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THE RACES OF MAN

IT is idle to deny that the human race is differentiated in various ways, and unproductive, if not ethically irrelevant, to go to biology and comparative ethnology for evidence of what, in the final analysis, can only be secondary uniformities uniting the species of man. Such arguments, while righteous enough in their emotional origins, confine discussion to mechanistic inference, and will produce conclusions which, although plausible at a superficial level, cannot help but generate masked, clandestine opposition on the part of those who have not in the least been helped to expose the roots of prejudice in themselves. Progress in the brotherhood of man is gained from understanding differences, not from suppressing dialogue about them with the fiats of science.

It is far more useful, for example, to point out the differentiations among men which are made plainly visible by another means of classification. There is a breed of humans we have no difficulty in recognizing by their consanguinity of spirit, once they are named. Thomas Paine, Toussaint L'Ouverture, Sun Yat Sen, Lázero Cardenas, and Soetan Sjahrir belong to a hierarchy of workers in behalf of their fellow men which has far more distinctive markings than any physiognomic traits. The Kikuyu educator, Mbiyu Koinange, has more in common with Horace Mann than with many of his fellow tribesmen, although this devotion to the human spirit, declaring a higher kinship than blood, exerts no alienating influence among the Kenyans for whom he was educational pioneer. Danilo Dolci is of the same tribe of heroes as Mohandas K. Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, now in the thick of a struggle that will probably outlast his lifetime, may be the spiritual ancestor of many more of this fraternity of men. It is difficult to remember, because they made it so, that Steinmetz and Randolph Bourne were hunchbacks; and who finds it relevant to remark to any purpose that Spinoza and Einstein were Jews?

Tolstoy, Ruskin, and Thoreau seeded Gandhi with global capacity for understanding and communication; Lincoln underwrote the vision of lovers of justice belonging to generations not yet born; Hillel was a prophet who will fertilize minds that have forgotten his origin.

There may, however, come a time when it will have momentary pertinence to explain that Mr. A, although a blue-eyed Nordic, was nonetheless a man who behaved as a man should, and that there were white American Southerners whose wider allegiances deserve to be remembered.

It is only with great difficulty that rebellious or reformist ethics, born from struggle against organized dehumanizing tendencies, is able to resist certain of the insidious corruptions of the environment it opposes. Take the idea of "welfare," as conceived in Western social thought and applied to manifest material need. Only the extreme deprivations wrought by the ruthless acquisitive drive of Western commercialism could have produced so one-sided a reaction as the claim that no other need requires serious attention. Ananda Coomaraswamy discusses this musingly in a comparison of Eastern and Western traditions (in *The Bugbear of Literacy*):

> It is overlooked that while many Asiatic peoples, for reasons sufficiently obvious, are inadequately provided with the necessities of life, this is by no means true of all Asiatic peoples. In any case it is overlooked that it is a basic Asiatic conception that, given the necessaries of life, it is a fallacy to suppose that the further we can go beyond that the better. Where the European seeks to become economically independent in old age, the Indian map of life proposes for old age an independence of economics. The "guinea pigs" of a well-known book, in other words you and I, whose wants are perpetually exacerbated by the sight and sound of advertisements (it has been recognized that "whole industries are pooling their strength to ram home a higher standard of living"), have been compared by an Indian writer [J. C. Kumarappa] to another animal—"the donkey

> before which the driver has dangled a much coveted carrot hanging from a stick fastened to its own harness. The more the animal runs to get at the carrot, the further the cart is drawn", *i.e.*, the higher the dividends paid. We are the donkey, the manufacturer the driver, and this situation pleases us so well that we, in the kindness of our hearts, would like to make donkeys also of the Balinese—at the same time that we ask, "Have they been spoiled yet?" "Spoiled" means "degraded"; but the word has also another sinister meaning, that of "plundered," and there are ways of life as well as material goods of which one can be robbed.
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> Let us make it clear that if we approach the problem of inter-cultural relationships largely on the ground of *art*, it is not with the special modern and æsthetic or sentimental conception of art in mind, but from that Platonic and once universally human point of view in which "art" is the principle of manufacture and nothing but the science of the making of any things whatever for man's good use, physical and metaphysical, and in which, accordingly, agriculture and cookery, weaving and fishing are just as much arts as painting and music. However strange this may appear to us, let us remember that we cannot pretend to think *for* others unless we can think *with* them. In these contexts, then, "art" involves the whole of the active life, and presupposes the contemplative. The disintegration of a people's art is the destruction of their life, by which they are reduced to the proletarian status of hewers of wood and drawers of water, in the interests of a foreign trader, whose is the *profit*. The employment of Malays on rubber estates, for example, in no way contributes to their culture and certainly cannot have made them our friends: they owe us nothing. We are irresponsible, in a way that Orientalists are not yet, for the most part, irresponsible.

Now what is the pertinence of all this to the question of race? The pertinence lies in the fact that Mr. Coomaraswamy has made the question irrelevant. He is speaking in terms of immediate values which we understand. We know he is right. No "proofs" are necessary. He is considering matters at a level where it is wholly unnecessary to mention "race"—no more necessary than it is to say that these people, Malays, Balinese, or whoever, *breathe*. And it is hardly worth mentioning that this argument—not really an "argument," but simple declaration—comes to us from a brown man of partly Asian parentage.

What is his declaration about? Excellence in human life. There is just no way to relate what he says to "race." To do so would probably block what understanding we might gain of his statement. It would reduce to the level of inductive demonstration, through ponderous assemblage of "data," a matter which is essentially unarguable. The fundamentals of this distinction are put clearly by Sydney Shoemaker:

> I am guided by Wittgenstein's remark: "My attitude towards him [any other man] is an attitude towards a soul. I am not of the *opinion* that he has a soul." If this attitude were one of belief, we could inquire into the grounds of the belief. But that is just what we do not do.

How burdensome it would be to this discussion for someone to come along and say, "You *must listen* to this man, even though he has a brown (black, red, yellow, green, blue, golden!) skin, because our *biological* researches show that he is really your equal!" How *ashamed* it ought to make us, that anyone would think such suasions are needed, or could actually help, in a situation where only simple humanity is involved.

There is in every one of us a foundation of what A. H. Maslow calls "experiential knowledge"—an awareness of what it means to be a human being. The languages of literature and the arts rely upon this common knowledge for all their communications. "Prejudice" might be defined as the obscuration or partisan distortion of that knowledge, which happens from causes too numerous to mention here. A very great distortion, which is then institutionalized, of this intuitive mode of knowing may lead outraged men to deny it altogether, and this, generally speaking, was what took place in the formulation of what we call "scientific method." That is, men of aroused social conviction saw in science a way of establishing total authority for "rationalism," as the only means of opposing successfully the tyranny of emotional belief. This was the justification for what Dr. Maslow calls "cool" science.

In the grammar of this persuasion, to be "cool" is to be invulnerable to bias, to remain free of the blindness and compromises which feeling so readily inflicts on human thought. In a characterizing

passage (in *The Psychology of Science*, Harper & Row, 1966), Dr. Maslow writes:

> Orthodox science today attempts to be free not only of values but also of emotions. As youngsters would say, it tries to be "cool." The basic notions of detachment and objectivity of precision, rigor, and quantification, of parsimony, and of lawfulness, all imply that emotion and emotional intensity are contaminants of cognition. The unquestioned assumption is that "cool" perceiving and neutral thinking are best for discovering any kind of truth. As a matter of fact, many scientists are not even aware that there are other modes of cognition. An important by-product of this dichotomizing is the desacralizing of science, the banishment of all the experiences of transcendence from the realm of the respectably known and the respectably knowable, and the denial of a systematic place un science for awe, wonder, mystery, ecstasy, beauty, and peak experience. . . .

Elsewhere he says:

> Let us remember that at the beginning of science the word "knowing" meant "knowing of the external world," and for the orthodox scientist it still does. It means looking at something that is not you, not human, not personal, something independent of you the perceiver. It is something to which you are a stranger, a bystander, a member of the audience. You the observer are, then, really alien to it, uncomprehending and without sympathy and identification without any starting point of tacit knowledge that you already have. You look through the microscope or the telescope as through a keyhole, peering, peeping, from a distance, from outside, not as one who has a right to be in the room being peeped into. Such a scientific observer is not a participant observer. His science can be likened to a spectator sport, and he to a spectator. He has no necessary involvement with what he is looking at, no loyalties, no stake in it. He can be cool, detached, emotionless, desireless, wholly other than what he is looking at. He is in the grandstand looking upon the goings-on in the arena; he himself is not in the arena. And ideally he doesn't care who wins.

Let us remember, before we go on, that the men who first figured out this Olympian approach to truth were not heartless intellectual abstractions, not cold, unfeeling "materialists," but men who thought that at last they had found a weapon with which they could overcome the vast psychological power of religious belief. They began as lovers of freedom. As Bertrand Russell remarked forty years ago:

> As a rule, the materialistic dogma has not been set up by men who loved dogma, but by men who felt that nothing less definite would enable them to fight the dogmas they disliked. They were in the position of men who raise armies to enforce peace. Accordingly we find that, as ancient orthodoxies disintegrate, materialism more and more gives way to scepticism.

But the methodological assumptions linger on. How terribly they get in the way of immediate perception of truth is pointed out by Michael Polanyi in a moving article in the Autumn *American Scholar*—"The Message of the Hungarian Revolution." The uprising which so excited the West in 1956, Polanyi shows, by direct citation, was a heroic demand by Hungarian Humanists for a politics which honored truth above ideology. It was in behalf of what all the Free World claims to believe in. Yet, as Polanyi shows, it took three years of soul-searching on the part of one professional scholar of the social sciences to bring himself to admit that the Hungarian revolutionaries were motivated by *a devotion to truth.* Value-free, "cool" historical science would allow no such judgment! After extended description of the development of this attitude in social science, Prof. Polanyi says:

> This analysis shows that a science that claims to explain all human action without making a value judgment discredits not merely the moral motives of those fighting for freedom, but also their aims. That is why the Hungarian revolutionary movement, which revived the ideals of 1848, and which claimed that truth and justice should be granted power over public affairs, has met with such a cold reception by the science of political behavior. Modern academic theories of politics, on the contrary, give support to the doctrine that denies that human ideals can be an independent power in human affairs.

And this is a discipline which had its *moral* origin in impartial devotion to the "truth" that science was expected to disclose, and which both the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries looked forward to applying for the good of the entirety of mankind, once all the "facts" were in!

The idea was somewhat as follows: Demonstrate that you have the "tool" of certainty by practicing impartial, objective, mechanistic, "cool" science, and *then* the world will feel a moral compulsion to put the tool to work for the common good. But it hasn't worked that way. Orthodox science has either been seized by political partisans or practiced by the morally indifferent, and this has had, in the West, the over-all effect of institutionalizing "the truth" and leaving it in the hands of highly trained specialists who, with occasional dramatic exceptions, are not in the arena and don't care who wins.

The humanness of human beings is not, then, an item of "scientific" truth or discovery, but an existential fact, a delivery of innate awareness, a "given" which comes with being human itself. To try to "prove" it is to concede the possibility of its being untrue by showing indifference to the common power of recognition present in all men. This does not mean that there are no "scientific" ways of bringing objective symmetry to the expressions of subjective realization that men have of this primary truth. The distinguished historian, Frederick J. Teggart, has shown the legitimacy of this sort of scientific study of history in *Theory and Processes of History* (University of California Press, 1941). And Maslow's *Psychology of Science* undertakes to demonstrate that science may give order and priority to intuitive forms of perception, once the validity of immediate knowledge is acknowledged, and the feeling and experiential side of life is restored to its proper place in the lives of healthy and growing human beings.

What about the "rhetoric" at our beginning of this discussion? Well, the point, there, was that a far more fruitful classification of human beings than that of race would be by moral stature, by radius of ethical concern, by visionary devotion to human welfare. Why not think of man according to ascending stages in this sort of development? It would have manifest advantages. First, the margins of the categories would hardly matter, nor could they be fixed. There would be no odious comparisons. Was Gandhi "greater than" Schweitzer? Who cares? Both added dignity to the human race, and they surely enriched each other and us all. A general preoccupation with these distinctions would reduce the matter of physical heredity and recognizable "traits" to the insignificance it so richly deserves. Why not regard men in the light of the qualities which show them to be more fully human, and let the rest of their attributes go. Who needs to know the size of Socrates' biceps? The color of Plato? Emerson's cranial structure? Albert Luthuli's "tribe"? The pedigree, or even the wounds, of Sophocles?

We take man as given, and he is given to us everywhere the same, in all essential characteristics. We do not *need* to know, for the important business before us, the trivial secrets of past heredity and environmental conditionings. We are much more what we can become than what we have been. After a long quotation from William James, Teggart exclaims:

> Thus, in complete unconsciousness of the historical aspect of the subject, James has described, from the point of view of the individual, what proves to be the essential element in the process through which human advancement has everywhere been made.

What James knew about all men, from study, of course, but first in and of himself, we all know, or have the potentiality of knowing. This is an irreducible starting-point in human life. We do not aid matters by arguing about it, although we may articulate the fact with grace and splendor. It is by doing this that we have some hope of turning the dream of the poets into self-fulfilling prophecy:

> What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god!

REVIEW
SOME MAGAZINES

THE *Progressive* for October has a perceptive article on how the Black Power idea is working in the South. The writer is Margaret Long, a native Southerner who shows much understanding of the pain and growth coming out of the struggle for racial justice. Miss Long has a lot to say about the new sense of dignity and self-respect born in the Negro populations of the Deep South, and the credit for this achievement goes mainly to SNCC. She writes:

> The "black consciousness" and new pride of Negroes in "movement" counties often shows vividly in the demeanor of the humblest around the court-house square, as in Hayneville the sleepy, serene, and shady county seat of Lowndes [Alabama], far off the highway and deep in the rich, pastured cotton and cattle country. A merry, sweaty, earth-grimed man spoke happily and laughed mischievously from the wheel of his ancient car, and his woman and children looked on bright-eyed.
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> "We gonna take over the county?" he repeated. "Not this time, maybe next time. I think we gonna get some colored folks in the courthouse. Look like if I'm black, I vote for black, don't it?"
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> "Ain't nothin' the matter with *us*!" proclaimed a poor proud, and jubilant black man at a late-summer political rally. *"We* don't hate nobody for the color of their skin. *We* ain't shootin' nobody or th'owin' bombs in their house at their women and children. *We* ain't no race problem. *But we ain't gonna no more take it.* They shoot in our house and we shoot back. We aims to get Black Power. . . ."
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> "We're with the Black Panthers," said R. C. May, a strong imposing old black farmer enjoying Sunday afternoon with his wife and daughter on their front porch on a hill up from the winding road, surveying his 148 acres of cotton, corn, hay, vegetables, and a red-wattled turkey strutting around the front steps. "This is the first time we've ever had registered voters, and it's a big change in the county. I don't know if I'd vote or if all the Negroes would vote, for all-Negro office-holders. The Federal government is trying to get people together. And it seems to me if we try to go by ourselves, we're working against the main objective.
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> "I don't believe in it, that we should take over. I've made up my mind to vote for Negro candidates I feel are able to do the job, and I may not vote for some who don't meet the qualifications. I feel like treating white people like I'd like to be treated myself. And I believe that if some few colored people win in the November election, the intelligent white people will fall in line."

A white sheriff, likely to be defeated by a Negro candidate, seemed undisturbed. He has a peach business to retire to and his wife said: "If any of the white people are mad and worried, they sure aren't showing it." Following is Miss Long's final comment:

> Such is Black Power in a few Deep South counties—the stirring cry, the surging pride, the political drive, the unleashed anger, the patient little beginnings of black self-help—and the big risk.
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> What Black Power brings to Lowndes County, in the most aroused, organized, and determined Negro push for local political control in the Black Belt, will show the way to eighty-two other Negro majorities in Southern counties—whether to prevail, compromise, or succumb.

Recently, in these pages, we have been giving attention to Ralph Ellison as a talented writer who happens to be Negro. Another view of Negro writers is put with considerable force in this issue of the *Progressive.* Discussing "Negro Writers and White Critics," Hoyt W. Fuller, managing editor of *Negro Digest,* shows how an oversimplification can work injustice in criticism:

> In a recent, somewhat belated attack on James Baldwin's *Another Country,* which he clearly misunderstood, poet John Ciardi showed how richly he deserved status among the philistines by writing that, "in the long run, I must insist, there must be no Negro writers, but only men as other men and committed to all man." It is, on the surface, an eminently sensible statement, but it is insisting that men with chains on their arms and legs run the mile with seasoned and unfettered athletes without calling attention to their bonds. . . .
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> "Write about people the readers can identify with," is one of the more innocuous of the familiar strictures. The only class in the English Department of Wayne State University that I ever came close to failing was a creative writing seminar presided over

> by a pencil-slim, steel-willed little woman who rejected every suggestion that Detroit Negroes lived in a discriminatory society. "You must stop writing about those things," she told me. "You must adjust and make the best of things, or people will call you neurotic." And so, unable to write for her class, I withdrew from it, taking the only "incomplete" of my college career.

What Mr. Fuller is objecting to is the tendency of white critics to insist that Negro writers find their material in the *white* tradition; this is like saying, for example, that it is all right to go to the American revolution as a source of insights into the meaning of the human struggle for freedom, but that the Negro revolution ought not to be similarly used. Such critics, Mr. Fuller says, "bring to their evaluation of Negro writing a set of ingrained presumptions which render it impossible to arrive at an essential clarity of vision. And the single presumption which is basic to the myriad others flowing out from it is simply this: that Negro life has substance and value only to the extent to which it meets what is considered the white norm."

Less perceptive, however, is Mr. Fuller's comment on a judgment by Louis Simpson in a critical article in the *New York Herald Tribune*. Simpson wrote:

> "I am not sure it is possible for a Negro to write well without making us aware he is a Negro. On the other hand, if being a Negro is the only subject, the writing is not important."

Fuller rejoins:

> There is no "universality" in the Negro predicament, on the other hand, the work of Evgeny Evtushenko, the highly acclaimed young Russian poet, is combed and filtered for evidence of disaffection with life in Russia. What is decried in the first instance is eagerly sought in the second.

This seems too easy and at the same time too confused an identification. Mr. Simpson might really be saying, that the *times* make it necessary for the Negro writer to make us aware that he is a Negro, but that to show the universality of his material is indeed the necessity of the artist. And the critic who says this is not likely to be the man who tries to find "disloyalty" to his native land in the freedom Evtushenko is able, or dares, to exercise in what he writes.

Our remaining space is for notice of a literary review in the *New Leader* of Oct. 24. We haven't read Iris Murdoch, whose *The Time of the Angels* is the subject of an essay by Raymond Rosenthal, but the way the values in her work are here described makes us think that we ought to. In an introductory passage, Mr. Rosenthal says:

> It is in fact the adult atmosphere of Miss Murdoch's books that marks them off from the run of her contemporaries. Though her characters may be, and often are, victimized and defeated, they are always aware. Their pathos rests precisely in their consciousness of possibility and their inability to avail themselves of it. . . . Her people, as one humorist accurately put it in another connection, are just as big as you are.
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> She is also a trained philosopher and knows quite well the existentialist concept of gluey, viscous, formless consciousness. Indeed she has written a brilliant analysis of Sartre's work which gives him his due as an incisive thinker, yet makes it clear that she is skeptical of his rationalistic despair (though she refuses to give up reason) and judges it, rightly, as a tortured attempt to save the idea of the individual. "His inability to write a great novel," she says at the conclusion of her short book, "is a tragic symptom of a situation which affects us all. We know that the real lesson to be taught is that the human being is precious and unique; but we seem unable to set it forth except in terms of ideology and abstraction."

Is there a more revealing comment than this last on what is now spoken of as the quest for identity, in modern critical literature?

COMMENTARY
A HEROIC ASSIGNMENT

ONE of the difficulties confronting the scientist in relation to "truth" is his acquired inhibition to spontaneous or intuitive response. (See lead article.) His theory of knowledge amounts to a declaration that scientifically determined truth is truth that must be practically institutionalized before it can be admitted. This works against the high responsibility which J. Bronowski, a scientist of distinction, held to be a primary scientific obligation: "There is one thing above all others that the scientist has to teach to the public and to governments: it is the duty of heresy." Dr. Bronowski said this in 1956, in an article in *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (for January of that year), in which he had pointed out that the scientist has already become a scapegoat for the helplessness felt by the public. Dr. Bronowski saw a terrible consequence: "That the scientist is forced, by the hatred of public opinion, to side with established authority and government. He becomes a prisoner of the hatred of the lay public and by that becomes the tool of authority." In such circumstances, the duty of "heresy" comes hard to men whose idea of professional integrity depends upon suspending decision until "all the facts are in." It is difficult for them to see that the real issues of an age are seldom concerned with either challenge or defense of already institutionalized "truths." Critical human decision takes place at another level of encounter.

In his address in 1937 as retiring president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Edwin Grant Conklin, a Princeton biologist, made this clear:

> In spite of a few notable exceptions, it must be confessed that scientists did not win the freedom which they have generally enjoyed, and they have not been conspicuous in defending this freedom when it has been threatened. Perhaps they have lacked that confidence in absolute truth and that emotional exaltation that have led martyrs and heroes to welcome persecution and death in defense of their faith. Today as in former times it is the religious leaders who are most courageous in resisting tyranny. It was not science but religion and ethics that led Socrates to say to his accusers, "I will obey the god, rather than you." It was not science but religious conviction that led Milton to utter his noble defense of intellectual liberty, "Who ever knew truth put to the worst in a free and open encounter? For who knows not that truth is strong next to the Almighty?" It was not science but religious patriotism that taught, "Resistance to tyrants is obedience to God." The spirit of science does not cultivate such heroism in the maintenance of freedom. The scientist realizes that his knowledge is relative and not absolute, he conceives it possible that he may be mistaken, and he is willing to wait in confidence that ultimately truth will prevail. Therefore, he has little inclination to suffer and die for his faith, but is willing to wait for the increase and diffusion of knowledge. But he knows better than others that the increase and diffusion of knowledge depend entirely upon freedom to search, experiment, criticize, proclaim. Without these freedoms there can be no science.

It seems obvious that this emasculation of the human spirit comes mainly with the notion that respectable science always provides sure-thing certainty; when the fact is that what is great, wonderful, and beyond price in human life can never be a sure thing. Fortunately, the pioneers of a new scientific theory of knowledge are beginning to declare just this. As a result, we may eventually find scientists quite capable of the heroism Dr. Conklin could see only in other quarters.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

WHAT IS THE CHILD?

BETTER late than never, the June issue of *Etc*. arrived at our desk a couple of weeks ago, with an article by the editor, S. I. Hayakawa, "On Communication with Children," rich in anecdote and illustration. At the outset, Mr. Hayakawa sketches a little of the history of ideas about what children "are," mentioning, for example, the theological view that "babies come to us full of original sin," and describing the fashions in child-rearing which resulted from the behaviorist notion of babies as the delivery of neutral, plastic stuff, ready for the conditioning process. Under this regime, "The likes and dislikes which the child was to carry through life were fed into him as if he were being programmed like an electronic computer." Mr. Hayakawa then moves to the generalization which guides the rest of his long and interesting discussion:

> All of these theories, and more, have had their currency at various times, and they are still held by various segments of the public. Each of them represents the effort of people to develop their children according to the models of human nature which they have inside their heads. But each of them can also be described as an activist theory, in the sense that the active doing *of* something to the child is felt to be necessary if the child is to grow up into an acceptable citizen and taxpayer. We are an activist culture; America is a fantastically energetic nation. Perhaps it is because of our energetic character that it did not occur to anyone until quite recently to ask what would happen with children if you tried to leave them alone. From the point of view of activist theories, as you can imagine, leaving children alone represented quite a fearful idea. . . .

By "leaving them alone," of course, Mr. Hayakawa means something quite sensible. He means letting them *be* children while they are children, instead of regarding them as potential vindicators of parents who are disappointed in life, or as imperfect adults whose shortcomings must be remedied as soon as possible. It also means "permissiveness":

> Permissiveness is a tremendous idea. Permissiveness does not mean, and no one has ever meant it to mean, allowing children to break up the furniture or to pour hot soup on their little sisters. Permissiveness means permitting children to do what they want, up to the point of not creating disturbances for others, not hurting others. But a more important component of permissiveness is that children should feel free to *express* their deepest feelings. Whether they do anything about them or not, they should always feel free to express them.

Leaving people alone, in short, is not a passive practice; it means respecting the forms integrity takes in *their* lives, and these are of a special sort for the young, peculiar to children and important to them. Rousseau was an early champion of this idea. Objecting to the hurry-them-along-to-be-grown-ups tendency of his time, Rousseau wrote:

> If the infant sprang at one bound from its mother's breast to the age of reason, the present type of education would be quite suitable, but its natural growth calls for quite a different training. The mind should be left undeveloped till its faculties have developed; for while it is blind it cannot see the torch you offer it, nor can it follow through the vast expanse of Ideas a path so faintly traced by reason that the best eyes can scarcely follow it.
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> Therefore the education of the earliest years should be merely negative. It consists, not in teaching virtue or truth, but in preserving the heart from vice and the spirit of error. If only you could let well enough alone, and get others to follow your example; if you could bring your scholar to the age of twelve strong and healthy, but unable to tell his right hand from his left, the eyes of his understanding would be open to reason as soon as you begin to teach him. Free from prejudices and free from habits, there would be nothing in him to counteract the effects of your labors. In your hands he would soon become the wisest of men; by doing nothing to begin with, you would end with a prodigy of education.
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> Reverse the usual practice and you will almost always do right. Fathers and teachers who want to make the child, not a child but a man of learning, think it never too soon to scold, correct, reprove, threaten, bribe, teach and reason. Do better than they; be reasonable, and do not reason with your pupil, more especially do not try to make him approve what he dislikes; for if reason is always connected with disagreeable matters, you make it distasteful to

> him, you discredit it at an early age in a mind not ready to understand it.

Mr. Hayakawa makes a similar point in commenting about a relative: "She found it difficult to speak to my children without in some way making a generalization about desired behavior; that is, a directive that not only had to be good for the present but had to be a lesson. She was wonderful to them but I could not help noticing this habit of talking to children in an unfailingly instructive way."

Well, this is the kind of a dialogue that goes on forever. No matter what is said, there always seems a pertinent "Yes, but," for reply. Our problem is that we have no clear idea as to what the "natural" or "ideal" environment for the growing child might be, but we often become very acute in recognizing what is *wrong* with what many people, even ourselves, have done in raising children. So counsel comes as corrective rather than prescription.

To "leave a child alone" can only mean, then, don't do things to him which interfere with his natural development, but the endless possibilities in "natural development" leave a great many blanks in our thinking. And as to "permissiveness," that all-time champion of the permissive educational environment, A. S. Neill, has this to say:

> It's one thing to use freedom. Quite another to use license. I haven't visited regular American schools, but more than half the young people now in my school are Americans. There is a difference between American children and English children. The Americans are accustomed more to license than to freedom, I think. . . . At Summerhill we've had difficulties with American children coming over. They've read my book, you see. They say, "This is a free school; we'll do what we like." And when they find they're up against self-government and they can't do what they like, they object.

To leave a person alone for his own good is really a Taoist maxim. It means doing the right things instead of the wrong ones, and the right things are exceedingly difficult to define. Half the time, probably, you don't know you're doing them. They are born from essential convictions as to the nature of man; and, in terms of action, they often grow as natural by-products of the lives of parents who are themselves very busy with objectives worthy of human beings. To be so involved has an immediate effect on all of one's relationships with other human beings—a quality which is not replaceable with pious items of educational theory. There may be a kind of reflex, overtone vehicle of this spirit in high cultural tradition, but without continual refreshment from *people* who live it out in their lives, the tradition soon turns into hollowly echoing clichés. To illustrate an extreme of this effect, Mr. Hayakawa recalls the last days of Nick, the "hero" of Willard Motley's *Knock on Any Door*, awaiting death for the murder of a policeman:

> In the background of this career are intense hatred and resentment of his father. The father cannot understand why his son ended up in this terrible way. "I can't understand it," says the father. "I told him and I told him and I *told him,* and I always whipped him when he did wrong." And the boy in the death cell cannot understand it either.

This was all the "tradition" the father knew, and it wasn't any good, and it didn't work.

How different the Scottish grandmother who, on rare occasions, would say to a little boy: "Ian McGregor, *never forget that you are a McGregor!"*

This is affirmative tradition recalled from a bygone age, an appeal to incommensurable values known only through cultural nostalgia. We can't use it, and we no longer admire it. Now we want to say to the child, "Never forget that you are a human being!" But we know that this is too much like saying, "Never forget that you are an X!" And we also know that the best way to say it, *really,* is without words, without the faintest hint of moralizing. We should like, in view of our own inadequacy, to apprentice our young to the wise centaur, Chiron, but all we have is Universal Military Training waiting in the wings.

It comes down to the question of what you see in a child's eyes—*who,* in the intuitive terms of love, and in the reflective wondering of the teacher, you think he is, and *what* he may become. All the rest is routine.

FRONTIERS

The Air Gets a Conscience

BACK in 1949, an important Blessed Event took place—Pacifica Radio was born in Berkeley, California. According to a theory propounded by its principal founder, Lewis Hill, some two per cent of the habitual listeners to FM radio will know immediately what this means—that Pacifica Radio is listener-sponsored radio, and that it means programming without commercial advertising to pay for the cost of production and broadcasting, since the listeners, of their own motion, send in annual subscriptions of $15.00 a year to keep the station (now stations—KPFA in Berkeley, KPFK in Los Angeles, and WBAI in New York) going and, hopefully, growing.

The Two Per Cent Theory was the heart of the original prospectus for the first Pacifica station, Berkeley's KPFA. It proposed that voluntary support of radio that is freed from the economic obligation to move goods and sell services, with all that this implies, could be expected from about two per cent of the owners of Frequency Modulation receiving sets—having FM being already a filter which had isolated as listeners people of some taste and discrimination so far as music is concerned. Lew Hill's Two Per Cent Theory asserted that among these music lovers could be found a core audience of people who would delight to become informal members of a free cultural community in which independent thinking and the free practice of the audible arts were the cohesive principle. Pacifica Radio would be the communications medium to bring that principle to life.

It worked. Against all pessimistic prophecy, regardless of the inconstancies and imperfections of the human beings involved, and in spite of what many regarded as a crazy reversal of techniques, methods, habits and beliefs that had characterized commercial broadcasting until that time—it worked. The two per cent that would support such a venture was there; those people did hunger for the kind of broadcasting Hill said they would; and when, in the early days, KPFA went off the air for lack of funds, the listeners, like the true believers they had become, rallied round and raised the money to enable KPFA to start up again on a sounder economic basis.

The foregoing is mainly an introduction to notice of a book about Pacifica Radio—*The Exacting Ear* (Pantheon, $6.95), edited by Eleanor McKinney, who was involved in the project from the beginning. The Preface is by Erich Fromm. Miss McKinney contributes a historical sketch, and there are twenty sample programs to show the depth and variety of Pacifica broadcasting. The last section is made up of letters from listeners to the Federal Communications Commission, in behalf of the renewal of the licenses of the Pacifica Foundation, which were in jeopardy due to charges of "subversive" tendency. It is worth repeating here that the Pacifica stations were completely vindicated in the investigation and their licenses renewed, along with severe reproach to commercial broadcasters for not helping Pacifica to fight its battle for free expression over the air. Addressing a convention of the National Association of Broadcasters in 1964, E. William Henry, chairman of the FCC, asked these sterling representatives of the American Way:

> Which of you wrote me a letter urging the Commission to dismiss these charges and to reaffirm the commission's time-honored adherence to the principles of free broadcasting? Where were your libertarian lawyers and their amicus briefs, your industry statesmen with their ringing speeches? . . . When you display more interest in defending your freedom to suffocate the public with commercials than in upholding your freedom to provide provocative variety, when you cry "censorship" and call for faith in the founding fathers' wisdom only to protect your balance sheet, when you remain silent in the face of a threat which could shake the First Amendment's proud oak to its very roots, you tarnish the ideals enshrined in the Constitution and invite an attitude of suspicion. You join the forces of crass complacency—in an industry and at a time in the

history of this nation when complacency of any sort is both misplaced and dangerous.

(When this kind of challenge to the mass media comes from the head of a Washington bureau, it becomes obvious that one should learn to use the word "bureaucrat" more carefully, and not always as an epithet!)

We shall not say a great deal more about the content of this book, which is certainly worth reading. In it, for example, is Clarence Jordan's talk on Koinonia, the interracial community in the Deep South—probably the most daring experiment in Christian brotherhood of the entire century—described with a humor that makes the listener or reader gurgle for days. Broadcasts by William O. Douglas and Alexander Meiklejohn are great documents of political philosophy. There is considerable color and cultural spice in several of the programs, and a distinguished commentary by Lewis Hill deals with the manifestations of conscience and the free spirit in the United States. Hallock Hoffman, president of Pacifica Foundation, is represented by his commentary on the balancing contributions of non-commercial radio to the cultural community.

This brings us to another aspect of the phenomenon of Pacifica Radio. The enterprise begun in 1949 by Lewis Hill and a handful of like-minded people was, and is, in the context of our times, almost an operational contradiction in terms. Pacifica's founders set out to make an *institution* devoted to freedom. Institutions are expected to throttle the free spirit, and in Pacifica Radio you have the example of an institution which sought to resist this broad tendency in the vast commercial culture "out there," while struggling, at the same time, to resist its own tendency to throttle itself. The fact is that the law of institutional lag also works, even though you tell everybody that you are on the side of the Angels, and, indeed, take what you think is your rightful place among the choristers celebrating the Good and the True.

It may not be generally realized, today, that Pacifica Radio was started by a handful of conscientious objectors who had been released from the c.o. camps of the Civilian Public Service System a few years before. These men didn't have any particular "politics," unless devotion to the ideal of free human intelligence is politics of a sort. One must suppose that the tough-minded commitment to this ideal, characteristic of a great many conscientious objectors, provided the strength behind the no-compromise-with-commercialism policy of KPFA. There is a sense, then, in which the founding of Pacifica Radio was one more historical confirmation of what is said about conscientious objectors in the *Encyclopædia of Social Sciences:*

> The conscientious objector has always stood as a most difficult challenger of the political state's claim to absolute authority over its citizens. Conscientious objection is itself simply a special case under nonconformity, and heresy is another aspect of the same thing. The list of conscientious objectors therefore includes most of the intellectual and moral innovators in history. The future role of conscientious objection is momentous and problematical.

Pacifica Radio is a prime sample of what conscientious objectors may do with their energies when the war is over and they find themselves able to become conscientious affirmers. Lew Hill and his friends took on a very difficult task—creating a social institution which would openly repudiate the idea that "culture" and intellectual communication must be tamed and submissive hostages of the profit motive. They brought into the center of the cultural life of the community a form of expression that had long been exiled to the fringes of our society, to exist precariously in the little magazines, gaining sporadic support from indigent radicals and an occasional free-thinking man with money and a good heart. Doubtless some of the neuroticism that goes with that kind of life came, too, and did no particular harm; after all, conventionality or conformity has its own kind of neuroticism, also, but being common is seldom recognized. The entrepreneurs of Pacifica Radio

probably made a few discoveries about the solid virtue of bourgeois work-habits and came to respect the stability of being able to meet a payroll. A few years ago, the "help" formed a union, marking a kind of sundown on the idea that the staff *was* the station; at the beginning the Great Idea was enough to cause one member of the staff to drive a taxi nights because KPFA couldn't pay him wages for weeks and weeks, and he wanted to keep on working for the cause.

There were "personality clashes" and palace revolutions in the early history of KPFA, and goings-on not characterized by the best of either humanist ethics or taste, but somehow, the station survived. We won't say that its programming got better and better; this may be open to question; but what is beyond question is the survival of the Idea and the passionate loyalty to it of a growing number of subscribers. (Famous artists and performers can be drafted almost at will to help the station along.) However much you may carp at the bleeding-heart "commercials" that have been used to raise money for the stations—which are nearly always *broke* (this is not a criticism; they *ought* to be broke)—and however much you may withdraw from the liberal power-elitism which at one time, after Hill's death, found expression in the hope of a great big chain of listener-sponsored stations which would be a transmission belt for correct liberal ideas, there is still the *style* of free radio communication to be experienced on Pacifica stations, something which apparently cannot be stifled by any known administrative force and which keeps bubbling out on the air. Pacifica Radio is as viable and as messy in its way of life as democracy itself—but a little more self-conscious, as befits a free communications system that is proud of its existence and of what it is trying to do.

There are some further apologies in order for Pacifica Radio. It cannot have, does not want, the slick finish and precision of the highly organized commercial undertaking. A commercial programmer has no identity problems. He is supposed to make an amiable and attractive frame for the merchandising efforts of the sponsors, and whatever else he may do, in the name of "creativity," he does not rock *that* boat. But the listener-supported radio station has undertaken a very different role. It at least tries to reflect what people *really* think, and neither staff nor management knows too much about doing this, and "the people" are out of practice, and have been, for a long time. All the adolescent pains and ambivalence of our restless and overgrown culture (is it "growing," or just falling apart?) gets a share of the time over Pacifica Radio. (Christopher Koch on programming for Pacifica is very good at making this sort of problem clear—and acceptable as a condition of life.)

Perhaps the right thing to say about an attempt to create and operate a freedom-preserving and -furthering institution is that it is very much like an individual man who tries to be free. No matter what, his career is hazardous. He has to be reborn every morning, as Goethe once said. He can't have any institutional guarantees. The life of freedom remains a life that cannot depend upon precedent. *Esprit de corps* is all it can have, and this, if used as laurels to rest on, may wither overnight.

We don't know a great deal about the present metabolism of the Pacifica stations but feel safe in saying that, with a fair share of permissible exception, what they do is likely to be, as in the past, the best thing on the air.