the accuracy in hitting the nail, the quality of the finished product, the confidence of the man performing, all these possible meanings depend upon the doer.

The false separation of the means from the end suggests that if the means were interrupted, the end would never be realized. But consider the construction left by a man who dies before he is able to roof and floor the house he was building. What is left is an unfinished house, but what makes the house unfinished is that, as it stands, it does not serve the builder's purpose (aside from the fact that he is in no position to use the house). As it stands, the construction has no use. But to say that the construction is in a state of suspended means is to deny to the construction that which it is at that moment, and to relegate the judgment of whether a thing is at its end to opinion rather than fact. Within itself, the construction is no further from the end implicit, in each act of construction, than the nail is in its various positions of embeddedness, or than the roofed and floored house next door is in its completeness.

Whether the means justifies the end, or the end justifies the means, is impossible to prove. They are the same. What we must ask is whether a given act justifies a given purpose or whether the purpose justifies the act. An act has its own limits as seen in its substance and evidence, but has no purpose in itself, so it must be given

purpose by man. To give purpose is a function of man, but that function has no substance and evidence in itself. Purpose, consequently, must be proved by acts.

If a man's purpose is to build a house, and the substance and evidence of his activity is a completed house, that substance and evidence are his purpose's justification or proof. But if the man's purpose is to build an impenetrable fortress, and the substance and evidence of his activity is a construction of bamboo and thatch, the man's purpose will never prove such a construction to be impenetrable.

And so we see that an act—man's action if you will—is of specific substance and evidence, and that substance and evidence exist in spite of man's purpose, intention, or his attempts intellectually to divide his actions into beginnings, means, and ends. The substance and evidence of man's actions exist in spite of labeling the actions something other than they are. A man labels his thatch and bamboo hut a fortress, but he lives in the vulnerable substance and evidence of his hut.

It is at once obvious and shocking to see the disparity between the so-called enlightened purposes offered by a few men, and the obviously antithetical actions these same few men, and the thousands who follow them, perform in their ignorant belief (can they know what they are doing?) that by their actions they will realize their purpose.

Presently American leaders are asking for peace, and labeling conversation and continued killing and destruction as the "means" to peace. North Vietnam leaders are asking for peace, and labeling conversation and continued killing and destruction the "means" to peace. The soldiers on both sides live in the substance and evidence of war. At home American civilians are living in the substance and evidence of an inflated war economy, of civil unrest; the Vietnam civilians are living in the substance and evidence of chaos, destruction, and imminent death.

Men throughout history have sought peace, justice, and liberation from oppression and they labeled nationalism, revolution, riots, new governments and laws their "means"; but they have had to live in the substance and evidence of their wars, their self-made masters called democracy, communism, world revolution.

There is no peace in war. There is no justice in the policeman's dog and club. In spite of his slogans and "lofty" purposes, in spite of his clever rhetoric and "enlightened" philosophies, man lives daily in the substance and evidence of his means. Man lives daily in the reality of his individual and collective actions.

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