

AT THE FOOT OF THE MOUNTAIN

WE live in an age of despondency. Our lives, both corporate and individual, are going awry. Our faiths have lost their substance, our theories their promise. The remedies proposed for our economic and ecological ills are either manifestly inadequate or require revolutionary changes which seem beyond our collective capacity or inclination. Wars, impoverishment, powerlessness, violence, nihilistic rage, and suicide, are increasing year by year. The modes of thought in both literature and social science are grimly pessimistic.

All that can be said to relieve this dark picture of the human present and future is that we are increasingly aware of our situation, and that there are those, with an air of calm desperation, who are trying to understand it. Dostoevsky was one who, a century ago, sounded the keynote of this effort. His *Brothers Karamazov* was a spontaneous expression that may be compared, in some ways, with the *Bhagavad-Gita*, which contains perhaps the greatest of all allegories concerning the meaning of human despondency. Both works raise a fundamental question: Is this despondency a natural part of human life? Is it part—a significant part—of the drama of our existence? If so, what meaning has such virtual despair for human beings? Can something be made out of it? Is that what we are meant to do?

The question turns on our hunger to understand the meaning of tragedy. We know, we have been taught, that tragedy depends upon consciousness. Great misfortune without consciousness is mere disaster. No catharsis follows. It is the search for meaning that brings the purifying result of pain. Well, that, at least, is going on.

In her introduction to the publication series, *Perspectives in Humanism*, Ruth Nanda Anshen asks:

Can humanism become aware of itself and significant to man only in those moments of despair, at a time of the dissipation of its own energies, of isolation, alienation, loss of identity, dissociation, and descent; only when pain opens man's eyes and he sees and finds his burden unendurable? Human, all too human! Does this lead to the proliferation of that atomic anarchy of which Nietzsche has spoken and which Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor offers us as a picture of a threatening fate, the nihilism of our time? Is there a humanism conscious of itself, which is indeed transcendent because here human suffering and consciousness of responsibility open man's eyes?

We dare not deal lightly with this inquiry. We may have to cultivate our garden, but to do so without thinking would be abdication. Camus turned various furrows in the sterile soil of Europe—he had his difficult and desperate work to do—but like Ivan in the *Brothers*, he *thought*. Camus had as much reason as any man who has lived to suffer despondency, and he did, but he also said: "I know that something in this world has a meaning and this is man; because he is the only being that demands to have a meaning." The quality of Camus' demands—which remained unsatisfied—has been enriching to us all. He, like Tolstoy, showed how a man of mind could make a rich fabric of thought out of his despondency and pain. In both cases some transcendence was achieved.

Camus was not unmanned by his despondency. Surely this is the first requirement of the humanist. He put his trial in these universalizing words:

I hold certain facts from which I cannot separate. What I know, what is certain, what I cannot deny, what I cannot reject—this is what counts. I can negate everything of that part of me that lives on vague nostalgias, except this desire for unity, this longing to solve, this need for clarity and cohesion. I can refute everything in this world surrounding me that offends or enraptures me, except this chaos, this sovereign chance and this divine equivalence which

springs from anarchy. I don't know whether this world has a meaning that transcends it. But I know that I do not know that meaning and that it is impossible for me just now to know it. What can a meaning outside my condition mean to me? I can understand only in human terms. What I touch, what resists me—that is what I understand. And these two certainties—my appetite for the absolute and for unity and the impossibility of reducing this world to a rational and reasonable principle—I also know that I cannot reconcile them. What other truth can I admit without lying, without bringing in a hope I lack and which means nothing within the limits of my condition?

What was the best that Camus could do? The brief paragraph which ends his "Myth of Sisyphus" may serve as an answer:

I leave Sisyphus at the foot of the mountain! One always finds one's burden again. But Sisyphus teaches the higher fidelity that negates the gods and raises rocks. He too concludes that all is well. This universe henceforth without a master seems to him neither sterile nor futile. Each atom of that stone, each mineral flake of that night-filled mountain, in itself forms a world. The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy.

Camus made a bleak, stoic peace with the Sisyphusian plight. In *Literature and Western Man*, J. B. Priestley finds its origins a hundred years earlier:

There can now be discovered—and it is writers of genius who first call attention to it—that curious *malaise* of modern Western Man. Too many things are going wrong at the same time. Any last pretense of society having a religious foundation and framework, being contained at all by religion, has vanished. Industry creates a new urban "mass" people, outside the old social structure. Patterns of living that had existed for thousands of years are destroyed within a generation. Deep dissatisfactions, really belonging to Man's inner world, are projected on to the outer world, except by a few profoundly intuitive men of genius, who now begin to prophesy disaster.

Somewhere in this age—from 1835 to 1895—Priestley says, "can be found almost all the ideas that have shaped men's lives during this present century." The confused and angry inner

world of the nineteenth century is now the "catastrophic outer world of our age."

The modern age shows us how helpless the individual is when he is at the mercy of his unconscious drives and, at the same time, is beginning to lose individuality because he is in the power of huge political and social collectives. It is an age of deepening inner despair and of appalling catastrophes, an age when society says one thing and then does something entirely different, when everybody talks about peace and prepares for more and worse wars. Western Man is now schizophrenic. Literature, which is further removed from the center than ever before, does what it can. . . . But literature itself now becomes one-sided, inevitably because it is over-introverted, often so deeply concerned with the inner world with the most mysterious recesses of personality, and so little concerned with the outer world, that it cannot really fulfil the task it set itself. .

Religion alone can carry the load, defend us against the dehumanising collectives, restore true personality. And it is doubtful if our society can last much longer without religion for either it will destroy itself by some final idiot war or, at peace but hurrying in the wrong direction, it will soon largely cease to be composed of persons. All this, of course, has often been said, but generally it has been said by men who imagine that the particular religion they profess, their Church greatly magnified, could save the situation. I think they are wrong, though I would not for a moment attempt to argue them out of their private faith. If such a faith, a Church, a religion, works for them, well and good. But I have no religion, most of my friends have no religion, very few of the major modern writers we have been considering have had any religion; and what is certain is that our society has none. No matter what it professes, it is now not merely irreligious but powerfully anti-religious. . . .

No matter what is willed by consciousness, that which belongs to the depths can only be restored in the depths: the *numinous* lies outside the power of the collectives, cannot be subject to state decree, created by a final resolution at an international conference, offered to all shareholders and employees by the board of Standard Oil or General Motors. So we have no religion and, inside or outside literature, man feels homeless, helpless, and in despair.

Priestley wrote this in 1960, or a little earlier—close enough to our time to capture its spirit.

These generalizations are accurate enough, but the grainy touch and color of individual experience is needed to make us *feel* what was happening. For this we go to Walker Winslow's *If a Man Be Mad* (1947), the personal story of a man struggling against alcoholism, a man who was also a fine writer and a poet. In several of the later chapters he tells of his experiences working as an attendant in a Veterans Administration Facility for the mentally disturbed. The problem of drink no longer harassed him. As he said, "I was beginning to realize that perhaps my seeming wellness came from the knowledge that the world, and particularly this institution, was far more mixed up and sick than I; far more fear-ridden."

And why did I continue in a situation where human excrement was often the medium for murals; where injury was inevitable; where heartbreaking stories poured in on me by the dozens; where a caste system oppressed me and its victims depressed me? What conceivable sense of responsibility could make a man do what I was doing? . . .

For a while I burned with a constant anger. Injustice seemed to be the rule, and in a place where justice should never have been a question, it was a miracle. It seemed impossible that one man, alone, could alter the situation, except by appealing to the conscience and decency in America. I tried that by writing an article or two and sending them to magazines. The magazines consulted their medical experts who inevitably found my view of the situation distorted or else said that the situation I depicted had now been altered. These same magazines would come out with other articles that had about as much relationship to the situation I saw as *Alice in Wonderland* had to atomic warfare.

Finally, he wrote to a leading psychiatrist for advice, telling him about what went on in the hospital and asking what he could do to improve the conditions there. This was the reply:

You raise a difficult question which is ages long and cannot be well solved under the present conditions of our civilization. I would not presume to outline the solution in a letter. Quite naturally, I feel I ought to respond more specifically to your personal question.

Apparently you had and are having a very valuable experience. You have no power political or

monetary to change the deplorable situation, but you have your pen and you are a writer, and I think you ought to write, you ought to tell what you know.

But the eminent doctor couldn't understand why Winslow remained in the hospital as an attendant. Musing, Winslow comments:

The only answer to that was that thirty-five men needed me—thirty-five out of the seven hundred thousand committed insane in America. A hell of a dent I was making.

My pen! My words! My attempts at writing, and even talking, had succeeded only in dramatizing my impotence. I could scarcely write letters; I lost touch with language and am not at all sure that I have even partially regained it. I who had been a constitutional liar in regard to my personal life found that America is a constitutional liar in regard to its national life. Is one to hate one's own kind? Like me, it wanted to be comfortable; like me, it wanted only those responsibilities its lies sometimes created. It went about reform as I went about my cures. I would admit and even get desperate about its surface symptoms, but in the depths the disease was always hidden—left for a comfortable day when it could be quietly and surreptitiously cured. While I had maintained a half-dozen false continuities—personal myths—my country maintained thousands, one for almost every trade and profession. Nothing was allowed to appear as it actually was, only as what it seemed to be.

Now Winslow does what every one of us must eventually learn to do—see his society in himself, in that hologram of the social totality that each one of us is, and know it to the core.

There is a theory that men arise to the created myths, that nations arise to them. Perhaps that is true, but what great myth, symbol, or event could ever unite all of those tangential myths: the myth of justice when innocent men are beaten in third degrees; the myth of reward for honesty in business when business often could not offer employment to honest men, much less reward them; the myth of education which Veblen aptly termed "trained unfit"; the dozens of myths in the arts and sciences; the multifarious justifications of politicians that scarcely masked a wish for power; the myth of patriotism, when what most often was meant was that it was profitable to identify one's own sense of destiny with that of the nation, and on and on?

Only a naive man, an extremely neurotic person, could write this, could have the guts to look at the nation through the distortions of his own pathology. Surely the nation wouldn't view me through the miasma of its own ailments and whisper, "Brother, I understand." No, there'd be an unspoken agreement between us: "You protect my lies and I will protect yours." That, in our time, is the agreement upon which most friendships are based, upon which our national life is *stabilized*. That was the agreement that kept this institution going. . . .

Now I was in some ways more insecure than ever. What could I say to a doctor, for instance, who delivered a lecture to a club on "The Therapeutic Value of Kindness" while he knew men were being throttled and beaten on his ward? Knowing the magnitude of his pretentiousness didn't make me an iota more secure; socially I was still his inferior, which implied that I was incapable of understanding him because of the limitations of my intellect. He was secure within the accepted lies of a group; I was isolated because of my guilt as an individual. . . . When I read the headlines it seemed to me at times that my own and my nation's plight were one. America considered itself a keeper in a world that had become very much like a disturbed ward. At times it was difficult to tell the keeper from the kept, especially when the keeper felt called upon to explain each improvisation in terms of morality and often got clouted while doing so.

Everywhere, we should add, there are intervals of peace and decency, even in mental hospitals, and nurses and attendants and doctors of the quality of Walker Winslow—but not enough of them. They exist and help to make life more bearable, but there are not enough of them to give the institution the profile that Winslow longed to experience and believed was not impossible. Our institutions, alas, are not the creations of eager men who evolve instruments to make themselves more effective as human beings; instead they are havens for the incompetent and the unimaginative, and protective barriers against the terrible chaos "out there," that we dare not try to understand. When the failure of institutions becomes noticeable, the despondency, once known only to sensitive anticipators of psychosocial trends, begins to be universal.

How long will the despondency last? In the case of Arjuna, it lasted until he decided to do what he had to do. So, if this is the case, it is the despondency which clears our eyes. It is the despondency which destroys our stake in the status quo. For Tolstoy, his despondency was the beginning of his real life. He still had all his quirks and his puritan conscience, but he took a new direction, giving foundation for another kind of thinking in the world. His genius made this possible.

No one has understood the importance of being "smashed" by the way the world and oneself are going, better than Ortega. In *The Revolt of the Masses* he wrote:

For life is at the start a chaos in which one is lost. The individual suspects this, but he is frightened at finding himself face to face with this terrible reality, and tries to cover it over with a curtain of fantasy, where everything is clear. It does not worry him that his "ideas" are not true, he uses them as trenches for the defense of his existence, as scarecrows to frighten away reality.

The man with the clear head is the man who frees himself from those fantastic "ideas" and looks life in the face, realizes that everything in it is problematic, and feels himself lost. As this is the simple truth—that to live is to feel oneself lost—he who accepts it has already begun to find himself, to be on firm ground. Instinctively, as do the shipwrecked, he will look around for something to which to cling, and that tragic, ruthless glance, absolutely sincere, because it is a question of his salvation, will cause him to bring order into the chaos of his life. These are the only genuine ideas; the ideas of the shipwrecked. All the rest rhetoric, posturing, farce. He who does not really feel himself lost, is lost without remission; that is to say, he never finds himself, never comes up against his own reality.

This is our text for the week, and perhaps for a lifetime or two. For there are various sorts of shipwreck and being lost, and degrees of having a clear head.

Do the blows of fate have meaning? The Greeks believed that they did. If they do not, then life itself can have little meaning, for in a time like the present we experience little else but blows.

Can we play out the drama with the stone-ground courage of a Sisyphus? Can we bear our woes with the calm defiance of a Prometheus? Is it possible to add the warming faith of a Gandhi to the stoic determination of a Camus?

Fortunately, there are those intervals of peace and quiet allowing time to think about such things. Glowing successes are not called for and probably will not be forthcoming. A Walker Winslow racked up no famous records either as writer or as reformer in his uneven, bottle-haunted life, but he had moments when he saw clearly and set it down in a common language. He died alone in a furnished room and was not found for days. But his words on paper have had the power to instruct and illuminate, helping people—who knows how many?—to get up and try again. Without the despondency this could not have happened. A deep despondency was the starting point of the work of Edward Bellamy, and of Henry George. Today it is the ill of an age. What common vision may dawn for a deeply despondent people? There are a few suggestive signs, but the vision is far from coherent as yet.

REVIEW

A FIELD FOR TRANSITION

OCCASIONALLY readers and correspondents comment wonderingly on how hard it is to trace or measure the influence of A. H. Maslow. That influence, one suspects, has been so pervasively far-reaching that objectivity toward it is hardly possible. A good clue to how Maslow's influence works is in the index to a recent book to which *Frontiers* gave brief attention last year—*The Challenge of Humanistic Economics* (Benjamin-Cummings, 1980) by Mark A. Lutz and Kenneth Lux. There are, for example, more entries for Maslow in the index than for Milton Friedman or Paul Samuelson.

Maslow is the key to a great many changes in thinking in our time. What did he do? He declared—and, it is fair to say, demonstrated—that there is a higher as well as a lower man. Both aspects of man's nature have needs. The higher man has being-needs, the lower, deficiency needs. This is a humanistic view of the human being. It is not new. In the West it began with the Greeks and was restored in the Renaissance by Pico in the time of Lorenzo de Medici. It died away, not from any deliberate suppression, but as a consequence of developments which made it seem irrelevant. Now the humanistic conception of man is again being restored, and *The Challenge of Humanistic Economics* is a book which gives the reasons for restoring it and a great deal of the history of how, in modern times, we came to disregard for all *practical* purposes the higher nature of man.

Why should economics take the "higher" part of man into account? Because, as Maslow shows, and as the authors of this book diagram, both the higher and the lower man have *needs*, and since economics is the science that deals with needs, both aspects must have appropriate attention.

It must be confessed that we have read this book, not as a text on economics, but as a study of culture and learning in transition. As such, it is

very good. We suspect that the erudite economic analyses are good, too, since people like Kenneth Boulding and some other well-informed reviewers have given the book high praise. Our comment, however, will be limited to its generally informing character.

Take for example what is said of Adam Smith, who published his *Wealth of Nations* in 1776, laying the foundation for all subsequent economic theory until the present. Smith, the writers show, was in his way a reformer. In his time the King of England wanted more power. He wanted a stronger army and navy, and this meant raising the money to pay for them. Smith "recognized that what counted was not the King and his treasury, but the material interests of the people at large." In his book he "advocated that a government could best advance the wealth of the nation by letting the 'natural' play of economic self-interest proceed without restraint and interference by the government, by which he meant the agencies of the King." His conception of how economics should be ordered was embodied in the French expression, *laissez-faire*, meaning "let it happen." The authors say:

With his concept of *laissez-faire*, Smith referred to the desirability of limiting the parasitic effect of the King and his feudal retinue on the productive efforts of the nation at large. The great enemy for Smith was not regulation per se, since regulation in the interests of the people was mostly unheard of, but the monopolistic influence of a government composed of the aristocratic and the wealthy.

In explaining his theory of the "invisible hand"—now called the "trickle down" theory—Smith said that the goods of the world under *laissez-faire* would have "nearly the same distribution of the necessities of life which would have been made had the earth been divided into equal portions among all its inhabitants." The authors, after quoting this from *The Wealth of Nations*, exclaim, "How interesting!"

That is how we are to know it is operating, when there has been a nearly equal division of the necessities of life. This is quite different from the

way the concept is ordinarily taken. The invisible hand is generally seen to refer to the workings of natural law, just as much as the action of gravitation is a natural law, and has no suggestion of the guidance of a universal moral order. Let the forces of self-interest and competition reign, it is said, and the invisible hand will be seen to operate for the good of all. Interfere with competition and you upset the operation of the invisible hand. Yet, if the invisible hand is the hand of "Providence" (Smith's capitalization), its effects are seen in an equitable and just distribution of goods.

Obviously, Adam Smith was not the sort of man we have supposed him to be. In a later comment, the authors say:

What Adam Smith did not foresee two centuries ago was the implementation of his economic proposals, such as increasing the division of labor and enabling ever-widening markets, would lead to moral decay which threatens to destroy the very framework of the market-place itself. In brief, Adam Smith was assuming a peaceful coexistence of two seemingly complementary social forces, self-interest and moral sentiments, yet history suggests that the former will gradually eliminate the latter, if given free rein. To use an analogy, it seems that there is a Gresham's Law in socioeconomic relations, as well as in the circulation of coins. . . . The law apparently applies to the social side of economics as well; low economic values tend to drive higher economic values out of circulation.

Now comes a clear explanation of why the moral sentiments are no longer able to temper the force of self-interest:

In feudal days, whatever the drawbacks, people did know their neighbors. Moreover, they knew the people with whom they exchanged goods. Economic exchange was guided primarily by considering the basic human needs of the community. People knew each other and cared for each other. The use of money played a peripheral role, at best. During the "economic revolution," markets started to replace traditional barter and money started to circulate and become an important commodity in its own right. Yet in these early days of capitalism people still had a feeling of community. When buying bread at the baker's, the exchange was not merely economic but also social. Imagine in these days, a small-town father rushing to the bakery to get some bread for the next day's breakfast, but discovering that the bakery

had closed early that afternoon. We would expect that the initial feeling of disappointment and frustration could be to a large extent mitigated by finding out that the baker had taken a much-needed afternoon off to spend with his family in leisure. Now compare this situation with a modern supermarket or a bank that closes twenty-five seconds ahead of the actual closing time. We are furious, there is absolutely no consideration for the staff inside, and neither do they really care about the angry customer outside. People don't matter because in the marketplace they no longer know who they are dealing with. . . .

Today we are on the threshold of an integrated world economy. We can expect an economic system of even greater complexity and integration in the near future. And indeed we are told by the authorities that this is going to be good for us.

Yet, such an "evolution" will move people even more into the background. Interpersonal relations will give way even more to relations between things. We don't know who produces what. The market is silent, it does not care, and neither can we. All we do know and care about is the nature of the commodity and its price. People become the means, and commodities, the ends. Humanistic social values give way to pecuniary calculation and materialism. Clearly human welfare is at a low point. The Smithian hand of the marketplace has led us anywhere but to self-actualization and social harmony.

What is the essential content of this book? An answer is given in one of the early chapters:

What the theory of humanistic economics shows us is that values correlate with needs and grow out of needs, so that when we are talking about one we are also talking about the other. Therefore the sphere of values that mainstream economics promotes is essentially synonymous with the needs it is centered upon: constant material expansion, or, "when something is good, more is better"; self-interest; pleasure; and so forth.

In short, *The Challenge of Humanistic Economics* is an open and explicit revolt against the degrading and dehumanizing portrait of the human being which results from adopting the assumptions of mainstream economics. The serious harm of these assumptions becomes manifest when we consider that for generations

they have been taught as mandated by the impersonal "laws of nature," absolutely beyond dispute. The authors emphasize the contrast between humanist and mainstream economics:

Economic Man is a one-dimensional creature operating in a static framework. His values are constant regardless of his experiences or what he consumes. And it is this stability that allows him to calculate mechanically (just like a computer) the best means to fulfill his life goal, utility.

This picture is in stark contrast to the dynamic, growth-oriented theory of human behavior and personality which underlies humanistic economics. We have defined psychological growth precisely as change in basic values and goals. But the contrast could easily be misunderstood to imply that Economic Man and Humanistic Person are two mutually exclusive concepts. Instead, we see Economic Man as a Humanistic Person that for some reason has never been able to grow, or to put it differently: Economic Man is an individual who is fixated at the lowest need level in the Maslovian system. Metaphorically he dwells in the dark basement of the human economy apparently not able to find the stairs that lead to the sunny upper quarters.

Humanistic economics, the writers say, would provide economic man with a field for transition into the full humanity of the social and moral person. Maslow's influence becomes manifest in such ways.

COMMENTARY

HEROIC MEN AND WOMEN IN EXILE

WE have received from Nancy Macdonald, director of Spanish Refugee Aid, Inc., an appeal which begins:

When the Civil War ended in 1939, a half million Spanish Republicans fled to France, choosing exile rather than life under a Fascist regime. Today, 30,000 Spanish exiles are still in France, and 700 of them are in desperate need of help. They are the last of the hundreds of thousands who, after fighting Franco, were trapped in detention camps in France when World War II began, and forced into labor camps or deported to Mauthausen, Dachau, Buchenwald. Thousands died; others escaped and fought heroically in the French Resistance.

Today, Spain without Franco has not meant a Spain open to refugees. . . . In a world that has seen wholesale destruction and displacement of human beings since 1939, these exiles have been forgotten and their cause has faded into history.

Spanish Refugee Aid was organized in 1953 with the sponsorship of people like Hannah Arendt, Bruno Bettelheim, Roger Baldwin, Noam Chomsky, Dorothy Day, Erich Fromm, Lewis Mumford, A. J. Muste, Ignazio Silone, Norman Thomas, George Wald, and George Woodcock. Dwight Macdonald is chairman. Pablo Casals was for years honorary chairman.

Aid is given in three ways. There is regular financial help to two hundred very needy refugees who are now over sixty. Some, of course, are over eighty. Close to four hundred refugees have been "adopted" by individuals and organizations in America, by arrangement through Spanish Refugee Aid. Adoption involves from \$10 to \$50 a month. The recipients are nearly all old and lonely, and adoption adds a human touch which brings moving response. Those who, years ago, sent packages to Europe and to these exiled Spanish people will remember the letters, filled with both dignity and gratitude, that came in reply.

In France, at Montauban, Spanish Refugee Aid maintains the Foyer Pablo Casals where refugees may come to receive new and used

clothing, meet friends, listen to records, and read and borrow books. SRA representatives give help and friendship. For refugees in hospitals, visits from SRA people may be their only contact with the outside world. The address of Spanish Refugee Aid, Inc. is 80 East 11th Street, New York, N.Y. 10003.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves IN THE MAGAZINES

WHILE reading our exchanges (other magazines with which we swap subscriptions) that come each week or month, we sometimes get ideas that seem good for discussion in a high school class. For example, *Rain* for October has an article, "A possible Utopia," by Andre Gorz. This brilliant and articulate radical was last quoted in *MANAS* for Nov. 22, 1967. His book, *Strategy for Labor*, was published by Beacon that year, and in "Children" we extracted from it the following:

Economic, cultural, and social development are not oriented toward the development of human beings and the satisfaction of their social needs as a priority, but *first* toward the creation of those articles which can be sold with the maximum profit, regardless of their utility or lack of utility. . . . The social processes, instead of being dominated and governed by human society, dominate *it*; they appear as "accidental" social results of private decisions and they proliferate anarchically: dormitory-cities, urban congestion, internal migrations, various kinds of misery and luxury. [Society] endeavors with all its ingenuity to offer individuals ever-new means of evading this intolerable social reality; and the implementation on a grand scale of these means of escape (automobiles, private houses, camping, passive leisure) thereby creates a new anarchic process, new miseries, inverted priorities, and new alienation. . . . it aims at no civilization of social existence, and of social relationships, no culture of social individuals, but only a civilization of individual consumption. Simultaneously, the homogeneity and the stereotypes of individual consumption created by the oligopolies produce this particular social individual whose social nature appears to him accidental and alien.

And now in *Rain*, introducing a review of Gorz's *Ecology as Politics*, Mark Roseland asks: "What do you get when you cross Karl Marx with Ivan Illich? Answer: Andre Gorz." In this book, Gorz says:

Socialism is no better than capitalism if it makes use of the same tools. The total domination of nature inevitably entails a domination of people by the techniques of domination.

. . . typical Americans start from the premise that the country belongs to them, that it will be what they make it, that it is up to them and not to the authorities to change life. The American revolution is not over.

Those are comforting words, and perhaps somewhat true. In his utopian fantasy in the same issue, Gorz imagines what will happen in France after an ecological revolution, voted by the people, who are already well on the way to making another kind of society. Wonderful changes are immediately announced by the new President, who explains that the French would now make only what is necessary, durable, easy to repair, and non-polluting. "We foresee," he said, "a very strong foreign demand for these products, for they will be unique in the world." He continues:

"We must reintegrate culture into the everyday life of all. Until now, the extension of education had gone hand in hand with that of generalized incompetence."

Thus, said the President, we unlearned how to raise our own children, how to cook our own meals and make our own music. Paid technicians now provide our food, our music, and our ideas in prepackaged form. "We have reached the point," the President remarked, "where parents consider that only state-certified professionals are qualified to raise their children adequately." Having earned the right to leisure, we appoint professional buffoons to fill our emptiness with electronic entertainment, and content ourselves with complaining about the poor quality of the goods and services we consume.

It has become urgent, the President said, for individuals and communities to regain control over the organization of their existence, over their relationships and their environment. "The recovery and extension of individual and social autonomy is the only method of avoiding the dictatorship of the state."

Then the President invites the new Prime Minister to spell out the program they have in view. "The Prime Minister concluded by saying that, in order to encourage the exercise of imagination and the greater exchange of ideas, no

television programs would be broadcast on Fridays and Saturdays."

A shorter article in *Rain* that would be good for class discussion is Julie Sommers' account of how she lives in a trailer (next to her garden) on under \$500 a year. This is a fine example of the reintegration of culture with "the everyday life." She says:

I live in beautiful, peaceful surroundings [in Oregon] without smog, noise, hustle or bustle. I eat well. My health is good. My time is mostly my own, since I need devote little of it to earning money. . . . I'm not out to set a record for living on little money: it just happens that what I've found to be most congenial is at the same time very economical.

There is other good stuff in *Rain*—2270 NW Irving, Portland, OR 97210—\$15 for ten issues.

Young and old who enjoy dancing might be fascinated by an article in a recent (No. 3, 1980) *Landscape*, on outdoor marketplaces as "Place Ballets." Some public markets have histories of four hundred years—the one in Varberg, Sweden, for example. The writers show that people go to the market in regular rhythms, and perform figures in their wanderings. The pictures help you to see why they call these movements a ballet. One shopper described her pattern:

I first buy vegetables at Sixten's stall and then leave them in the hotel [where she works] at my desk. I walk back to the market through the fruit and vegetable stalls to the arts-and-crafts area where I look at the handcrafted clothes. Then I walk back to buy flowers, stroll around the cloth corner, then return to my receptionist job. I do this pattern each Wednesday and Saturday on my coffee break.

A grim tale that might also have attention is "The New Lost Generation" by Frank Viviano, in the September/October *Working Papers*. It begins with a sad vignette of a boy who can't fit into our society—because it has no place for him. He turns to crime and then disappears. This story is mostly horrifying statistics:

The high-school drop-out rate is now 17 per cent for all young adults in this country, nearly 25 per cent for blacks and nearly 40 per cent for Hispanics.

In some cities, the crisis is even more acute. More than 43 per cent of New York's high school students fail to earn their diplomas—including an astonishing 80 per cent of all young Puerto Ricans. In Chicago, 71 per cent of Puerto Ricans fail to graduate from high school. Nor do these statistics even address the meaning of a high school diploma awarded by institutions that cannot teach the most basic skills necessary for survival in a modern economy.

The writer draws largely on Vice-President Mondale's report on the employment of youth in the United States. It is mostly on unemployment:

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2,695,000 people between seventeen and twenty-one who actively looked for work during the quarter that ended last November [1979] gave up without finding a job. Some 600,000 young people between seventeen and twenty-one have quit both school and the search for work, and are no longer reflected in official unemployment statistics; they have dropped out of mainstream society altogether. In all, at least 4 million young people are subject to chronic unemployment because of a syndrome that includes inadequate schooling, poverty, race, and family or personal problems, according to the Mondale report.

Illiteracy is hard to bear, and the schools are turning out lots of illiterates—

But illiteracy is not the most strategic place to intervene if the Mondale Task Force is serious about the youth crisis. As the report itself acknowledges, "If we upgrade education but neglect to develop jobs, we risk raising everybody's expectations unfairly." Boosting job training programs and compensatory education in the public schools ignores the new realities of the labor market, as well as the continuing failure of the educational system.

Frank Viviano finds the business community as responsible as the educational establishment, and the Mondale staff spoke of the "irresolvable conflict between the productivity goals of business and the individual needs of often troubled adolescents." The language is moderate, the situation hair-raising.

FRONTIERS

A Still Living Tradition

WHILE opposition to the draft for military service is more than a "tradition," since it declares the right of individuals to decide how they will conduct their own lives, the historic aspect of this opposition has more than negligible importance. In an article in *Civil Liberties* for April, 1980 (reprinted in *Fellowship* for last September), Ari Korpivaara gives the highlights of the history of conscription in the United States. When, during the presidency of James Madison (1809-1817), it was proposed that the regular army be organized by federal conscription, the measure failed because not enough Congressmen believed that the government had the power to conscript. Speaking against the bill, Daniel Webster said:

Where is it written in the Constitution, in what article or section is it contained, that you may take children from their parents and parents from their children, and compel them to fight the battles of any war, in which the folly or the wickedness of Government may engage it? Under what concealment has this power lain hidden, which now for the first time comes forth, with a tremendous and baleful aspect, to trample down and destroy the dearest rights of personal liberty? . . .

Sir, I almost disdain to go to quotations and references to prove that such an abominable doctrine has no foundation in the Constitution of the country. It is enough to know that the instrument was intended as the basis of a free Government, and that the power contended for is incompatible with any notion of personal liberty. . . .

The Civil War, we learn, was fought mainly by volunteers. While there was a draft act passed at a time when more men were needed, "Only six per cent of the 2,666,999 who served in the Union Army were conscripts."

While conscription was adopted for World War I, there were outspoken opponents. Champ Clark, Speaker of the House, declared: "I protest with all my heart and mind and soul against having the slur of being a conscript placed upon the men of Missouri. In the estimation of Missourians

there is precious little difference between a conscript and a convict." And in the Senate, Robert M. La Follette predicted that the power to conscript, if granted, would attach to the office of the President and "would be exercised so long as this nation shall last, by every successive incumbent, no matter how ambitious or bloody-minded he may be."

When, in 1940, the Selective Service Act was passed, there was substantial opposition in both the Senate and the House, and James Wadsworth, a sponsor of the bill, called it an "emergency measure," adding, "It is not an attempt to establish a permanent policy in the United States."

Today the opposition is not only in the legislature, but in the homes, towns, cities, and streets of the country. Paul Jolly a young Quaker who lives in Scarsdale, New York, tells his friends and relations of his choice in the *Friends Journal* for Oct. 1 of last year:

I am writing to inform you of my decision not to register for the military draft. . . . George Fox, the founder of the Quaker movement, said, in 1660, "I live in the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars . . . and am come to a covenant of peace that was before all wars and strife were." I cannot claim the same immersion in the spirit of Truth that George Fox had, but I am preparing, with God's help, to live in peace.

This country, as I am sure you know, is preparing itself for war. Draft registration is a gesture of compliance with the military ethos. It is an indication of availability. I have decided not to register, simply because I am *not* available for military "service." I will not be alone in this; several thousands will refuse to register or in some way show their opposition to military domination. . . .

My life is not primarily focused toward stopping the military. This is because I find it important to do work that affirms life, instead of merely protesting. I spend most of my time writing and working with children: I am not an agitator. The government is claiming the right to use my mind and body at will, with no regard for my conscience or reason. The government has forced me to choose: to either allow myself to become a mindless cog in a machine that threatens all life, or to say no. I am saying no.

While the Selective Service System claimed that 93 per cent of those eligible registered last year, journalistic estimates were only 80 per cent, or even 70 per cent.

Another article in this issue of the *Friends Journal* gives useful counsel to those who have registered but intend to qualify as conscientious objectors, which may prove difficult. The writer suggests that such men contact the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors, 2208 South St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19146, for help and advice.

Another war resister, Karl Meyer, recorded his convictions in the *Catholic Worker* for last September:

The Government is saying now that it does not plan to actually draft men *at this time*. But registration is the first step. If they don't plan to start drafting men soon, then the list of names and addresses they are taking now will soon be out-of-date and useless. People who sign up now are letting the Government believe that they are available to be drafted, and available to kill and be killed in any war the President and the Congress decide to get us into.

In another part of his letter he says:

We must send a message to the President and Congress that militarism, war and threats of war are foolish and dangerous ways of falsely pretending to defend our way of life and values. We must wake up and find effective, nonmilitary, political solutions to world conflicts and problems or be wiped out by the dangers of the nuclear age.

This seems a good place to call attention to *Handbook for Satyagrahis*, a manual prepared for peacemakers by Narayan Desai, of the Gandhi Peace Foundation, New Delhi, India, and distributed in the United States by the Movement for a New Society, 4722 Baltimore Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19143. In a foreword George Willoughby says:

To those concerned with the art of training as a part of the movement for nonviolent social change, the *Handbook* is evidence of the serious and long continuing efforts to develop programs to help people to prepare for nonviolent struggle. There is much we can learn from these efforts.

The author, Narayan Desai, has spent his entire life committed to that struggle. Much of the first twenty years of his life were spent living with Gandhi at Sabarmati and Sevagram Ashrams. He helped found the Shanti Sena, India's "Peace Army," which he led for many years.