

SEEKING THE GOOD

BY reason of its objectives (see editorial box, page 4), MANAS attracts communications representing a wide variety of interests or directions in seeking the good. A recent mail, for example, brought a letter proposing (in some detail) a program of action to obtain justice for people without work—a program conceived not as only a specific solution for the four or five million unemployed in the United States, but as a way of opening up public awareness of the need for a radical change in ideas about the good society. (Some extracts from this letter will be quoted later on.)

Then, another letter examines the problem of making democracy function effectually, in terms of "organization theory." Following is a sample of this correspondent's thinking:

One of the difficulties standing in the way of effective group or committee work is the fact that high intellectual attainment in the members does not necessarily mean psychological maturity (in fact, often the reverse). However, even if all members of a group were free of any "neurosis," and there were no communication barriers, a group is nevertheless a communication system whose complexity is of a different order of magnitude from that of the individual, and time and "exercise" are needed for it to develop the necessary channels, and to achieve the necessary massive information transfer between members, for it to be able to operate as a balanced, coordinated, purposeful whole.

It is only quite recently that much thought has been given to the problems of how to "train" a group to be effective, and I do not know of anyone who claims to have the answers. We usually solve the problem by appointing a leader, thus cutting down enormously on the amount of information transfer and resolution mechanism required, and helping effectiveness to develop more quickly. We also of course cut down on the range of problems which can be tackled, and the range and ingenuity of solutions produced (and on the enthusiasm of implementation,

unless the leader is "loved"—hence the search for the "good leader").

An analogy might be seen in the baby alligator, which comes out of its shell ready for action. It can solve immediately a limited range of problems, but its potential for learning is small. The human baby, in comparison, is a more complex communication system, with fewer pre-printed circuits. Initially it is helpless, but we give it a suitable learning period and appropriate "exercises," and protect it while it learns, and I feel we have to find out how to do the same for a group. Progress in this area will come as we turn our energies away from arguing about the merits of democracy versus dictatorship, and towards finding out what are the essential characteristics in individual members and in group structure which will allow group maturation and evolution. and what are the best "training" methods. (I have not noticed if you have reviewed Karl Deutsch's book, *The Nerves of Government*, which I feel is a superb pointer to the way in which cybernetics and organization theory can come together with psychology and religion.)

These comments, it should be explained, came in response to what this correspondent regarded as the pessimism of Amiel (quoted in the MANAS lead for April 8—"The Prophetic Agonizers") concerning the workability of democracy. Amiel said:

The masses are the material of democracy, but its form—that is to say, the laws which express the general reason, justice, and utility—can only be rightly shaped by wisdom, which is by no means a universal property. The fundamental error of the radical theory is to confound the right to do good with good itself, and universal suffrage with universal wisdom. It rests upon a legal fiction, which assumes a real equality of enlightenment and merit among those whom it declares electors. It is quite possible, however, that these electors may not desire the public good, and that even if they do, they may be deceived as to the manner of realizing it. Universal suffrage is not a dogma—it is an instrument; and according to the population in whose hands it is placed, the instrument is serviceable or deadly to the proprietor.

Our present correspondent, Brian Carpendale, who teaches in the department of mechanical engineering at the University of Toronto, addresses himself to "half" the problem posed by Amiel. Mr. Carpendale has plans for undeceiving those who would like to serve the public good, but employ mistaken means. As he puts it:

What we have here is the problem of "learning," and the fact that it has to be considered at several levels, brought out by the key remark from Montesquieu: "The more wise men you heap together, the less wisdom you obtain." The first level is that of the individual, and his progress towards physical and intellectual attainment, and psychological maturity. The second level is that of the group, and its ability to learn how to function effectively, making full use of the talents of its members. The third level would be that of a group of groups, and so on.

Along with his letter, Mr. Carpendale sent us some notes (prepared for use with his students) which explore the various internal dynamics of group action, examine the characteristics of a "leaderless" group, and list the ways in which groups commonly resolve conflicts. This material is exceedingly interesting. We do not have space to quote much more, but the following table ought to bring considerable "shock of recognition" to anyone who has worked in one or another capacity within a group:

METHODS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION,
THOUGHT OF AS LYING IN A SCALE

Tabu	}	<i>Invisible or implicit coercion</i>
Tradition		
Indoctrination		
Hypnosis		
Physical violence	}	<i>Explicit coercion</i>
War		
Threats and intimidation		
Blackmail		
Economic sanctions		
Wages (when there is unemployment)		
Strikes and lockouts		
Social pressure		

Bribery	}	<i>Exchange</i>
Incentives		
Wages (under full employment)		
Contracts		
Purchase		
Debate plus coercion	}	<i>Fact-finding and Altruism</i>
Emotional argument		
Sophistic and legal debate		
Discussion and voting		
Discussion, leading to consensus		
Discussion, leading to unanimity		

Now what analysis of this sort does, initially, for people who work with or in organizations—and who does not—is to make visible the causes of vague feelings of moral uneasiness when certain methods are used. It increases self-consciousness in respect to the kind of organization we have, or want to have, and makes us more critical of the techniques of manipulating people in organizational roles. Let us note that Mr. Carpendale's scale is an *ethical* scale. It represents the values which claim attention whenever you start out with the assumption that human beings are ends in themselves, and not merely means to the ends of other men. The analysis, therefore, leads to ethical confrontation. It does more. It somehow suggests that the best discipline for the releasing of human energy and capacity for inventive behavior is essentially an ethical discipline. Finally, it suggests that this discipline actually exists, or is potential in the reality of various human relationships, and can be found out, formulated, and put to work.

What does this analysis neglect? It ignores (on the surface, at least) the possibility or the fact that there are those who do not respond to an ethical appeal—who do not, in Amiel's phrase, "desire the public good." Every man has some part of him which harbors this stubborn indifference to the good of others—an aspect of human nature which resists exposure and defends what control it has gained over the decisions of the individual with all the available resources of dissimulation, hypocrisy, misdirection, and sometimes brazen defiance. The problem of ethics is to reveal and to make intolerable that part of

our nature, so that we will begin to change. No doubt working with the sort of groups Mr. Carpendale has in mind will help to precipitate all sorts of crises of moral decision in the participants, so that we cannot say ethical decision is totally ignored. It is being dealt with tacitly, through implication. But somehow, by this general approach, the question of ethical determination, perception, resolve, resources, seems taken for granted. Can there, should there, be a direct and open recognition of this kind of choice?

Raising this question recalls Dr. Henry Winthrop's paper in the Spring 1963 *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, "Blocked Communication and Modern Alienation," in which he spoke of "the impoverished relationship between man and man which springs, not from failures in and breakdowns of communication, but rather from *the deliberate attempt to avoid communication.*" In other words, skills in communication and in organizational techniques are achievements which may touch only indirectly or accidentally the essential *moral* problem of the dominant motives in human beings. In short, we are brought face to face with the old question: Can virtue be taught?

We are sure that Mr. Carpendale would have interesting and useful things to say in answer to this question, even if his comment were only to the effect that, in our present state of knowledge, it would be better to have no direct answer to this question than an over-simplifying or dogmatic one. Not even Socrates, as we recall, provided a firm answer, unless it was in the almost unparalleled example of his life and death; but the questions which have only tentative or uncertain answers, it seems to us, are just the questions which must never be left out of any such inquiry.

There have been cultures—Buddhist culture, for example, in the time of Asoka—which found ways of erecting signs for everybody to see and take to heart, saying, in effect: "It is important for everyone to try to become an ethical (altruistic)

human being"; and which gave the best reasoning that age afforded to support the injunction. Is there a right way of doing this sort of thing, today? And does not Mr. Carpendale's program for "learning" how to make democracy work need to be upheld and sustained by the entire cultural community?

We break off here the discussion of Mr. Carpendale's letter and turn to the other communication which came in the mail. It seemed desirable to find a common denominator for these letters, and it turns out that the second letter, which comes from Richard Gregg (author of *The Power of Non-Violence*), is concerned with one way of getting before the public signs which invite people to become ethical human beings. Mr. Gregg's letter is printed below.

* * *

For some months I have been thinking of the problem—really the problem of the whole country—of how to persuade people to change the entire economic and social system so deeply and thoroughly as to ensure security and dignity to every inhabitant. I feel sure that the civil rights struggle involves not only voting, housing, integration, unemployment, and automation, but also the economic system. I feel that, eventually, the set-up described in a *Nation* article a few months ago [almost certainly, Robert Theobald's "Abundance—Threat or Promise," *Nation*, May 11, 1963, in which the writer proposed economic arrangements something like those described by Edward Bellamy in *Looking Backward*]—a set-up whereby a decent income would be provided for every soul as a matter of right, whether or not he has a job. If the nation can afford to spend what it does on armaments, it can afford to switch and spend the equivalent on its citizens.

It will take a lot of persuading. It will take tremendous and long-enduring faith in the existence of a spark of conscience in the hearts of the greediest, once people are compelled to face the facts. It will call for a deep conviction that by the right means *everyone* can be brought to realize

that the unity of mankind as a living species is not only an irrefutable fact, but that its implications are stronger than any of the institutions man has yet devised.

Since the means used in any struggle determine the end finally reached, the only means we can use to attain a decent society is non-violent persuasion. So far-reaching a change by such means has never before been accomplished, but until 1947 no empire had ever yielded to non-violent persuasion and given up control over a subject population. There are many things today which never existed before—jet planes, television, Telstar, and automation. Moreover, the self-awareness of all societies is new and growing. With the extended radius of modern communications and transport, this self-awareness gives grounds for hope that such a change can be made non-violently. Our new self-consciousness must be put to work in organizing better social and economic systems. These systems are going to change rapidly anyway, under the impact of the four "explosions"—population, urbanization, communications, and knowledge. They might as well be guided in the right direction.

As I see the matter, when legal slavery existed, a slave was capital and the slave-owner conserved his capital just as a farmer takes care of his cattle and his horses. The slave-owner bore that expense. When slavery was abolished, the employer was relieved of any necessity to care for the workers. This expense was thrown on the workers and partly on society. Eventually, the government was saddled with some of the expense. Our institutions and hypocrisy hide the fact of the shift of that burden, and the accompanying poverty is kept out of sight as much as possible and even used to give the "upper crust" of society a sense of superiority. This was not a matter of deliberate skulduggery by the holders of power, but largely unconscious on their part. But they hold on to their advantage. Now, under automation, the employer can get rid of a much bigger expense—the wages of nine-tenths of

his former employees. The expense of maintaining these workers can also be shifted to society—*i.e.*, to the government. Again an attempt will be made to keep the results hidden, so that the well-to-do can avoid facing the realities.

But Gandhi has shown us how to drag realities out into the open and compel people to face them. All sectors of society must be made to face the facts. Devious hypocrisies must be dissolved. Our efforts must be to compel *everyone* to face the poverty of the poor and the way the system creates and maintains it. Instead of letting the unemployed sit at home in apathy and despair, organize them to demonstrate non-violently and parade the realities. In every town where there are unemployed, people should have marches and demonstrations. The unemployed might picket, carrying placards which say: YOU CAN'T SWEEP US UNDER THE RUG. . . . HAVE YOU GOT A CONSCIENCE? WHAT DOES IT TELL YOU? . . . WE ASK YOU TO THINK UP A BETTER ECONOMIC SYSTEM . . . DOES AFFLUENCE REQUIRE FOUR MILLION UNEMPLOYED? . . . DON'T TURN AWAY—FACE WHAT IT MEANS TO BE UNEMPLOYED. . . . IF PRIVATE INDUSTRY WON'T GIVE US WORK, WE ASK THE GOVERNMENT TO DO IT. The placards should not be angry or coercive, but persuasive, appealing to the conscience of people and their sense of fairness.

The churches might be picketed on Sundays. Picket the banks, the mayors' offices, the newspaper offices. Have new signs every week. Marches in most of the towns in the country might stir widespread thinking more effectively than marches on Washington. The homes of Congressmen should be picketed or at least marched by. Both Negro and white unemployed can do this. People without jobs do not have to idle away their time on street corners. Here is something they can *do*, and if they organize and do it on a large scale they will have an effect.

They will have to overcome their fear of going to jail, but the Negroes have already shown that this can be done. It will be difficult to get the white unemployed to see and to act out the importance of non-violence, but a beginning must be made. West Virginia might be a good place to get this started.

Such appeals to the fairness and honesty in people have now a much better chance of success than would have been possible thirty years ago. Modern communications have increased understanding and self-consciousness very greatly and over wide areas. And in some respects wars have made people more sensitive and imaginative. Forty years ago a Marshall plan could not have even been conceived.

As for the signs and placards carried by picketers—all should turn on one simple theme: WE WANT WORK. One of them might offer simple reasoning like the following: IF GIVEN WORK WE WOULD PRODUCE MORE VALUE THAN OUR WAGES. Or: OUR BEING ON RELIEF INCREASES YOUR TAXES—WHY NOT GIVE US WORK AND HELP KEEP YOUR TAXES DOWN?

Organizing demonstrations among the unemployed would risk the failure of some to understand the necessity for non-violence, even under extreme provocation, and this might bring rioting and bloodshed. But the Negroes are proving that important advances can be made by non-violent methods. The alternative to taking that risk is the wearing away of the self-respect and character of millions of people, as unemployment goes on, with enormous and fearful waste, increased crime, and chaotic social conditions. The program would require very careful planning and educational work, and detailed organization. Yet I think it can be done, and would be worth the effort.

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The net of these two communications—Mr. Carpendale's and Mr. Gregg's—as we read them,

is that there are concrete things to do to increase the effective function of democracy and to make people more aware of their obligation to see that justice is done. And underlying these educational undertakings and forms of social action is the root-problem of overcoming indifference to the public good—a common human failing. How do people gain sympathy for one another? How do they become sensitive to suffering and social wrong? For, in the last analysis, these are the qualities which tend to make people *want* the kind of education in democratic organization that Mr. Carpendale proposes, and which will make them responsive to the kind of a campaign Mr. Gregg has outlined. This question, which is a way of asking how altruism is born in the human heart, is a bed-rock inquiry, and can have only a bed-rock reply. Such a reply, it seems to us—insofar as there can be one—will relate to the idea of the self that is commonly held by people at large. What do they expect of themselves? By what standard or ideal do they judge their own behavior? Only a more ennobling idea of the self is capable of inducing self-impelled changes in people. Educational and action programs may trigger the changes that will have to take place, but creating the *potential* for change is a preparatory process of reflective philosophizing and self-investigation which must go on in the entire human community. Everyone can help in this, and the help of everyone is needed.

REVIEW

ON BEING NEGRO

JOHN HOWARD GRIFFIN'S *Black Like Me* can hardly be as influential in our century as *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was in the last, but this book is certainly a dramatic demonstration that men of pale pigment can learn what it is like to come from forebears born "closer to the sun." Griffin, a race relations "expert," decided in 1959 to become a "Negro" by undergoing a skin-darkening process. When he confided in the editor of *Sepia* magazine, he got a prophetic response:

"It's a crazy idea," he said. "You'll get yourself killed fooling around down there." But he could not hide his enthusiasm.

I told him the South's racial situation was a blot on the whole country, and especially reflected against us overseas; and that the best way to find out if we had second-class citizens and what their plight was, would be to become one of them.

"But it'll be terrible," he said. "You'll be making yourself the target of the most ignorant rabble in the country. If they ever caught you, they'd be sure to make an example of you." He gazed out the window, his face puffed with concentration.

"But you know—it is a great idea. I can see right now you're going through with it, so what can I do to help?"

"Pay the tab and I'll give *Sepia* some articles—or let you use some chapters from the book I'll write."

He agreed, but suggested that before I made final plans I discuss it with Mrs. Adelle Jackson, *Sepia's* editorial director. Both of us have a high regard for this extraordinary woman's opinions. She rose from a secretarial position to become one of the country's distinguished editors.

After leaving Mr. Levitan, I called on her. At first she thought the idea was impossible. "You don't know what you'd be getting into, John," she said. She felt that when my book was published, I would be the butt of resentment from all the hate groups, that they would stop at nothing to discredit me, and that many decent whites would be afraid to show me courtesies when others might be watching. And too, there are the deeper currents that make the idea of a white man's assuming nonwhite identity a somewhat repulsive step down. And other currents that say,

"Don't stir up anything. Let's try to keep things peaceful."

The story, *Black Like Me*, is now well known. It appeared as a Signet paperback and has been made into a motion picture. However, there are certain highlights in the published account which should be emphasized here. Some three weeks after assuming a Negro identity, Mr. Griffin reported the following reactions:

After a week of wearing rejection, the newness had worn off. My first vague, favorable impression that it was not as bad as I had thought it would be came from courtesies of the whites toward the Negro in New Orleans. But this was superficial. All the courtesies in the world do not cover up the one vital and massive discourtesy—that the Negro is treated not even as a second-class citizen, but as a tenth-class one. His day-to-day living is a reminder of his inferior status. He does not become calloused to these inferior things—the polite rebuffs when he seeks better employment, hearing himself referred to as nigger, coon, jigaboo; having to bypass available restroom facilities or eating facilities to find one specified for him. Each new reminder strikes at the raw spot, deepens the wound. I do not speak here only from my personal reaction, but from seeing it happen to others, and from seeing their reactions.

The Negro's only salvation from complete despair lies in his belief, the old belief of his forefathers, that these things are not directed against him personally, but against his race, his pigmentation. His mother and aunt or teacher long ago carefully prepared him, explaining that he as an individual can live in dignity, even though he as a Negro cannot. "They don't do it to you because you're Johnny—they don't even know you. They do it against your Negro-ness."

But at the time of the rebuff, even when the rebuff is impersonal, such as holding his bladder until he can find a "Colored" sign, the Negro cannot rationalize. He feels it personally and it burns him. It gives him a view of the white man that the white can never understand; for if the Negro is part of the black mass, the white is always the individual, and he will sincerely deny that he is "like that," he has always tried to be fair and kind to the Negro. Such men are offended to find Negroes suspicious of them, never realizing that the Negro cannot understand how—since as individuals they are decent and "good" to the colored—the whites as a group can still

contrive to arrange life so that it destroys the Negro's sense of personal value, degrades his human dignity, deadens the fibers of his being. Existence becomes a grinding effort. . . .

While Griffin could hitchhike rides in the South from white drivers, he found that, however affable the "good Samaritan," his dark hue made him an alien presence. A diary entry recounts his attempt to explain to a white young man why so many Negroes appear to live in squalor. The young man had remarked: "I don't know. It looks like a man could do better." Griffin attempted to explain:

"It looks that way to you, because you can see what would be better. The Negro knows something is terribly wrong but with things the way they are, he can't know that something better actually exists on the other side of work and study. We are all born blank. It's the same for blacks or whites or any other shade of man. Your blanks have been filled in far differently from those of a child growing up in the filth and poverty of the ghetto."

He drove without speaking through a thundershower that crinkled the windshield and raised the hum of his tires an octave.

"But the situation is changing," I said after a time. "The Negro may not understand exactly *how*, but he knows one thing—the only way out of this tragedy is through education, training. Thousands of them sacrifice everything to get the education, to prove once and for all that the Negro's capacity for learning, for accomplishment, is equal to that of any other man—that the pigment has nothing to do with degrees of intelligence, talent or virtue. This isn't just wishful thinking. It's been proved conclusively in every field."

"We don't hear about those things," he said.

"I know. Southern newspapers print every rape, attempted rape, suspected rape and 'maybe rape,' but outstanding accomplishment is not considered newsworthy. Even the Southern Negro has little chance to know this, since he reads the same slanted reports in the newspapers."

For conclusion, we have a passage from a down-to-earth war novel, *The Short End*, by Gene L. Coon, which throws a sympathetic light on the

reasons why so many Negroes have become Black Muslims:

I'm not saying Mohammed Ferkin was the kind of guy I wanted for a close friend, but . . . I've done a lot of thinking about him. If I was colored, and had to put up with the crap that the average spade has to take, North or South, I reckon the least I'd be is a Muslim. It isn't exactly rational, or reasonable, but there comes a point where reason folds up and fades away. I think, when you come right down to it, that the Muslims actually could be a lot worse. You're a little spade kid and you grow up in a world that's got sharp edges, all of them turned toward you. Your mother and father, if they've got any interest in seeing you get out of life alive, give you the word. Stand up for your rights until somebody looks real serious about taking them away from you, then turn around and take another stand in another direction. You grow up knowing you're not going anywhere, unless you're Sammy Davis or Harry Belafonte or Floyd Patterson. You can make it big as an entertainer or a clown, or if you're a physical freak you can make it big in athletics, or if you're lucky enough and smart enough to put up with thirty years of sweat and stink and no money and a lot more hard work than most of us are capable of, you can maybe be a doctor or a lawyer or get a job in government. But you can't go out like a white man and just casually make it in the world. You can maybe wring a lot of money out of your own people, selling groceries or booze or burial plans, but you can't go anywhere else. Ninety per cent of the whole country is badlands as far as you're concerned. You just stand out there in the dark man's dark and look in at the light, at all the fat white cats who look like they've got so much to laugh about, and from your point of view they have, and pretty soon all that envy just naturally has to turn to hate. It's a wonder to me that eight out of ten colored guys don't pick up a gun or a club and just start running and shooting and smashing. Come to think of it, it seems to me that we ought to hand the Muslims a medal for being so moderate. That's all it was with Ferkin. Some times a man just has to hit back, that's all. And if it makes you feel like you're hitting back by taking a name like Mohammed and deciding Christ is the white man's God, O.K. At least it's better than running amuck or hanging around in dark alleys touting tourists into a mugging.

COMMENTARY
HELP OF VARIOUS KINDS

IN 1959 Mrs. Henry Mayers of Los Angeles wrote to an Indonesian newspaper, inviting its readers to ask for used magazines from the United States. She expected fifty requests, but some 9500 came. So began the project of which Mrs. Mayers is chairman: *Magazines from a friend in the United States to a friend overseas*. Information in the form of an instruction sheet may be obtained by writing to Mrs. Mayers at the Person-to-Person Workshop, 2444 Silver Ridge Ave., Los Angeles 39, California. People requesting the names of Asians to send magazines to should enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Hank Mayer, business agent of Local 273, United Furniture Workers of America (AFL-CIO), 744 North Main Street, Sumter, South Carolina 29150, writes to say that his local has launched a campaign to bring its members more knowledge and understanding of the labor movement. "South Carolina," he observes, "stands very low in the area of education and awareness of today's many problems in the fields of economics and social needs." He adds:

We have started a library in our union meeting hall and we need books, pamphlets, and magazines that might help in the education of our members. Any assistance given will be a stimulant in our "mission" work here in behalf of South Carolina labor, and it will mean a lot to our men and women to receive the good will of friends outside their own state.

It seems likely that not only literature concerned with unionism will be useful to these people; books, pamphlets, and files of magazines concerned with social and general issues would doubtless be appropriate, also.

Since our fund for Indian readers continues to grow, it may be well to repeat the announcement

that persons in India who would like to subscribe to MANAS at the rate of \$2.00 a year, may do so, until the fund is exhausted. Indian subscriptions should be sent to International Book House, 9 Ash Lane, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay 1, India.

In the winter of 1939, fragments of a defeated Republican army trickled across the Pyrenees into France. Today, 100,000 anti-Franco Spanish refugees are still in France, and while most of them are now self-supporting, the old and the sick have only a tiny subsistence allowance to live on. Spanish Refugee Aid, an organization headed by Pablo Casals and Salvador de Madariaga, gives practical help to these people. It asks for help in money or in the form of "adoptions" of Spanish Republicans in need—individuals and families—to whom food and clothes may be sent. Contributions are needed to maintain the Foyer Pablo Casals, a center established in Montauban, France, as a friendly haven for now elderly refugees living in the vicinity. Inquiries and requests for literature should be addressed to Spanish Refugee Aid, 80 East 11th Street, New York 3, N.Y.

CHILDREN

. . . and Ourselves

THE UNIVERSITY AS MICROCOSM

THERE are two ways in which this way of thinking of the college community can be elaborated, one focusing upon the "ideal" and the other upon the "practical." *The Uses of the University*, a recent book by Clark Kerr, president of the University of California, epitomizes the latter viewpoint:

The university has become a prime instrument of national purpose. . . . This is the essence of the transformation now engulfing our universities. Basic to this transformation is the growth of the "knowledge industry," which is coming to permeate government and business. . . . What the railroads did for the second half of the 19th century and the automobile for the first half of this century, the knowledge industry may do for the second half of this century: that is, to serve as the focal point for national growth. And the university is at the center of the knowledge process.

Dr. Kerr is, by all accounts, a capable administrator. What he says makes perfectly good sense—providing we assume that "national purpose" has been adequately defined and that the agencies of government will comprehend that purpose and know something about how to fulfill it. Dr. Kerr's administrative problems grow out of the largest university in the world, but in all our rapidly-growing schools, from kindergarten to advanced institutions, the situation tends to get farther and farther away from the Mark Hopkins ideal of the student on one end of the log and the teacher on the other. We have more time, more money, and more people, and universal education is technically much more feasible than at any time in the past. But our universities also have another and older tradition, that of a community of scholars in pursuit of intellectual excellence, discovering new avenues of inquiry, reshaping opinion, etc. Such men are under the impression that they have a special duty to *lead* the nation ideatively, not follow the policies which arise from untutored mass opinion.

Thoreau once wrote that "better sedition than the lethargy of ignorance." We pay vague homage to Thoreau's ideas, but are inclined to neglect some of the severe implications of his approach to the basic educational problems. An article titled "Thoreau and Education," appearing in *History of Education* for March, 1962, summarizes:

Thoreau is without question a subversive influence, as any man of independent thought must be. The modern critic has written of him that "he first anticipates the pioneers in modern education in his conception of a liberal education as daring to think." But even though he wrote these words a quarter of a century ago, when educators were even perhaps supposed to approve of independent thinking, I wonder whether he knew the extent to which Thoreau dared. Thoreau thought in the old-fashioned Roman way, as a free man, not as a slave. And the expression of this thought has suddenly become fearful and shocking. Consider for example, what he wrote after he had observed the soldiers patrolling the citadel at Quebec: "How impossible it is to give that soldier a good education, without first making him virtually a deserter."

This is unquestionably a different approach from that of streamlining "the knowledge industry." From the standpoint of the intellectual, it is not necessary to be as radical as Thoreau to see the dangers of guiding the colleges according to prevailing definitions of "national purpose." David Riesman, for one, feels that regarding education as some kind of "national utility" often leads to the view that excellent students are primarily utilizable, rather than human beings. "I have become convinced," he says, "that what is happening now to some of the most gifted young is that they are pushed and encouraged from a very early age to play from strength rather than weakness." He continues: "If they exhibit a mathematical or scientific aptitude in the 8th grade they are moved ahead very fast in this field. As they enter college, their teachers look upon them as potential recruits for the graduate school. Our best colleges are becoming pre-professional and protograde, even if they still regard themselves as liberal arts colleges. And the students never get a chance to explore their full selves."

In the winter number of *Dissent*, Irving Howe examines another of our unsolved dilemmas:

"Mass education" brings with it severe and unprecedented problems. But the truth is that the turn to "mass education" has not occurred under favorable circumstances, has not been planned or thought through, and is frequently the result of drift, panic and national egotism. Coming in a society characterized by misshapen values and economic injustice, racial prejudice and political evasiveness, "mass education" is contaminated from the very moment of its birth. To make high claims for the life of the mind in a world devoted to accumulating money and bombs is either to indulge in a pious hypocrisy or to indicate to one's students that if they are to become serious intellectuals they must be ready to accept a measure of estrangement, perhaps even deprivation.

But more. Just as the tragedy of the Negro freedom movement is that it reaches its climax at the moment automation is undercutting the Negroes' economic possibilities, so the tragedy of "mass education" is that it appears at the very moment "mass culture" is seeping into the American universities. Ideally, the university ought to be a bastion of resistance against "mass culture." Some universities are. The dominant trend, however, is toward allowing the university to become, among other things, a depository of "mass culture"—and less through deliberate intent than mild slothfulness.

A lecture given at the Georgetown University campus by Frank Keegan provides a further warning as to the ways in which a limited definition of "excellence" hampers creativity and subverts the cause of philosophy:

We seem fatalistically unable to learn from experience as we avidly pursue the excellent among our students. The half-educated young men and women of today become the teachers of tomorrow. We persist in the folly of permitting professors to become learned without being educated. And we do this with our best, our excellent students. . . .

One of the most curious ironies in this situation is the fate of the in excellent student. In today's hot pursuit of the best, the average or less able student is fortunately overlooked as he pursues, not excellence, but what many educators regard as important for modern life, four years of liberal education.

Our inexorable march under the banner of excellence is making sheep of us, of students, faculty and administrators. Plato said that what is honored in a country is cultivated there. We pursue excellence because it is now honored in our country, and because foundations give money for it. We march under the magnetic appeal of our prestige-laden, excellent institutions. More suited to a corporation than a community, this is simply conformity and it is patronizing. . . .

In 1933 Robert M. Hutchins said "what the university has been trying today may be briefly stated: it has been trying to be a university. . . . A university is a microcosm. It can reflect the disintegration, confusion and disorder of the macrocosm. It can mirror the chaos of the world. But since it is a microcosm, it can perhaps on a microscopic scale, produce within itself conditions that indicate a path the world may follow. It may illumine rather than reflect; it may be a beacon rather than a mirror."

The words reprinted here by Thoreau, Riesman, Howe, and Keegan are certainly not going to change the course of the University of California, nor solve its pressing problems. We cannot ask the System to stop trying to make the knowledge industry more efficient—but we can ask its custodians to pause and to listen to such declarations.

FRONTIERS

More on the American Ethos

OUR review of Frank Waters' *Book of the Hopi* (May 13) not only revealed an increasing interest in "depth study" of Indian culture, but also invited discussion of ways of life radically dissimilar to that of Western civilization. An earlier work on the Hopis, Laura Thompson's *The Hopi Way* (1947), provides a provocative introduction:

The Hopi world-view is pre-Columbian and non-literate. It also is much nearer to the *emergent* world-view, symbolized by the word "field," the word "holistic," and the word "synergism": nearer to this emergent world-view of physics, of biology, of psychology and of sociology, than is our too-mechanistic "culture-lag" from the 18th and 19th centuries.

In so severe a world of nature and man that the Hopi, individual and group, seems like Nietzsche's ropewalker, these human beings, through creative action across many ages, have demonstrated a survival-capacity (spiritual and biographical), compared to which the history of European groups and types appears like an "Ever-breaking shore / That tumbles in a godless deep." This survival-capacity, as one of many aspects is found now in the convergence of the results of performance tests and depth-psychology soundings. The Hopi rate mentally to a critical extent higher than other groups in the United States who have been thus tested and sounded.

In *Pueblo Gods and Myths*, Hamilton Tyler draws an interesting parallel between the symbolic Nature personifications of the Pueblo pantheon and those of Greek religion:

In Greek drama there was a place above the stage where the gods appeared and spoke directly to the audience. Whenever their words were available I have used this device and let the gods speak for themselves. The Greeks also had a word, *theologos*, which has come down to us in a modified form. To them it did imply knowledge and study, but it was also applied in a general way to "one who discourses of the gods."

Mr. Tyler's interest in Pueblo culture was a matter of fortuitous circumstance rather than scholarly training. When his family moved to New Mexico, his curiosity about the Indian

dwellings and traditions developed in the direction of both wonder and a philosophic concern:

There were ruins everywhere. The buildings, even in desolation, had a simplicity and grace which both challenged the immediate countryside and at the same time were a part of it. There was harmony. Since I had been engaged in landscaping, I was keenly aware of the qualities involved in integrating vegetation, structure, and site. The role of people had been of less interest; in our culture they come and go—they rent, buy, and sell, but in any event they move. One reason they do move so often is that they have had little part in the actual construction of their dwellings and surroundings.

Pueblo ruins modified that view with a personal appeal. The construction is so simple one feels that with the help of friends, relatives, and even children, a similar work of beauty might be accomplished. The buildings are composed of adobe or sandstone blocks, of a size which anyone could grasp easily in either hand, and a mortar of the dun earth to bind the blocks together. Such complete simplicity is not an ideal in itself, but it does draw one powerfully. The human element is immediate and one can grasp that too, in a way which cannot be duplicated in response to the works of artist-engineers in our own culture, even when the art is good.

When looking at these vacated monuments of collective endeavor, a second thought occurs. Pueblo Bonito's great structure is not a desolated temple, nor the tomb of a dead king; it was a safe dwelling place for the whole population of a fair sized town. Pueblo religion, then, must have been expressed not in material construction but in mental constructs which would be available to all who wished to live within them. The ancients were gone, but their descendants were still very much alive. We determined to find out how mankind joined in the integration of landscape, structure, and human life.

That the Pueblo ethos, and particularly the Hopi mystique, exert a powerful attraction for some psychologist-philosophers is apparent. Beneath the ruins and beneath the formal structure of the ceremonials, one senses what Frank Waters calls "an esoteric mysticism," with intimations of a deep symmetry and maturity. Only recently studies of the Hopis have indicated a close kinship of their thought with the precepts of Eastern philosophy and psychology. In *Book of the Hopi*,

Mr. Waters writes of the significance of the "emergence myth":

Whether or not the Hopi creation myth is regarded as a record of prehistoric events, there is no question of the value of the esoteric mysticism it reveals, despite its superficial simplicity. Within Man are several psychological centers. At each successive stage of his evolution one of these comes into predominant play. Also for each stage there is created a world-body in the same order of development as his own body, for him to become manifest upon. When each successive period of development concludes with catastrophic destruction to world and mankind, he passes on to the next. The four lower centers, as they successively descend in man, decrease in purity of consciousness and increase in grossness of physical function. In the fourth stage of development he reaches the lowest and mid-point of his journey. The Fourth World, the present one, is the full expression of man's ruthless materialism and imperialistic will, and man himself reflects the overriding gross appetites of the flesh. With this turn man rises upward, bringing into predominant function each of the higher centers. The door at the crown of the head then opens, and he merges into the wholeness of all Creation whence he sprang. It is a Road of Life he has traveled by his own free will, exhausting every capacity for good or evil, that he may know himself at last as a finite part of infinity.

How appallingly simple it seems in this Hopi creation myth! Only its closest parallel, the Tantric teachings of Tibetan and Hindu mysticism, reveal in meticulous detail the profundity of its premise. As specific footnotes in this narrative suggest, they elucidate the functions of man's centers and describe in full the stages of mankind's development. Quite obviously we of the West view the psychical achievements of the East with a suspicious alarm comparable to that which the East views our hydrogen bombs, interceptor missiles, and space rockets. Mysticism has its own dangers—from which the Hopis themselves have suffered acutely, as we shall see and pragmatic Western science has bestowed immeasurable blessings upon all mankind. It is merely a matter of choosing different goals and the means of achieving them. The contrast of the two systems is mentioned here because this pathetically small and misunderstood minority group, the Hopis, are so strangely attuned to the precepts of another hemisphere rather than to the technological civilization engulfing them.

John Collier's twelve years of service as U.S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs led him to make extraordinary predictions concerning the future of the Indian population of the Americas (*Indians of the Americas*, Mentor, 1948). He saw the Indians as potentially much more than "pathetically small and misunderstood minority groups," and felt that Western culture would come to maturity only when some of the profound psychological motivations of the Indian world-view are held in proper esteem. Mr. Collier wrote:

I have certain predictions to make, growing out of my years of absorption with the Red Indian situation, my life with them, my efforts for them as Commissioner.

The Western Hemisphere nations increasingly will base their Indian programs on the Indian social groups. They will do this with greater boldness and inventiveness as experience is accumulated, is recorded, and is interchanged among nations.

The Indian societies will keep their ancient democracy, sometimes adapting it to the larger tasks which they will take to themselves, sometimes with no adaptation at all. There will exist productive Indian local democracies to the number of forty thousand or more—democracies social and economic, not merely political. These Indian social units will become federated within nations and over national boundaries. They will traffic with the other social groupings within the nations, particularly with labor, with conservation bodies, with research institutions, with organizations concerned with the arts. These Indian societies will supplement their ancient co-operative forms with modern co-operative forms, they well may become the major embodiment in our hemisphere of the co-operative movement of the world.

With the advance of "integral" education, including bilingual literacy, the realized mental potential and the social energy of the Indian societies, and their biological vigor, will increase by hundreds, even thousands of per cent. A large number of their individuals will pass out into the general life of their nations, and they will pass into increasingly higher social levels. But they will not become divorced from the societies which formed them and gave them their orientation; and thus they will play a part in the world of the future out of lessons drawn from the past.

As the Indian societies move from their four-centuries-long delaying action into a confident and rejoicing advance, expression along many lines of literature, of the arts, of religion and of philosophy will come into being. The ancient-modern affirmation of the deathless man-nature relationship will flow into poetry and symbolic art of cosmic intensity, tranquility and scope.

The movement will be inward and outward at one and the same time—inward to the world-old springs, buried or never buried, which still flow because the societies have not died; outward to the world of events and affairs.

There will come to dawn in the nations, the Indians playing their part, two realizations. The first, that their soils, waters, forests, wild life, the whole web of life which sustains them, are being wasted—often irreparably and fatally. The other, that their local community life, their local democracy, their values which are required for beauty, wisdom and strength—their very societies—are wasting away even as their natural resources are wasting. As these realizations increase, the nations will turn to their Indian societies increasingly, seeking the open secrets they have to reveal.

All these good things will come to pass if the nations will maintain and increase their enterprise and research into Indian need and Indian power. More slowly, less decisively they will come about even if the nations *regress* in their Indian programs. For the delaying action of the Indian societies and of that spirit they represent is ended. They have proved that they cannot be destroyed, and they are now advancing into the world.