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IN ORDER TO HAVE PEACE

EDUCATION for peace is an idea that has been talked about for years, along with particular efforts to put it into practice—all the way from carefully deliberated academic inquiries into the causes of war to study groups and seminars and workshops on the theory and practice of nonviolence. At present both peace research and peace education have renewed attention. The September issue of *War Resistance* (quarterly journal of the War Resisters' International, 3 Caledonian Road, London, N.1. England) presents a long article by Beverly Woodward describing and in some measure evaluating the work of the peace research groups which are now active in several countries, in the hope of increasing collaboration among them. Meanwhile, the recently established Indian Council of Peace Research (223 Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Marg, New Delhi 1, India) has announced a symposium on "Education Towards a Nonviolent Order" in New Delhi, Jan. 8-12, 1974.

It is wholly natural that people deeply concerned with the evils of war should look to education as the means of strengthening the peace movement. The central problem, of course, is where do you begin, what do you do, and what needs to be known in order to educate for peace. No one supposes that answering these questions is easy, and exploring their implications is one of the purposes of the New Delhi symposium scheduled for next January. Familiar goals are often arguable. For example, one of the objectives of the Indian Council of Peace Research is "to make peace research a subject of concern to the intelligentsia, the universities and other institutions of higher learning," and there is also reference to developing peace research "as an independent applied scientific discipline." This makes pertinent a passage by Beverly Woodward on the European experience:

> Helge Hveem, a researcher at PRIO, the Norwegian peace research institute in Oslo and one of the oldest of its kind points out in a recent article that peace research originated as a protest movement in reaction to the horrors and devastation of World War II and to the weaponry that that war produced (notably the atomic bomb). But even though motivated by the spirit of protest, peace research did not stray too far at first from established academic approaches. Although it was interdisciplinary before interdisciplinary studies were so much in vogue, still it took the different disciplines it used (basically the modern social sciences with some admixture of the natural sciences) more or less as it found them with their heavily empirical past-oriented, and quantitative approaches. Moreover, in many cases (even though there were significant exceptions), it also took the institutions of society more or less as it found them and focused not on institutional change, but on supplying persons in power in the existing institutions with new information that would lead to changes in the way they made decisions and thus enable them to become more adept at avoiding or "managing" crises.

Conclusions of this sort concerning "academic" research are found much earlier, as in the comment of an army officer, Major Sherman Miles, in an article in the *North American Review* for March, 1923, in which he reported his findings after a study of such (academically) reputable foundations as the Nobel Committee and Institute, the World Peace Foundation set up by Edwin Ginn in 1910, and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. A lot of money was spent for research, but with negligible result in terms of actual explanation of the causes of war. The only exception was an essay on two minor Balkan wars. There were also some economic studies of which Miles remarked: "the one thing about them that strikes a soldier is that they throw no light on the causes or prevention of war, but that they would be most useful guides to any government *while waging war."* However, a concluding

comment by Major Miles might be taken as a mandate for peace research in the present:

> . . . these two societies appear to know of no peace organization anywhere that has ever studied the causes of war scientifically. A search in the Library of Congress reveals but one such study by any peace society, and that consists in a compilation of individual theses written by five members of an English Quaker Meeting during the war.

What is it to study the causes of war "scientifically"? Does anyone have an acceptable answer to this question? Consider, for example, the critical works of two eminent modern writers, both of whom happen to be pacifists, on what we generally think of as the "scientific" approach: Lewis Mumford and Theodore Roszak. Question: After reading, say, *Pentagon of Power* and *Where the Wasteland Ends,* would anyone of intelligence really want to entrust determination of the dynamics of peace-making to disciplines sharing the assumptions about the nature of man that are characteristic of the conventional sciences relating to human behavior? To what extent is the desire to be "scientific" a hunger for academic respectability? In many particular cases, of course, this question does not apply. Science, for many people, still means the spirit of deliberate impartiality and search for the facts, and there are men, often leaders, who embody this spirit in all the branches of science. But the institutional tendency is at issue, here, not the often high motivations of individuals. An illustration of this necessary distinction is available in Robert Kirsch's review of Sampson's *The Sovereign State of ITT.* After an account of the more than royal power of ITT (International Telephone and Telegraph, an enormous multinational corporation which operates in 90 countries), Mr. Kirsch says:

> The very bigness does not guarantee invulnerability. Despite the tight centralization of ITT, individuals in the organization have acted on conscience and there are indications in this book that many are sensitive to questions of means and ends. But the structure itself, says Sampson, seeks to avoid accountability, uses questionable means which can corrupt the free political process and the official diplomacy of nations to attain its own ends.

Similarly, there are distinguished pacifists—distinguished as both thinkers and activists in many instances—on university faculties in the United States. Beverly Woodward names some of them: Larry Gara, Howard Zinn, Grace Paley, Sid Peck, Staughton Lynd, and more recently Noam Chomsky, Dick Falk, and Sid Morgenbesser. The question, however, is whether such persons expect to "change" the institutions where they work and teach, since nearly all these enormous places are dependent upon government subsidy for their support and very existence. Indeed, the entire scheme of higher education in the United States is subject to such questioning and may be said to be on trial. A great many people would say that the trial is over and judgment already in. William Irwin Thompson articulated the consensus of intelligent American youth when he said, in *Time* for Aug. 21, 1972:

> The universities are no longer on the frontiers of knowledge. A lot of students are leaving, professors are leaving. The universities won't die or disappear, but they'll lose their charisma and their imaginative capacity to innovate, which means that they will become the kind of places where you learn the past where you consolidate, and then, when you're ready to really get into things, then you'll say, "O.K. I'm gonna go and work with Soleri, or I'm gonna work with Piaget, or I'm gonna study with Gopi Krishna, or I'm gonna go to India or go to the Lama Foundation in New Mexico."

As for the intelligentsia, Thompson has a similarly pertinent comment:

> . . . from top to bottom, there's a kind of revulsion against middle class, bourgeois industrialism. This is why many intellectuals like T. S. Eliot, William Faulkner or D. H. Lawrence would be disgusted by the modern world, and why the peasants would not like it either, and the top and bottom come together to get rid of the middle classes. Except: the intellectuals are always betrayed, because the peasants basically want to become middle class, and so there's a slippage. Many of the intellectuals now are so hungry for order that they would be willing to see the end of democracy and some new kind of Napoleonic order coming in. Arnold

> Toynbee, in his recent book *Surviving the Future*, says that as far as he can see we have a choice between a world federal state with an Alexander at the helm or nothing—annihilation.
>
> I think the intellectuals will be the first people to make accommodation with the new power structure. As long as they can still have their elitist sense as professors and computer scientists, they will be quite happy in an aristocratic pro-management system. They don't stand to lose that much. Thus the ones who cry the loudest for freedom might not be all that much in favor of it.

In short, making peace involves so deep a change in attitudes and conceptions of value, that those intending to do peace research and to plan peace education are not likely to find many allies in established institutions whose survival depends upon the power structures and relationships of the status quo. Good men in these institutions may be allies, but no *institution*, as such, can change with the times and embody the spirit of peacemaking the world requires, save in a lagging and minimum manner, and in belated confirmation of thoughts and acts on the part of innovators who create space for and the dimensions of the less rigid institutions of the future. There is no help or salvation in conventional institutions for reformers or pacifist revolutionaries, and never has been. Practically no existing foundation will fund radical transformation of the society to which it looks for support, and certainly no government will knowingly contribute to subversion of its own power. There may be institutions which have no stake in their own perpetuation, and would willingly dissolve, like an ad hoc Quaker committee, upon the disappearance of the evils or wrongs it was formed to deal with, but they are not listed in any directory ordinary folk have access to.

Can the objective of peace education be simply stated? Early in her paper Beverly Woodward says:

> . . . it has become clear that while slogans like "There is no way to peace; peace is the way," and "Wars will cease when men refuse to fight" express fundamental insights, they leave a good many questions unanswered. A global movement for the elimination of war and the creation of nonviolent social institutions will certainly require something more.

In what terms should the "something more" be defined? What questions need a measure of settlement before some broad consensus can be established among pacifists? Can Skinnerian and Rogerian peacemakers get together on means and peace education? Can class-struggle socialists and rural communitarians agree on strategy? Can anarchopacifists and admirers-from-afar of the achievements of the Chinese Revolution decide on a common appeal? The splits in the peace movement arising from widely differing social philosophies are plainly evident and will probably long continue, perhaps until the next great mutation in human kind transforms social issues into more reconcilable stuff.

Meanwhile, let us recast the "fundamental insights," looking for grounds of basic agreement. In *Pacifism in the Modern World,* now an old book (1999), Devere Allen said:

> Without giving *homo sapiens* a clean bill of health, the pacifist of today is aware of the fact that infanticide, human sacrifice, marriage by capture, slavery, the duel, and a multitude of other evil institutions have been done away with, and all without revolutionizing human nature.

Peace without final perfection, in other words. Another illustration of what is needed might be reconstructed from Elaine Sundancer's *Celery Wine:*

> If our actions are different, it's because the assumptions underlying them are different. It's very hard for me to pin down what these assumptions are, just because they are assumptions, the unquestioned furniture of our minds. Well, an attitude towards land for one: it seems very weird to think of land as property, stuff that can be owned, bought and sold; and I don't think anyone here thinks of it that way. Even though of course that idea is built into the legal framework of the country, and we have to act within that framework. (Compare: nowadays everyone agrees that it's weird to treat human beings as property, to buy and sell them, but a little more than a century ago that idea was still part of our legal code.)

Next step: It's very weird to kill people or to help anybody to kill people, because a government says you have to or should. *No one* thinks that way any more, but people used to.

So the question is, How do we get from where we are to that desirable state of mind? What else is more important than: How do we get from here to there? But we won't ever get there unless more and more people begin to agree that it's very weird to kill other people and begin to refuse to be part of any such enterprise and do all they can to live in ways that break connections with war-generating and war-supporting processes. Identifying those processes is of course an aspect of peace research, but it won't be pursued with the necessary determination without a psychological change in depth toward the act of killing people.

If this is the case, we can hardly separate the problem of education for peace from the problem of general education. As a matter of fact, little is known about how people are moved to adopt fundamentally changed attitudes, although there are some useful generalizations to consider. One is by Henry T. Buckle, set down in his *History of Civilization:*

> Owing to circumstances still unknown there appear from time to time great thinkers, who, devoting their lives to a single purpose, are able to anticipate the progress of mankind, and to produce a religion or a philosophy by which important effects are eventually brought about. But if we look into history we shall clearly see that, although the origin of the new opinion may be thus due to a single man, the result which the new opinion produces will depend on the condition of the people among whom it is propagated. If either a religion or a philosophy is too much in advance of a nation it can do no present service but must bide its time until the minds of men are ripe for its reception. . . . Every science, every creed has had its martyrs. According to the ordinary course of affairs, a few generations pass away, and then there comes a period when these very truths are looked upon as commonplace facts, and a little later there comes another period in which they are declared to be necessary, and even the dullest intellect wonders how they could ever have been denied.

This may be the prognosis for the peace idea, which has already had some martyrs, and may require more. We have no timetable, and while psychological changes—changes in taste, in values, in conceptions of goal—seem to be the order of the day, and are occurring at an accelerated rate, workers for peace have sometimes mistaken emotional moods and passing revulsions for basic alterations in attitude and have suffered great disappointments. Quite evidently, we are too ignorant of what happens in characterological change to be able to make firm predictions. We know that the peace idea is in the air—more now, perhaps, than at any other time in history—while, in ironic balance, there has been vastly increased mass slaughter in war, too, and the potentialities for more war and escalation are not hidden from view. But in harmony with Buckle's idea, we are able to say that where opinion is articulate concerning peace and peacemaking, it is usually possible to recognize the influence of certain distinguished men, Gandhi most of all, and also Tolstoy, and a number of others. It is to these thinkers that we owe much of the currency, the staying power, and the moral vision and energy of the peace idea. And this staying power and moral energy are steadily increased by the contributions of others who make the ideas of these pioneers their own, and add their own thinking.

So, wherever there is genuine peace education, there is recourse to the extraordinary inspiration of these "ancestors" of the peace movement, who were not technicians of peace, or "researchers," but humane, cultivated, deeply civilized human beings who lived and thought in anticipation of a better world for all. Movements that lack this fire of inspiration become sterile, lose their capacity to move, to awaken, to bring hope to the discouraged, the depressed, and the powerless.

Peacemakers do not need a "line" so much as a fire; they do not need organization so much as they need invention and individual enterprise,

although some organization is naturally sensible and necessary. But even organizational peacemaking can be a block to the freedom of original thinking, if it is allowed to exclude or discourage recognition of thinking which has in it a spontaneous power to ignite the minds of others. Here we are thinking of the first appendix in Robert Speaight's *Life of Eric Gill*, which we happened on recently. Called "A Tribunal," this imaginary dialogue between an applicant for Conscientious Objector status and a British Tribunal might not qualify Gill as a member of the War Resisters International—since the bond of that association would be almost meaningless if it did not stick to rejection of *all* war—but Gill created a valuable anti-war document, just the same. Gill's work may be an illustration (not a perfect one) of the difference between organizationally defined stances—which we doubtless need in our imperfect condition—and the unbroken gradations of moral thought and inner reflection used by responsible human beings to shape their lives and to guide their actions. It is that seamless quality of mind and feeling that grows with authentic education, and party or organizational lines and slogans are allowed to interfere with the growth process only at the peril of us all. We may see the need for these precise definitions as tools, but should never lose sight of their limitations, their mechanistic effect on thought. A self-imposed compulsion is still a compulsion, and the conformity it brings, while strengthening an organization, may also crystallize the mind. Group expressions in the interest of organizational progress or in the service of "scientific" procedures may have to be paid for in sectarianism and stultification, until we learn that a tool is only a tool, not a mentor or guide. A law which defines conscientious objection in a certain way can make a generation of young men strain to qualify, quite honestly and sincerely, yet to take one's definition of moral integrity and meaning from the state's bureaucratic necessities is seldom a useful borrowing. The resulting subjective confusion will have to be worked out later, its only justification being that legislators and administering bureaucrats are human, too. The kind of thinking that makes for future peace is thinking which delegates no power of self-definition to an outside authority. Qualifying will then be a matter of understanding the limitations of bureaucracy, instead of embracing them, and of seeing whether our own not wholly developed conceptions have a reasonable fit with the even more imperfect notions or intent of a law.

Education for peace? What wakened the founders of the peace movement to the vision to which they gave voice? What made them what they were? We need to dwell with our minds in all the wonderful diversities of their thinking, and not hope to routinize such riches with scholarship. Scholarship has its uses, but what is wanted is a general and widespread feeling that it is weird to kill people at the order of some political authority—for that is war—and weird, too, of course, to kill at all. Education for peace is not the fruit of a branch of "research," but has in it all the affective mysteries of self-discovery and self-actualization. This, at any rate, is what the record shows, if we take the trouble to look at it. Education for peace is hardly more than the project of becoming civilized human beings—something far from accomplished so long as war persists. This is a plainly sensible but not a widely accepted idea. We shall have to make it so, in order to have peace.

REVIEW
ART FOR EVERYMAN

IT is never easy to write usefully about "art," but books by Frederick Franck, who works in pen and ink (and oils), give the reviewer who is a tyro in art a great deal of help. Dr. Franck works effectively in words, too. There is a quality in his books which may cause the reader to grow fertile in associations for what he says. His view of drawing and of the seeing on which drawing depends seems to suggest transfers in every direction. His latest book, *The Zen of Seeing* (Random House Vintage Book, $3.45)—which was briefly noted in "Children" for Oct. 31—leads naturally to reflection on what it means to be an artist. Thinking about what Dr. Franck says about drawing—a way of "seeing"—it seemed to us that an artist is someone who at every moment lives with a heightened visual awareness that is particularized and recorded on occasion in what we conventionally call his "medium." For example, years ago we happened to be in the foyer of a large theater, one morning, where some Russian dancers were waiting to be called to the stage for rehearsal. They were lounging around, drinking coffee, smoking, talking quietly among themselves. It was a long wait and they moved around quite a bit. Watching them, you began to realize that this was the way fine dancers moved all the time. The casual gesture, a few steps across the room, the visual punctuation of dialogue, the turn to attention in another direction—all their motions were art forms, and they weren't thinking about it at all.

Those movements were just the right ones—as in a drawing which is original, which would never be done the same way again, but to change a single line in it—would be mutilation. An artist, then, is a person who has an order of certainties about what he ought to do and how to do it, knowing it but not knowing it communicably except by doing it; the certainties which come or grow from being able to *see*. Dr. Franck makes this distinction:

> Looking and seeing both start with sense perception, but there the similarity ends. When I "look" at the world and label its phenomena, I make immediate choices, instant appraisals—I like or dislike, I accept or reject, what I look at, according to its usefulness to the Me . . . THIS ME THAT I IMAGINE MYSELF TO BE, and that I try to impose on others.
>
> The purpose of "looking" is to survive, to cope, to manipulate, to discern what is useful, agreeable, or threatening to the Me, what enhances or what diminishes the Me. This we are trained to do from our first day.
>
> When, on the other hand, I SEE—suddenly I am all eyes, I forget this Me, all liberated from it and dive into the reality of what confronts me, become part of it, participate in it. I no longer label, no longer choose. ("Choosing is the sickness of the mind," says a sixth-century sage.)
>
> It is in order to really SEE, to SEE ever deeper, ever more intensely, hence to be fully aware and alive, that I draw what the Chinese call "The Ten Thousand Things" around me. Drawing is the discipline by which I constantly rediscover the world.
>
> I have learned that what I have not drawn I have never really seen, and that when I start drawing an ordinary thing I realize how extraordinary it is, sheer miracle: the branching of a tree, the structure of a dandelion's seed puff. "A mouse is miracle enough to stagger sextillions of infidels," says Walt Whitman. I discover that among The Ten Thousand Things there is no ordinary thing. All that is, is worthy of being drawn.

Frederick Franck feels about drawing the way Eric Gill felt about architecture. Gill believed that what a man is, what he thinks about nature and meaning, will determine whether or not he can design good buildings—that is, do worthy architecture. Franck says that "There is no split between [a man's] seeing, art, and 'religion' in the sense of realizing his place in the fabric of all that is." Choice of pen and paper is an individual affair. "Maybe you'll like a pencil better, or chalk, or a brush." For paper Franck uses 70-pound offset paper, buying it in bulk. But he uses only a pen for drawing, finding ballpoints and felt-tips "too insensitive and mechanical."

"Seeing," for Franck, is apparently the first step in becoming, and then being.

> This apple tree is not the first one I draw, perhaps the thousandth. As my pen follows the trunk, I feel the sap rise through it from the roots to spreading branches. I feel in my toes how the roots grip earth. In the muscles of my torso I feel the tree's upward groping, its twisting, struggling, its reaching against all resistances, toward the sun. In my arms I sense how the branches must wrest themselves away from the parental trunk, to find their own way, fight against the elements.
>
> My fingers become the tender shoots that probe the sky.

Dr. Franck hasn't much use for instruction in drawing which begins by demonstrating the "basic forms" in all nature—ellipses and triangles, etc. This approach may be useful to "picture manufacturers," but it may also deprive you of really seeing, say—a horse.

> In order to draw a horse, draw horses until you practically become a horse—not "horses in general," but always that particular horse you are drawing at a particular moment. Until you feel the tense curving of its neck in your own neck!

Franck does lots of "nudes," but the term displeases him. The naked body is for him "the human being I am confronted with." To draw the body, he has to see it move and flow "with its own subjective life."

> Everyone seems to know what constitutes "a beautiful body," a "good body." But, of course, a beautiful body is not one with a set of prescribed ideal circumferences. The models I love to draw are neither necessarily young, nor well-proportioned. Pretty little things, smooth pin-ups and fashion models, with all the right measurements, taking charming poses, may bore me to distraction. Looking for the human being in this smooth, posturing flesh, I find nothing but pretentious, impersonal signalings: "Am I not lovely!" In the human being, in the human body, it is the spirit that informs the movement of every muscle.

"Show me your nudes," says Franck, "and I know who you are." Only a few of the great master painters are able to satisfy his requirements:

> Rubens' brilliant nudes are all meat.
>
> Rembrandt's naked women are all compassion.
>
> "Even before I can say it, it is no more," says Sengai, the great seventeenth-century Japanese draftsman. And this is what Rembrandt saw: the human dewdrop evaporating before his own consciously mortal eye, full of wonder, full of reverence. He saw life as transitory and therefore as of utmost preciousness. It is as though he had said to his model: "We have faced one another for eons. How is it possible we have never seen each other?" He saw the eternal human condition in every human body he drew, painted, etched; that is his unique greatness.

Dr. Franck speaks of the women he has drawn:

> Older models, exhausted from the bearing of children, the scrubbing of floors, have been inexhaustible sources of inspiration to me. One of these is a former ballet dancer. She is well over fifty and earns a living for herself and a sick husband. Her time-worn body still moves with such grace that a hand never dangles dead by her side but it is moved by her spirit into exquisite gestures of fatigue, despair, or resignation. Sometimes I draw this woman as the young girl I still see in her. Then suddenly, I see her again in her beauty as of an old olive tree. . . .
>
> Then once in a while, in comes a dumpy girl in her street clothes. She takes off her glasses, peels off her stockings, and stands there in her strong womanliness—a revelation and promise of tenderness, in her eyes the expectation of life's fullness. Drawing her becomes a pleading—a prayer almost—that all this expectation, all this promise, may not be squashed by life's buffetings. Sometimes I draw such a girl and discover I have drawn her as if she were already old. . . .
>
> This nude I am drawing is not just a body, not an abstract symbol of youth or old age. She is the concrete person before my eyes: *this* person. It is enough. To draw her is to let the perception on my retina be affirmed by the hand that notes down in obedience. It is not in any way "self-expression." It is letting the person I draw express what she is, through me.

Once, drawing a very old man lying down, Franck looked at the quivering life in the sleeping body, and then, suddenly, when it stopped, he

knew the old man had died. Life is ceaseless motion, which continues until the moment of death. To draw is to live in the midst of continuing spectacle:

> Faces loom up from nowhere, pass by, disappear forever. The hand moves as in fever, the paper fills up with these figures appearing from, being sucked back into, Nothingness, each one—like myself—disguised as a Me. Sokei-an, a contemporary Zen master has said:
>
> > "I saw people coming toward me
> > But all were the same man,
> > All were myself."
>
> And St. Nicholas of Cusa saw that "In all faces is shown the Face of Faces, veiled and as if in a riddle. . . ."

Of his own work, Dr. Franck writes:

> The good drawings I do are hardly mine. Only the bad ones are mine for they are the ones where I can't let go, am caught in the Me-cramp.
>
> "If the good drawings are not yours, if it is not the ego that draws them, do you mean to say that they are done by the Absolute?" someone is bound to ask ironically.
>
> That which draws in SEEING/DRAWING is that which I really am, but which I cannot possibly define and label. It simply defines itself by the way it draws. SEEING/DRAWING therefore is an impossible effort as long as the ego tries to force it. Once the ego lets go, it becomes effortless.
>
> Emerson deflates the pseudo-originality the ego strains for: "What you are speaks so loudly, I can't hear what you say."

The drawings in this book gain considerable excitement (not quite the right word) from the text, and together they make 124 pages of visual enjoyment, with verbal counterpoint.

COMMENTARY
THE USES OF HISTORY

SINCE little is said in this week's lead article concerning the value of research for peace, the work of a seldom remembered American historian, Frederick J. Teggart, may be taken as an example of one useful approach. Teggart was moved by the slaughter, waste, and ruin of the first world war to devote himself to understanding the causes of war. His *Processes of History* (1918) indicated the method he would follow in research, and his *Rome and China* (University of California Press, 1939) presented a study of the barbarian invasions of the Roman empire from 58 B.C. to A.D. 107.

Teggart's object was to expose causes that could not be revealed by the "narrative" sort of history of a single country or nation, but would become plain through correlation of events involving, in this case, not only the Roman frontier in Europe, but also Roman aggressions in the East, and military undertakings by the Chinese. He demonstrated that Roman "pacification" in the Near East disturbed trade and livelihood throughout large areas, eventually creating "the conditions which gave rise to the descents of the barbarian tribes on the Danube and Rhine frontiers." Failing to connect such events, Roman historians attributed the northern invasions to "overpopulation" or Germanic desire for loot, and later historians adopted their view. Teggart likewise showed that wars undertaken by the Chinese to subdue the Huns (Hsiung-nu) brought disorder to trade routes in the Tarim basin, causing war on the Roman frontier. Teggart is able to be precise, remarking that "there were no uprisings in Europe which were not preceded by the respective disturbances in the Near or Far East, and there were no wars in the Roman East or the T'ien Shan [mountains] which were not followed by the respective outbreaks in Europe." Thus, in conclusion—

> . . . wars which were undertaken by the governments of China and Rome in pursuit of what were conceived to be important national aims led inevitably to conflicts among the peoples of northern Europe and to invasions of the Roman empire. It is of some importance to note that the statesmen who were responsible for or advocated the resort to war, on each of forty occasions were entirely unaware of the consequences which this policy entailed. The wars of the Chinese, indeed, were initiated only after lengthy discussion at the imperial court by ministers who were well versed in Chinese history, and who reasoned from historical experience no less than from moral principles and from expediency. But the Chinese emperors and their advisors were unconscious of the fact that their decisions were the prelude to conflicts and devastations in regions of which they had never heard. The Romans were equally in the dark with respect to the consequences of their wars in Bosporus, Armenia, and Syria, but here the fact is striking, for the reason that their wars in the East were followed invariably by outbreaks in Europe.

There is general as well as particular instruction in this book concerning the causes and effects of war.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
TEACHING OR TAOISM?

CHARLES WEINGARTNER, who with Neil Postman wrote *Teaching as a Subversive Activity*, has an article in *ETC.* for September (No. 3, Vol. 30) on teaching as a harmful activity. His formal title is: "The Most Common Obstacle to Learning: 'Teaching'." The book was a fairly devastating job on the duplicities of modern civilization, with much space devoted to helping youngsters to see the deceptions and hypocrisies they were inheriting from the past. There was some relief from this unlovely picture of the times in chapters illustrating good teaching. This article in *ETC.*, concerned with children learning to read, is similarly devastating. The way reading is "taught" in the schools has apparently little relation to the way children actually learn to read. So problems develop where none had to be:

> The inability to read is probably the first phase in the process of intellectual murder in the schools. How is this inability *developed* in schools? Most children who arrive at school in kindergarten or first grade cannot read. At this stage this inability to assign meanings to "words" is not *developed;* it is not yet a "problem." It is merely "normal." What happens from this point on, however, seems analogous to the process Wendell Johnson described as that which produces stutterers. Stutterers are developed, as "problem readers" are developed. Johnson pointed out that non-fluent speech is normal in the language learning of children. For physiological (and hence cultural) reasons girls learn language earlier than do boys. There are more boys (in our culture) who "stutter" than girls. How come? It seems related to "teaching." Stutterers, as Johnson pointed out, are victims of being "taught" how to speak. If they weren't "helped" by being "taught" they probably wouldn't become "stutterers." The "teaching" begins when parents of children who are experiencing non-fluent speech become anxious about the non-fluency and begin to "teach" the children to be fluent. The "teaching" generally begins with the admonition, "Stop stuttering." At this point, the normal nonfluency is transformed into an abnormal anxiety about fluency in the child, and as he tries harder to avoid non-fluency he becomes, of course, increasingly non-fluent which intensifies his anxiety which intensifies his non-fluency, etc. So stutterers are made. Johnson reinforced this description of how stutterers are made (in his chapter, "The Indians Have No Word For It," in *People in Quandaries*) by noting that among American Indians whose language includes no word for "stuttering" there are no stutterers. Hence, there is no focus for anxiety about normal non-fluency. It is merely ignored.

Children, of course, are *not* all ready to read at the same time. Children, being people, like people, are different, but the school, which has its own problems, "is relentlessly dedicated to ignoring, and simultaneously to leveling, the differences that exist." So "problem readers" are a flourishing product of the schools.

Mr. Weingartner has another essential point to make in his brief essay on "death at an early age," but let us look at the first one for a while longer. The problem, as he tells it, is that teachers are determined to teach—this is something that *they* must do, at a certain place in a given time. They are determined to teach something that *ought* to come naturally. We have institutional habits and requirements which prevent them from simply helping an ability to come naturally, so they *teach* it, as a kind of "processing" of the children. Parental anxiety, Weingartner says, plays a part.

Well, it is a fact that parents, most of them, want their children to turn out in a certain way. Reading is just the most obvious example of this sort of problem. In *The Conspiracy Against Childhood* Eda LeShan tells about a charming little four-year-old girl whose merely "average" I.Q. score was a serious threat to the mother. This woman lived in a neighborhood where all the parents knew their children's I.Q.'s and talked about them, and she was worried about how smart her child would prove to be in a year or two, when she started school. Miss LeShan relates:

> "Suppose it turns out she isn't as brilliant as her father thinks she is?" she asked. I confess to having lost my professional objectivity when I snapped back, "Well, there's obviously only one thing you *can* do—throw her back and try for another!"

There is a vague parallel here with all the anxiety about "law and order." We have so much violence, so much resentment in minority groups, and so much angry righteousness in other sectors of the population, that the natural decencies of human beings have very little chance to find expression. "Law and order" is the political version of, "Ready or not, we're going to *teach* them what they ought to know!" So, Weingartner's remarks recalled Holmes Welch's sage interpretation of the *Tao Te Ching* on matters of government and laws:

> Government controls—and these include laws—defeat themselves. . . . They are a form of aggression on the nature of man: "The more laws you make, the more thieves there will be." This is like the American Indian dictum: "In the old days there were no fights about hunting grounds and fishing territories. There were no laws then, so everybody did what was right." Lao Tzu believes that man's original nature was kind and mild, and that it has become aggressive as a reaction to the force of legal and moral codes. This is the basis for some surprising statements. "Banish human kindness, discard morality, and the people will become dutiful and compassionate"; "It was when the great Tao declined that human kindness and morality arose. . . . It was after the six family relationships disintegrated, there was 'filial piety' and 'parental love.' Not until the country fell into chaos and misrule did we hear of loyal ministers." Thus Lao Tzu reverses the causal relationship which most of us would read into such events. It was not that people began preaching about "loyal ministers" because ministers were no longer loyal: rather, ministers were no longer loyal because of the preaching, i.e., because society was trying to *make* them loyal.

This is thinking which all moralists and educators ought to take to heart. Some of them, of course, have already done so. Back in 1952, Carl Rogers, then a professor of psychology at the University of Chicago, made an interesting confession at a Harvard conference on classroom approaches to human behavior. He had become convinced that real learning is self-discovery, and that this kind of truth can't be verbally communicated. Trying to do so is fraudulent:

> When I try to teach, as I do sometimes, I am appalled by the results, which seem a little more than inconsequential, because sometimes the teaching appears to succeed. When this happens I find that the results are damaging. It seems to cause the individual to distrust his own experience.
>
> *Hence I have come to f eel that the outcomes of teaching are either unimportant or hurtful.*

No one assimilates revolutionary utterance like this easily, but it is very much to the point of anything that is said about education and how it happens.

Mr. Weingartner's other main point is that teachers believe they have to "cover" something that is written down somewhere—a "course" in a text or manual—in a certain length of time.

> The "covering" approach sets up expectations in teachers not infrequently quite unreasonable expectations about all kinds of things. When students fail to meet these unreasonable expectations, they are judged to be "slow" or "failures" or "problems." The process that forces these ultimately self-fulfilling judgments seems to get little attention. H. L. Mencken once said that the most useful thing American children learn in school is how to lie. His contention is supported by case histories in *How Children Fail* in which John Holt describes the intricate strategies children develop in an attempt to avoid negative teacher judgments. Indeed, it may well be that all most children ever learn, although this is not explicitly "taught," is ways to avoid being judged negatively. Those who do not learn how to do this are condemned by the labelling judgment to be chronically out of step. It's a kind of semantic Gresham's law of school administration: Bad labelling drives out students who would otherwise be good.

Weingartner's recommendations are fairly simple: Stop teaching children *as if they were all the same*, which would end unreasonable expectations and the resulting judgments; stop even talking about "teaching,"—a practical step he has been able to apply with English teachers over a number of years, with amazingly gratifying results. Learning seems to increase dramatically when "teaching" is reduced.

Naturally enough, these proposals, while common sense, are not easy to put into effect. They are based on respect for children, and express the faith required by the change from focus on subjects to focus on the learner. Taoistic confidence in human beings and patience are involved.

FRONTIERS

The New Frontier

SURVIVAL TIMES (published by the Santa Barbara [Calif.] Community Environmental Council) for last July has a good article on "Frontier Ethics" by James Joslyn, who draws on the work of two professors at the University of California, Santa Barbara—Wilbur Jacobs and Roderick Nash. Joslyn says:

> The energy crisis represents a major turning point in the American way of life. And the ecological situation requires that each person change his attitude towards consumption. Americans realize that they are living in a world of ecological chaos, and yet they are clinging to what could be called a "hangover" of "frontier ethics."

What is the frontier ethic?

> Most Americans are proud of their frontier heritage and their nation's material achievement. They look on the pioneer as a hearty breed whose rugged individualism, self-sufficiency and perseverance enabled him to successfully challenge the natural environment and bring culture and civilization to a savage wilderness.

As a historian, Wilbur Jacobs maintains that this attitude has been uncritically celebrated and glorified by frontier historians steeped in a laissez faire ideology. "Our view of progress—one which permeates all groups of society—is that progress consists of exploitation and growth, which in turn depend upon commercialization and the conquest of nature." Historians, he says, now have the task and obligation of revaluing the frontier experience in the light of present-day environmental conditions.

Roderick Nash, Joslyn says, believes that "mind pollution" is the most serious environmental problem, since it leads to "the contamination of thought by outmoded, myopic, selfish and ultimately suicidal ideas about man's relation to his environment." This seems true enough, and it points to the need for more of the depth analysis of motives and values that Lynn White, Jr., pursued in *Machina Ex Deo* (MIT Press, 1968). White finds that "modern Western science was cast in a matrix of Christian theology," and that "modern technology is at least partly to be explained as an Occidental, voluntarist realization of the Christian dogma of man's transcendence of, and rightful mastery over, nature." In effect, nature and her creatures are soulless and no more than a store of utilities made available by a bountiful Creator. In addition, it certainly seems evident that the "chosen people" conceit of the Puritans and the Pilgrim Fathers has survived as an unquestioned secular assumption of practically all Americans, although corrected for now and then by sensibly mature individuals.

The mix of character that frontier life both revealed and produced has various facets. Its riches and promise are described in Charles M. Schlesinger's minor classic, "What Then Is the American, this New Man?" which appeared in the January 1943 issue of the *American Historical Review*. Sometimes fine fiction conveys the spirit of a time even more effectively than historical essays. In *The Great Meadow*, Elizabeth Madox Roberts suggests what went on in the minds of the men and women who were planning to leave Virginia for the unsettled territory of Kentucky, where Boone and Harrod had built forts. The time was 1774. After listening to the menfolk, a mother who was not going said:

> "Hit's Indian property. The white man has got no rights there. Hit's owned already, Kentuck is. Go, and you'll be killed and skulped by savages, your skulp to hang up in a dirty Indian house or hang on his belt. Hit's already owned. White men are outside their rights when they go there." . . .
>
> The appeal had no effect:
>
> "If the Indian is not man enough to hold it let him give it over then. . . . It's only a strong race can hold a good country. Let the brave have and hold there."

They knew what they were doing, and the way things are:

> "The most enduren' will take." . . . "Strong men will go in and take." . . . "Strong men will win there."

So now we have for reflection, first, say, Helen Hunt Jackson's *A Century of Dishonor,* and then, after an interval, the flood of revisionist literature which began at the popular level with Arnold's *Blood Brother* (on which *Broken Arrow* was based), and attained to some sophistication and satire with Deloria's *Custer Died for Your Sins.* A book like *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* shows that balances are being redressed at the literary level, but the legislative level and the bureaucracy are long in responding. In many ways, injustice has long since passed the point of no return, so that reparation calls for a wisdom that has never existed in politics and never will, although politics can sometimes reflect it.

Actually, when you study the problems which now confront Americans, the same sort of dilemma exists on many fronts. At root, the energy crisis has become a characterological issue, not an economic or even ecological one. Required is another order of spontaneous responses, with different foundations in deep conviction and habitual value-themes in life. We are able to make broad generalizations about the needed changes, but we don't know how to "engineer" them, probably because the dynamics involved belong to an unfamiliar universe of meanings—one in which we are barely kindergartners, as yet.

Joslyn says:

> Individualism and the "work ethic" need not be discarded completely. But Americans, as individuals, must voluntarily regulate the degree to which they demand wealth, success, energy and material goods. Perhaps in this era of ecological crisis an individualist might better be described as one who consciously conserves energy; frequently utilizes modes of transportation other than the automobile refrains from buying or using "luxury commodities" such as electric knives and hair dryers; and regularly supports recycling processes. Although the general public would consider this type of individualism somewhat eccentric, it is significant that it comprises the virtues of selflessness and consideration for others—virtues of great value in the ecological struggle.

This sounds right, but only if we realize that these virtues can never be acquired by fear of the whip of circumstance. The virtues have to come *first,* and not because of their utility in meeting the practical emergencies of the times. Such compelled virtues don't work very well because they are not really virtues. One thinks of the people who had these virtues naturally, long before we began turning the planet into desperation row. Thoreau was not Thoreau because someone told him what might happen if he behaved the way everyone else did. Doubtless at a mass level Nature's backlash needs to be interpreted, just as there is some useful instruction in the adage that crime does not pay. But no culture worth having was ever generated by following such rules.