VOLUME XXX, NO. 3
JANUARY 19, 1977

REFLECTIONS ABOUT MORAL DECISION

A VAST area for research opens out from questioning the idea of "righteous argument." The sort of inquiry implied becomes evident right at the start if we say that "reflection" ought to be put in the place of "research" in examining this problem. Reflection determines value, while research suggests the collection and ordering of value-free facts.

What are the credentials of value-free facts? Why are they important? For a hundred years or more in scientific thinking, the value-free fact has been regarded as knowledge immune to the contaminations of haphazard opinion, wishful thinking, and prejudice. Bringing value-free facts to bear on the issues of a discussion contributes an air of dispassion. Science must be objective, impersonal, unemotional.

These contentions can hardly be ignored. The services of a range of facts to moral decision are everywhere in evidence. Discovery and assemblage of facts continually create new regions of moral decision. *Silent Spring* is an excellent example. Without Rachel Carson's book, we would have far less idea of all the things we have been doing wrong.

Another example applies to the problem of why men go to war. Some thirty-five years ago, an eminent historian, Frederick J. Teggart, published his *Rome and China* (University of California Press, 1941) to demonstrate the importance of historical knowledge in relation to preventing or putting an end to war. Ignorance of facts, he shows, leads to serious errors in moral judgment. In this monograph on Chinese and Roman history, Professor Teggart reviews the period from 58 B.C. to 107 A.D., revealing that barbarian invasions of the Roman empire were often caused by wars waged by the Chinese emperors, the impulse of disturbance in the Far East being transmitted westward along the trade routes of the Tarim basin. During the time studied, Teggart says, twenty-seven of a total of forty uprisings on the frontiers of the empire, harassing Roman administrators, "are to be attributed to the influence of events in the 'Western Regions' (of China)," while the rest are traceable to aggressions in the East by the Romans themselves. Teggart comments:

> It is of some importance to note that the statesmen who were responsible for or advocated the resort to war, on each of forty occasions, were entirely unaware of the consequences which this policy entailed. The wars of the Chinese, indeed, were initiated only after lengthy discussions at the imperial court by ministers who reasoned from historical experience no less than from moral principles and from expediency. But the Chinese emperors and their advisors were unconscious of the fact that their decisions were the prelude to conflicts and devastations in regions of which they had never heard. The Romans were equally in the dark with respect to the consequences of their wars in Bosporus, Armenia, and Syria.

It was not without reason, then, that the Romans decided that their barbaric neighbors—especially the Germans—were "actuated by an unalterable disposition to maraud and war," although, as Teggart observes, "the immediate factor in the border wars was not the martial spirit of any particular tribe or tribes, but the mutually unintelligible conduct of men responsive to different modes of existence." We might recall, here, that this judgment of the Germans by the Romans was revived and righteously quoted by advocates of severe punishment of Germany after both the world wars of this century.

So facts, quite obviously, have great importance. But are facts always facts, and do they remain so? And are they really "value free"? A few years ago a professional writer contributed an article to one of the better magazines,

recording her melancholy discovery that whenever she researched a subject a second or even a third time, she was obligated to alter her conclusions. The facts, or her reading of them, had a chameleon quality. Each time she saw more. It is reasonable to assume that this researcher—and the rest of us—will *always* see more, or see differently, each time we look. This, we could say, is a conclusion from researching research—or, as we suggested at the beginning, from *reflection.* The facts, in other words, can at best never do more than produce a total at some given moment, a total that cannot remain the same. This does not invalidate the importance of facts, but it certainly says something about their use.

It is of interest that whenever we seek out for consideration some moral issue, we gravitate quite naturally to the area of public or social affairs. (Choosing this focus is itself a value-judgment.) Here we have done this in relation to pollution and war. We do it for probably two reasons. First, the expressed moral thinking of our time always has a social character. Private morality is virtually taboo as a subject. Personal moral questions are thought to be salvation-oriented, and therefore selfish and elitist. The saint achieves only a private good, setting his welfare apart from that of others. Second, public moral issues, displayed in the behavior of institutions, are capable of clear identification. Pollution is obviously a bad thing, war obscenely evil, and enforced poverty a crime. At the institutional level good and evil (mostly evil) stand up for easy counting. Racial prejudice that is confirmed in statute and supported by custom is unambiguously bad.

Something might be said here about the role of institutions as reflectors of human qualities. There are epochs when the institutions created by society seem wholly animated by upward and onward intentions. But intentions change. We could take America's land grant colleges as an example. Justin Morrill, a dyed-in-the-wool Vermonter dedicated to the good of his countrymen, wrote the Land Grant Act which was passed in 1862—the year when the Homestead Act also became law. The Land Grant colleges were meant to help rural Americans to become better farmers—more scientific. By 1880 there were forty of them, and, as Kevin Shea says in a review of American agriculture (*Environment,* October, 1976), America "was on its way to establishing the largest and most prolific agricultural research complex that had ever existed."

A few years later Congress authorized land grant colleges for blacks in the South. Looking back at them, Mr. Shea remarks of these schools, established in seventeen southern and border states: "While this seemed to be a progressive step for a country that only three decades earlier had thrown out slavery, it can also be viewed as a form of institutionalized racism that, as will be seen, permeated all of agricultural officialdom and has survived to the present time." Then, in 1920, the Farm Bureau came into being. This was an institution which proceeded to confirm the prediction of a Texan critic, Clarence Ousley, who opposed the proposal of the Farm Bureau five years before it was established by law. Ousley said in 1915:

> It seemed to me . . . that this Bureau movement was a scheme whereby a progressive body of farmers took advantage of the department and college in order exclusively to utilize the services of the county agent. If this is what the bureau means, then it is an unwholesome movement. The whole tendency of agricultural education is to benefit the man who is already progressive. It does not reach the man who is most in need, the neglected man, who neglects himself, who does not seek knowledge, and to whom the colleges and the department, through the county agent, should go as a missionary.

What are today the most noticeable achievements of these much admired nineteenth-century institutions? Agribusiness and the Green Revolution. Mr. Shea asks:

> What have our agricultural research, education, and policymaking institutions been doing for the past 100 years to solve some of the problems of rural

> Americans (and affecting urban Americans as well) which have been growing as rapidly as the agricultural revolution? The answer is, of course: very little. Our agricultural research and educational establishment has been so busy grinding out scientific and technological gadgetry to *boost* farm production that it has largely ignored the problems its labors have created. On the other hand the federal government has been so preoccupied with devising complicated legislation to *hold down* production that the people who have suffered from these two seemingly opposite activities have been all but ignored.

Research in behalf of agriculture has had about the same effect as research in general, which has turned the universities of the land into multiversities—high class service stations devoted to the needs of the acquisitive technological society. (To say nothing of their dependence on the military.)

In *The American Condition,* Richard Goodwin points out that institutions, which are created for particular purposes, serve only a portion or fragments of human beings—commonly some facet of practical self-interest. Individual human beings have a moral side, but the institutions devised to serve them have only their mission-oriented charters to guide them. The colleges and universities—whatever has been claimed for their "higher" objectives—came into being to help people to become smart, efficient, and rich. They illustrate in institutional practice, therefore, the separation of the *rationalizing* capacity of the intellect from the *reason* of the whole human being. Institutionalization, one could say, is a way of authorizing collectivist control of the rationalizing capacity in certain directions for certain purposes. The analysis provided by Erich Kahler in *The Meaning of History* applies here:

> Reason is a human faculty, inherent in the human being as such, rationality is a technical function, a technicalization and functionalization of the way reason proceeds. . . . It is only rather recently, in consequence of the general process of specialization, and of the ensuing transformation of consciousness, that rationality has become completely independent of, indeed radically opposed to human reason. And just as the expansion of collective consciousness entails the shrinking of individual consciousness, rationality grows at the expense of reason.

Prof. Kahler shows how this works out in institutional terms by taking for illustration a scientific specialist in military technology:

> As far as human reason comes in at all, it is effective only in the narrowest, personal scope of concern for keeping his job and pursuing his career, and even the care for the destiny of his children is repressed and held back from any connection with the dire implications of his work. To ponder over the general human consequences of his activity hardly occurs to him; indeed, according to the scientific canon of strict confinement to a limited field of research, such inferences are considered to exceed his competence.

There is this further comparison:

> In the field of medicine for instance, rationality works toward the most subtle means of therapy and medication. Years may be devoted to saving the life of a single child, while, in the field of war technology, rationality juggles the lives of millions of human beings as mere proportional figures. The most dainty comforts are produced alongside of colossal destructivity. The prevalence of reason in human affairs would presuppose a comprehensive evaluation of all factors, in a given situation. But in the anarchical condition of an incoherent collective consciousness, functional rationality has reached a point of autonomy where it simultaneously serves the most contradictory ends, among them purposes which human reason must regard as monstrous.

No wonder we pick out social and public practice for criticism! What, we naturally ask, are the priorities in attempting to correct this insane behavior? Well, first of all, is it really an institutional problem, or will we have to go back of institutions to restore wholeness to the function of reason?

It was Thoreau's view that moral institutions come into being and gain their coarse functional limitations only as a result of the splits in the moral nature of individuals. This returns us to individual morality. From this point of view, the

weaknesses of institutions are human weaknesses abstracted and writ large. Recognizing morality only in institutional terms enables the institutions to monopolize our attention. Most formidable of all, Thoreau might say, are the rationalizations of moral institutions, since they mechanize moral intelligence while yet in the bud of its early growth. He wrote in a letter to a friend:

> When, in the progress of a life, a man swerves, though only by an angle finitely small, from his proper and allotted path (and this is never done quite unconsciously even at first; in fact, that was his broad and scarlet sin,—ah, he knew of it more than he can tell), then the drama of his life turns to tragedy, and makes haste to its fifth act. When once we thus fall behind ourselves, there is no accounting for the obstacles which rise up in our path, and no one is so wise as to advise, and no one so powerful to aid us while we abide on that ground. . . . For such the Decalogue was made, and other far more voluminous and terrible codes.

Here, at the end, Thoreau is talking about the bureaucratization of moral decision—for that is what moral codes do. For purposes of convenience and efficiency, but most of all for avoidance of the pain of individual decision, men succumb to the temptation to make morality a technical discipline which can be entrusted to specialists—lawmakers and priests. This is turning morality over to the rationalizers—in our day the quantifiers—a transfer similar to the method of the behaviorists who convert mental realities into their physiological signs, thus eliminating all subjective subtlety as well as all value. Morality in institutional definition is indeed denatured morality, just as the psychology of the behaviorists is denatured psychology—it has abolished mind. Polanyi has put the matter succinctly: "Behaviorist psychology depends on covertly alluding to the mental states which it sets out to eliminate."

The politicalization of morality—its bureaucratization—is the subject of Arthur Koestler's famous novel about the Moscow trials of forty years ago—*Darkness at Noon;* and a similar *tour de force* by the Chinese Communists made it possible for William Irwin Thompson to remark: "Mao thinks he is creating a religionless society, but really he has created the largest Puritan state in the history of mankind." (That it seems to be working so well is perhaps nothing to regret, but certainly something to try to understand.)

What of America? By common consent, the folly of attempting to control or dictate the sources of morality by statute was ruled out of the Constitution by the First Amendment. The overt acts reflecting inadequate morality would be punished, with no futile attempt to install a true or truer belief-system. But as Wilson Carey McWilliams observes in *The Idea of Fraternity in America*, "If you cannot 'legislate morality,' you cannot legislate without moral effect." All legislated arrangements reflect the sum of individual moral attitudes:

> The separation of "public" and "private" spheres is, in the long term at least, a fraud; our efforts to deal with racial inequality and poverty, for example, take us ever deeper into the private sphere, while our ingrained "public" habits of mind make our invasions ineffective, ungracious, and dehumanizing. . . . The "system" is not a "value-neutral" set of techniques; the Framers would have been offended at the mere suggestion. Our public institutions have been based on the assumptions and theories of the liberal Enlightenment. Law contains a bias toward individualism, a hostility to communities, an assumption that material well-being and technological advance are in the high interests of man. (Almost the only positive aim set forth in Article I of the Constitution is the "progress of science and the useful arts.")

We have been pursuing here a discursive examination of some aspects of moral decision, hoping to exhibit the weaknesses of the tendency to refer morals to institutional authorities of one sort or another, and of relying on the public truths of science or the "objective facts" that an individual may assemble in order to reach right decisions. The point, really, is the one made by Thoreau. His view is difficult to establish, not demonstrable by "argument," although it may be found intuitively acceptable. It is that the inward

sense of moral responsibility, of consistency with life-intent and life-meaning, is always the true arbiter of moral decision. We may need facts, but the urge to look for them, the willingness to accept them when found, and the way we choose the "relevant" facts is always determined by this inward sense. If we do not see this, we become susceptible to the endless persuasions of rationalization.

A "case study" of this sort of thing is available in an article in *Science* for Oct. 22, 1976, ill which two psychologists, Kenneth R. Hammond and Leonard Adelman, make a heroic attempt to place moral decision within the framework of scientific method. The effort incidentally brings various sage observations to the foreground. The writers start out by speaking of the difficulty in integrating scientific facts with social values. Yet doing it becomes urgent for the reason that "scientific progress" itself is now being continually questioned in terms of social values. They say:

> The key element, therefore, in the process of integrating social values and scientific facts is human judgment—a cognitive activity not directly observable and generally assumed to be recoverable only by (fallible) introspection and "self-report. These characteristics, among others, have led to the general belief that human judgment is beyond scientific analysis and therefore little has been learned about the cognitive activity that produces crucial decisions. The integration of social values and scientific information in the effort to form public policy remains largely a mystery.

The solution the psychologists found for this problem was to take public testimony from both technical and social experts, purifying it of bias by including as many factors (both facts and values) as possible for consideration, then weighting the factors (quantification) and combining them by algebraic formula. This method of uniting fact and value, it is said, is defensible and scientific because "it provides a public framework for (i) separating technical, scientific judgment from social value judgments and (ii) integrating them analytically, not judgmentally."

How was this method applied? The question to be answered was: Should the Denver Police Department change its handgun ammunition to hollow-point ("dumdum") bullets as having more "stopping power" (they spread and tear flesh) in encounters with armed criminals, especially since some criminals use dum-dum bullets against the police? Well, ballistics experts testified on stopping power, doctors testified concerning injury, and the "social" authorities (the mayor and other officials, including the chief of police) testified on what they knew about matters like threat to bystanders and the importance of stopping effectiveness. These views were given a numerical value and the result, accepted by all, was the choice of a bullet which combined good stopping power with less severe injury. The bullet is now in use. The authors conclude: "The argument advanced here is that a scientifically, socially, and ethically defensible means for integrating science and human values can be achieved."

At issue, of course, is not the "correctness" of the decision, but its lack of depth. What needs to be brought into consideration when a community finds itself obliged to make decisions of this sort? What moral attitudes on the part of people generally allow them to be content with setting the fusion of fact and value at this level? Does resolving differences here by scientific expertise do anything at all to raise common human behavior to a level where the argument might bc as it has been in some countries during happier days—whether the police, as peace officers, ought to use firearms at all?

REVIEW
A RESURGENCE READER

MANAS receives a lot of magazines, mostly exchanges, but some (one or two) we pay for. If the truth were known, it might be generally admitted that for most purposes good magazine articles are better reading than books. You have at least a fighting chance to remember what an article says, but books are just too big, and often without justification. Magazine reading has a different rhythm. What you can take in in a few minutes is like a light meal, better than a heavy one. An article is less pretentious than a book. It isn't supposed to settle anything, but to get you thinking in some direction. This may be far more valuable than having something completely nailed down in a big book.

Magazines are the embodiment of current ideas in circulation. They give expression to the flow of life in the mind. They are also sensitive reflectors of changing opinion. We couldn't do without them.

At present magazine publishing in America is in the midst of a far-reaching transition. Several big, useless magazines have gone out of business and others will probably follow. Meanwhile very good new ones are developing. The contrast between the old and the new is dramatic. Papers like *Rain* and *Self-Reliance* are filled with material people want to know about, need to know about, and can enjoy reading. A few of the "old" magazines, of course, are important, too. We think of three published here that are essential for keeping in touch with the best thinking in the country—the *Nation,* a weekly, the *Progressive,* a monthly, and the *American Scholar,* a quarterly.

A new magazine published in England that we have come to rely on is *Resurgence,* founded by John Papworth in 1966. He had in mind to broaden the base of pacifist thought and action to include an understanding of how a peaceful society needs to be constructed. Ten years later Michael North selected what seemed to him "the best of *Resurgence"* and Prism Press (Stable Court, Chalmington, Dorchester, Dorset, England) published the collection under the title, *Time Running Out?* The price for this *Resurgence* reader (paperback) is £2.25—a little less than four dollars, say, with shipping included.

What is in *Time Running Out?* A regular contributor from the beginning has been E. F. Schumacher. Nine of his articles (none of them out of date) are in the reader. Another "new economist" writer often in *Resurgence* is Leopold Kohr, who has three articles in the reader. John Seymour, a journalist and farmer who writes about land use, has three. Other contributors who may be familiar to MANAS readers through quotation are Ronald Sampson, Geoffrey Ostergaard, Nigel Wilson, and Geoffrey Ashe. The present editor, Satish Kumar, interviews Vinoba Bhave on "People's Politics in a Non-Violent Society" (reprinted in MANAS, Feb. 20, 1974), and there is an article by Jayaprakash Narayan, "The Indian Village Revolution."

In the first issue of *Resurgence* John Papworth printed a "Statement of Intent" which said in part:

> Mainly as a result of prolonged failure to analyse the full consequences of the modern revolution in what Ellul calls "technique" mankind is moving into a state of endemic emergency in relation to the problem of war, human numbers, food and energy supplies, and human identity.
>
> Against the background of a world-wide crisis that is basically a crisis of political power, the methods of war protest so far evolved, the marches, meetings, manifestoes, and other forms of mass activity, are clearly inadequate and can now hope to achieve little of practical effect. . . .
>
> A civilisation that genuinely reflects all that human beings long for and aspire to cannot be prefabricated whether by Fabians, Commisars or capitalists; it can only be created on the basis of each person's freely acknowledged power to decide on each of the many questions that affect his life. . . .
>
> We have come to see that besides the bigger campaigns of protest and obstruction that are needed when the war danger threatens to erupt as a

> consequence of some act of folly by the rulers of this or that power unit, we need also to extend our field of action and to change our social structures if they are ever to yield peace as naturally as they now yield war. . . . Men will not come to reject our war societies until they have some coherent alternative to which they can turn. We think this alternative, based on love, non-violence, personal dedication and the powers of the individual to make his own decisions, is today the only alternative to the monstrous biological anticlimax towards which human society is clearly moving.

The several lines of interest which became manifest in *Resurgence* are discussed by Michael North in his editor's preface. Of E. F. Schumacher he says:

> The real importance and profundity of Schumacher's work lies not in its detailed clarity of exposition, but first of all in the moral foundations from which he builds. The recurrent theme of his *Resurgence* articles is the debasement of human beings by industrial society and the consequent resentment, apathy, and vacuity. The incompatibility of modern industrial methods with elementary human dignity is a fact which is often glossed over by many so-called "radical" thinkers, witness one of Schumacher's articles, "Insane Work Cannot Produce a Sane Society." Indeed, the attempt to place economic life in a moral context which was more or less abandoned by the Church at the Reformation has been one of *Resurgence's* foremost concerns.

The Gramdan movement of India—which became a primary inspiration of the Land Trust movement in the United States, now slowly gathering strength—is another subject to which *Resurgence* often returns, since "the Gandhian ideal is something that has rooted itself in the awareness of many in the over-developed West." It is worth noting that *Resurgence* was the first non-technical journal in Britain to give serious attention to ecology.

Late in 1973 the magazine was redesigned to its present format and Satish Kumar took over as editor. Since then there has been more emphasis on matters such as land tenure and the question of whether Britain can feed itself.

There is a plain connection between this editorial direction and the strong moral tone of the pacifist stance. *Resurgence's* muscular commitment to peace-making is well illustrated by some passages from Ronald Sampson's "The Will to Peace." After some review of the hypocrisies of nation-states and the twisted logic of their contentions, Mr. Sampson says:

> The truth as always in moral issues, is very simple. (Nothing, incidentally, so arouses the fury of the apologists of the existing order as the preceding simple statement. The suggestion that moral truth is simple and within the reach of all men is particularly obnoxious to them.) The truth is that not by any conceivable logic can power (of man *over* man) be reconciled with love (of man for man). Love is necessarily based on equality, as power necessarily is not. The purpose of all strained arguments, all the casuistry, all the hair-splitting and tortured definitions is to make life possible and comfortable for Mr. Facing-Both-Ways, whose name is legion. . . .
>
> What conclusion is to be drawn from this analysis? That our first duty is always to the truth. If the truth convicts us of hypocrisy, then let us at any rate not dishonour the truth, but acknowledge honestly our own weakness. Hypocrisy may be the tribute that vice pays to virtue, but the point is that it is tribute to virtue, viz., the acknowledgement of which is the first necessary step on the difficult but not impossible road toward resolving the contradiction. . . .
>
> The second conclusion is that my task in this world does not consist of devising "democratic" constitutions, channels of consultation or information within existing hierarchical structures, or organs of representation of other people's wills, which do not admit of representation anyway. Nobody has invested me with power over and thus responsibility for my fellow men. . . . My task is so to conduct my life as not to be on the back of my neighbor, so as not to intrude without his consent into his life, his fortunes, his destiny. If I can go beyond that and genuinely serve his needs when he asks for help, so much the better. But it is enough if I get off his back and let him breathe free. For instance, there are some things which are absolutely indispensable to every human being for him to be able to live at all—food, drink, shelter, clothing, fuel, sanitation. I have many other needs, but these are basic, inescapable needs which, if left unattended to, will shortly bring about my death. If therefore, I myself, by my own labour, by my own

> sweat and skill, produce *none* of those things which I *must* consume, no argument in the world can conceal the fact that whatever else I do, I am fundamentally parasitic, living off the toil of my fellow men.

This is the luminous, intuitive logic behind the back-to-the-land movement, behind the quest for simplicity, behind the basic changes of taste and spontaneous inclination in countless people of the present. It is the same truth as that which lies behind Proudhon's assertion, "Property is theft," behind Gandhi's idea of Trusteeship.

There are compromises, to be sure, some of them inevitable and necessary, but the only permissible compromises are those in the service of the weak. Compromises designed to serve and clinch the interests of the strong—the thrust of all modern states—invariably call into being the whole range of angry absolutists, including the Nihilists who revel in terror and destruction. Sooner or later this happens—the only certain harvest of calculated self-interest.

Resurgence has moved recently. The address is now: *Resurgence,* Pentre Ifan, Felindre Farchog, Crymyth (Dyfed), Wales, U.K.

Rain is $10 for ten issues. The address is *Rain,* 2270 N.W. Irving, Portland, Or. 97210. A six-issues-a-year subscription to *Self-Reliance* is $6 for persons and $12 for institutions. The address is *Self-Reliance,* 1717 18th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

COMMENTARY
LAW OF COMMUNITY?

IN the account of life on his Quebec farm (see Frontiers), Lowell Naeve formulates in vivid, colorful terms the fundamental ideas which Ruth Benedict proposed in her discussion of Synergy—a way of living in community which turns the everyday activities of individuals to the service of the common good. In a chapter in *Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, A. H. Maslow describes and illustrates this temper of community life, concluding:

> This synergy principle is so important, not only for a general objectively comparative sociology, not only for the tantalizing possibility that this comparative sociology also opens up the way for a supra-cultural system of values by which to evaluate a culture and everything within it, not only because it furnishes a scientific basis for Utopian theory, but also for more technical social phenomena in other areas. . . . I would say no Utopia can be constructed henceforth by the knowledgeable person without making peace with the concept of synergy.

William T. Harris, who was U.S. Commissioner of Education from 1889 to 1906, and who with Susan Blow established the first kindergarten in the United States, may have put into words the secret of synergistic power when he wrote:

> 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 can not be consumed by another. This confusion between spiritual and material laws which we find in the school of writers that demand freedom from external authority, explains the mixture of good and bad, wise and unwise prescriptions which we find side by side in their books.

Harris seems here to have hit upon the metaphysical *law* which underlies the transcendent excellences that become evident in true community.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
STAGES OF MORAL GROWTH

IN *Contemporary Education* for the Fall of 1976 (published by Indiana State University School of Education, Terre Haute), an issue devoted to moral education, the guest editor asks:

> What should be the goals and methods of moral education? At one extreme, moral education is sometimes seen as systematic indoctrination by means of which a given set of values is imposed, willingly or unwillingly, on each succeeding generation. The Russian educational system, for example, is designed specifically for that purpose. At the other extreme, moral education is conceived in terms of ethical relativism which assumes that moral principles are culturally variable in a fundamental way. It is exemplified in our society by a "do your own thing" attitude to life. How then are we to avoid both extreme indoctrination and extreme relativism? What is needed is a basic revolution that would define the central aim of education as the development of a free and powerful character. This revolution is, of course not entirely new. It is in essence John Dewey's revolution which never did take place.

The first contributor to the discussion is Lawrence Kohlberg, of the Moral Education Research Center, Harvard University, who presents material from his Franklin Lecture in Science and the Humanities at Auburn University, Alabama, early in 1976. Prof. Kohlberg's work has been several times referred to and quoted in MANAS for the reason that it seems to fill a vacuum that has long existed. Here we shall quote him at length, on the ground of what seems the great importance of this contribution not only to moral education, but also to any thinking about the ordering of society. He believes that both the goals and processes of education should be stated in moral terms, that moral awareness has ascending stages of development, and that John Dewey's conception of moral education needs qualification or amplification by "reassertion of the Platonic faith in the power of the rational good."

He begins by showing that conventional "character-building programs" do not work. Virtues are not transmitted from parent to child or teacher to pupil by exhortation. Both Socrates and modern research are at one in this. The assumption that "any adult of middle class respectability or virtue knows what virtue is and is qualified to teach it by dint of being adult and respectable" is simply untrue. Prof. Kohlberg's conclusions, which accord with Plato's and Dewey's, are based on intensive research only briefly identified in this paper. He says:

> What we have claimed is that research findings on methods of education cannot revivify the traditional conception of moral education as the transmission of the fixed values of the teacher, the school, and the majority community. Instead we shall offer what we consider to be a more adequate approach to moral education. The origins of our position are to be found in the writings of John Dewey who in works like *Ethical Principles Underlying Education* (1909) first presented a "progressive" or "developmental" conception of moral education. Proposing that intellectual education is the stimulation of the child's development of an active organization of his own experience, Dewey also stressed the central role of *thinking* or active organization in morality. Further, he stressed that *development* is the critical aim of moral education and that this development takes place through stages.

From studies done in the United States, Britain, Turkey, Taiwan and Yucatan, Prof. Kohlberg concludes: "In all cultures we find the same forms of moral thinking. There are six forms of thinking and they constitute an invariant sequence of stages in each culture."

Moral development breaks up into three basic levels—(1) Preconventional, (2) Conventional, and (3) Principled—and each level has two stages, making six in all. At the Preconventional Level "the child is responsible to cultural rules and labels of good and bad, right and wrong, but interprets these labels in terms of either physical or hedonistic consequences of action (punishment, reward, exchange of favors) or in terms of the physical powers of those who enunciate the rules and labels." The two stages of the Preconventional Level are:

> Stage 1: The punishment and obedience orientation. The physical consequences of action determine its goodness or badness, regardless of the human meaning or value of these consequences. Avoidance of punishment and unquestioning

deference to power are valued in their own right, not in terms of respect for an underlying moral order supported by punishment and authority (the latter being Stage 4).

Stage 2: The instrumental relativist orientation. Right action consists of that which instrumentally satisfies one's own needs and occasionally the needs of others. Human relations are viewed in terms like those of the market place. Elements of fairness, reciprocity and equal sharing are present but they are always interpreted in a physical pragmatic way. Reciprocity is a matter of "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours."

At the second or Conventional Level, "maintaining the expectations of the individual's family, group, or nation is perceived as valuable in its own right, regardless of immediate and obvious consequences." In persons at this level, the prevailing attitude is one of conformity to personal expectations and social order, and also loyalty to it, which means "actively *maintaining*, supporting, and justifying the order and of identifying with the persons or groups involved in it." Again, there are two stages:

Stage 3: The interpersonal concordance orientation—"good boy," "nice girl" morality. Good behavior is that which pleases or helps others and is approved by them. There is much conformity to stereotypical images of what is majority or "natural" behavior. Behavior is frequently judged by intention—"he means well" becomes important for the first time. One earns approval by being "nice."

Stage 4: The "law and order" orientation. There is orientation toward authority, fixed rules, and the maintenance of the social order. Right behavior consists of doing one's duty, showing respect for authority and maintaining the given social order for its own sake.

The third clearly identifiable stance is the Principled Level, where there is noticeable effort "to define moral values and principles which have validity and application apart from the individual's own identification with these groups." Here the two stages are:

Stage 5: The social-contract legalistic orientation. This stage generally has utilitarian overtones. Right action tends to be defined in terms of general individual right and in terms of standards which have been critically examined and agreed upon by the whole society.

There is a clear awareness of the relativeness of personal values and opinions and a corresponding emphasis upon procedural rules for reaching consensus. Aside from what is constitutionally and democratically agreed upon, the right is a matter of personal "values" and "opinion." The result is an emphasis upon the "legal point of view," but with emphasis upon the possibility of changing law in terms of rational consideration of social utility (rather than fixating it in terms of Stage 4 "Law and Order"). Outside the legal realm, free agreement, and contract is the binding element of obligation. This is the "official" morality of the American government and Constitution.

Stage 6: The universal principle orientation. Right is defined by the decision of conscience in accordance with self-appropriated ethical principles appealing to logical comprehensiveness, universality and consistency. These principles are abstract and ethical (the Golden Rule, the categorical imperative). They are not concrete moral rules such as the Ten Commandments (except insofar as these have been internalized by the individual, i.e., not imposed from the outside, but truly made one's own). At heart they are the principles of justice, of the *reciprocity* and *equality* of the human *rights* and of respect for the dignity of each human being as an individual person. . . .

At the higher reaches of the sixth stage are found such individuals as Socrates, Abraham Lincoln, and Martin Luther King. Prof. Kohlberg adds:

At Stage 6 the natural rights of Stage 5 are defined by a general ethical principle of moral obligation universally applicable to all mankind. These Stage 6 principles are respect for human dignity or personality and justice or equality of persons. At Stage 6, principles are not only principles for me and my group, they are universal; they are guides to moral choice for all mankind.

This is the general outline of the stages of moral development. Prof. Kohlberg shows how they overlap, describes the ordeal of transition from one stage to another, and emphasizes that no stage can be "skipped." His illustrations help the reader to see how this approach to moral awareness may be used by teachers.

FRONTIERS

Community Thinking and Practice

RIKKA is a quarterly magazine, now in its third year, published in Toronto, Canada, by a group of Japanese race, Canadian nationality, and multicultural goals. The Fall 1976 issue gives attention to West Indians, Filipinos, Nisei (Canadian-born Japanese), Koreans, Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabs, and East Indians—all present in sufficient number in Toronto or Canada to form ethnic communities. "If," an editor says in an introductory note, "we are really serious about multiculturalism, then it is necessary for us to go beyond the superficial understanding (or misunderstanding) of a given ethnic group's culture and value orientation."

This is majority, not minority journalism—in terms of concern, interest, and appeal. It deserves the encouragement of support, but this will involve no "sacrifice" since the paper is intensely interesting. Six issues are offered for $5 in Canada, $6 in U.S. and elsewhere—write *Rikka*, P.O. Box 6031, Station A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1P4, Canada. (Happily, this sort of journalism is now becoming a "trend." The June 1976 *Black Scholar* contains an article by Cesar Chavez, and an interview with Dennis Banks, a founder of the American Indian Movement (AIM). Banks told his interviewer: "When Martin Luther King was standing we should have stood with him no matter what his beliefs because we know objectively he was also asking for social change in this country.")

Implicit throughout this issue of *Rikka* is the importance of community, a theme which becomes explicit in a supplement presenting an article by Burt Wilson, participant in an urban Los Angeles community and a rural one in Oregon, and "Individuality and Community," by Griscom Morgan, who draws on material by his father, Arthur E. Morgan, and by D. H. Lawrence, both of whom show that richness of individuality is an essential ingredient of good community life. Another feature of this section is the joint contribution of Lowell and Virginia Naeve, artists and farmers who live on their 140-acre place in North Hatley, Province of Quebec. The Naeves tell about their farm and why they settled there.

An element of irony attends the selection of writers for this supplement on Community—included, as the editors say, "in commemoration of the 200th birthday of the U.S.A., birthplace of Arthur Morgan." Morgan may some day be recognized as embodying the best of American life and ideals, but today he is a neglected and almost forgotten man. Yet he will one day be restored to the eminence he deserves by future *practice* of what he stood for.

Lowell Naeve spent the years of World War II in prison as a conscientious objector. He relates the story of this period in his book, *A Field of Broken Stones* (Libertarian Press, 1950), and he has illustrated some of its meanings in *The Phantasies of a Prisoner* (Swallow, 1958), a collection of pen and ink drawings. In his *Rikka* article, he tells how, thirty years ago, he and Virginia and their children were living in a Bleecker Street flat in New York. Then, one day, they bought an old truck and moved to a Vermont farm as neighbors of Scott Nearing. Some years later, to have more land to cultivate and to provide a draft-age son with immunity to the Vietnam war madness, they migrated to Canada.

Well, it does fitting honor to the United States to publish the Naeves as spokesmen for the spirit of community. Somehow or other, they acquired their convictions here, even though they found Canada the best place to give them expression! Some of Lowell Naeve's musings:

> . . . I think that there is a certain country resentment toward city people. To skip over this lightly or sidestep it would lean toward distortion.
>
> . . . Some of us have the feeling that fundamentally "the City" is constantly trying to mold us into becoming more avid consumers. How else can the city continue to exist unless it keeps manipulating and unnecessarily over-processing our basic needs? And with razzle-dazzle advertising encourages us to

buy planned obsolescence, shoddy and inferior foods? We resent the huckster approach. It wouldn't be so painful if it were an accident, but "planned obsolescence" is an accepted business concept. We country consumers out here feel we are looked upon as endlessly gullible.

There exist for me two kinds of city people. There are those who are after money, who manipulate products or services and are hellbent for more of the same. If they keep it up they will put us all down the drain. But there are those who see what is happening and are apprehensive. They have reservations and want desperately to get out of "it," but don't quite know how. This latter group interests us very much. They will make very interesting neighbors.

On life in North Hatley:

We've cream so thick it stands up on our strawberries. . . . Virginia churns her own butter, makes yogurt and cottage cheese, also cheddar cheese. . . . a city person walks into our house. Near the door are the cheese racks. Right now there're eight wheels of cheese there. They are finished in brushed butter (wax is not good for you). The wheels are a brilliant golden yellow. It's made from pure Jersey milk With the cream left in. I don't believe you can buy that kind of cheese *anywhere.*

The city person starts talking, but keeps glancing at the wheels of cheese. . . . We know what is coming. When the time is right, they pop it. "Do you ever sell any of that cheese?" The answer is, "We'll tell you how to do it, but we won't sell it."

Why? Virginia feels we take the trouble to see that the cow eats off unsprayed land. We get the best hay available and give her some grain. I milk the cow by hand. Virginia goes through the lengthy process of making the cheese. We enjoy doing all this, but we don't do it for money.

Money from my point of view can only buy at best second rate products, junk foods, etc. . . . Money is not an equal trade or anywhere near it. Out here Virginia's cheese in trade or as a gift does wonders. . . .

We have had an organic garden for 28 years. We trade seeds, plants, and best of all, we learn from each other by trading ideas. City people come to look at the garden. They have even filmed it! Virginia's willing to tell them about what to plant, when to harvest; how to preserve it. . . . companion planting, composting . . . the principle of matching the amino acids when they eat it. *We are anxious* to get other people into doing it. . . . but, we don't sell garden produce for money.

I believe a normal human being has a need to grow the food he eats. What I am saying is*:* a lot of people no longer act on normal impulses. To plant a garden in the spring is a normal human impulse. We have become consumer freaks! There are so many of us around that the statement appears ridiculous—outrageous.

This ultimate common sense continues on and on—the veritable "guts" of community thinking for a world that must go in this direction—either happily and eagerly, or kicking and screaming.