

OPTIMISM ONE

FM ESFANDIARY

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OPTIMISM ONE

Also by F.M. Esfandiary (a/k/a FM-2030)

Up-Wingers

Telespheres

Are You A Transhuman

Countdown to Immortality

The Day of Sacrifice

The Beggar

Identity Card

In 1962, long before heart transplants and recombinant DNA, Esfandiary was writing about physical immortality.

In the late 1960s when the U.S. and the entire world were preoccupied with the Vietnam War and mired in despair, Esfandiary was heralding an upcoming Age of Optimism.

During the 1973 energy crisis when everyone talked of a coming Dark Age and Limits to Growth, Esfandiary was confidently projecting an upcoming Age of Abundance.

Today as people complain about the collapse of the industrial world, Esfandiary is enthusiastically mapping out the emerging post-industrial world of Telespheres.

In an age when **Optimism** is still highly suspect and stigmatized, Esfandiary has been talking about a “new Hope in the world.” Through the years, his insistent thesis has been that “we live in the most promising and revolutionary period in all history. That we are not only moving to a new historical stage, but that we are actually flowing to a whole new level in evolution.”

Optimism One

By F.M. Esfandiary

About the Author

F.M. Esfandiary (a/k/a FM-2030) is a writer, normative philosopher, designer, long-range planner, university lecturer. He was formerly with the United Nations.

He has taught Up-Wing philosophy at The New School for Social Research (New York) and U.C.L.A.

His articles on the future have appeared in *The New York Times*, the *New York Times Sunday Magazine*, *New Times*, *The Futurist*.

His most recent books are: *Optimism One*, *Up-Wingers*, *Telespheres*.

Esfandiary says: I am thrown off by such common questions as: What is your nationality? Where do you live? What is your profession? Where did you study? Are you married or single or involved with someone? How old are you? Are you Right wing or Left?

These questions are irrelevant to my worlds. My responses invariably throw off my contemporaries.

I am Universal. I translive all over the planet. Learn via Unicom. Have many professions. Am involved with many people. Consider all children as mine also. Neither Right nor Left—I am Up.

I have no age. Am born and reborn every day. I intend to live forever. Barring an accident I probably will. I also want to help others live on indefinitely.

My philosophy: Optimism — Abundance — Universalism — Immortality.

*This book is dedicated to
one of the extraordinary phenomena
in the universe—you,
the human individual.*

CONTENTS

Part One	OUTGROWING THE ROMANCE WITH THE PAST	5
Part Two	HARMFUL PESSIMISMS ABOUT THE MODERN WORLD	11
	Mass Society—Hotbed of Individualism	13
	Our Humanizing Machine Age	16
	Privacy—A Modern Privilege	20
	Fluid Identities—The New Emancipation	22
	Alienation—A Myth In Our Age of Integration	26
	Beyond Family—Global Friends	28
	Myths About Nature	34
	The Trend Toward Non-Violence	38
	Breakthroughs In Human Nature	47
	Exploding Myths	
Part Three	THE YOUNG UNIVERSALISTS	54
	Expanding Commitments	55
	World Economy	56
	Regionalism, Continentalism, Globalism	58
	Humankind Converging	60
	Universalizing Technology	64
	Conclusion	66
Part Four	A RARE MOMENT IN EVOLUTION	71
	Optimism—The New Revolution	74
	21st Century Visions	82

PART 1

Outgrowing the Romance with the Past

We are at Optimism One. The first age of optimism.

Today optimism is the only rational philosophy.

We have reached a stage in evolution at which pessimism, fatalism, nihilism are no longer valid philosophies.

Ours is the Age of Breakthroughs. We are so conditioned to rapid change that any problem not solved overnight is viewed as failure.

This is the greatest tribute to our triumphs and accomplishments. We expect miracles because we now know that we can accomplish miracles. Nothing is permanently beyond our reach.

In the first half of the twentieth century most children around the world had little chance of reaching adolescence. Today we are striving to do away with death altogether. In those days it took months to cross an ocean. Today we reach the moon within a week.

In spite of colossal obstacles humankind has come a long way. We rejoice in our phenomenal progress and triumphs. We say Bravo to the human spirit.

Recently I addressed a group of social scientists in New York City. At the end of my talk one of the psychologists said, "I don't share your views on human progress. I work at a hospital here in the City which has only ninety psychiatrists on its staff. Our hospital needs at least three times as many. But modern society is insensitive to the needs of people. Nobody cares anymore."

"Your outrage, although justified within a modern context, does not refute my thesis — it confirms it," I said. "Your concern for the emotionally troubled is uplifting. It is reassuring to know that one single hospital has ninety psychiatrists. I cannot help thinking of the countless emotionally ill in Asia and Africa, in Sicily and Mississippi, who struggle through life rejected and abused, or who rot in dreadful lunatic asylums and prisons."

Modern individuals lack historical perspective. In our preoccupation with lingering problems we lose sight of spectacular advances in *all* spheres of life.

We are daily growing, transcending awesome barriers, challenging basic premises of life on this planet — our dynamism is totally optimistic. Yet most modern individuals are still too afraid, too guilt-ridden, too brainwashed, to even acknowledge our dynamic advances. The philosophical outlook of the modern world remains absurdly pessimistic.

The world is still saturated with literature the riding humankind's progress, romanticizing the past. We have *invented* a past to soothe wounds of the present. We are steeped in a pathological nostalgia for the past — the so-called Golden Age of the Prophets, the Golden Age of Greece, the Golden Age of Rome, the Renaissance, the Age of Enlightenment, La Belle Epoque...

Whom are we deluding with these fantasies? There was no Golden Age of Greece or of Rome, there was no Renaissance or Age of Enlightenment of Belle Epoque.

Can an age be considered Golden or Enlightened because of a handful of scholars who were wise by the primitive standards of their day? Were they Golden or Enlightened ages to the slaves who labored in every home at the mercy of ruthless owners? Or to the children who were regularly flogged at homes and abused at sweatshops? Were they Golden eras to the women, rich and poor, who were immobilized in subservient roles? Or to the men, slaves and slave-owners alike, who were regularly taken away to fight in endless wars? What is there to romanticize about eras when life expectancy was under thirty?

The wealthiest aristocrat in the so-called Golden Era of Greece or the Renaissance had fewer comforts, fewer rights, less security, less peace of mind, less leisure, less freedom of movement, less protection from suffering and death than an ordinary worker in a modern community.

There are more learned individuals in the city of Athens today than in all the four-thousand year history of Greece.

This nostalgia for the past is in part nourished by history books that focus on the lives of emperors and sultans, prophets and sages. We have been conditioned to associate the past with their lives. We seldom pause to consider the wretched lives of the masses.

Most history books read like fairy tales, bubbling with melodramatic superlatives: The Most Illustrious Civilization...the Greatest Empire of the World...the Glory that was Greece...the Splendor of the Caesars...the great Harun Al Rashid in the Fabled City of Baghdad...the Proud Aztecs...

Most history books are written to the blare of trumpets.

A silly earthen pot found at an excavation site's is drooled over and passed around from one dingy European museum to another gloomy American museum. "Brilliant piece of art. Magnificent. Delicate. No modern artist can duplicate it"...

In Asia peasants piss in these pots.

Even an ancient sacrificial mass burial is rationalized as a happy occasion. Here is how a European historian describes the excavated remains of Samarian villagers believed to have been deliberately buried alive: "... Their faith is tranquil, their eyes full of vision... All very happy to be dying, the musicians playing to the very end..."¹

Those who romanticize the past are quick to condemn the modern world. They are insensitive to cruelties and sufferings of the past, hypersensitive to injustices in modern life. They would rather be left to languish in the womb of the past.

Out of a nostalgia for childhood days has evolved a whole philosophical glorification of the past and pessimism about modern life. But it is one thing to be nostalgic about one's childhood, quite another to formulate, from this private nostalgia, far reaching philosophical conclusions.

What is even more absurd — and damaging — is this glorification of backward lands which symbolize the past. In the early 1960s while in the Middle East I met an American couple who had just spent two weeks crawling in and out of archaeological sites — the Pyramids, the Sphinx, the ruins of Baalbeck, the ruins of Jerash and Petra, and many "holy" places.²

In Jordan they met a Middle Easterner who urged them to visit a camp of squatters. Here several thousand Palestinian refugees festered in dark damp hovels that were no more than holes in the ground. Families of five, eight, or 10 huddled together in cells with barely room enough for three or four. The stench of urine permeated the trapped air.

The Middle Easterner led the American couple to one of the openings in the ground and asked them to follow him down. "These stairs looked dangerous," the American woman said. "Besides there is nothing to see down below."

¹ Ivar Lissner. *The Living Past*. Capricorn Books, New York, 1961.

² The following several paragraphs are extracted from my article, "The Mystical West Puzzles the Practical East." *New York Times Sunday Magazine*, Feb. 6, 1967.

"If you had been told that two or three thousand years ago people lived down there you would have crawled on your hands and knees just to have a glimpse of the place. But because people lived there now you refuse to see it."

"But what is there to see anyway?"

"You would have seen the misery of these people."

"I'm not so sure these people are miserable. They look peaceful to me. They are probably a lot happier than some Americans we know back home." The American paused, looked about, and with remarkable inattention to logic, added, "In fact there is something spiritual, something Biblical, about the way these people live."

Many Americans and Europeans know every rose petal that dropped from the mouth of a Buddha or Confucius, know every stone of the Pyramids, the Taj Mahal and Machuppichu but know nothing of the peoples living in these lands today. Nothing of their needs, efforts and hopes.

It is not only the nice lady in Ohio who has a sweet tooth for the placebo of Lao-tse or Gibran. Bookstores in New York and Los Angeles, Paris and London, Munich and Amsterdam, also abound with Instant Spiritualisms from the East.

Today Buddhism, Hinduism, Zen, Islam, Bahaiism attract countless followers in America and Europe. In Paris, New York, San Francisco, bearded zealots sit cross-legged on the ground, wallowing in Haiku poetry, Bhagavad-Gitas and Zen, in an atmosphere saturated with exoticisms of incense and lanterns. The scene smacks of a Dr. Fu Manchu melodrama.

The American and European Underground which considers itself avant-garde is in fact regressive. It does not look ahead — it looks back. Its dialogue like its poetry is heavily spiced with allusions to Nirvana, Karma, Satori. Its idols are the swami, the guru, the mystic, and other high priests of Eastern occultism who go about murmuring such profound revelations as, "Life is like a fountain."

Posters of swamis and yogis abound. Large head, dark piercing eyes, benign smile, flowing gray beard — they bear a disquieting resemblance to the Judeo-Christian god. Looking at these posters I cannot help wondering if Westerners who have just come back from the burial of their late god are not now looking for new ones.

There is something pathetic about this lingering hunger for fairy tales.

Consciously or unconsciously many Westerners do not want the oldworld to change. In particular they want the East to remain cross-legged and contemplative — what they call spiritual — while they go about vigorously developing better existences for themselves.

In romanticizing backwardness these Westerners are not only indulging their own private nostalgia. They are also reacting hypersensitively to pressures within their own societies. If life today is tough it must have been gentler in the past; it must be better in the "spiritual" societies.

Then too, what better way to allay a sense of guilt about widespread suffering in backward lands than to glorify it? Isn't it more convenient to believe that the poor are really happy?

But the West must not take its idle romanticizing lightly. The European or American spiritualist who seeks to revive the philosophies and worlds of a Buddha or a Joshua is rendering the same disservice, perpetuating the same ills, as the Washington official who supports reactionary regimes around the planet.

In substituting one god for another, in submitting to the passivity and fatalism of ancient theologies and philosophies, they are only perpetuating their own infantilism.

Americans and Europeans must guard against romanticizing poverty and backwardness.

Undernourishment, filth, authoritarianism, patriarchy, subjugation of women, child beating, ignorance — these are not worth romanticizing. You would not tolerate such conditions in your own societies. Why tolerate them elsewhere?

You may find the veil very mysterious. The progressive North African finds it oppressive and demeaning.

You may find medieval mud villages exotic. The progressive Asian, African or Latin finds them unsanitary and stifling.

You may want the older societies to remain unchanged so you can periodically run over and gawk at the past. Then run back to your own homelands and benefit from all the social and economic amenities of this late 20th century.

But it is the peoples of these lands who finally have to endure the privations.

Progressive Latins, Africans and Asians want liberated lives no less than progressives in North America and Europe.

To want to move ahead is not a Western aspiration. It is a human drive. Progress is not a Western monopoly.

Let us travel all over the planet because this is now our planet. But let us not rationalize anyone else's poverty. Or romanticize anyone else's backwardness.

The poor are not happy. The feudal life is not beautiful.

The alternative to industrialism is not feudalism. But worlds *beyond* industrialism.

To romanticize feudal conditions in Central Asia or West Africa is reactionary. And hypocritical.

Asia and Africa also have their romantics. In their hypersensitivity to privations of the present they romanticize the past. Africans, Arabs, Israelis, Iranians, Indians and others squander fortunes inventing histories to show the world how illustrious they were at one time.

History has been reduced to a stupid wasteful game of proving that my father was bigger than your father, that my past was greater than yours.

Who the hell cares?

Can this preoccupation with the romanticized past help alter the sad fact that today millions are still poor and suffering from illnesses of body and mind?

A notable exception is China which has wisely turned its back on the past and is focusing instead on the present and the future. The break with the past is the determined emphasis of the Chinese government. "Our revolution," said the late Chou En-lai, "aims at a complete eradication of China's past... We want to liquidate entirely by this great cultural revolution all the old ideas, the entire old culture, all the old habits and customs created in the course of thousands of years..."

But elsewhere leaders and intellectuals continue exhorting their people to glorify, even to revive, their past. Before the bloody colonizers barged in, they tell their people, we had illustrious cultures.

This is rubbish — illustrious rubbish. Whom are they fooling with these fairy tales?

No civilization of the past was great. There is little to glorify in the Egyptian, Hebrew, Chinese, Indian, Turkish, Iranian, Arab, African, Greek, Roman, Spanish, Mayan civilizations. They were all primitive and persecutory, founded on mass subjugation and mass murder. All humankind's past is sad.

At no time in the past was the world in any way better off than it is today.

No fairy tales about the past can in any way heal damaged self-esteem or other psychological injuries induced by the destitution and authoritarianism inflicted over many millenniums. The individual finally has to face the realities of the world as it is today. You have to live with yourself. You cannot fool

the self with such stupidities. You cannot develop an identity on the illusory identity of ancestors long dead.

We can all gain much more by facing our *real* past. The less we have to hide and suppress, the freer we will be of our past and therefore the stronger we will feel.

Above all, it is by vigorously pushing ahead that we can build self-esteem and meaningful identities relevant to our times. I am not responsible for what went on in the past, but I am responsible for the present and the future.

For instance, if you are a Black don't leave fantasies about Africa's past. Africa does not have a glorious past. Your ancestors, like everyone else's, swung from trees. What matters is that you the Black, like everyone else, are now swinging across the solar system.

We must not try to identify with what we pretend we were but with what we can become. If we must believe in something let us believe not in our past but in our future — our own infinite potential.

It is encouraging that among youth of the world there is increasing determination to flout the dead weight of the past. The liberated are not amused by suffering and destitution. They are sensitive to backwardness and see in it no beauty, no dignity, no spirituality, nothing sacred, nothing worth holding.

The wisdom of Confucius or Plato today reads like a boy-scout manual. The Old Testament, the Bible, the Koran, smack of a regulation code at a school for bad boys. What relevance do philosophies from the age of tribes and caravans have in the age of liberation movements and space rockets?

Even twenty years ago is like the Middle Ages.

All this is not a repudiation of our ancestors. It is a tribute, particularly to the great visionaries of the past who exhorted their contemporaries to move on. For us now to cling to their philosophies and social systems is to go against their revolutionary spirit. Far ahead of their times, they are now far behind ours.

The greatest tribute to the past is to outgrow it.

The highest homage to our ancestors is to tear down the old rotted houses in which they lived, and build instead playgrounds, launching pads, gardens where life can continue to grow. Not allow the houses to degenerate into tenement-shrines of rats and cockroaches.

The gloomy cathedral towns of the oldworld (Europe for instance) are an affront to the past. These ancient towns and their dilapidated houses, cathedrals, and temples are now dead as the ideals that built them.

We live in a new age and deserve a new image of ourselves, and new ideals for our emerging situation in an exploding expanding universe.

PART 2

In this book and particularly in this section I am not concerned with distinctions between nations but primarily with distinctions between the oldworld and trends in the new. It is difficult to isolate these two levels of history because they overlap and coexist everywhere on our planet. In varying degrees the oldworld and the new are juxtaposed in every individual and every home, in every community and every nation.

Here I am also not concerned with distinctions between East and West, socialism and capitalism. Rather my focus is on the evolutionary contributions of industrialism and the new post-industrialism. In both socialist and capitalist countries industrialism and post-industrialism are working for increasing prosperity, democratization, and integration of all segments of the population. In fact we are not only overhauling our social, economic and political systems, we are also altering our more basic human situation in the universe. In creating new worlds, we are rendering both capitalism and socialism irrelevant.

HARMFUL

Pessimism About the Modern World

Sloppy stale theorizings of many European and American intellectuals have helped spread a ridiculous cynicism about the modern world. So thoroughly have Western skeptics brainwashed themselves and others that today everywhere in the world violence, estrangement from nature, mechanization of life, loss of control, loss of privacy, pollution, and many related ills are automatically identified with twentieth-century life.

In his book, *The Sane Society*, Eric Fromm writes, "alienation as we find it in modern society is almost total; it pervades the relationship of man to his work, to the things he consumes, to the state, to his fellow man and to himself..."³

In *Man Alone*, the editors, Eric and Mary Josephson, reiterate Eric Fromm's thesis and add, "who would say that the alienation of modern man is not now complete?"⁴ The jacket of the book carries a neat summary of its contents. "Modern man, alienated from nature, from his gods, and from society, in an increasingly mechanized, atomized and depersonalized worlds, too often is unable to achieve an identity and a relatedness to others."

Loren Eiseley writes of the "colossal insensitivity of the new asphalt animal... Science has come dangerously close to bringing into existence a new type of man who is not human."⁵

Countless other European and American writers have been hacking at the same tired themes.

Science and Technology have become the whipping boy of Western intellectuals, academicians, and artists.

And why not? Millions cheer them on. Dollars, francs and pounds flow into their pockets. Doomsaying is lucrative. You can grow fat and famous.

Tell your readers and audiences that they are estranged from one another, alienated in an increasingly impersonal world, lonely and powerless, that machines have dehumanized them, and they, guilt-ridden masochists, lap it all up and ask for more.

The rest of the world, more driven by shame and honor than by guilt, goes out of its way to cover up blemishes. Most Americans and Europeans go to the other extreme.

The cynicism of the middle-aged Western intellectual is finally as devitalizing and reactionary as the Jingoism of some conservatives. This fashionable pessimism about the modern world is harmful and must not be taken lightly.

It erodes the idealism and self-confidence of youths. It is also confusing to millions around the planet who are vigorously struggling against dehumanizing poverty, patriarchy, authoritarianism.

Already the doomsday chic of Western intellectuals has infected intellectuals in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Everywhere writers, artists, filmmakers pride themselves in being compared to the Kafkas. To win recognition they strive to outdo the Western intellectual's pessimism.

³ Erich Fromm. *The Sane Society*. Reprinted in *Man Alone*, eds. Eric and Mary Josephson, Eleventh printing. Dell Publishing, New York, 1970.

⁴ *Man Alone*.

⁵ Loren Eiseley. *The Firmament of Time*. Atheneum, New York, 1966.

But the world does not need despair. The world needs individuals with vision and hope who can inspire confidence and lead it away from age-old cesspools of gloom.

To say that there is *still* violence, conformity, depersonalization, and related problems in the world is valid. I don't quarrel with that. What I categorically reject is the contention that ours is *The Age of Violence*, *The Age of Robotized People*, that there has been a *Breakdown of Communication* in modern societies, that we are *increasingly Estranged from Nature*, or that science and technology are *Dehumanizing* us.

These are not modern problems — they are modern fallacies and myths. They must be refuted. Such myths partly stem from a lack of historical perspective and have helped spread pessimism about progress and the future.

Mass Society—Hotbed of Individualism

It is often alleged that modern mass society and mass technology are robbing people of individuality reducing them to "machines — mere cogs in a vast impersonal assembly line."

This is sloppy reasoning. How could people lose individuality when they never enjoyed individuality in the first place?

Psychologically people were owned by their authoritarian parents, clan, and church. Economically by feudal landowners and employers. Politically by the tribe, the state, the absolute ruler. In the pre-industrial world, it was not just the slave or serf who was owned but every member of society.

Absolute obedience was required of every child. At home, at school, and in the community children's views were never permitted to obtrude. In adolescence their lifelong mates and lifelong jobs were selected for them. No questions asked.

Individuality and creativity were strictly discouraged. People seldom spoke in their own voices. Rather they mechanically echoed the powerful voices of clans and traditions.

In advanced industrial societies the individual is emerging as never before. Parents are proud of children who are late well to others, are spontaneous, self-confident, and express opinions. Children's individualities are respected as never before.

As they grow older they continue asserting individuality. It is they who select a college to enroll in. It is they who select their studies, friends, trips abroad. Still later as adults it is they who select their own companions, homes, professions and take part in the election of leaders.

Modern individuals take all this for granted and forget that in the oldworld people did not — and still do not — make these elementary decisions.

City dwellers around the world still love to romanticize rural folks. Americans for example speak of the Midwesterners' "rugged individualism." What individualism? This is a silly fantasy. As a rule, people in rural areas are orthodox and traditionalist. They rarely have opportunities to develop or assert individuality.

Too often we confuse the reserve of the farmer with individuality. In the cities a person with the same trait is usually called neurotic.

Mass society, Mass. technology, big business, and giant institutions, far from squelching individuality, have actually reinforced the trend toward expanding individuality.

Too often massiveness is mistaken for conformity, smallness for individuality. The fact is that an employee at a giant New York company enjoys more individuality than a worker at a small shop in a Sudanese bazaar. Women in modern mass societies assert their autonomy in countless ways, while in the smallest oldworld communities their individuality is completely denied — they do not have the right even to divorce a husband. Students at giant American universities assert their rights to make decisions in *all* matters involving them. On the other hand at the smallest school in any oldworld village, students still do not have the right to express even an opinion in class.

It ought to be axiomatic by now that there is more conformity in a small town like Waco, Texas, than in massive London, Stockholm, or Tokyo.

It is to the mass society of the big city that individuals run to escape the mass identity and anonymity of the small town. It is particularly in a big city with its mass media and massive institutions that individuals can best discover and assert individuality. It is among the teeming multitudes that they can most clearly hear their own voices.

Massiveness generates its own dynamism, eroding and destroying conformity and inertia. New York, a city of massive concrete and steel structures, changes more rapidly and totally than pre-industrial mud villages. Within months skyscrapers are torn down and new ones start rising. Whole city blocks are razed to make way for new apartment buildings. Within months entire neighborhoods are modernized. Tenements make way for parks and plazas, dingy narrow streets are turned into attractive thoroughfares. The change is ceaseless.

On the other hand small towns in Europe and America remain unchanged for generations. In Asia and Africa village mud huts stand as long as the mud holds out. When the mud collapses, a new hut, the exact duplicate of the first, is slowly put up. The conformity and the inertia are granitelike.

Then too mass technology and mass society create their own diversity. In New York City alone there are over twenty-five AM and FM radio stations, eight or nine television stations, numerous movie theaters, and literally hundreds of newspapers, magazines, periodicals, and newsletters. If you don't like discussions on one station or the political bias of a publication you turn to another or another or yet another. If in response to a commercial or an advertisement you buy Dial soap and don't like it, next time you buy Camay or Palmolive or Dove.

There is both the economic power and the psychological individuality to create diversity and in turn to be influenced by it. In the closed economy and closed psychology of the pre-industrial world there are no choices.

It is true that modern technology is growing more and more powerful. But the more powerful it grows the more diversity it generates. Powerful communication satellites reach every person on this planet. In so doing they also open up the world to every viewer. Regardless of the opinion presented, there is an automatic avalanche of alternatives.

In Afghan mullah speaking on Kabul television, sternly warns his people not to deviate from the traditional life. But the films and news documentaries following his talk offer windows to the world which are in themselves powerful alternatives to the mullah's orthodoxies. The result is that Afghan students, having witnessed a televised newscast of student uprisings in Rome, begin to think differently about their own traditionally submissive roles. The Afghan girl who has had glimpses of liberated modern girls earning their own living, no longer unquestioningly abides by the status quo.

Skeptics forget that as mass technology grows stronger, people too grow more liberated. The oldworld had in *internalized* mass media which totally controlled individuals. Tradition, conformity, fear, ignorance, superstition, guilt, shame — these were the mass media of the oldworld. No modern mass media can match their immobilizing powers. "Thou shalt not commit adultery." This commandment was not circulated by radio or television, yet its impact lasted over three thousand years.

Partly because of modern technology people are now less and less controlled by tradition and ignorance, fear and guilt and shame. They are now more individualistic and liberated than ever. No propagandist today can control or manipulate modern individuals as totally and bindingly as in the past.

Mass technology and mass society have actually helped the emergence of individuality. Hypersensitivity to gigantism is absurd. Eric Fromm is overreacting when he writes that "man's whole creation stands over and above him... the more powerful and gigantic the forces are which he unleashes the more powerless he feels himself as a human being."⁶

These are oldworld attitudes. Only those who have not moved with the times or who are hobbled by a poor self-image feel threatened by giant technology and society.

⁶ Fromm. *The Sane Society*.

The modern do not view giant creations as standing over, above, or even apart from them. Their self-image has evolved beyond such deflated attitudes. They view gigantic creations as extensions — expanding, not smothering — freedom and individuality. They do not feel powerless or reduced but uplifted.

When I see a giant communication satellite I do not feel dwarfed by it. I feel enormously extended. I feel I am the satellite or that it is a part of me. When I watch the giant world-wide apparatus of the United Nations at work I do not feel powerless but powerful knowing that my voice — the voice of the individual — is at long last beginning to be heard in world affairs. When I feel the power of a giant jet engine I am exhilarated because I know that the formidable thrust and power essentially issue out of me — its human creator.

Today as we move into the post-industrial world, our institutions, technologies, societies grow more massive and global, while we ourselves grow daily more individualistic.

We are not only extending our control over natural, social, economic, political environments. We are actually learning to self control our own emotions, our own minds, our own bodies.

Through the ages we have longed for such self-control. If only I could control my fears. If only I did not suffer over so and so. If only I could control my orgasms during lovemaking. If only my body once again functioned properly. If only...

In the coming years, through extensive mappings of our brains, through electrical stimulations of desired areas in the brain, through implanted electrodes in our bodies, it will be increasingly possible for us to control our own minds and bodies — rather than be manipulated by them.

We will anticipate and influence the rhythms of our own bodies, control our own pain and pleasure, appetite and sleep, heartbeat and circulation. We will regulate the degree of stress and even the rate of aging.

We will enjoy undreamed of individuality and autonomy.

Our Humanizing Machine Age

A fallacy is current in the world that the Industrial Revolution and modern technology have dehumanized and mechanized life, reducing people to machines, robbing us of privacy and individuality, estranging us from nature.

Why is technology the target of so much hostility, particularly in Western countries? Is the hostility justified? Why do new technologies almost invariably trigger angry resistances?

— New technologies are feared and attacked because they threaten the status quo. People at first resisted the electric bulb, the radio, the telephone, the railroad, the automobile, the airplane, the TV... Each of these technologies precipitated basic radical changes at all levels of societies. Today people fear and fight new technologies — supersonic and hypersonic aircraft, nuclear power, cybernation, genetic engineering, etc.... Underlying these resistances is the fear of change — the unarticulated awareness that new technologies soon radicalize values, institutions, the very rhythm of life.

— New technologies are particularly threatening to the uninformed and the unimaginative. The Harvard University Study on Technology and Society reported that the subjects with "a low level of information were much more likely to feel that technology has made life too complicated and want a return to nature... It is those with the least knowledge and education that were most likely to feel alienated and put the blame on technology." The uninformed are disposed to simplistic answers to problems, focusing on the very worst consequences of each new breakthrough, unable to envision the potentials ahead.

— New technologies are particularly threatening to individuals with poor self image. People with frail egos have difficulty coping with new technologies — with change in general. They are the ones quick to feel dwarfed by bigness — the big new aircraft, the big corporation, the big city, mass society. They are the ones quick to feel reduced to numbers by credit cards, data banks, computers. They are the ones quick to feel their privacy or individuality threatened by new global communication systems. They are the ones quick to see assaults on their humanhood by breakthroughs in biology, in genetics — in any field.

— Modern technology is resented partly because it is equated with Westernization.

One of the intrinsic qualities of the new tele technology is that it recognizes no regionalism and no ideology. The new technology does not Westernize or Easternize — it globalizes.

Technology has made its most recent advances in the West, but technology must not be equated with the West. Technology is an outgrowth of *all* humankind's cumulative efforts. Astronauts who now glide across the universe are not Russian or American only. They are world astronauts. The whole world has reason to be proud because the whole world has shared in these and other epochal achievements.

— Recent technologies are incorrectly blamed for mechanizing life and transforming people into machines. The fact is that people had been turned into machines long before the Industrial Revolution and modern technology. People functioned like machines ages before machines were invented.

The struggle for survival reduced people to cogs in the impersonal assembly line of tribalism, authoritarianism, rigid traditionalism. Robotlike, entire societies arose at exactly the same hour, dressed in

the same manner, ate the same foods, drank the same drinks, lived in the same kind of lodgings, retired at the same hour. They used the same equipment, plowed and sowed and harvested in the same manner, used the same irrigation methods, worked the same hours, the same days, the same seasons. Entire societies worshiped the same gods, recited the very same words of prayer, went through the same rituals, harbored the same beliefs, the same fears, the same superstitions, the same expectations.

Even today take any preindustrial village in, say, southern Spain or Ecuador — all the local people dress alike, think alike, sound alike. They speak in set formulas, give stock answers, mechanically recite traditional formalities. In backward communities of the world, Moslems, Jews, Christians and others, mechanically repeat prayers that have come through the centuries without the slightest deviation from the original texts. Teachers repeat the same lessons decade after decade. Cobblers, carpenters, blacksmiths, cooks, make a living only if they mechanically repeat age-old patterns. Scholars and the learned are those who can faithfully recite classics.

Even the romanticized artists and artisans of the preindustrial world were highly mechanical. In Teheran several years ago I approached Gholar Aghassi, a well-known old artist whose drawings and paintings hang in coffeehouses and inns all over Iran. I told him that a foreign couple had seen his paintings and wanted to buy one. The following day the amiable old man brought a painting to my apartment. "My son did this painting last night," he said.

"Your son? That's amazing. It looks exactly like one of yours. Doesn't he have a style of his own?"

He stared at me obviously surprised. "Why should he have a style of his own? What's wrong with our style? My family has been in this profession for generations. We are not about to change our family style."

Throughout Asia, Africa, and Latin America craftsman, miniaturists, sculptors, potters, sandal-makers, rug-weavers, silversmiths, enamelists, and others all mechanically adhere to local or regional traditions, repeating age-old lines and figures, copying and recopying the same colors, the same designs, the same patterns, the same motifs, the same themes, the same symbols — over and over and over again.

It is the tourist who views all this as art. To the workers who repeat themselves year in and year out, their work is monotonous and mechanical — a struggle for survival.

In pre-industrial economies, machinelike repetition persists not just through one worker's lifetime, but through many generations as sons mechanically follow fathers. Industrialism and modern technology have broken through this generational assembly line that stretched across centuries.

It was our hapless ancestors who functioned at most like robots and machines. There was no escape from the assembly line. Deviation brought outright rejection, punishment — even death.

Many Western social scientists and writers confuse the mechanized life for the mechanical.

The prevalence of machines does not presuppose a depersonalized mechanical life. On the contrary, existence was most mechanical and robotized when there were *no* machines. The machine has enabled the individual to grow *less* machinelike.

— Modern technology is often viewed as destructive and dehumanizing. How can machines be destructive? Machines have no will of their own. (Not yet anyway). We ascribe to machines traits that are in ourselves. We have stigmatized technology as destructive conveniently forgetting that it is we, not technology, who are disposed to destructiveness.

Machines can be deployed to bring pleasure, to spread warmth, music, laughter, to allay pain, save lives. On the other hand, machines can be used to destroy life. How a machine is used depends on people.

There are not many modern machines in the Vatican or in Mecca, yet few places are as cold and dehumanizing as these citadels of orthodoxy. There are backward villages around the world that do not have modern machines, yet is there anything more destructive than the poverty, the disease and the social deprivation of these feudal communities? A military complex and a cruel judicial system are also destructive whether they use machine guns or daggers or other deadly weapons such as fear, guilt, shame, self hate.

Those who attack modern technology are fighting the wrong battle. We should grapple with the *real* causes of dehumanization: the destructiveness of nature, the fragility of our own mortal bodies, poverty, authoritarianism, exclusivity, patriarchy, orthodoxy, insularity.

These are the destructive, dehumanizing forces. They existed long before we fashioned our first crude implements. They existed eons before modern technology.

These are the destructive forces which torment and twist people impelling them to construct machinery with which to torment and destroy others.

It is precisely by creating machines that we have succeeded in defusing some of the destructiveness of nature, protecting the vulnerability of our bodies, eroding authoritarianism and orthodoxy. With the help of technology we are progressively reducing the pressures and the threats to our existences, enhancing communication, comfort, leisure — fostering global cooperation and humanity.

— Modern technology is incorrectly blamed for introducing environmental problems — particularly pollution. The fact is that pollution is an age-old problem, far more insidious in feudal times than in the 20th century. The fact also is that modern technology has helped us reduce pollution, particularly in backward areas of the world.

Until the first half of the 20th century hundreds of thousands of people around the world died every year of infections contracted from polluted waters. Dysentery, typhoid fever, cholera, malaria, intestinal disorders, trachoma and many other diseases were widespread in feudal lands blighted with improper sewerage and irrigation systems, polluted wells, ponds, streams.

(It is also hypocritical to lament the death of fish and birds in offshore polluted waters when for ages people themselves have wantonly killed and eaten birds and fish.)

Air pollution too is nothing new. In pre-industrial villages, even today, people grow up and spend a lifetime in the polluted air of mudhuts, dust roads and sandstorms. In a recent issue of *Medical World News*, two Australian doctors, Cleary and Blackburn, reported finding a high prevalence of chronic lung disease among the people of New Guinea due to the polluted air in their huts.

To be sure industrial technology has unleashed its own water and air pollution. But let us bear in mind that pollution and other environmental problems are not new and have not even worsened. It is we who have grown more sensitive. Washing linen in a stream was at one time romanticized as a pastoral scene, today we angrily denounce it as polluting the waterways.

Let us also bear in mind that pollution is not inherent to technology. It has been inherent to feudal/industrial machines. Post industrial fuels and technology will be largely nonpolluting.

Already because of heightened sensitivity to environmental problems as well as the development of new technologies, we have reduced pollution around the world. In early industrial lands, as a result of improved sanitation and the introduction of plumbing and other technologies, pollution-related diseases

such as malaria, typhoid, and cholera have been virtually eliminated. While in late industrial nations as a result of vigorous anti-pollution measures there has been a noticeable reduction in air and water pollution as for example in the Ruhr and Saarland areas, in the Great Lakes region of the U.S.A., in industrial Sydney. In London there has been a 70% increase in sunshine since the early 1960s.

As we move into the postindustrial world of solar and nuclear energy, hydrogen fuel and cybernated tele technologies we will continue to do away with age-old pollution. Around the beginning of the 21st century our planet will be cleaner, safer, lovelier than ever.

— Finally technology is also feared and resented because it allegedly estranges us from nature and from our own organic humanlife. I will deal at length with this broad theme in subsequent books. Suffice it to say here that in my view there is nothing sacrosanct, nothing incontrovertible, nothing ultimate in nature and in organic life.

To be estranged from nature is not a tragedy because nature itself estranges by destroying and drowning and burning and burying and crushing life. Technology has helped us cope with the destructive side of nature, enabling us to enjoy its gentleness. Moreover Earth's nature is not our ultimate or our only environment. This very day we are reaching out for other worlds — other natures.

To be estranged from our organic life is also not a tragedy because the organic is finally nothing more than an animal/human stage in our evolution. Our organic life is too primitive, too limited, too fragile and fleeting to warrant preserving. Let alone rhapsodizing. The organic is not and should not be our ultimate life form. This very day we are on our way to a post-organic post-human stage in evolution.

Anti technologists as a rule are committed to this finite Earth and to organic life. They are content with very little.

For those of us who aspire to infinite worlds and to higher life forms technology is central.

There can be no growth, no progress, no evolution, without technology.

Technology is the creative use of elements in the Universe to help make ourselves safer, freer, lovelier, more comfortable, more dynamic and transcendent within the Universe.

Privacy—a Modern Privilege

It is often alleged that mass society, modern technology — in particular electronic surveillance — are robbing the modern world of privacy.

How can we be *robbed* of privacy when we never had privacy in the first place? The modern individual living in a modern society enjoys more privacy than our ancestors ever had. We have more time to ourselves than ever. Privacy is not diminishing. It is expanding.

In the oldworld, from birth to death, the individual was — and still is — an inseparable part of the family unit. Everyone grows up with numerous other children — brothers, sisters, cousins. The adult has a large family of its own and remains an integral part of an extended family that comprises parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, in-laws, and others.

In Cyrenaica as in Guadalajara entire families live in one little village within a tight family compound. They eat together, sleep together, work together, celebrate together, and mourn together. A personal dishonor is invariably a family dishonor. A quarrel between two people automatically involves the whole family, even the whole village.

The individual goes through life without ever separating from the family or clan. Even to have a room of one's own is often unheard of. No one has such privacy. No one seeks it. Privacy is not viewed as a privilege, rather as a threat.

Even when the individual is briefly alone, perhaps at work in the fields, still it does not *feel* alone. Belief in God and spirits is so strong that the individual knows God is all around watching. Also hovering around are numerous angels, prophets, patron saints, spirits of ancestors, devils, ghouls, jinns, etc. they are all very real. The individual never feels that it can shake them off or in any way elude them and be totally private.

The nun in an isolated convent would not put up with a moment's loneliness and suffering if she were not absolutely sure that god and the saints were watching her.

In modern communities the extended family or clan no longer exists. The child does not grow up surrounded by aunts, uncles, cousins, and others. Even the nuclear family is shrinking as people have fewer and fewer children. Millions of people choose to live singly.

Then too as a rule the modern no longer believes in god or spirits. For the first time it is possible to enjoy total privacy.

At home the modern individual can open up the channels of communication to let in the world. Just as quickly, with the push of a button, you can shut off the world and ensure privacy. God and the spirits can never be turned off. Nor can the aunts.

Those who complain that wiretapping and other modern methods of intrusion are robbing us of privacy do not realize that we are just evolving from an oldworld in which gods and spirits were perpetually — from birth to death, night and day — eavesdropping on every word, every deed, every *thought* of every individual. This built-in wiretapping was more insidious and intrusive than any method of eavesdropping modern technology can devise.

An individual living in the heart of New York City enjoys more privacy than the villager of the oldworld. Privacy is exclusively a modern concept, a modern privilege. It is only the modern person who is even preoccupied with it.

But although the psychological, social, and technological progress enables us to have more privacy than ever, our *need* for privacy is diminishing. This is a paradox that seems to elude many people.

They are convinced that as the technology of eavesdropping continues to develop, it will be increasingly difficult to have any privacy at all.

These alarmist projections are made within the context of today's conditions. Alarmists forget that as our techniques of intrusion develop our fears of being intruded upon continue to diminish. We are outgrowing ageold puritanism, secretiveness, and repressions. In the year 2010 privacy will have far less meaning because shame and guilt and pathological fears will have greatly diminished. It will not matter to people if their conversation is overheard, their finances publicly disclosed, or their lovemaking watched.

We can already see the trend. Victorian women put on or took off their prodigious dresses in securely locked rooms. Women today undress into bikinis on public beaches and don't give a damn about privacy and nudity. Nudity itself is a rejection of privacy.

The loosening of rigid dressing habits often reflects a loosening, or a symbolic attempt at a loosening, of personality.

In the past people rarely even *talked* about their families. In many societies around the world people still do not mention their families in public. In Jerusalem during the course of a long conversation with an Israeli woman I asked her about her relations with her parents and sisters. "How can you ask such an improper question?" she groaned. "This is a private matter." A New York woman would have taken an hour to explain in perceptive detail her own emotions and those of her parents and the reasons for their "inability to relate." She would have voluntarily thrown in a few words about her male friends as well.

Until the 1950s in North America and much of Western Europe, Communism, homosexuality, and erotic literature were illegal. In today's open society, Communists, homosexuals and eroticism have come out of the closet. They are no longer clandestine. Privacy in such matters is therefore increasingly superfluous.

We may be developing more refined eavesdropping techniques, but all along we are also acquiring more liberated values. It is not how much information the government has about you that matters. Rather how it uses this information.

If the government knows that you enjoy making love twelve times a week that is not an intrusion into your *privacy*. It can become an infringement on your *rights* if the government requires you to make love only three times a week.

In most countries governments know the exact incomes, properties, and expenses of all citizens. This information is vital to taxation itself for the benefit of the people. In countries which enjoy socialized medicine, some central agency has detailed information on everyone's health. This too is useful to the peoples themselves.

As communication expands societies grow more open and permissive and therefore the need for surveillance diminishes.

The point is that although we enjoy more privacy than ever our emphasis on privacy is receding as we grow psychologically, sexually, socially, politically freer.

Fluid Identities—the New Emancipation

The argument goes that modern individuals living and working in the anonymity of mass society and mass technology are no longer sure of who they are. Alienated from the people around them and from their work they are losing their identity.

All this has a familiar ring. To begin with there is the usual faulty premise. The contention that the modern person is *losing* identity obviously assumes that their pre-modern had an identity. After all, one cannot lose what one does not have.

The fact is that the oldworld lacked not only individuality and privacy as shown in preceding pages, but for many of the same reasons it also lacked individual identity. People were — and still are — totally submerged in the identity of family, clan, tribe, village, sect.

Who am I? If they ever pause to ask themselves such a question the answer is prompt and clear. I am Patrick McFarland of the McFarland clan. I am Irish. Catholic. I live in Kilkenny and I am the village cobbler.

Who am I? I am Ibrahim Yussef, the son of Muhammad Yussef. I am Moslem of the Sunni sect. I belong to the village of Irbid and I am a farmer.

Ask them to tell you more about themselves — their own individual selves — and they are at a loss. They will simply repeat their inherited affiliations and echo the ideas and beliefs of their groups. There are no personal views, no individual identity. Your identity is totally and permanently encapsulated in the mass identity of the group or groups into which you are born.

In most oldworld communities no one is interested in your first name. Only your family or clan matters. "What is your name?"

"My name is Pappas."

"Ah yes, I know the family well. It is a good family, decent and generous. Whose son are you?"

"I am the son of Evangelos Pappas."

"Yes, I know of him. He is one of the prominent members of the Pappas family. Our families have long been closely associated. Well, well, I am always delighted to meet a Pappas..."

He will probably part without having asked your first name. He does not want to know who *you* are, rather who your family or clan is. (It is the modern individual who asks your first name.)

In the oldworld the individual is a non-person. You have no distinct identity of your own. Only when you speak as a member of a clan or tribe, church or government, is your view recognized or taken seriously.

The woman too is without an identity of her own. She is an appurtenance to the man. Until about a hundred years ago, in some Asian societies many a woman was even buried alive when her husband died. Without her husband she had no meaning. Today the woman still takes on more than simply her husband's name. She transfers her identity from her own family or clan to that of her husband. If she is a Buddhist and is allowed to marry a Jain, she will become a Jain. If her husband is a leftist she will become a leftist, and if he is a rightist she will become a rightist. In other words she shifts her identity and takes on his.

Even in the home she exercises authority over her children only as the father's representative. "If you don't obey," she warns the children, "I will report you to your father. Wait till he comes home tonight."

In the oldworld the concept of a free woman unappended to a family or a husband does not exist. To be a free woman is to be a whore.

In the past even more than in today's changing oldworld every person was permanently pegged with the fixed identity of inherited affiliations. You had an ancestral village or town in which you were born, in which you live, and in which you died. You had a fixed clan or tribe, a fixed religion, often a fixed nationality.

As a rule you had a lifelong profession from which you also derived your fixed identity. The blacksmith was only a blacksmith. The soldier only a soldier. The priest permanently a priest. The housewife only a housewife.

Each individual had a fixed label. Cardot the artist. Ahmad Hassan the carpenter. Lorenzo the baker. Herr Goldshmitt was the goldsmith and Abraham Spicehandler handled nothing but spices.

People also had fixed ideologies. If you were born into a family of monarchists or if you joined a nationalist group or a brotherhood, more likely than not you remained permanently committed to and identified with your group. If necessary you even died for it.

Within these rigid identities and commitments there was very little deviation. Even the convert merely shifted its submerged identity from one clan or sect or group to another. The devout Zoroastrian became a devout Moslem. The faithful clanswoman became the faithful member of her husband's clan. The patriotic Pole became a super-patriotic American. The conversion was not so much an assertion of an individual identity as a transference from the passive mass-identity of one group to the mass-identity of another.

But in the oldworld this fixed group-identity worked well. For one thing the oldworld was insular and static. Religions and ideologies remained relevant for decades, even centuries. It was not illogical therefore for individuals to remain permanently identified with a group or an ideology, or even to inherit identities of parents and grandparents.

Moreover, as I have already mentioned, the authoritarian oldworld did not engender the ego-strength to assert individuality and a personal identity. In fact it was precisely through total permanent identification with a fixed family or tribe, a fixed religion and nation, a fixed profession and ideology, that you derived some security.

So much for the old past. In recent decades the steady rise of communication and the loosening of traditionalism and authoritarianism have enabled people in large urban communities of the world to begin shedding inherited group-identity and assert individual-identity.

People grew more and more mobile, fluid, and autonomous. They were no longer bogged down in their ancestral village or town. They moved away to the big city. Nor were they any longer trapped in an inherited profession, automatically stepping into the family trade. They sought jobs which were more expressive of their own pace and ideals. Kinship ties and religious affiliations also loosened. For the very first time the individual was able to assert its self. Individual-identity began to supplant group-identity.

All this happened in just the last few decades, and only in modern urban communities. Individual-identity like privacy and individuality is a relatively recent gain.

But now in the most advanced communities of the world even individual-identity is losing relevance. Upcoming generations living in an increasingly fluid world are themselves too fluid to maintain a distinct identity.

This is what many Western social scientists and intellectuals call *loss* of identity. But this de-identification must not be viewed as a loss. Rather as a gain.

It is a loss only to those who are fixated on their recently acquired individuality. In a way these Western social scientists and intellectuals are like the new-born nations of Africa and Asia. Having only

recently won independence these states are now having difficulties relinquishing nationhood and evolving to new stages. Many urban Westerners are also hung up on identity and regard its loss as a tragedy.

The fact is that in the emerging post-industrial world expanding individualism, mobility and fluidity are rendering the whole concept of identity obsolete. Identity is increasingly elusive and superfluous.

As a rule, the young modern has no strong kinship ties. You do not *belong* to a clan or tribe or town or state or even country. You do not have a fixed profession, a fixed political position, a fixed morality, or a fixed philosophy of life.

At seventeen you are a politically moderate student in Los Angeles, at nineteen a Youth Corps volunteer in Ethiopia, at twenty-one a socialist correspondent in Paris, at twenty-three a loafer and globetrotter, later in the year a student at the University of Grenoble, three years later making a film in Mexico or doing research in Yugoslavia or writing a book in Rome, and five years later at the ripe young age of thirty-two or thirty-five you may be anywhere in the world — at an ashram in India, working at a restaurant in San Francisco, teaching school outside Rio, shacking up with a Korean girl in Amsterdam, or preparing to go to a Space colony. Wherever you are, whatever you are doing, more likely than not you are on the move, exploring and growing.

In the feudal/industrial oldworld an inability to remain settled in one place and committed to a lifelong profession, religion, or ideology was condemned as fickle, unstable, traitorous. In our fluid age it is often a sign of the dynamic evolving individual. It is a sign of fluidity — and fluidity defies identification.

Who am I? This is increasingly difficult to answer but what of it? Why is it necessary to have an identity? A tag?

The young modern does not *need* an identity. You do not need to know exactly who you are, what your affiliations are. Today you are one thing, in a year or two quite another.

What is your lifelong profession? What is your philosophy of life? What is your party allegiance? Your ethnic group? Where is your home? Your homeland? These are all increasingly irrelevant.

They presuppose a certain stability and continuity. But stability and continuity are oldworld conditions. They are more and more elusive and undesirable in our fluid times.

Stability is often a cop out for stagnation.

The young are too dynamic to encapsulate themselves within a distinct identity. To them identity is too confining and static. Their growth is continual.

Commitment is becoming as difficult as non-commitment was in the past. The oldworld found some security in permanent commitments and fixed identities. Today's young find security in non-identity and non-commitment. They find security and a sense of selfhood in motion and fluidity.

They may temporarily take part in a movement with a specific aim — for instance a campaign to liberalize an educational system, or to promote civil rights. But this commitment is temporary, voluntary, and questioning. It is not inherited and not lifelong.

Many American and European social scientists and intellectuals are conditioned to the world of the 1930s and the 1940s when individual-identity came into existence, an era in which more than ever it was possible and desirable to assert one's own identity and individuality. But these quasi-modern Westerners have not evolved with the times. They are still bogged down in the world of thirty or forty years ago. They are still imputing theories of the 1930s and the 1940s to the world of the late 20th. They judge a new world and new generations by concepts of the old.

They speak of and Identity Crisis. But what crisis? There is no identity crisis. The young are not *losing* identity. They are gladly disencumbering themselves of it.

Non-identity is the new emancipation of the individual.

An identity crisis exists only in those who have not adjusted to that new era of instant telecommunication and interplanetary travel — to the new liquidity, the new pace and rhythm. The crisis and the alienation they see all around are projections of their own alienation from a rapidly changing world.

They fail to see that the unstructured new pace, so disruptive to their generation, is exhilarating and stimulating to modern youth who find the structured life in the slow pace of the oldworld disruptive. They do not see that the new rapidity and fluidity are not evidences of haste or tension, any more than the slow pace of the oldworld denoted tranquility. An individual traveling in a supersonic may feel more tranquil than a person crouched in a corner of a mud hut.

To be without fixed family ties, without fixed commitments to a profession, a political party, a nation, a morality, or an ideology, is no longer a loss and certainly not a crisis.

To young generations identity is less and less an issue or a goal. As the world grows more fluid and people more mobile and individualistic, the whole concept of identity is losing all meaning.

Alienation—a Modern Myth in Our Age of Integration

Many people in modern societies have succumbed to the absurd brainwashing that we live in an Age of Alienation — that we are losing rapport with one another.

These theorizings are particularly absurd in our times when we are at last emerging from centuries of deep alienation. People in modern societies are closer to one another than ever. There is more integration and communication in advanced societies than humankind has ever known.

The feudal/industrial oldworlds were highly compartmentalized discouraging closeness and communication. What communication was there between authoritarian parents and their submissive children? Between authoritarian teachers and their docile pupils? Between husbands and wives whose marriages were arranged by others? Between peasants, serfs, and exploitative absentee land-barons who showed up once a year to collect revenues? Or between pompous emperor-kings insulated in well-fortified palaces and their impoverished subjects?

What communication was there between members of different castes? Different classes? Different sects? Religions? Races? Empires?

The oldworld which we are now outgrowing did not fragment merely individuals. Societies themselves were rigidly fragmented. Authoritarianism, patriarchy, hierarchy, feudalism, tribalism, caste, class, puritanism — all these generated their own alienation and represented obstacles to communication.

Even today most old societies still maintain rigid segregation of adults and children, men and women, employers and employees, rulers and subjects. Members of aristocracies have nothing to do with the poor and the "third class." Brahmins do not fraternize with Jats. Jats do not touch untouchables. No Japanese fraternizes with members of the segregated Eta community. Buddhists do not marry non-Buddhists. Parsis do not marry non-Parsis. Choose marry only Jews, Moslems only Moslems, Christians only Christians.

Deep cleavages separate even sects within the *same* religion. For instance Sunni and Shia Moslems. Khadari and Tijani Moslems. Maronite and orthodox Christians. Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jews.

Lack of communication also persists between tribes, between clans, between language groups, between dialect blocs. This alienation often erupts into violent clashes. For example, recent tribal wars between the Ibo and the Hausa in Nigeria. Bloody street clashes between Chinese clans in Malaysia. Age-old clashes over language in Yugoslavia, Belgium, Daghestan S.S.R., India, and elsewhere.

In the past, segregation was even more insidious. Tribes fought on sight. They fought and killed not over grievances but simply because they belonged to different tribes. All the world religions spoke of "the brotherhood of man" — none observed it. Members of different religions did not even *sit* or *eat* together. Among Jews, Christians, and Moslems, men were forbidden to *look* at women. Women forbidden to *look* at men. Children were not allowed to *speak* in the presence of adults. Common citizens were not permitted to *address* members of the nobility. In Japan and in some African societies subjects were strictly forbidden even to *glance* at royalty. And in the United States Blacks were not even allowed to *piss* next to the whites.

In modern communities — for example New York City or Copenhagen — rich and unrich, employers and employees, leaders and citizens, Catholics and Jews and Protestants and Atheists, Blacks and Whites and Yellows, Radicals and Liberals and Conservatives — all live and work and eat and drink together.

Such integration was unheard of in the past. In fact the oldworld would not have allowed so many disparate groups to even live close together.

The phaseout of family, marriage, exclusive relations, patriarchy, puritanism, nationalism, is helping bring people together as never before.

There may be more communication in modern societies, skeptics argue, but mass technology has imposed its own obstacles to meaningful communication. The *quality* of communication has been impaired, it is said. Mass technology has rendered communication distant, impersonal, and one-way. How can one really communicate through a telephone? How can one talk back to a radio or a TV set?

In the first place these arguments presume that in oldworld societies communication between people is personal and two-way. How can it be two-way? Who can talk back to God? Or to the Bible, the Koran — to any book? Who can have a dialogue with the prophets and saints all long dead yet exercising enormous influence? Who can converse with the devil? Or the high priests? Or the absentee landlord? The ruler? Or even talk back to one's own father?

Laws and rules are set down — there is no talking back. Communication is not personal or two-way. People often talk at statues and crosses or murmur as they look up into the sky. They talk at their donkeys, their goats and plows. But there is no dialogue.

The oldworld has its own internalized distances, its own invisible obstacles to communication. In modern communities communication is more personal and two-way because relationships are more democratic and reciprocal — people can talk back, there is dialogue.

Modern technology is helping widen this dialogue without rendering it impersonal. For instance a modern employer and employee conversing by telephone are *technically* or *physically* separated from each other, but in all probability they are communicating more personally than an oldworld employer and employee having a face-to-face talk.

How can one talk back to a radio or a TV set? It is simple. Millions talk back by writing, wiring, or calling in. Every day radio and TV stations receive countless telephone calls and letters from listeners. They are talking back. Many others talk back by participating in panel discussions, interviews, and two-way programs. Different points of view are heard.

It is absurd to focus on alienation or a break-down in communication at a time when liberated values and new tele technologies are helping generate personal communication among all peoples of the planet. Modern communication flits through jungles, oceans and frontiers to bring people together.

Beyond Family—Global Friends

Many people claim to nostalgic fantasies about a past when families were supposedly aglow with love and togetherness, protected by strong affectionate fathers, gentle devoted mothers, and children oozing with love and devotion for their parents.

All this is news to those who were brought up in the oldworld. That is, those who do not weave fantasies about their childhood.

In his penetrating book, *Growing Up in an Egyptian Village*, Hamed Ammar, the social scientist, writes that in Silowa, Egypt,

the tension and suspicion discerned in the interpersonal relationships is epitomized in the saying that "every man has an enemy." [This] could be related to the excess in resorting to both fear and rivalry motives in the upbringing of children... Adolescent boys and girls impressed the writer as being on the whole timid, apprehensive, and withdrawn... Hearty laughter is rare, and it usually occurs among adults in their sarcastic allusion to others... Suspicion of the evil intentions of others is institutionalized in the evil eye, seeing potential danger in practically everybody... The morbid fear of shame, the excessive touchiness, the resort to the use of oaths and swearing, the exaggerated expression of language are all symptoms of a type of personal relationship which could not legitimately be described as intimate and smooth...⁷

This alienation in the home and community is borne out by findings of other social scientists and anthropologists who have been investigating family life in oldworld communities around the globe. Hopefully this growing research will help dissipate fantasies about family life in the past.

Contrary to popular opinion, family life in the oldworld was not — and still is not — secure or integrated. Cohesion is maintained not so much through love as through fear and dependence, guilt and shame. Love is always conditional. The mother or father expresses love only if the child is obedient. The community accepts the child only if it abides by all its rules and traditions.

Authoritarianism itself is an inherently *rejecting* system. It is precisely by keeping the child or the individual at arm's length, in a state of fear and insecurity, that authoritarianism can perpetrate itself.

Within the shaky cohesion of the authoritarian system you may know who you are and what your place is — but you are far from secure. In fact you are deeply insecure.

Is not surprising that in the home as in the community relations are highly emotional, fragile, and intense. This intensity is often mistaken for closeness and love. Tight cohabitation is confused with integration.

The fact is that although members of families, clans, tribes and villages live close together, they hardly relate to one another. As a rule relations are dominant-submissive, protective-dependent. They lack reciprocity and spontaneity. They lack communication. Parents, elders, and teachers talk *at* their children. People rarely talk *with* one another.

In the patriarchal oldworld, fathers in particular are traditionally austere and punitive. They grow distant as children reach adolescence. Sadi, the thirteenth-century Iranian poet-philosopher whose writings are revered throughout the East, wrote, "The severity of a teacher is better than the love of a father."

⁷ Hamed Ammar, *Growing Up in an Egyptian Village*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1954.

It is in the oldworld that individuals feel *least* secure within the family and community. It is here that they suffer the deepest loneliness.

Sons feel isolated from fathers. Wives from husbands. Brothers from sisters. Pupils from teachers. Employees from employers.

Too often we forget that *open* expression of *unconditional* love to children is twentieth-century. So too is, camaraderie with children. There is more camaraderie between modern parents and their children, brothers and sisters, teachers and pupils, than ever.

Generation gap between modern parents and children must not be confused with alienation. Rapid change has widened the generation gap as never before. Several ages separate today's parents from their children. In the oldworld several generations belonged to the same era. But this widening gap notwithstanding, relations between modern parents and children are closer than ever in the past.

Today for the first time parents are acutely sensitive to the *emotional* well-being of their children. In the oldworld there is no such sensitivity mainly because there is not the insight. So long as your children eat well and obtain good marks at school they are considered all right.

Today's youths who leave home enjoy better communication with their parents than the submissive youngsters in the oldworld who festered in their parental homes until they reached adulthood at forty.

In the oldworld, relationships were and still are foisted on the individual. You have to accept them. You have to accept parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins. Even the wife or husband is selected by others. You have very little choice. You spend a lifetime with people who are often incompatible.

In the modern world the individual *chooses* most of its relationships. You do not have to accept anyone. You strive for maximum compatibility and integration. Your fluidity enables you more than ever to achieve integration within relationships.

Leaving home is no longer necessarily an act of rebellion. It is now more often an act of growth.

If youngsters are leaving home at an earlier age than in the past it is only because they mature more rapidly than ever. The seventeen-year-olds who live away from their parents are only doing what the forty-year-olds of two generations ago did that when they left home.

The modern youngster can well do without a fixed family. It is the family that is having problems surviving in today's world.

Relations between men and women are also growing more liberated. Within this fluidity there is more rapport and communication than ever.

In the past, relations between men and women were hampered by a rigid puritanical segregation of the genders. This was as true in ancient China, India, and Egypt as in Old Europe and the United States. Today in oldworld communities around the planet, segregation of the genders persists, men and women still move into different worlds.

This lack of communication between the genders is particularly severe in puritanical societies. In Mecca or Medina for instance if a man knocks at the door and only the woman is at home she must not speak out or open the door. In other words she must not even be seen or heard. She simply claps her hands once or twice to indicate that she is alone and the man goes away.

In the oldworld there is little communication even between husband and wife. The husband diverts himself with his men friends — together they attend parties, go on evening promenades, sit in

cafés, discuss politics, share secrets. The wife turns to her mother, sisters, female relatives and friends. Camaraderie and dialogue between husband and wife hardly exists.

In his book *Village Life in Northern India*, Oscar Lewis writes:

At no meal time do all the family members eat together. Children and elderly persons are generally served first, the others, one by one, eat their meals and go. The women of the household eat last — never with the men...

Men are seldom seen in the home; during the day they work in the fields and any spare time is spent in the "baithak" or men's quarters, where the men meet to chat and smoke the hookah. The men sleep in the baithak too, visiting their wives only briefly at night for sexual purposes. The baithak is sometimes located in the same compound as their women's ghar, but often it is in a completely separate place, many streets away.⁸

The literature and folklore of the oldworld are filled with themes of alienation, particularly of estranged couples. Men and women forced on each other by autocratic parents and conniving relatives. Lovers kept apart by feuding clans, or by "fate" which, analyzed carefully, is often a rationale for impotence, frigidity, inability to communicate, distrust of the other gender.

But who thinks of all the Romeos and Juliets of old literature as alienated? Alienation is identified with modern individuals.

Recordings of Omm Kolthoum, the late Egyptian singer, daily wail threnodies of estranged lovers over Radio Cairo. Millions in the Middle East and North Africa listen and identify. Neapolitan, Oklahoma hill-billy, and other singers of the oldworld also wail ballads of men and women who somehow can never get together.

Modern individuals read Kama Sutra, the Perfumed Garden, and other misleading erotica of the oldworld and their imaginations run wild. Backwater Asian and African men are viewed as exciting lovers who carry off women into the wilderness and make torrid love. Village women are identified with "mother earth" and romanticized as passionate and sensuous, brewing ancient aphrodisiacs in their peasants' huts.

All this comes as news to rural people. The sad fact is that people of the oldworld are lousy lovers. Men and women alike are psychologically immature and sexually naïve and repressed.

It is the *image* of the rural and primitive lover that tantalizes. The reality is far from tantalizing. The exciting lover is more likely to be found among liberated elements in big cities — in Rome rather than in Calabria, in San Francisco rather than in the Wild West, in Nairobi rather than in the bush, in Beirut rather than in an oasis.

It ought to be axiomatic by now that the more modern the person the less sexually alienated. Rollo May and other Western social scientists are wrong in alleging that sexual relations between modern men and women are becoming "mechanical." Quite the contrary. They are growing more human. They have never been less mechanical.

In the old world the woman has always been essentially a receptacle for the man's sexual gratification and a vehicle for procreation. As a rule a wife is not expected to *enjoy* lovemaking. She is not even expected to be a good lover or an active participant. Passivity and chasteness are stressed. The man mechanically penetrates, has his orgasm, and moves away.

⁸ Oscar Lewis. *Village Life in Northern India*. Vintage Books, New York, 1965.

You do that with a modern woman and you'll never see her again.

It is the modern woman who asserts her right to sexual gratification. It is the modern man who responds to the woman's sexual needs. The woman does matter. Passivity and innocence are no longer the ideal. In fact the modern woman is expected to be a good lover, a participant — not a machine.

Then too, when lovemaking is over the man does not dash off to be with his men friends. Nor does the woman join her female relatives. Men and women now communicate at other levels as well. They confide and consult, exchange views on art, literature, politics, they go out for a walk, see a film, sit in a café.

Sexually, emotionally, intellectually, men and women are relating more and more *humanly* to each other. Even in a brief love affair communication now has more depth and dimension.

Liberated men and women do not simply communicate better. The two genders are actually merging. It is increasingly difficult to distinguish a man's roles, jobs, clothes from a woman's. The two genders are fusing.

Those who deplore the disintegration of the family and resistance to marriage are using outdated values. Marriage is becoming an anachronism in a world of increasing psychological, sexual, social, and economic freedoms, endless alternatives and varieties.

This trend can already be seen in the large cities of the world. As a rule men and women no longer marry at eighteen or twenty. They now marry at thirty and are divorced at thirty-three. In urban centers of the United States and Western Europe nearly one out of every two marriages ends in divorce. In the Soviet Union the rate of divorce is now nearly one out of every three marriages and rapidly rising.

Singlehood and nonparenthood are now pervasive in the large cities of the world.

It is increasingly obvious that marriage is inoperative in the modern world. To try and modernize marriage is like striving to modernize religion. How can you modernize an institution which is *inherently* irrelevant to the times? Today everything is working against marriage.

For one thing, the formalization of love is no longer binding to a modern person. To go before some fuddy-duddy judge and swear that you promise to love and protect someone has lost its adhesive value. This ritualization of love is increasingly offensive to the modern person. Love does not need guarantees — it is its own guarantor.

Moreover how can marriage survive in a fluid open world in which people will not and cannot permanently and totally commit themselves to anyone? How can marriage — an inherently exclusivist arrangement — endure in a world which is rapidly renouncing all forms of exclusivities? What does a "stable marriage" or a "stable home" mean in a world itself no longer stable — but dynamic?

Marriage, at one time the glamorized basis of stable society, is now an unliberated anachronism.

Parents and child psychologists who still insist on a stable home for children are only fooling themselves. There is no longer such a thing as stability. Stability is an oldworld condition.

The stable home with its fixed mother, fixed father, and fixed values did not even work well in the oldworld let alone in the new. It produced individuals who remained fixated on the primary love-objects (mother and father) unable ever to outgrow these early fixations and relate effectively to their spouses and lovers. Relationships between men and women have always been painful chiefly because people have not been able to overcome the traumatizing influences of their early relationships with the one and only mother and father.

It is mainly this exclusivity (inherent possessiveness) in parent-child relationships which generates many of the painful insecurities, anxieties, depressions, rivalries, jealousies, and the like in

children — problems which then persist through life. Later it is again the exclusivity of marriage which reawakens and reinforces these painful emotions.

Any kind of exclusivity in human relations is inherently disruptive and leaves the individual vulnerable to considerable suffering.

I am aware that our exclusive family organizations, while disruptive, may have at one time served a useful purpose. They conditioned individuals to extremes of loyalty essential to survival. But the earlier survival problems hardly exist in modern communities. To survive we no longer need tightly knit loyalties and commitments. On the contrary, to survive and evolve in our fast moving world, we now need individuals who are fluid, resilient, dynamic, spontaneous, able to move along. Those who are prone to fixate and remain bogged down in dependent commitments do not fare well.

A saner upbringing for children of the next three or four decades is a fluid environment comprising many "fathers" and many "mothers" all involved in fluid relationships with one another and with the children. Such multiplicity of loving but non-fixating early relationships can better prepare individuals for our fluid worlds.

Procreation itself is being de-romanticized. In the past fatherhood and motherhood enjoyed a certain mystique. A house filled with children was considered blessed. It was an affirmation of one's womanhood or manhood. In today's world having children is considered anti-social.

More and more modern individuals consider procreation a bore (though some may not openly admit to it). They strive for fulfillment not by having children but by being personally creative and productive, at work and in relationships with others.

Liberated women refuse to act like cows bearing and breast feeding infants year after year. They are aware that so long as they are the bearers of children they will remain subordinate to men.

It is also increasingly difficult to persuade modern men to the old delusion that wiping babies asses year after year is biologically pleasing.

"Young married couples (in the Soviet Union) are no longer in a hurry to have children," writes V.I. Perevedentsev in the weekly *Literaturnaya Gazeta*. "Many get divorced before having *any* children. Families with several children have become rare... Divorce is highest among the intelligentsia, lowest among collective farmers... Increasing number of the intelligentsia attach little importance to family, emphasizing instead their profession and social activity..."

Among youths this is now a universal trend. Having children is no longer economically or politically necessary. People do not need children to help them on the farm or at the shop or to defend the clan.

Unfortunately too many people still have children without forethought. They breed to satisfy narcissism, to allay psychological insecurities by having a dependent child to depend on, or simply because they feel they are expected to have children. These are not civilized reasons for producing more lives. Millions of human lives on our planet are in perpetual suffering chiefly because we reproduce without emphasizing the quality of life at the rate we increase its quantity. Slam-bang breeding, at one time a boon to progress and survival, is now a deterrent.

By the year 2000 we will reproduce chiefly through selective insemination, in ovulation, telegensis, nonflesh wombs. Still later when we have done away with death we may altogether stop the primitive process of reproduction. We will be free at last to concentrate on refining and regenerating the living.

I will elaborate on all this in subsequent books. What I want to emphasize here is that family, marriage, parenthood, are on their way out. There is no reason to dread the new liberated relationships. As

a rule there is more integration and mature love in today's fluid relationships than in the static involvements of the past. Today we *choose* our relationships and in them while they last we are freer, more spontaneous and often more loving.

A liberated couple enjoys deeper, fuller communication in a brief love affair than an oldworld couple enjoyed in thirty years of "stable" married life.

Family and marriage are giving way to a new concept — Universal Life. Wherever we connect we have found a brother or a sister. Our multinational lovers and friends are replacing the old kinship ties. We are outgrowing home and homeland — reaching out to embrace more and more of the world.

Myths About Nature

European and American writers have long been circulating the myths that people in modern societies are deeply estranged from nature and that this cleavage is worsening. They have encouraged the myths that in the past people felt close to nature but that industrialism changed all that, reducing the modern person into a "cold asphalt animal entombed in cold asphalt cities."

These Westerners can afford such fantasies. After all, don't they languish in air-conditioned apartments, cozy comfortably heated houses, and cities well protected from the rapacities of nature?

Two glaring fallacies pervade all this nonsense about our deepening estrangement from nature. First, that people in preindustrial times *felt* closer to nature because they *lived* closer to it. Second, that increasing control of nature means increasing alienation from it.

Martin Heidegger, for instance, wrote that for all the energy and genius expended upon the control of nature, "man today feels less at home in his natural setting than he did at the time of the Greeks."

At the time of the Greeks? Here is another quote. "In ancient times nature made man simple and peaceful and the world was happy. But then man acquired knowledge, and life became complicated... Mankind moved from the fields into the towns and began to write books. Slowly misery was born... The wise man will avoid towns and the corrupting influences of civilization. He will go back to nature... because happiness can be gained only in obeying nature and wandering quietly along the serene paths of the earth."

Which twentieth-century philosopher wrote this?

It was written twenty-five hundred years ago—at the time of Heidegger's Greeks. Twenty-five centuries ago Lao-tse believed that in "ancient times" people had been simple and had lived close to nature, but that things had changed, people had moved to towns and were no longer in communion with nature. Lao-tse was complaining of an estrangement from nature more than two thousand years before modern technology.

The point is that this romanticization of nature and dread of city life are nothing new. They don't even have anything to do with industrialism and modern technology. There have always been individuals like Lao-tse, Solomon, Rousseau, and Schiller who reacted hypersensitively to the pressures of collective life and exhorted their contemporaries to seek refuge in the womb of nature.

But their contemporaries never responded to these illogical exhortations. They did the opposite. They sought refuge not *in* nature but *from* nature. They moved from the valleys and the deserts, the mountains and the forests, to the relative security of towns and cities.

People have *never* felt close to nature. They were always deeply estranged from it. In fact the farther back you go in history the more alienated from nature people were because the farther back you go the more they were at the mercy of nature.

Nature which made them starve, burned them in the summertime, made them freeze in the winter, ruthlessly drowned their children, arbitrarily demolished their frail habitations, desiccated their land, washed away their few possessions, destroyed their crops, wiped away their villages.

How could they have felt at peace with nature? They were involved in a relentless struggle with it. A struggle for survival.

Today this struggle with nature's cruelties goes on.

Heavy monsoon rains lash South Korea killing 85 persons and leaving thousands homeless.

Cyclones and floods claim 200,000 lives in Bangladesh.

Earthquake entombs 13,000 people in Morocco, 20,000 in Guatemala, 70,000 in Peru, 650,000 in China...

There is much talk about humanity's crime against nature. What about nature's continuous crimes against humanity?

In 1962 a severe earthquake jolted a wide area of central Iran. In less than 2 minutes dozens of mud villages near Teheran were completely leveled. Over twelve thousand men, women, and children were buried alive.

Everywhere in what had been villages, mutilated bodies, severed arms and legs jutted out of the rubble. The smell of rotting corpses hovered in the air.

A few days after the earthquake in a village near Buyin Zahreh I came upon a man staggering in the rubble, holding a whimpering little girl in his arms. "He is in a daze," a news reporter from Teheran said. "On the night of the earthquake their mud hut collapsed on them. His wife and all his six children are buried somewhere there under the rubble. He and the little girl are the only survivors in this village."

The next day the man and the little girl stood by watching as volunteers from Teheran dug up the bodies for burial. "Look brother," my friends and I told the man, "let us drive you to one of the neighboring villages."

The man stared into the distance and shook his head. "I'll take this little girl and will go to the city. At least in the city there is protection from all this."

"But there are other survivors in neighboring villages," I said. "You can all start afresh."

"Start afresh?" he repeated. "How many times can one start afresh? Just two, three years ago we had that damned drought and we all nearly starved to death. Only recently we had the heavy rains and floods. We were just beginning to recover. Then this happened."

He began to weep. "Start afresh you say. I have just lost my children and wife. This whole village is gone. Just the other day children were playing around here. They are all corpses now. What did we do to deserve this? Didn't we have enough tragedies? Why did the earthquake have to strike our poor village?"

The earthquake also severely jolted Teheran. But in that relatively modern city not a single building collapsed, not a single person was killed.

People build cities to protect themselves from nature. They built cities precisely because they were at the mercy of nature and therefore deeply estranged from it. How absurd to think that those who *live* close to nature *feel* close to it, or even share the modern person's enthusiasm for nature.

For instance many peasants regard a flower as something they sell in the neighboring town. It represents livelihood. To them a garden at night is hardly a romantic setting. Rather it is a gathering place of jinns and spirits — a place to be avoided.

People in ancient Mesopotamia (Land-Between-the-Two-Rivers), lived encircled by two beautiful rivers, yet no one swam. Since swimming was unknown persons condemned to death were sometimes thrown into the river which meant a sure death by drowning.

Africa has thousands of miles of beaches along the Atlantic and Indian Oceans — however until recently people sat and roasted in the sun but would not go in for a dip. Now beautiful beaches are suddenly coming to life as men and women in bikinis disport themselves in the water and dance in seaside cafés.

I repeat, *living* close to nature must not be mistaken for *feeling* close to nature. By the same token, living *away* from nature does not presuppose being *estranged* from it.

New Yorkers feel closer to nature than rural people. They feel closer because they are less threatened by nature and therefore able to enjoy its positives without being as helplessly exposed to its destructiveness. Moreover modern persons have greater leisure and inner freedom to enjoy nature.

I am not saying that the modern technological world is now in tune with nature. Far from it. People are still estranged from nature. And why not? This is not an estrangement to deplore.

Nature is destructive. So long as its destructiveness has not been completely overcome, people will be estranged from it.

Those who romanticize nature do not know it well. They only know domesticated nature — swimming pools, garden parties, ski lifts and cozy lodges, sunbathing at comfortable air-conditioned resorts.

They do not know nature in its pristine condition. The jungle is a natural setting with which we have tampered the least. Those who rhapsodize about nature should pay a little visit to a jungle. They should see firsthand what it is they idealize.

This is where they will find the rule of force at work. Might makes right. Dog eat dog. Wild beasts tearing out each other's flesh. A lion gorging itself on a struggling zebra, a serpent devouring a bird, the terrorized cries of an animal pursued, the agonized shrieks of an animal being devoured.

Only those who have witnessed at firsthand the daily holocaust in a jungle can grasp this. Here in one day there is more anxiety, more rapacity, more terror, more destruction and violence, than in all the ghettos of the world combined.

This is nature at its most natural.

Balance of nature? What a farce. Those who insist on a balance of nature want a balance of violence.

Naturalists, lovers of "wild life," and other purists who insist that nature must not be tampered with are all smart enough to live in cities. I have never known a lover of "wild life" who *lived* in a jungle or in a desert. But it is one thing to barricade oneself in the safety of a big city and insist that nature must not be tampered with. Quite another to live in a village bordering the jungles of North India or the Kalahari Desert.

Those who claim to love nature passionately and do not want to be estranged from it should go to it. They will not last a week.

As for *lovers* of "wild life" many of them are in reality *haters* of wild life. They want to protect wild life so that they themselves can go out and destroy it — by hunting and fishing and trapping.

The resentment some express over our increasing *control* of nature reveals a deep cynicism about humanity itself. They think they would rather be at the mercy of "mother nature" than at the mercy of fellow people. I have greater faith in people's potential for wisdom and humaneness than in the unfeelingness of nature.

Humankind will continue to evolve and before long will make the right decisions. But nature cannot mature. It cannot reform itself to accommodate people.

The fatalism of the oldworld was a direct outgrowth of humankind's helplessness vis-à-vis nature. So long as nature, even in the smallest ways, makes decisions for us, we are not free. The arbitrariness with which nature controls life on this planet is an intrusion into our freedom. We must make our own decisions, guide our own destiny.

We have been mired in quarrels with our fellow people for so long that we do not yet fully realize that our enemy is not our fellow creature but nature, of which our own destructiveness is a product.

Our estrangement from nature will end only after we have remade nature. Without our refining influences nature is crude and rotten. We must divest nature of *all* its ugliness, its cruelties, its tyranny.

We have been attempting this from primordial times. We will continue to alter ourselves and nature till no sea can drown us, no earthquake can bury us, no heat can burn us, no cold can freeze us, no fall can maim us, no violence can destroy us.

The Trend Toward Non-Violence

There is less violence in the world today than at any time in the past.

Sounds absurd, doesn't it? Are we not told over and over that violence is daily increasing, that ours is The Age of Violence?

What about crime in the streets of our cities? What about race riots? What about recurrent bloodshed in the Middle East and in Africa? Or assassinations of leaders? What about student uprisings around the world? What about...

All these examples do not disprove my thesis. They only prove that violence is still widespread in the world. Not until you view this whole problem in perspective does it become obvious that there is less violence in modern communities than in oldworld environments, that we are less destructive than our ancestors, and that far from living in an Age of Violence we are living at a time of steadily diminishing violence at all levels of all societies.

But people everywhere lack perspective. This is nothing new. Every age has had its cynics who were convinced that things were never worse than in their times, that conditions were better in the past.

"The world is degenerating these days. There are signs that civilization is coming to an end. Bribery and corruption abound. Violence is everywhere."

This was not written in 1978 or 1950. It was written on an Assyrian tablet more than three thousand years ago.

Some even go so far as to believe that violence is a particularly modern phenomenon, that the mass killings of the Second World War are without precedent in history. They read about genocides of the past as though they were fairytales. For instance Ivar Lissner, the European historian, is contemptuous of violence in the modern world but refers to genocides perpetrated by Attila, Genghis Khan, and Tamerlane as "magnificent conquests."

Nearly one and a half million French soldiers died in Napoleon's maniacal campaigns and conquests. Over one million Europeans were slaughtered by his armies. Today Napoleon is a great hero in France and around the world.

Alexander conquered many lands, burned down villages and towns, massacred tens of thousands of men, women, and children, enslaved countless others. He is now called "Alexander the Great."

But who has heard of Hitler the Great? He is considered a twentieth-century monstrosity.

There were countless Hitlers in the past — Darius the Great, King Richard the Lion Heart, Charlemagne the Great, Suleiman the Magnificent, Peter the Great, Napoleon the Great...

Winston Churchill wrote of the British onslaught of the African Fuzzy-Wuzzies as "the last of the romantic wars." Romantic like hell.

People not only idealize conditions far back in time, they also romanticize conditions in far away societies. Urban people all too often succumb to wishful thinking about rural societies. In fact the farther away these pastoral societies are the more they lend themselves to fantasies.

Many years ago in a *New York Times Sunday Magazine* article⁹ I wrote about violence in old "exotic" societies, noting that to explain to the modern world that emotional problems or violence exist in the palm-treed islands of the Celebes is a thankless task.

⁹ F.M. Esfandiary, "Is It the Mysterious—or Neurotic—East?" *New York Times Sunday Magazine*, March 24, 1957.

A professor from a large West Coast University wrote, "I am appalled by your essay... I have traveled in Java, Bali and the Celebes and have found no terror, tension, or violence... I have found the people at all times friendly, gentle and happy..."

In 1965 these "friendly, gentle" people once again went on a rampage. During two nightmarish months over 300,000 people were killed in Indonesia.

Is violence an old problem? A modern problem? Is it decreasing? Is it, as often alleged, aggravated by conditions in modern technological communities? Or is violence inherent to humankind and therefore unalterable?

Evolutionary perspective can shed considerable light. One way to gain perspective on violence is through the history of laws. The psychology of a people is reflected in its laws.

For instance the code of the Babylonians known as the Code of Hammurabi, like other laws of ancient times, was based on vengeance. If you blinded someone you were punished by being blinded. If a house collapsed and killed its owner, the builder was put to death. If the house collapsed and killed the owner's son, the builder's son was executed.

The Old Testament was no less sanguine. And eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, a life for a life. A man and a woman charged with adultery were both put to death. Homosexuals met the same fate.

The ancient Iranians, like most of their contemporaries, punished crimes by blinding the culprits, by burnings, crucifixions, live burials.

In England as late as the eighteenth century, women and little children ten years old, were hanged for petty theft. More than *three hundred* "crimes" were punishable by death.

Until recent times many large cities of Europe and Asia had Execution Squares where individuals were publicly tortured, hanged, beheaded.

Compare all of the above with trends in today's judicial systems. Most European and Latin American countries have abolished capital punishment. So too have Israel, Nepal, Canada, New Zealand, most of Australia.

In the Soviet Union, Poland, Malaysia, the Philippines and the United States the death penalty has not been officially abandoned but it is rarely carried out.

In most countries which still practice capital punishment, executions are now carried out in private as though everyone were ashamed of the act.

Around the planet the trend is toward the complete elimination of the death penalty. The evidence for this is the number of jurisdictions that have abolished capital punishment for common law crimes, murder included, and steadily decreasing number of executions even where the penalty is retained.

In Sweden even life imprisonment has been abolished. Murderers and others are helped to hold jobs and attend school outside prison. They are not called prisoners or convicts but clients. They are allowed to go home for regular visits and are sent on vacations with their families.

In Holland, Denmark, and many North American states criminals, including murderers, are given psychiatric treatment in hospitals rather than punished.

Among modern peoples around the world, emphasis is now increasingly on rehabilitation rather than on vengeance and violence. This shift implies more than merely a change in penal laws. It reflects the increasing sensitivity to and respect for human life.

Violence is also diminishing in relations among nations.

Until the first half of the 20th century every year *several* armed aggressions rage around the world. The farther back you delve into history, the more frequent and gory the aggressions.

Babylonians, Assyrians, Egyptians, Phoenicians, Hebrews, Chinese, Indians, Iranians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Tartars, Mayas, Incas, Turks, Spaniards — they and other ancient peoples were immersed in perpetual invasions and conquests.

But they were not content with merely acquiring territory as in recent centuries. In ancient times nearly every conquest was genocidal.

Here are *some* of the *well-known* cities that were completely destroyed or burned to the ground— Babylon, Tyre, Sussa, Rhages, Nineveh, Jerusalem, Athens, Persepolis, Thebes, Rome, Phoenicia, Carthage, Bokhara, Samarkand, Merval Shahidsan...

As people evolved, emphasis shifted from mass extermination to exploitation. The conquered were allowed to live — they were colonized.

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were an era of colonization. Still they were far bloodier than the twentieth.

Consider the nineteenth century. From the beginning to the very end of that century, on *all* continents, there raged *incessant* conquests, invasions, land grabs, annexations, colonial expansions, carving up of states. Also a decreasing number of massacres and wars of extermination in East Asia, in the Balkans, and in North and South America. But above all this was the century of gunboat policy.

In 1802 Britain conquered Ceylon. Just like that. No questions asked, no explanations, no apologies, nothing. Britain wanted Ceylon, so it grabbed Ceylon.

Britain also wanted Singapore, the Malay Peninsula, North Borneo, Kashmir, Aden. So it moved in.

In 1810 the Ashantis of West Africa began invading neighboring territories and did not let up until later in the century when they in turn were conquered by Britain.

In 1815 the Dutch occupied Java. That began a series of long and bloody wars of conquest which ended around 1903 when Indonesia was finally crushed and reduced to a colony.

In 1830 France conquered Algeria. It squelched numerous uprisings, burned down hundreds of villages, slaughtered tens of thousands of Algerians.

China was wracked by incessant internecine wars, raids, and aggressions by warlords. In the Taiping Rebellion alone nearly twenty million people were killed.

In the Opium War England grabbed Hong Kong. Later in the century, Germany, England, and Russia carved up China, each seizing vast areas.

Cambodia, Annam, Siam, and Burma were mired in genocidal wars with one another. Later France moved in and took over Indochina, then Siam. England annexed Burma to its Indian Empire.

Italy conquered Somaliland and Eritrea. It slaughtered over eighty thousand Ethiopians in its attempts to invade their country.

Belgium began expropriating the Congo.

Portugal forcibly annexed vast areas of Angola and Mozambique.

The United States grabbed Puerto Rico, Hawaii, the Philippines.

France seized Tunisia, Morocco, Madagascar. Just like that.

Japan invaded Formosa, the Pescadores, Southern Manchuria.

Germany conquered East Africa, Cameroons, Togo, Southwest Africa.

England invaded Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, Egypt, Tanganyika, Nyasaland, Zanzibar, Pemba.

It went on and on throughout the whole century. Asians conquered Asians. Africans conquered Africans. Europeans conquered Europeans. Americans conquered Americans. Several European powers devoured vast portions of Asia and the *entire* African continent.

In any *one* year of the nineteenth century more *conquests* raged around the world than in *all* the decades since 1950. Except for a few conquests, recent wars have been struggles for independence — wars to *undo* aggressions of earlier centuries.

In the past aggressions were not only more frequent and cruel — they were carried out with greater impunity. Britain, France, Germany, or some other power was able to dispatch a few gunboats, land troops, mow down the "bloody savages," and take over. Just take over. No declarations of war, no warnings, no explanations.

Newspapers in London, Paris, Berlin, or Madrid carried accounts of the heroic glorious conquests. The people rejoiced in the acquisition of more territory, more wealth, more power and glory for the empire.

Sometimes a few intellectuals protested, but they were quickly drowned out.

The great heroes were those who conquered and killed the most — the Napoleons, the Wellingtons, the Kitcheners. Aggression evoked no sense of shame or guilt — only pride and exultation.

In our age, on the other hand, when Americans embarked on aggression in Vietnam and Cambodia the world was outraged. The aggressors themselves protested their own aggression. All over the United States, all over the world, the aggressor was wildly, angrily, relentlessly condemned. Mass demonstrations, mass rallies, parades, teach-ins, sit-ins, draft card burnings, open encouragement to draft dodgers and sheltering of them, etc.

The Vietnam moratorium in the fall of 1969, involving millions in the United States and around the world, was the most massive peace demonstration in history. No aggression, no war, was as universally condemned as the American aggression in Indochina.

Were it not for the tragic loss of life, the Vietnam War of the 1960s and the 1970s would have been the first comic war in history. No powerful state ever carried out aggression as apologetically as the United States did in Vietnam. Hardly a week went by when the American government did not in one way or another seek to justify its intrusion, explain it to the world, cover it up, or lament its own plight. Alexander, Genghis Khan, Napoleon, and all the empire builders and colonial lords must have bristled with rage in their graves.

Military aggression is becoming a farce. The long and bloody era of conquests and gunboat policy is coming to an end.

Wars have not changed for the worse. It is humankind that is changing for the better.

If the war in Vietnam was the most unpopular in history, it was because people have grown more sensitive to injustice and violence.

Modern communication is helping humanize us. Communication makes it increasingly difficult to think in terms of sides. We know much about the other side — its problems its sufferings, its humanness. It is easier now to empathize. The other side is becoming our side.

Not only does the modern person's sensitivity reject aggression. Political and technological conditions in the world cannot accommodate military adventures. For one thing armed aggression can no longer be surreptitious. Within hours the whole world is alerted. Within hours "world public opinion" reacts. It's moral power now has a restraining influence.

It is increasingly difficult for world powers to get together and "carve up" a country let alone a whole continent. World powers are hardly able to maintain spheres of influence let alone occupy territories.

Today conflicts between nations are ideological and economic. Military conquests are giving way to ideological persuasion. The race to conquer territories has already given way to the race to win alliances.

To win alliances you now have to send over wheat and machines, help build factories and dams. To win alliances world powers now have to outdo one another not in subjugating — but in *helping*.

This is a totally new phenomenon in relations among nations.

If the relatively few armed aggressions of the 1950s, the 1960s and the 1970s, particularly the most recent in Vietnam and Cambodia, have proven anything, it is not that things are the same, but that things are not the same. That humanity is maturing rapidly and will not tolerate armed aggression.

The lessening of violence is evident not only in our penal systems and in relations among nations but in *all* spheres of life.

Human sacrifices, gladiator fights to the death, slavery, routine assassination of leaders, duels to the death, torture and killings of the emotionally ill, vigilantism, lynchings, wife beatings and child beatings — all these were commonplace and universal at one time.

In fact the orientation to violence started in the home and at school. Children were routinely abused and beaten. Parents, themselves victims of cruelties, set the pattern for violence. Their children perpetuated the violence through life.

(At one time the complaint was that parents were too authoritarian. In modern societies today the occasional complaint is that homes are too permissive.)

Violence is diminishing. Between parents and children, between men and women, teachers and pupils, employers and employees, leaders and citizens, society and the criminal, society and the emotionally ill, between nations, even between people and animals — at all levels of all societies there is a steady diminution in the rule of force and in violence.

If violence is lessening why does it appear that violence is rising everywhere? What about statistics that point to increase in crime, particularly in the more advanced societies?

— Violence *appears* to be spreading because communication is spreading and therefore we are better informed. We are bombarded every day by a torrent of worldwide news — Two people were killed in this morning's uprising in Northern Ireland... Martial law has been declared in Pakistan following a night of unrest in as Islamabad... In Salisbury four people were injured when a bomb went off in a cinema... An old lady fell or was pushed onto the metro tracks at the Clichy Station. Trains on that line are now stalled... And so on...

Listening to the news as it comes pouring in from all over the world we are apt to shake our heads and think, "What is the world coming to? So much violence and unrest everywhere. Things were never so bad in the past."

The fact is that in the past problems were never as thoroughly, as globally, as rapidly, reported as they are now.

Who knew or who cared what went on in the Mekong Delta or in Amizmiz? The Pashas of Morocco murdered thousands of their enemies in their subterranean dudgeons but the world never knew

and couldn't have cared. White Americans waged a war of extermination against Redskin Indians — the world learned about it a century later. Through Hollywood films.

"My own belief," Dr. Karl Menninger writes, "is that there is less violence today than there was 100 years ago, but that we have a much better press and communications to report it."¹⁰

As communication continues to advance, world events are more and more comprehensively and rapidly reported spreading the impression that violence around the world is rising, though actually in proportion to population growth it is decreasing.

— Do statistics show a rise in violent crimes? Statistics cannot show such a thing because there is no basis for comparison. We have no statistics of crimes for the past or even for today's backward communities.

"Unfortunately for the investigator," writes Sheldon Hackney of Princeton University, "even moderately reliable data are available only for the recent past and only for relatively modern countries. This limits the possibility of cross-national comparisons."¹¹

What data we have seems to indicate that the incidence of violent crime is much higher in backward areas than in the more modern.

For example, the homicide rate in Mexico is 32 per 100,000. France 1.5 per 100,000. England .7 per 100,000.

In the United States, Vermont's homicide rate is .5 per 100,000 in less advanced Alabama the rate is 11.4.

In rural areas of North America, Europe, Asia, and elsewhere, crimes perpetrated by local government officials, sheriffs, gendarmes, landbarons and others, often go unrecorded. Sexual attacks, rapes, and violence involving "honor" are also often not reported. Instead vendettas are clandestinely carried out by individuals or groups.

In modern communities the increasing use of computers, closed circuit TV, and other electronic crime detection systems enable us to report and record crimes more rapidly and comprehensively than ever. People are also less afraid and less ashamed to report crimes. For example liberated women now increasingly report rape to police.

"For the first time in history we now have an accurate measure of crime in America — at least in the largest cities," reports Donald E. Santarelli, of the U.S. Justice Department.

The lack of data lends the impression that in the past as in today's oldworld communities, the incidence of crime was negligible. While sophisticated crime detection and crime statistics in advanced communities fostered the view that violence is increasing.

— The news media, particularly in Western countries, is notorious for emphasizing and exaggerating incidents of violence and crime. Newspapers in the United States and Western Europe offer a relentless daily litany of rapes, muggings, murders and gore — presumably to sell newspapers. Dr. Dan Koenig, a sociologist at Victoria University who has done research in this field is quoted in the *New York Times* of September 30, 1976, "the exaggerated fear of crime (in North America) is due to excessive

¹⁰ Karl Menninger. *The History of Violence in America*. Bantam Books, New York, 1969.

¹¹ Sheldon Hackney. "Southern Violence." *American Historical Review*, Feb., 1969. Revised version in *The History of Violence in America*. Ibid.

violence on United States television and sensational crime reporting... The media are responsible in large measure for creating a false impression."

— Violence is not increasing — it is our sensitivity to violence that is increasing. We are growing more humane. For example in the oldworld children were routinely subjected to beatings and humiliations. This was considered proper upbringing. Today we angrily condemn this as "child abuse".

Who pauses to consider the daily rape of countless young girls in the oldworld who were required to submit sexually to husbands to whom they were given against their own wishes and who they despised? Forcible marriage is institutionalized rape. Today the rape of a single woman triggers justified outrage.

Until the first half of the 20th century the conquest and colonization of a weaker nation was celebrated as a patriotic event. Today even mild economic exploitations are loudly condemned across the world as imperialism.

In Spain a man hacks an animal to death in a bull ring and everyone cheers and throws flowers at him. In a modern community if you pull your dog's ears you are severely reprimanded for cruelty to animals.

What at one time was socially accepted, even encouraged, is today condemned as crime or violence.

— Our treatment of criminals is also growing more humane. In the oldworld criminals were treated very harshly. They were lynched or executed, tortured or thrown in dungeons never to be heard from again. In modern communities we strive for the rehabilitation of criminals. Sometimes they are released prematurely. They strike again. "By far the greatest proportion of all serious violence is committed by repeaters," reports the U.S. Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence. This in turn fosters the wrong impression that more and more people commit crimes.

— Violence in the cities of the world is committed not so much by modern individuals, but by the backward and the disadvantaged. The above mentioned Commission on Violence reports that "Violent crime in the cities (of the U.S.) is committed primarily by individuals at the lower end of the occupational scale... The poor uneducated individuals with few employment skills are much more likely to commit serious violence than persons higher on the socio-economic ladder... Violent crime in the cities stems disproportionately from the ghetto slum."

In their book, *Social Class and Mental Illness*, two American social scientists write, "Lower-class children are exposed to more external methods of discipline such as physical and often brutal punishment... (Lower class) adults have a strong propensity to physical violence. Aggression in (upper classes) is more apt to be expressed verbally..."¹²

The point is that violence in our world has its roots mainly in problems of the past rather than in conditions of the modern world. As people advance socially and materially they are less impelled to violence.

¹² August B. Hollingshead and Fredrick C. Redlich. *Social Class and Mental Illness*. John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1964.

— Some of the violence today is sparked by the friction of classes, ethnic groups, age groups, races, nationalities coming together. This unprecedented convergence of the planet has helped surface age-old grievances and bigotries, and has helped accelerate rising expectations. The occasional violence is transitional — the beginning of communication between the rich and the poor, the strong and the weak, the modern and the oldworld, the liberated and the orthodox, women and men, leaders and citizens etc... For the first time in history there is dialogue, however eruptive at first. Out of this initial contact a more just and reciprocal order in human relations is steadily evolving.

If at times it appears that violence is increasing in our world it is only because we are now more informed, more involved, more humane.

Cynics tell us that humans are the only animals that kill for reasons other than survival. This of course is a myth because predators kill when not hungry. But even if this thesis were correct, it is understandable. Animals live at the survival level. Their only problems are survival. We humans have evolved beyond simply the survival.

We have emotional, philosophical, ideological, political conflicts. Although many of these may be ultimately traced to survival needs, the *range* of our existence is much wider than that of the animals. Animals are too primitive and limited to have differences other than survival.

Cynics also enjoy telling us that humans are the only animals to organize mass destruction of their species. I am not sure that this is correct. But what these detractors fail to note is that humans are also the only species in the entire animal world to organize voluntary rescue missions, digging and drilling frenziedly day and night, week after week, to save one single trapped member of their species. That humans are the only creatures to rush ships and helicopters and airplanes in a desperate mass attempt to rescue one single drowning fellow creature. That people are the only creatures to rush food and medicine to starving members of their species in a faraway area of the world. That we are the only species to mobilize mass relief, mass rescue, mass rehabilitation.

In our preoccupation with our cruelties we often lose sight of our gentleness and sensitivity. It is a fact that the human — even the most evolved — is still capable of beastliness. But it is also a fact that no creature on this planet is capable of as much love or as much humaneness as the human.

The wildest beasts of the jungle when brought up by people lose some of their rapacity and become gentle. When we say that an animal has been domesticated we really mean that it has acquired the human attribute of gentleness, that it has been humanized.

Violence has been inherent to our situation in the world. Our cruelties through the ages have been outgrowths of our biological vulnerability, and the ever present threats of nature and society to our tenuous existences.

In the past people were born and grew up in violence and fear. From the moment of conception their existences were in danger. People were born into a world of ever present natural threats, starvation and disease, ignorance and poverty, beatings and repressions. The orientation to violence was set early in life.

Today in modern communities the individual is born and brought up in far gentler environments. The natural and social threats to our existences are receding. The very foundations of life are growing more secure.

As our control over our biological makeup and our natural and social environments increase our propensity for violence decreases.

We now have the technological potential for colossal destruction. But we are also developing the potentials for global cooperation. We are growing less and less impelled to destructiveness than our ancestors who fought with axes and spears. The rule of force is giving way to new patterns of behavior.

The most uplifting development in our long and tragic history of violence is our increasing ability to control violence, and in time to eliminate the fundamental causes of violence.

"A search for anti-aggression pills could well be the main goal of psychiatrists and biochemists in the 1980s," says Dr. Heinz Lehman, professor of psychiatry at McGill University in Canada.

"The control of hostility is here," says Dr. Kenneth E. Moyer, of Carnegie-Mellon University, who in recent experiments has successfully induced temporary docility in naturally aggressive animals.

Many current efforts will help our age-old struggle with violence — life support technologies, genetic modifications, biological reconstructions, prosthetics, psychosurgery, tele-stimulation and control of one's own brain, personality modifications, improvement of diet, control over nature, refinement of our social environment (the dissolution of poverty, authoritarianism, puritanism, patriarchy etc...).

By the second or third decade of the 21st century we will at last have done away with violence altogether.

Breakthroughs in Human Nature

A fallacy is still current in the world that human progress has been only technological. We have ingenious machines, it is said, comfortable homes, space rockets, but people themselves have not really changed. You just can't change human nature.

Others believe that people *have* changed — for the worse.

To conclude that we have not evolved psychologically because we are still beset with crudities is as absurd as believing that we have made no technological progress because we still have a few pushcarts and gaslights in our cities.

The fact is that we could not have advanced technologically had we not evolved psychologically and socially. But because technological advance is more evident many are left with the impression that we ourselves have not changed.

The late Andre Malraux believed that "the most basic problem of our civilization is that it is built around machines and neglects man." Loren Eiseley wrote that "modern man's whole attention is shifted outward," that he has "concentrated upon things"...¹³

These views are widespread particularly in North America and Europe. They contain fallacies which must be vigorously refuted.

No past civilization has emphasized the inner human as much as our so-called machine civilization. Never have people concentrated as much on their selves — their inner selves — as they do now.

Our attention has not only shifted outward. It has also shifted inward. We have gone farther into outer space as well as into inner space than ever.

We are probing areas of our selves which the closed people of the oldworld never dared uncover. In his time Rousseau's *Confessions* was shocking in its candor. By our liberated standards it only scratches the surface.

"Even if he looks within," Loren Eiseley adds, "it is largely with the eye of science... but science is not enough for man. It is not the road back to the Garden, for that road lies through the heart. Only when man has recognized this... can he become human."¹⁴

What if we look within ourselves with the "eye of science"? Is there a better way? It is precisely the heart that science (meaning organized knowledge) seeks to uplift and soothe. Even giving life to a dying heart.

There is more love, more compassion, more sensitivity in a modern psychology book than in all the poetry and all the "holy" books of our hard-pressed ancestors. I know of no theology, no philosophy, no social system which exhorts people to love as unconditionally as does science.

"You can't even beat your children any more," a Greek father once told me. "If you beat them or are harsh with them they say you are not scientific."

To many who grew up in the oldworld, to be scientific means to be enlightened, democratic, gentle.

Science is warm and reassuring. Science is helping us gain control over our persecutory environments, alleviating age-old problems — not only physical but also social and human problems.

¹³ Eiseley. *The Firmament of Time*.

¹⁴ Ibid.

Shiraz, for example, a city in southern Iran, has long been renowned for its nightingales, its poets, and its Suffist philosophy. Yet until recently in this "city of poetry" thousands of emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded men, women, and children were kept in chains in stifling prison cells and lunatic asylums. They sat rotting for weeks and months and years — often all their lives. Neither poetry nor Suffism nor the "spiritual" life was able to help them.

In the 1960s a wealthy young Shirazi who had studied social science in Teheran and abroad opened a psychiatric hospital in Shiraz — the very first in that area. After considerable struggle with city officials he succeeded in having many of the emotionally disturbed and the mentally retarded transferred from the lunatic dungeons to his hospital. Here Dr. Salameh and his staff now attend to them.

They are fortunate. In oldworld communities around the globe emotionally troubled men and women are still incarcerated in dark filthy dungeons. The cruel rejection and punishment are intended to teach them a lesson or help exorcise evil spirits.

In these backward communities of the world emotional problems go largely undetected and misdiagnosed. This has encouraged the fantasy that people of the oldworld are free of these problems. Has anyone ever heard of a neurotic bedouin? Or a neurotic cowboy? Neurosis is a disorder identified with modern life.

These are illogical assumptions. It is like presuming that there is no deafness in Tibet because no one there wears a hearing aid.

Touchiness, dependency, apathy, fatalism, stinginess, rigidity, submission to the strong, domination and abuse of the weak, emphasis on shame and honor, evasiveness, paranoia, inability to overcome grievances, inability to accept blame, resort to scapegoats and falsehoods, to illusions and pseudo-masculine poses — all these psychological problems are severest among the most backward, mildest among the most modern.

Psychological backwardness is in evidence in all spheres of life in the oldworld. In the home as in the community, relations are marked by extremes of domination, manipulation, competitiveness. Disagreements often degenerate into brawls. Emotional wounds take forever to heal.

Parents and children, brothers and sisters, schoolmates, colleagues may live and work in the same house or room for months and years without ever exchanging a word or in any way acknowledging one another.

Not surprisingly religious and ethnic feuds, political and national conflicts drag for decades — even centuries.

By modern standards, *all* oldworld people are immature and unliberated. They are *all* traumatized.

Equally wrong is the assumption that in the past people's attention was directed inward to the heart or the soul. It was precisely in the oldworld attention focused *outward* — on food. People were and still are perennially involved in the struggle for survival. Who has the time or energy to turn inward?

Moreover in the authoritarian oldworld there is no self-awareness. People shun their inner selves. Large areas of their personalities are tightly and permanently sealed off. To look within would mean exposing a mass of hatred and anger toward the long line of authoritarian figures starting with the punitive rejecting parents all the way to the wrathful gods. To face their selves would also threaten their carefully constructed self-image exposing continued resentment and fear of authority, submissiveness and dependence. Therefore they try at all costs not to turn inward but to look outward.

For example, it is well known that people of the oldworld are as a rule secretive, evasive, withdrawn — what is romantically called "mysterious." People speak of the "mysterious East," the "mysterious Oriental," the "mysterious Latin," or what amounts to the same thing, the "silent type" of the American Midwest. But what is this mysteriousness, this silence? The mysterious or the secretive not only hide themselves from others, they hide themselves from their own selves. They live in an internal world of walls and labyrinths. They're fragmented selves are like a Moorish castle full of dark secret chambers that are never opened. They are not in touch with their own selves.

This resistance to look within does not simply spring from lack of knowledge. The problem is far deeper. The individual is too repressed to cope with the mass of squelched emotions.

The oldworld's emphasis on shame and politeness is itself a way of repressing negative emotions.

Modern individuals brought up in relatively permissive environments that do not squelch them have stronger self-esteem and are therefore able to look within. They have less to repress. Their gentler environments do not engender extremes of resentment or submissiveness. They are less afraid and less guilt-written to express hostility toward authority figures.

The remarkable evolution in the human psychology is perhaps nowhere as evident as in backward areas of the world. In Africa for instance there are people who still grovel in the bush while their sons and daughters participating in conferences at the United Nations and other international bodies, make illustrious contributions to human progress. A vast evolutionary gap separates these contemporary African generations.

The old Africans vegetated in the closed psychological world of tribalism, animism, and taboo. Their children live in a new world of individual rights, rapid change, rising expectations, expanding worlds, global communication.

Young progressive Africans have not only grown more mobile, they have also grown psychologically more fluid. As their world expands their commitments grow less tribal, their taboos, suspicions and phobias less shackling, their conceptions about causality more rational, their outlook to life less fatalistic, their attitudes to authority less submissive, their hopes and expectations more daring. In one or two generations young city-dwelling Africans and others have made a phenomenal evolutionary leap. This psychological breakthrough is as spectacular as some of our technological advances.

Monumental social and human changes are also unfolding in modern societies. Science and technology are helping liberate our values — our attitudes to gender roles, sex, love, procreation, parenthood, family, religion, country, the human body, life expectancy, our place in the Universe.

These and other changes constitute significant breakthroughs in our inner human lives.

For example, the modern youngster is far stronger and more self-reliant than the "rugged" individual of the oldworld who is clutched by an infantile dependence on gods and other authority figures. Even the brave pioneers of the past who ventured away on their own knew that finally they were not alone, that no matter how far away they went, gods or saints or ancestors' spirits were at all times around watching over them

Whom do modern youngsters have? They are without families, without tribes, without saints, without gods. They are more on their own than the individual has ever been. They are the most self-reliant, self-sustaining individuals in history.

Today's modern youngsters are growing up confident that they can do anything, that they can change the world. This too is a giant evolution from the psychology of oldworld people who did not believe that they could alter even their own individual situations.

Not only are people growing more self-confident and self-propelling, they are also increasingly more humane.

At one time humanitarians were a rarity. They stood out, not only in their own lifetimes but through many decades and centuries. Today who in a modern community is not a humanitarian? Who in a modern community is not against wars? Against poverty? Against injustices of all sorts? Very few.

In New York City alone there are several thousand organizations actively working for international cooperation, for civil rights, for children's rights, for better treatment of the emotionally disturbed and the mentally retarded, for distribution of food and medicine to the poor of the world, for relief to refugees, for the rights of grape pickers three thousand miles away, for the elimination of capital punishment, for more enlightened treatment of criminals, for the right of free speech, for help to the handicapped, for release of political prisoners in one country or another, for humane treatment of animals, for protection of migratory birds, etc., etc.

There are more humanitarian agencies and movements in a New York City than in the entire oldworld.

Many such organizations are also active in other modern cities around the planet.

There is more love in the world today than ever. This is not surprising. People are now better nourished, better cared for, more loved than at any time in the past.

As we gather and integrate more and more knowledge and self-awareness, as the cumulative benefits of scientific and technological breakthroughs gain momentum, we continue to alter and refine our environments, in turn accelerating our own human evolution.

We are not only freeing ourselves from the gravitational pull of the earth. We are also emancipating ourselves from the gravitational hold of primitive instincts.

Already we of the late 20th century are radically different from our ancestors. We are more mature, more peaceful, more cooperative, more purposeful, more integrated, more refined, more self-reliant, more humane.

Psychologically we have come a long way. We have yet far to go.

EXPLODING MYTHS

The more food we produce the less we are preoccupied with eating.

The more sexually free the less focused on sex.

The stronger the kinship ties the more backward the society.

The more exclusive the family ties the more insecure the people.

The poorer a society the more materialistic its people.

The more affluent a society the less materialistic the people.

The poorer we were the more possessive we were.

The richer we grow the less possessive we grow.

The more technology advances the greener the planet.

The more we control nature the closer we grow to nature.

The more backward a society the more robotized its people.

The more robots we deploy the less robotized we grow.

The more machines we develop the less mechanical the life.

The more complex our technologies the simpler our lives.

The faster we travel the slower the pace of life.

The faster we produce goods the more leisurely the life.

The more massive the communication the more privacy we enjoy.

The more privacy we have the less privacy we crave.

The more rigid the people the more defined their identities.

The more liberated the people the looser their identities.

The more global the communication the more widespread the individualism.

The more widespread the individualism the more global the communication.

The more global the communication the more global the people.

The more powerful the communication the more powerful the people.

The more powerful the people the weaker the government.

The more the potentials for world destruction the more the potentials for world cooperation.

The more natural organs in our bodies the more mechanical our lives.

The more mechanical replacements in our bodies the more natural we grow.

The slower the pace of change the more difficult to anticipate change.

The faster the pace of change the easier to forecast change.

The more we grow the more we want to grow.

The more rapidly we grow the more rapidly we adapt to growth.

The more we advance into the future the more we know about the past.

The more we know about the past the more we like the present.

The more we like the present the more we dare think about the future.

The more we think about the future the more realistic we grow.

The more realistic we grow the more Optimistic we grow.

PART 3

The Young Universalists

Until the first half of the 20th century many a nationalist was a revolutionary. Today the nationalist is a reactionary.

Only yesterday nationalism was a revolutionary movement directed against colonialism and exploitation, a drive for unity and progress. Today nationalism is a stale political philosophy no longer relevant to the times.

Of course universalism is nothing new. Through the ages many philosophers, prophets, ideologists have advanced this ideal. But they and their followers *preached* brotherhood then went on to massacre members of other tribes, religions, races, nations.

Visionaries of the past *spoke* of the one world. Today's young generations live it.

Universalism is one of the revolutionary movements of our times and cannot be stopped or reversed. Nations rich and poor, backward and progressive, are converging. Nationalists too are being universalized in spite of themselves. Today everyone and everything is working for universalism —

Expanding Commitments

In our times, the nationalist, the chauvinist, the religionist, the racist, the ethnic are all psychologically stunted. Nationalism is a sure sign of immaturity.

Earlier in this book I wrote that authoritarianism particularly in the home and the community usually produces a static psyche that remains rigidly committed to family, profession, religion, ideology, nation — often to all at once. There is not the inner strength to outgrow or deviate from commitments and loyalties.

The present trend toward the loosening of authoritarianism at all levels of all societies is helping individuals grow increasingly fluid. Modern people brought up in the loose permissive environments are fluid not only in ties to kinfolk, profession, ideology but also in their ties to country. (Patriotism and nationalism are closely linked with feelings of love and hatred, guilt and shame, fear and dependency involving parents, family and home.)

Modern youths have open, evolving personalities which do not remain bogged down in rigid commitments to inherited affiliations such as nationality. Their psyches are spilling over frontiers in an irrepressible need to expand and grow.

The New World Economy

Until the first half of this century trade among nations was negligible. Even bilateral trade agreements immediately before and after the Second World War did not significantly increase trade among nations.

The protectionist high tariff policies of the past were not motivated by economics only. In fact they were self-defeating because they slow down economic growth. These tariff walls behind which nations hid reflected a more general psychological and political isolationism in which the entire world floundered.

But since the 1950s the walls have been coming down. This general thaw has helped liberalize tariff policies, precipitating a boom in world trade. Global trade is now swelling at an annual rate of about ten percent.

All nations — rich and poor — are enjoying an increase in exports. This pace in trade is now quickened by world tariff-slashing agreements. Every day bilateral and multilateral trade agreements are concluded among the nations of the world.

The boom in international trade is helping denationalize all aspects of life. Around the planet shopping centers, boutiques, markets are selling products, goods, and foods from all parts of the world.

International and transnational corporations are mushrooming everywhere. Here are just a few: Toyota, Minolta, Sony, Eastman Kodak, Singer, International Telephone and Telegraph, General Motors, IBM, General Electric, Petrofina, Solvay, Alfa-Laval, Olivetti, Unilever, Siemens, Hoffman-La Roche, Rhone-Paulenc, Consolidated African Selection Trust, Rio-Tinto Zinc, East Africa Bank, Arab Development Bank... There are now several thousand international corporations and the number is steadily increasing.

With their usual lack of perspective, alarmists argue that extensive American and European investments in less developed areas have precipitated a new kind of economic domination.

This argument overlooks new realities in a new world.

Today foreign investors are among the strongest revolutionary agents at work in the world, particularly in developing areas. It does not matter what their nationality or their ideology. They are a revolutionary force often without their own awareness. Their investments are stimulating sluggish economies by creating employment, introducing modern manufacturing techniques and modern managerial practices, and raising local wage scales.

Above all their products themselves are often catalysts for change. Their transistors, television sets, films, telephones, computers, aircraft are radicalizing *all* aspects of life. The most progressive leaders of Africa and Asia cannot help their people advance as rapidly as these modern technologies can.

What does it matter if the aircraft, the transistor, the television, the refrigerator, or the bikini is Japanese, Russian, American, Chinese, or Italian? The product itself knows no nationality, no ideology. In fact, jets, cars, television sets are anti-nationalist — they do not recognize barriers.

They enlarge peoples' vistas and contacts, amplify their dialogue, extend their mobility, radicalize their worldview, expand their self-image. In other words these new products challenge the status quo by enabling people for the *very first time* to see *alternatives*.

Again and again we have seen how people in oldworld communities who have had glimpses of the modern world in films or on television shake off resignation to the status quo. They begin clamoring for consumer goods, for an easing of the archaic laws and restrictive traditions. Even banal films plant in them the seeds of rebellion against what they had once accepted as an incontrovertible way of life.

Isolated small towns and villages suddenly come to life. People and goods begin to flow. With them flow ideas. Thereafter nothing, not even a repressive regime, can save the status quo.

If American, European, or Japanese investors collaborate with a reactionary regime, more likely than not their products determinedly work against the regime. In other words the new commodities are not static, like fruits or coffee. You can send the rugs or fruits to a country without altering its status quo. But the new products are themselves agents for change.

It is chiefly because of these new technological commodities that people around the planet have grown more alert, better informed, and therefore less susceptible to exploitation. Give me my fair share or get out — this has been the rallying cry from Peru to Libya to Angola to Iraq, where people have been chasing away oligarchies and foreign exploiters, while at the same time embarking on multinational ventures to produce and market their resources. But their struggles against foreign exploitation must not be mistaken for nationalism. Heads of states, like heads of corporations, are rapidly realizing that their economies can no longer grow if they remain national.

The transnational corporation that is flooding a developing land with *jointly* manufactured tractors or *jointly* produced films is not the old British oil company or the old American fruit company which at one time exploited the natural resources of a foreign territory without giving the impoverished local people their share of the profits.

We are dealing with an entirely new set of realities — a new interdependent world market which cannot grow and prosper unless *all* its parts grow and prosper. New generations better informed than ever and therefore more difficult to exploit than ever. New technological products themselves inherently radicalizing forces.

Alarmists are also illogical in their contention that global trade is Americanizing the world. It takes a frail ego to dread Americanization — to be even concerned with it.

Europeans or Asians who fear Americanization underestimate the impact of their own cultures and goods on America. American investors in Tunis or Rio are outgrowing their provincialism just as rapidly as the Tunisians and the Brazilians are outgrowing theirs. If American goods are flooding the world, products from all over the world are also flooding the United States.

Walk in any American city today and everywhere our products and cultural influences from all parts of the planet. Volkswagens, Hondas, and English bicycles parked near Paris-inspired sidewalk cafés. Men dressed in Nehru jackets or in African togas, women wrapped in tapestries from Iran. Israeli restaurants specializing in Syrian foods, playing Egyptian music to the gyrations of Greek and Turkish belly dancers from New Jersey. Japanese stores alive with statuettes from Africa, bracelets from Mexico, and lanterns, miniature tape recorders, and cameras from Japan itself. Indian shops redolent with incense, selling Ravi Shankars and mysticisms of jet-setting gurus whose devoted followers, languishing in nearby pads, read Oriental literature and smoke pot from North Africa.

Also bombarding the American psyche are films and plays and books and magazines and television programs from *all* over the world.

What is Americanization? America itself is undergoing rapid change. It is precisely America's heterogeneity that has stimulated its progress.

Of course imbalances exist in all exchanges of culture and of goods. But these imbalances are not constant or fixed. The world is not being Americanized, Africanized, Sovietized, Orientalized, or Europeanized. It is being planetized.

Regionalism, Continentalism, and Globalism

Political institutions and national agencies are also steadily evolving into regional, continental, and global organizations.

"A surrender of sovereignty is a mark of an advancing civilization." These are not pearls of wisdom uttered by a guru in a Tibetan Temple. They are the words of a recent prime minister of England stating the policy of his country.

In the 1950s a Latin American politician willing to forgo even a modicum of national sovereignty ran the risk of assassination. Latin America seemed hopelessly mired in divisive nationalism. Today the Central or South American leader who is not committed to regional and continental integration is rare.

In most countries around the world it is no longer nationalism but regionalism that is the cornerstone of government policy. Regional communities are now a reality, though at different stages of development. For some like the West African community obstacles to integration have been awesome. For others like the European Common Market and the Andean Common Market, development has been relatively rapid.

All are working vigorously toward economic and ultimately political integration. Immediate efforts are focused on eliminating tariff barriers, accelerating trade within and without the bloc, establishing regional economic institutions.

Some like the Southeast Asia grouping are also setting up technicians pools and coordinating their educational and cultural institutions. Others like the West European countries are going beyond economic and cultural integration, coordinating their foreign policies and political institutions as well.

Whether progress toward regional integration is fast or slow the will to unite is prevailing over nationalism. Tribes and nations for centuries at one another's throats are now at last coming together.

Here are the main regional communities today.

Central American Common Market. Created in 1960. Includes five Central American states.

Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA). Created in 1960. Eleven South American countries.

Andean Common Market. Six South American countries.

Economic Community of West Africa. 1976. Fifteen countries.

East African Community. 1967. Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania.

European Common Market. Nine West European countries.

Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) 1949. Eight East European countries.

The Arab Common Market. Twenty countries.

Regional Cooperation for Development. Pakistan, Iran, Turkey.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Five countries.

Many smaller subregional organizations complement and reinforce the main regional communities. For instance the Caribbean Free Trade Area and the Caribbean Development Bank. Desert Locust Control Organization in Africa. European Atomic Center. The Iron Gate Hydroelectric Power Project, the Komi Project, the Kingisepp Phosphate Development, and many other multinational development projects in Eastern Europe. Asian Productivity Organization, Asian Development Bank, Southeast Asia Transportation. And more.

Shortly after the Second World War, Jean Monnet, Paul Reynaud, Robert Schumann, and others began pressing the idea of a European Common Market. Skeptics laughed, "You'll never get France and

Germany to cooperate. They have been mortal enemies for decades. The French will never forget the two world wars. Never." Others also scoffed at the idea. "How can you make Europeans integrate? They are too nationalistic."

Now that the West European Common Market is a spectacular success and growing steadily, skeptics say, "Yes, but that could have only happened in Europe. After all Western Europe was an industrialized area with modern transportation and communication facilities, high literacy rate, etc. Such an integration movement cannot work in backward areas"

When the spirit is weak one can always dig up reasons to justify pessimism.

The second half of the 20th century is the era of regionalism. But regionalism is not a final goal, merely a quick stepping-stone to continentalism, globalism, and beyond.

The late Tom Mboya, Kenya's Minister of Economic Planning and Development predicted, "Once several larger units of this kind [meaning East African Community] have been created throughout Africa, I am convinced that these Communities will find it to their advantage to promote closer political and economic ties among themselves. This is the only realistic way to make progress toward the ultimate objectives of a United Africa."

Jean Rey, ex-president of the West European Common Market's Executive commission, voiced a similar conviction about Europe. "The forces pushing the Continent toward unity are irreversible."

Dr. Jorge Valencia, early Coordinator for the Andean Common Market, says, "In theory all but governments and leaders are now in favor of integration. They understand that for the fast development of their countries there is no solution but integration."

By the year 2000 regionalism will be passe. Continentalism will be a more viable system. But regionalism, continentalism, globalism, universalism are not successive stages of development — they are also concurrent, reinforcing one another.

Already we have numerous global and international organizations. For instance, the United Nations, International Court of Justice, International Monetary Fund, International Civil Aviation Organization, World Health Organization, World Bank, World Meteorological Organization, Universal Postal Union, International Planned Parenthood, International Labor Organization, International Telecommunications Union, International Astronomical Union, International Atomic Energy Agency, Interpol...

Most of these international agencies are now — this very day — pooling the knowledge, resources, and energies of more than one hundred and forty nations.

Over one hundred thousand members of world organizations travel and live in all parts of the planet. They help distribute milk and food, help fight disease and ignorance, arbitrate feuds, maintain peace on borders, help improve techniques of food production and education, finance the construction of dams and roads, coordinate data and scientific knowledge of all nations.

They all act as members of world organizations. Professionally they no longer have nationalities.

Today as regionalism is breathing life into fragmented economies, other powerful global forces are at work dismantling the psychological, social, and political barriers that have long fragmented the world.

Humankind Converging

Our social, economic, political institutions are not alone in transcending frontiers. We ourselves are mobile as never before.

Suddenly the world is on the move. Never has there been such worldwide circulation of people. In the smallest villages you will now find tourists, youth corps volunteers, students, United Nations technicians.

In the past people remained close to their ancestral homes, villages, and towns. As a rule mass circulation of people was precipitated by wars, famine, drought or other threats to survival. Relatively few people traveled voluntarily.

Since the early 1950s however a voluntary circulation of millions of people has been going on around the world.

Every year around one million tourists have been visiting Japan, India, Greece, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Morocco, Kenya, Brazil, Uruguay.¹⁵

Over 4 million tourists yearly to the Soviet Union.

Over 10 million tourists yearly to England.

Over 14 million tourists yearly to the United States.

Over 14 million tourists yearly to France.

Over 15 million tourists yearly to Yugoslavia.

Over 30 million tourists yearly to Spain.

Over 37 million tourists yearly to Italy.

Thirty seven million—every year. This is more than the entire population of most countries.

Every year the number of tourists and other travelers is increasing. Continued economic prosperity, lessening of political tensions, and the giant jet-liners, air buses, and supersonics lend impetus to world travel. If the present spiraling trend continues, by 1995 nearly one billion tourists will be traveling around our planet.

The enmeshing economies of nations is also contributing to the global movement of people. For instance over ten thousand Japanese businessmen and their families live or travel abroad on business every year. Twenty-five thousand American business people and their families lived in Switzerland alone. Tens of thousands of Asians, Africans, Europeans, and Latin Americans also involved in world trade live and travel abroad every year.¹⁶

¹⁵ Tourist figures vary from year to year. Although tourism sometimes declines in a country beset by severe political unrest, world tourism on the whole has been steadily rising. Tourist estimates and statistics in this book come from the following sources: International Union of Official Travel Organizations, International Center, Geneva; American Society of Travel Agents, New York City; *Le Monde*, Paris; *New York Times*; Consulates and tourist information centers of countries for which statistics are given — for example, USSR Tourist Office in New York City.

¹⁶ Statistics for foreign labor and company representatives abroad were obtained from the following sources: *London Times*; *New York Times*; *Le Monde*; M.T.I. Hungarian Press Agency; *Polityka*, Polish weekly; International Executive Service Corps, New York City.

Since 1962, every year nearly *ten million foreign workers* have been employed in Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Switzerland, Germany and France.

These millions come from Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Black Africa, Turkey, Greece, Yugoslavia, Italy, Portugal, Spain.

France has 2,000,000 foreign workers. West Germany 1,000,000. Several hundred thousand Indians and Pakistanis work in England.

Labor mobility is increasing in Eastern Europe too. 10,000 Poles now act work in Czechoslovakia. Over 100,000 Poles, Yugoslavs and Hungarians and it's in East Germany.

Thousands of workers from Mali, Upper Volta, Guinea, Ghana employed in the Ivory Coast.

Tens of thousands of Palestinians, Syrians and Egyptians employed in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Libya.

We now also have global student exchange and youth movements.

Nearly 40,000 Indian students at universities abroad.¹⁷

Over 50,000 African students at universities abroad.

Over 50,000 American students at universities abroad.

Nearly 60,000 European students at universities abroad.

Over 70,000 Arab students at universities abroad.

Tens of thousands of high school students now travel overseas during the summer months.

Summer study abroad is a part of their school curriculum. Until recently 15-year-old youngsters spent the summer in camps or close to their parents. Today 14-and 15-year-olds travel *alone* to all parts of the planet.

Large universities are now global institutions, comprised of hundreds of foreign students and multinational faculties. It is no longer uncommon to find students from feuding countries sitting next to one another in classrooms.

I am not concerned here with the obvious results of this mass circulation of people. The fact that tourism for example is the biggest single item in international trade. That every year tourists are pouring several billion dollars into the poor rural countries. That the Soviet Union for example is building over 60,000 kilometers of highways and numerous motels along these super roads to accommodate the onrush of tourism. That Italian migrant workers employed in northern countries send back several billion dollars every year to their families in Sicily and Napoli. Or that youth corps volunteers of many nations are vigorously fighting ignorance and disease, building dams and roads, hospitals and educational facilities.

Directly or indirectly all these are helping globalize us. But here I am concerned with less obvious — invisible — forces set into motion by mass movements of people.

Every traveler regardless of nationality, ideology, or intentions is an agent for change and denationalization. Your very presence in a foreign land is an automatic alternative to the status quo, a challenge to local customs and attitudes.

¹⁷ Foreign students statistics for the entire world are still not available. For one thing, many developing countries are only now beginning to gather students statistics. Moreover non-member countries of the United Nations are not included in the UNESCO estimates and statistics. Sources: UNESCO Statistical Yearbooks; Institute of International Education, United Nations Plaza, New York; African-American Institute, United Nations Plaza, New York; Arab Information Center, New York City; Ministry of Education of India, New Delhi.

For example, the daily contact between youth corps volunteers and villagers is itself a revolutionizing experience for both. It is not always that the volunteers *teach* the villagers that has the greatest impact. Rather the way they interact, the volunteers' permissiveness, informality, and respect for the rights of the pupil-villager upset age-old traditions, helping alter the pupils' attitudes to authority, to the pupils' own rights, and to the rights of others.

Long after the tourist or volunteer has left, the psychological impact persists. For example among Iranian villagers who had studied with Peace Corps volunteers the most recurring impression I heard had to do with the *quality* of the relationship. Nearly every one I spoke with remembered and emphasized the personality of the volunteer-teacher.

In Sari, a small town near the Caspian Sea, a young man spoke nostalgically of a Peace Corps volunteer with whom he had studied. "He was our teacher yet did not act like a teacher. I mean he wasn't arrogant the way teachers are. When we finished our work we all sat together and chatted just like this. He told us stories about his country and we told him about our villages. We all laughed and smoked and drank together as though we were friends. And yet he was our teacher."

For the first time the villagers have witnessed a reversal of the traditional image of authority. They have an alternative symbol to identify with. They can be permissive toward their own pupils, children, patients, or employees and not be as afraid of appearing weak.

The mere presence of travelers often precipitates far-reaching psychological and social changes. For instance a scantily dressed foreign couple walking hand-in-hand in a small town or village. A youth volunteer shopping with his wife, washing dishes, or attending to other traditionally "female" duties. A visiting professor in shirtsleeves. A tourist fraternizing with his son or with a lowly local employee. A vacationing college girl discussing politics.

All these threaten deeply ingrained traditions and often act as catalysts for reversal of basic attitudes to self, to the other gender, to child upbringing, to authority, to life itself.

Of course in such contacts of peoples the impact of the more progressive culture is usually dominated. Europeans and Asians rail contemptuously at America, yet it is partly the vigorous shirtsleeve culture of the United States that is helping them loosen up.

But contact leaves no one unchanged. Weak and strong, rich and poor, dynamic and sluggish, *all* are changed. For one thing contact with any foreign culture automatically compels a conscious and unconscious reappraisal of one's own culture. It matters little whether you have spent a year with a primitive tribal or three months in a foreign metropolis. The reappraisal begins to take place when you step outside your own culture.

Americans who stay abroad begin to have a different view of their country. More likely than not they grow more responsive to its qualities, more aware of its shortcomings. Many American Peace Corps volunteers have gone back to the United States and for the first time become active in civil rights movements and anti-poverty programs. Their stay abroad opens their eyes to problems at home.

The very act of travel itself is often an attempt to break away from home and homeland, to enlarge one's autonomy, outgrow provincialism, alter one's view of the world — in other words to change and grow.

Travel universalizes often without one's own awareness. Even to tourists places they visit become thereafter personalized. Rigid textbook images of faraway people begin to loosen.

Americans who have visited the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries are less likely to harbor paranoid hostility for communists than those who have had no contact at all. Communism

becomes personified in the little girl they saw at play in Belgrade, the hospitable family in Tiflis, the pretty young women strolling in Prague.

This is not to say that contact and dialogue automatically generate positive responses. They may confirm or arouse hostility. But the hostility is less likely to be irrational.

Many Africans, Asians, and Europeans who have lived in the United States harbor resentments toward Americans. As a rule however these resentments are related to specific irritants. The earlier image of America, a faraway monolithic power, is modified by contacts with flesh-and-blood Americans who have their own problems, their own frailties and qualities.

Images are more misleading (and threatening) than reality.

Lack of contact often encourages extremes of romanticization and paranoid hostility.

* * *

Every traveler is a live computer receiving and disseminating information and cultural values. You are reconditioned by new contacts and in turn recondition those you come upon.

Nationalists who want more tourists, foreign investors, youth corps volunteers but insist that their country maintain its "national identity" are illogical.

"Let the tourists come, we need their money." Shopkeepers around the world who say this are fooling themselves. Tourists bring with them much more than money. They help recondition national identity and character. The very presence of tourists is an intrusion into "domestic affairs."

It is you the tourist who are helping emancipate the world from insularity, traditionalism, and squalor.

It is you the tourist who are helping prod societies out of puritanism and rigidities.

It is you the tourist and the foreign student who are enabling people in Kansas and Toulouse and Kiev to outgrow provincialism and muddleheadedness.

It is the multinational student bodies that are pressing demands for liberalization of archaic educational systems and narrow nationalistic government policies.

It is the young migrant worker from oldworld communities who in the words of Danilo Dolci, "is irrevocably altered by his contact with a more advanced society and from his first day back at home, is a force for change."

It is you the tourist with your enormous economic power who are actually compelling governments around the world to alter their policies — liberalize censorship, allow greater freedom of speech, rescinded puritanical laws, beautify cities and towns, expand communication and transportation facilities, emphasize construction of medical facilities and roads, hotels and cafés and parks...

It is this daily contact of tens of millions of peoples reinforced by global trade and technology that is steadily pushing the world toward a global language, global currency, global commitments.

This mushrooming circulation of millions of people is helping revolutionize life on this planet.

Each time you travel you make the world a little more intimate.

Soon there will be no tourists. No outsiders. No foreigners. The whole planet will belong to all of us.

Universalizing Technology

Of all the universalizing forces I have touched on, modern technology is the most powerful. It is daily making a mockery of nationalism and other exclusivities.

Arabs and Israelis fight over national borders, then go home and talk to one another on radio and television which recognize no borders. They look into one another's backyards, watch one another change babies' diapers, dance to one another's music, laugh at one another's jokes, listen to one another's problems.

In the insular city of Medina, the Saudi man carefully closets away his wife in the harem. He gives her an innocent little box with a screen for amusement while he is out and right away the doors and walls and gates and barricades come tumbling down. Before you can say Open Sesame, the most sheltered woman on earth has a balcony seat watching world events. The Genie is out. This Saudi woman will never be the same — already she wants a mini-veil.

Modern technology cannot wait for human conditioning and for class struggles to go through their relatively slow evolution. This new tele technology is impatient. It is dissolving barriers which otherwise would have taken decades, even centuries, to erode.

You need not be literate to watch films, television, or listen to transistors. Illiteracy is losing meaning. The illiterate is no longer the uninformed or the uninvolved.

The ten-year-old New York child may not read or write well, but it is the most knowledgeable child in history.

People around the world do not need more schools. They need more communication satellites.

In the oldworld lack of information and lack of contact made for self-centeredness and self-interest. Illiteracy too created its own insularity. Everything was generalized from one's own experiences. Patriotism, orthodoxy, nationalism were inevitable.

Today entire generations are growing up with a perspective of the whole planet from outer space. For the first time in history we are conditioned to view our worlds as a unit — one single sphere.

Then too global tele technology is making it increasingly easy to view the world in its totality. In our era of communication satellites and supersonics there can be no insularity, no fragmented view of the world. The young fellah in North Africa is now able to watch an Idaho farmer at work, enjoy live sports events in Mexico City, follow a conference of scientists in Moscow.

On July 20, 1969, *nearly one billion people* simultaneously watched humanity's first landing on the moon. One billion people. That is nearly one out of every three persons on earth.

Nearly one billion people simultaneously watch international sports and United Nations conferences.

By 1990 we will be able to establish instant communication — by radio, television, telephone, computer, laser — with any town or city in the world.

"The Russians destroyed the concept of nationality," Arthur C. Clarke writes, "when they sent Sputnik splashing across a hundred frontiers. But because this is perfectly obvious, it will be some time before everyone sees it and governments realize that the only runner in the space race is — man."¹⁸

Post-industrial tele technology is revolutionizing and de-nationalizing *all* aspects of life. Nearly every large city in the world is now international. A mounting avalanche of travelers, information, and goods sweep through, planetizing everyone and everything. The national city no longer exists.

¹⁸ Arthur C. Clarke, *Profiles of the Future*. Popular Library, New York, 1977.

It is entirely fitting that the United Nations headquarters is in New York City, World Health Organization in Geneva, U.N. Industrial Development Organization in Vienna, UNESCO in Paris, International Planned Parenthood in London, U.N. specialized agencies in Belgrade, Cairo, Nairobi, New Delhi, Tokyo, etc. These are all international cities.

New York, the most international metropolis of our times, belongs as much to its huge international community as it does to the Americans. Without its millions of foreign residents, visitors, students, global investors, United Nations personnel, and others, New York City would be a prosaic small town.

Large hospitals around the world are also going global. They not only have multinational medical staffs and patients but medical treatment itself is being internationalized. Medical students in Europe watch open-heart surgery performed thousands of miles away in Texas. Specialists in Washington, D.C., examine the heartbeat of a patient in Tours, France, diagnose another patient in Tokyo, then within *minutes* provide analyses of their conditions via satellite.

Thanks to modern communication and transportation most major publications are also transglobal. For instance the *London Times*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Economist*, *Paris Match*, *Elle*, *L'Express*, *Le Monde*, *Epoca*, *Il Tempo*, *Oggi*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *International Herald Tribune*, *New York Times*, *Playboy*, *Penthouse*, *Stern*, *Der Spiegel*, *Constanze*, *Quick*, *Pravda*, *Soviet Life*, *Soviet Woman*, *China Today*, *Peking Review*, *China Pictorial*, *Jeune Afrique*, *La Prensa*...

Most of these publications address the world, compete for world markets, report on world conditions. Many of them can be obtained on news racks in Kuwait and Kansas City and Caracas. Regardless of their bias, these and other world publications are helping create global co-involvement.

Modern technology is helping convert our planet into a family courtyard. Our very psyches are enmeshing. An American senator is assassinated. Within seconds news flashes around the globe. The world is stunned and mourns. Merchants in Nairobi and Tokyo close down their shops, women weep in the streets of Moscow, a man dies of a heart attack in Greece.

The Russian and the Indian are surprised that they can be driven to tears at the death of an American president or movie star. The American and the Spaniard are astonished that they can feel deeply saddened by the death of a Russian composer or cosmonaut.

Can there be any doubt that the world consciousness is rapidly developing? We are all growing more and more involved in one another's lives, more and more sensitive to one another's sufferings, more and more enhanced by one another's triumphs.

Nationalists who want modern technology but do not want intrusions into their country's internal affairs are absurd. They are contradicting themselves.

Film, radio, television, telephone, teletype, telecomputer, communication satellites, global transportation — they are all intrusions into domestic affairs of nations. No force can erode the exclusivity of a nation as deeply and as rapidly as modern tele technology. Nations now exist mostly in name.

Conclusion

Human kind is converging but not always adjusting fast enough to the rapid changes. Confusions abound in our commitments and loyalties.

For example, many a United Nations official dedicated to planetary goals is still at heart a nationalist. An Asian diplomat who considers himself a progressive tells me of his contempt for American right-wingers and patriots, yet spends an hour bragging about the greatness of his country, and reacts hypersensitively when I want to discuss its problems.

Today we are all in the grips of psychological and ideological conflicts. We are at once nationalist and internationalist. Still tribal in our instincts, we nevertheless live in a world relentlessly compelling us to detribalize and denationalize.

We are afraid to let go the aprons strings of motherland yet we ridicule others who do not let go. It is time we became *consciously* aware of these conflicts and sought consciously to work them out.

For one thing, we need to remind ourselves that it is no longer possible to be a nationalist and a progressive.

Regionalism, continentalism, globalism are the progressive movements of our times. We must consciously renounce nationalism and all its derivative exclusivities such as *national affairs, national identity, national destiny, national homeland*.

Fees are all oldworld concepts. They have absolutely no meaning in our times.

There is no longer such a thing as domestic affairs of nations. Non-intervention in internal affairs is no longer possible. Not even desirable.

We want more involvement in internal affairs of other nations. Not less.

We want more tourists, more exchange students, more youth volunteers, more global investment, more global publications, more exchange of information, more transistors, more global computers, more global television, more communication satellites.

It is ridiculous to want all these and still insist on non-intervention in national or domestic affairs.

Non-intervention means forfeiting your own right to travel and live in other countries, because your very presence in a country is a direct meddling into its internal affairs.

There is no domestic affair from which anyone, anywhere, need any longer exclude itself. We must never again say this little corner of the world is mine, I will occupy myself with my nation's domestic affairs, you concern yourself with yours. As Kenneth Boulding says, "This happens to be my planet and I'm very much attached to it."

I do not recognize your nation's domestic affairs. I do not recognize any nation's affairs as exclusively internal.

In the name of "internal affairs" governments and citizens commit heinous injustices with impunity.

To hell with internal affairs. It is time we outgrew this tribalism. Exploitation and imperialism are not just political wrongs perpetrated by one nation against another. Is oppression more tolerable because it is an internal affair? What are internal affairs anyway?

In a world daily growing more and more interinvolved it is downright hypocritical to even pretend that there are any longer internal affairs.

Delegates to United Nations conferences spend days and weeks and months meddling in one another's internal affairs, but when convenient have the effrontery to protest "intrusion into domestic affairs." It is time we dispensed with all this stupid pretense.

We must openly want to grow *more* involved in advances as well as in injustices *wherever* they exist. No domestic affairs any longer exclude other nations.

National elections in the United States are no longer the exclusive affair of American voters but the concern of all peoples, since the results will affect the whole world. You may be a gentle enlightenment parent or teacher, but if children in a faraway land are daily mistreated or left hungry, you and your children will one day soon suffer the consequences. When a communication satellite is launched into space the whole world is involved.

We serve notice that affairs within nations are now the affairs and concerns of the entire world community.

It is understood that we do not want destructive or military encroachment but positive involvement that humanizes and universalizes.

We must also once and for all reject the concept of national identity or national character. What does national identity mean? In our times it means only one thing, that the nation is static or slow-moving — not responding to the world.

To insist on national identity is to reject rapid growth. It means shielding the nation's distinct identity from the impact of world influences.

If a country or an individual is to grow and realize its ever-expanding potential, it must not be confined by any identity. It must not pin an identity on itself. It must be fluid and open-ended.

Fluidity as I have already explained defies identity.

It is increasingly difficult to speak of national identity, even more difficult to maintain it. What is the national identity of Norway, Yugoslavia, Kenya, Algeria, Canada? It was one thing twenty years ago, quite another today. It will be radically different twenty years from now.

What is the identity of Tokyo, Rome, Budapest, Amsterdam, London, Madrid, New York City, Los Angeles, Mexico City? Their fluidity too defies identification.

Today only slow-moving countries and communities still have definable identities. But from here on even their national character will be steadily reconditioned.

For instance if all the Jews of the world flocked to Israel that would no longer insure the future of a distinctly *Jewish* state. Nor would the elimination of Israel insure survival of a distinctly *Arab* nation.

National and ethnic purity and identity are of another age. An age when conditions evolved slowly and communication among cultures was negligible.

It is absurd to speak of national identity in an age when millions of tourists, students and others pour into every country year after year. At a time when world trade and global communication are wreaking havoc with origins.

But does this mean global uniformity? Absolutely not. The end of nationalism means the acceleration of *diversity*.

Nationalism compels mass conformity to a national identity. Nationalists have blocked personalities because they have been conditioned to grow and relate only within a national or ethnic periphery. The German, Chinese, Brazilian, Catholic, Zoroastrian — each is required to abide by traditions and identity of its own ethnic group or nation.

Globalism shatters these rigid bloc identities and enables each individual (not each group) to respond in its own way to the crosscurrents of world influences.

It is not unlikely though that by 2020 diversity may give way to global uniformity. But we needn't worry about that. By then we will have outgrown our planet.

Globalism is not a terminal goal. Only a stepping stone to universalism.

Then too what is home? What is homeland? In our emerging world there are no fixed homes or fixed homelands. The world is on the move. Millions each year voluntarily leave home and homeland.

We are *all* refugees — from the static life.

It is precisely this new fluidity that is helping us all outgrow ancient exclusivities. Rapid cross-fertilization is prodding static societies out of their torpor.

Toynbee noted that the great creative figures of history were the *deracine* — individuals who were not rooted, who enriched and were enriched by many cultures.

Those who cannot let go of home and homeland are the backward and the timid. Modern individuals do not need or want fixed homes and homelands. Their mobility and fluidity are their greatest assets. They are not rooted. As someone recently said, people are not carrots to need roots.

To be without a home and homeland is no longer a tragedy. We are losing home and clan and nation — gaining the whole world. This is no longer a dream or a theory. Every year millions of people change homelands. Tens of millions of youths now study and work and live away from homeland — and do not go back.

The entire planet is now our homeland.

Even youngsters who do not travel are outgrowing national homelands. During my travels I am always struck by similarities among youths of the world. Intellectually and psychologically youths are now closer to one another than to their respective elders. This is not surprising. Youths of the world are increasingly conditioned by many similar forces.

Everywhere youths read international publications, watch international films, listen to regional radio, watch regional and global television, dance to international discotheque music, wear multinational styles of clothes, intently follow and respond to international youth movements.

World youths express disdain for the past but respond enthusiastically when you talk to them of science and technology, the Space Age and the future. There is growing impatience with orthodoxies of the past, and a determination (not always verbalized) to become a part of the emerging world community.

A silent universalizing dialogue is going on day by day cutting through ideological, national, and other barriers. While their elders still bicker and coddle old prejudices and grievances youths are daily growing closer. Their elders charged them with betraying their heritage and traditions, of becoming Europeanized, Sovietized, or Americanized. The fact is that the young are daily globalized and universalized.

* * *

But this young universalism now sweeping our planet needs urgently to be nourished. What can you the individual do? Plenty.

For one thing, as I have already explained, you yourself are inherently an agent for universalization. If for instance you are an East European Communist, don't go only to neighboring

countries. You must visit the United States also. If you are a North American don't go only to Paris and Tokyo and Rio. You must travel in the Soviet Union and other Communist countries. If you are a European or American Jew don't go only to Israel. Visit Arab countries also. If you sympathize with the Arabs don't just go to Cairo and Damascus, but also to Tel Aviv and Haifa. If you are opposed to the Apartheid regime of Pretoria do not *boycott* South Africa. On the contrary you must go to it. You must encourage others to go there.

This is one of the ways to stimulate a society and reinforce local movements for change. In boycotting a country you are only helping the forces of reaction and exclusivity.

We urgently need more and more dialogue, trade, and communication. Not just with people whose loyalties and ideologies are compatible with ours but particularly with those who are separated from us by one barrier or another. In helping others outgrow their provincialism we will outgrow our own.

But in our times if you don't seek contact it will seek you. As I have striven to show throughout this section, it is no longer possible to elude the onrush of worldwide communication and integration. It is everywhere around us. Whether you like it or not you are daily globalized.

Nationalism, racism, isolationism, are all anti-evolutionary. In our times particularly they can no longer work. Occasionally there is alarm over spreading neoisolationism in one country or another. This is a groundless fear. Isolationism is no longer possible. It is not a modern condition. If a nationalist regime takes over in some country, if tourism or foreign investment is discouraged in another, if televised news is censored, or if your regional community suffers setbacks, still the world will come pouring through in countless other ways.

You can help the onrush of globalism but no one, no government, no nation or movement can any longer stop it.

"There is a growing sense of unity among young people," reports a recent United Nations study on youth. "A feeling of world solidarity and a sense of common responsibility for the achievement of peace... Youth of the world is seeking a universal identity... This is a new kind of population, more resilient and adaptable than their elders, ready for change, open to new ideas... World opinion is increasingly the opinion of the world's youth... Youth of the world will begin to predominate in world affairs..."¹⁹

Vigorous generations are rising in the world impatient with the paranoid tribal feuds between Westerners and Communists, Arabs and Israelis, Blacks and Whites. They are tired of jingoist leaders who still quibble and fight, unable to respond to the new realities of our times.

These young generations are moving beyond tribal commitments, beyond ethnic loyalties, beyond national boundaries, beyond continents. They are moving beyond the planet itself. They are spreading across the solar system. They are growing Universal.

¹⁹ United Nations Economic and Social Council. *Preliminary Report on Long-term Policies and Programmes For Youth in National Development*. Jan. 7, 1969.

PART 4

A Rare Moment in Evolution

This is a beautiful moment in human evolution.

It is the stage at which the human species has broken away from its confinement to this planet.

Suddenly we are no longer of this world only. We are transcending our world, breaking the umbilical cord that had tied and confined us to a speck in space. We are no longer immobilized in a terrestrial existence. People from our earth are now visiting other worlds.

This extension into the universe is more than simply a scientific accomplishment or a physical feat. We are transcending basic conditions inherent in all organisms of this planet. We are reversing fundamental premises of human life, altering the very nature of nature, redefining concepts of evolution and our situation in the universe.

No philosophy, theology, or ideology of the past touches on our new situation in the universe. No concept of the old earthbound human species is now relevant.

What can the Old Testament, the Bhagavad-Gita, the American Constitution, and the Communist Manifesto teach the intelligences living with a new set of premises on extraterrestrial colonies?

The human species began exploring space from its beginnings in the primeval slush. It has not stopped since and never will. Having reached out across this planet it is now reaching out into worlds beyond — first the solar system, then the galaxies. We are on our way to new worlds, new existences.

In its editorial of July 21, 1969, the usually restrained *New York Times* wrote:

In the long evolution of the human race up from the primeval ooze, no more significant step has ever been taken than yesterday's when man the worldling truly became but "little lower than the angels" and first set foot upon another planet... This is the year, this the month, the week, the day when, so far as we can know, for the first time in all the eons of existence of this universe of ours, a sentient being has transported himself from his earthly habitat to a different sphere floating in the endless sea of space. The men that landed yesterday on the moon represented not any group or creed or nationality; they represented all humanity and they carried with them a little of all the hopes and struggles of mankind to attain the heights throughout the ages.

Yesterday, July 20, 1969 will be marked forever as the date man transcended the bonds of his nature and his environment, and the human race entered a new era leading to realms beyond comprehension, even beyond imagination. Man has realized the unrealizable because he dared to conceive the inconceivable; now one can believe that the limitations to the accomplishments of man are set only by the limitations of the human spirit.

Another rare moment in evolution is coming up. The Space Age will soon be followed by the Time Age. That will be the stage at which we will at last cease to be confined to a speck in Time. We will attain immortality.

Immortality means being free of Time. Free of its pressure. In infinity there is no Time — no beginning, middle, or end. What difference to the eternal individual if it takes one second or one million light years to reach a certain zone in space? We are creatures of Time because we are circumscribed by it — we are born and we die. There is a beginning and an end. Time will cease to matter once death has been erased.

Theoretically death is now no longer an irreversible condition of the human organism. It can no longer be regarded as a fate permanently beyond control.

The attainment of immortality is not far away — probably by the first decade of the 21st century.

Suspended animation, transference of the brain to durable bodies, genetic restructuring, anti-gravity, antiaging techniques — these are *some* of the methods we know today that could help us achieve eternal life.

Some progress has already been made in most of these techniques. In his book, *The Prospect of Immortality*, Robert Ettinger writes of advances in suspended animation. "Most of us now living have a chance for personal, physical immortality... At very low temperatures it is possible, right now, to preserve dead people with essentially no deterioration, indefinitely... We need only arrange to have our bodies after we die stored in suitable freezers against the time when science may be able to help us... In a sense, the freezer era has already begun, since conscious purposeful activity in this direction is underway."²⁰

Then too countless people who only a few years ago would have been dead and buried, now go on living with transplanted lungs, hearts, livers, kidneys, and other vital organs. Still others live with the help of respirators, electronic pacemakers, dialysis. They are the forerunners of the cyborg.

At the rate we are advancing it will not be long before we replace our fragile perishable bodies with durable replaceable bodies.

Today we can only speculate on how and exactly when we will attain eternal life. But our attitude to death can never again be the same. Death has become a biological problem, not a biological imperative.

Immortality is only another phase in evolution. It is no more spectacular than the evolution of the upright position or the attainment of speech. Certainly it is far less spectacular than the emergence of life from matter. Just as we now take these evolutionary advances for granted soon immortality too will be taken for granted.

But most people are still too guilt-ridden, too resigned to the inevitability of death, to even hope for immortality. Eternal life? Live forever and ever? Who me? It's too good to be true. I don't deserve it. I can't make it.

But we must now vigorously reject this belief in the absolutism of death. As Miguel de Unamuno wrote, "We must want to want to live forever and ever."

I may have emerged from Nothingness, but I am no longer resigned to the premise that I will necessarily sink into Nothingness. I reject the existential premise that my life is finite, my world limited. These attitudes are now too passive and resigned.

I reject the thesis that it is even natural to die. This is also too fatalistic and passive. Is it not against the laws of nature for humans to fly or live in water? Today we fly higher, faster, and farther than any bird. We swim deeper, faster, and farther than any fish. Having transcended our very planet we must no longer consider ourselves permanently bound by *any* of its laws.

If it is natural to die then the hell with nature. Why submit to its tyranny? We must rise above nature. We must refuse to die.

Today we exhort our fellow people to join in the struggle against death because for the very first time in evolution there is the possibility of winning that struggle. Until now theologies and philosophies prepared us to meet death. Today we must prepare only to do away with death. We must do so with all our genius and determination. Anything else is now suicide.

²⁰ Robert C. W. Ettinger, *The Prospect of Immortality*. Revised and updated edition. Macfadden-Bartell Corp. New York, 1964.

Humankind has had a long and hard climb from the abyss. One push, one final push, and we will attain another evolutionary summit. We will not only cease to be limited by Space, we will also cease to be at the mercy of Time. We will be eternal and belong to All-Space and All-Time.

Millenniums from now these years and decades will be remembered. We are at an Evolutionary Turning Point.

Eons of human achievement and effort have brought us, bit by bit, to an emerging new situation in Time and Space.

From here on the past will be less and less relevant. The road that led to us will no longer be our roots. We are veering in an entirely new direction, toward radically new concepts of intelligent life which can never again be gauged or understood by the Time-bound and Earth-bound concepts of the past.

Optimism — the New Revolution

In view of our new situation in Time and Space optimism is suddenly the only rational philosophy.

Ours is the first Age of Optimism. We are at Optimism One.

It will take some time before we fully grasp this. We are now at the *beginning* of the Evolutionary Turning Point, still too ridden with self-doubt and guilt, too lacking in perspective, too brainwashed by our long heritage of pessimism, to feel or even yet to grasp the meaning of this optimism.

We still live in the shadows of our tragic past and therefore cannot yet take optimism seriously.

We are daily growing, evolving, transcending formidable barriers — our dynamism is totally optimistic, yet our philosophical outlook remains pessimistic. It is as though all our triumphs and accomplishments were unreal — a fantasy. As though only our flaws and unresolved problems were real.

Our attitudes have not kept up with the realities of our times. Here and there around the planet are some brave visionaries — a few normative thinkers, a few Space scientists, some geneticists, physicists, immortalists.

But as a rule the intellectual world is still pessimistic — cynical about human progress, contemptuous of the modern world, apprehensive about the future. This is an old and atrophied intellectualism that has not kept up with the times. This middle-aged intellectualism lacks vision and hope. It lacks guts.

Pessimism as an attitude to life and to progress is reactionary and cannot be taken lightly. This is an intellectual pollution which seeps insidiously into our everyday relationships, our life styles, our books, newspapers, TV programs, films.

The modern community's fashionable cynicism is particularly confusing and damaging to millions around the world who are now striving for a better life.

No less devitalizing is the impact of this negation on youth. The middle-aged intellectual, particularly in the West, harangues youth with bleak views of humanity and contempt of the modern world, then is outraged when youngsters rebel or are estranged. Is it surprising that in America and Western Europe intellectuality is sometimes identified with cynicism?

This is unfortunate because it is precisely the intellectual who has often been the spearhead of human progress, precipitating struggles against oppression and backwardness. How paradoxical then that the most progressive should be the most cynical of progress.

We must dissipate this pessimism which still hangs over humankind, spreading despair where there is hope, self-hate where there ought to be self-esteem, befuddling the very people who need confidence and idealism to carry on.

I will begin by explaining the four main factors which perpetuate pessimism about the world and our future.

First there is the basic problem of the psyche. How we view the world and the human condition is directly influenced by the way we view ourselves. Around the world today most people over twenty-five grew up in overprotective repressive homes where the child was treated as though puny. Love was conditional, lavished if the child was obedient. As a rule, children grew up faced with persistent rejection, frustration, and a sense of their own unworthiness.

The psychological foundation for defeat was set early in life and these people remain permanently oriented to failure. They carry the seeds of failure or the expectation of failure within them. Even when

things go well their pathological pessimism convinces them that their success will soon give way to failure, that nothing ever really works out.

These people unconsciously generalize from their own history of personal frustrations and failures.

Nothing ever works out for me, engenders the attitude that, nothing ever really works out for anyone. There is no such thing as progress... Things are really the same... Nothing has really changed.

You can spend a whole day cataloging for such people the great achievements of humankind — still they will remain unconvinced. They *want* to believe. But their conditioning says no. Achievements and happiness are somehow not real. Only failure is real.

How quickly we all dismiss our achievements. How tenaciously we fixate on our problems. In the early 1950s people were absolutely sure that France and Germany would never join in a Common Market. Having conveniently forgotten their earlier skepticism, they are now absolutely sure that a union of all Europe will never happen. These were also the pessimists who in 1950 were absolutely sure that Africa would never be free, that the European colonizers would never leave. Today Africa is free of colonialism but these people are unimpressed.

In his book, *Profiles of the Future*, Arthur C. Clarke quotes numerous *authorities* in various fields whose skepticism about progress proved to be nothing more than colossal "failure of nerve." Clarke is absolutely right when he says we need to

jog the remarkably selective memories of the pessimists... The speed with which those who once declaimed "it's impossible" can switch to "I said it could be done all the time" is astounding.

Some of these failures of nerve are so ludicrous as to be almost unbelievable, and would form an interesting subject for psychological analysis... The most famous, and perhaps the most instructive, failures of nerve have occurred in the fields of aero -and astro- nautics. At the beginning of the twentieth century, scientists were almost unanimous in declaring that heavier-than-air flight was impossible, and that anyone who attempted to build airplanes was a fool.

Even after aviation became a reality, skepticism persisted. Arthur C. Clarke quotes William H. Pickering, the celebrated astronomer:

The popular mind pictures gigantic flying machines speeding across the Atlantic and carrying innumerable passengers... It seems safe to say that such ideas must be wholly visionary, and even if a machine could get across with one or two passengers the expense would be prohibitive to any but the capitalist who could own his own yachts... Another popular fallacy is to expect enormous speed to be obtained...

Clarke also notes that even later, in 1929, Neville Shute, then a leading aeronautical engineer, wrote a paper on the future of aviation. "The forecast is freely made," Shute had said, that "within a few years passenger-carrying aeroplanes will be traveling at over 300 m.p.h. the speed record today." Shute considered this gross exaggeration because "the commercial aeroplane will have a definite range of development ahead of it beyond which no further advance can be anticipated."

Neville Shute was obviously not deterred by these glaringly inaccurate predictions and in the 1950s wrote *On the Beach*, a best-selling book in which he dramatized humankind's imminent doom.

The same failure of nerve was evidenced in other fields as well. "Right through the 1930s and 1940s," Arthur Clarke reminds us, "eminent scientists continued to deride the rocket pioneers — when they bothered to notice them at all."

Even as late as the mid-1950s Dr. Richard Woolley, a leading member of the British Royal Astronomical Society, is quoted as having told the press, "Space travel is utter bilge." The very next year Sputnik was sent into space.

Precisely this same psychological orientation to failure has operated in every fields — in medicine, in international affairs, and social relations, etc.

It takes self-esteem to believe in the future, to believe that things will work out or can be *made* to work out.

Your personal history of failure has nothing to do with what is happening outside you. Generalizing from your own deflated self-image is understandable but not logical. Your personal failure is not humanity's failure. Your private sense of puniness is not humanity's puniness. If nothing has ever worked out for you, it does not follow that nothing will ever work out for the world. If you do not feel that you deserve success or happiness it does not follow that the world does not deserve or cannot achieve success and happiness.

Stating the idea another way, if I wake up tomorrow with an acute toothache I will feel understandably miserable, but this personal anguish of mine has nothing to do with humanity's situation in the universe. And it ought to have no bearing on my philosophical position on human evolution. The inability to make this distinction between what is happening within me and what is happening outside me is at the root of much of the pessimism in the world.

The second factor is guilt. If you have been brought up with the conviction that you are inherently wicked and that you do not *deserve* success or happiness it is unlikely that you will rejoice in humankind's successes. The mere allusion to success evokes a sense of guilt and automatically impels you to fasten on failures.

Humanity's epochal journey into Space? Why, that is terrible. We have many problems right here on earth. Life extension, antiaging, living forever? How foolish. The money should be spent on more important needs.

To bring glad tidings to such people, to show them for instance that essentially things are going well for us does not elicit pleasure but hostility.

Hope, success, happiness, abundance, immortality — these are all threatening. *Optimism* itself makes them cringe.

The guilt-ridden do not want to be robbed of their just desserts. They are resigned to anguish and suffering. They cannot allow themselves to expect anything else. Even if they are successful or live in comfort they allay their guilt by adhering to a *philosophy* of despair. What better way to disassociate themselves from their successes, pleasures, and comforts than to go through life groaning about the futility of existence or the emptiness of modern life? If they do not live in actual suffering and failure, they make sure they live in a *philosophy* of suffering and failure.

Such people, mostly in modern societies, are actually energized by pessimism. The more they lament their metaphysical anguish and the more they sneer at human progress the freer they are to "enjoy" life.

If they do not flog themselves with this "cheerful nihilism," as John Barth calls it, others will do it for them. Writers, artists, social scientists, film makers, particularly in Western societies, prosper and

thrive accommodating this guilt. Acting like the old Sunday evangelists, they lambaste and revile people, calling them dehumanized and alienated, clobbering them with doomsday forecasts and disaster films. Guilt-ridden and masochistic, the people lap it up and ask for more.

The third factor is the lack of historical perspective, itself reinforced by the first two causes. This "historical amnesia," as the American Commission on Violence recently termed it, is nothing new. People have always lacked historical perspective. In their preoccupation with, and sensitivity to, problems of their own times, they always believed that things were never as bad in the past.

In our times this lack of historical perspective and the resulting pessimism have been formalized and given the widespread circulation by the careless theorizings of some American and European philosophers, social scientists, film-makers. So thoroughly have these vocal Western intellectuals brainwashed themselves and others that around the world today, alienation, estrangement from nature, loneliness, violence, pollution and a mass of related ills are mistakenly identified with late twentieth-century life.

In this book I have striven at some length to refute many of these myths which often spring from an absence of historical perspective.

Modern individuals are justified in clamoring for more liberated lifestyles, more leisure, more wholesome communities, cleaner air, etc... It is only when we generalize from inadequacies of our times to lapse into easy pessimism about the modern world and progress — it is then that we are illogical because we conveniently forget that as our social and material standards of life are rising, our expectations are rising also.

Contrary to popular opinion the world cannot move backward or stand still. Even a "conservative trend" is a myth. There can be no such thing. At all levels of all societies, particularly in our radical world, there is only one trend — the progressive.

The conservative of today is the liberal of yesteryear. Modern conservatism is at a higher level of history than the liberalism of two generations ago.

For example, in the year 1920 liberals as a rule expected complete submission from children and students, believed in god and the prophets, attended church regularly, supported capital punishment, harbored prejudices toward minority groups, had not even begun to support women's rights, social security, the right to collective bargaining, were proud of their country's colonies, and fiercely patriotic.

Today not only has the modern liberal outgrown these attitudes, the young conservative too has evolved beyond them.

By standards of today's Yemen, the New York conservative is a revolutionary.

Pessimists tend to fixate on specific conditions that appear to have suffered setbacks and conclude that progress has stopped, that conditions have regressed, or that a conservative trend has set in. These are illogical assumptions. Even when a progressive government is supplanted by a conservative group the basic total direction is still forward.

For one thing, while a conservative government holds the reins in some areas of life, progressive forces are all along radicalizing other areas — consumers grow more assertive, education systems more autonomous, standards of living rise, the powers of the church loosen, transportation and communication facilities are extended and modernized, and so forth. All these forces not only propel the society as a whole; they also goad the conservative government to move on.

A government does not exist in a vacuum. It has to respond, at times without its own awareness or consent, to the demands of the growing society around it. In our times it also has to respond to the

multi-pressures of a world itself on the move. Above all it has to respond to the radicalizing influences of increasingly autonomous young generations.

Finally this conservative government has a limited time only. Soon old age forces the leaders out. A new group of leaders takes over. At best these new leaders are progressive. At worst conservative. But they are younger conservatives conditioned by a newer world and therefore necessarily more advanced than the old conservatives.

Barring a global cataclysm, human progress cannot be stopped, much less reversed. It is increasingly difficult to even slow it down.

In our times the question is no longer *whether* a country or the world is progressing but how fast.

We humans are a dynamic species, ceaselessly propelled forward by evolving conditions and by new generations, themselves conditioned by new worlds and in turn generating new worlds and new potentials.

Human evolution is unique because it is cumulative. Animals transmit experience only genetically, one generation to the immediate next. Their evolution is therefore negligible. Humans transmit knowledge and experience not only genetically but culturally. We do not lose what we have learned. We cannot know less today than we knew a year ago, a generation ago, or five centuries ago.

In every way each generation is more evolved than all previous generations, each decade more advanced than the preceding, each century ahead of all previous centuries.

This inability to see our human condition in evolutionary perspective also accounts for much of our pessimism.

The last factor is our legacy of philosophical pessimism. Not only does our psychological conditioning incline us to a sense of hopelessness, our intellectual orientation does so too. Throughout the ages our attitude to life has been conditioned by theologies and philosophies of Resignation, Fatalism, Submission, Renunciation, Pessimism, Nihilism, Catastrophism, Disillusion, the Absurd, Despair, Nothingness. (Optimism was only manifest in theological fantasies about the goodness of god and in the conditional promise of everlasting happiness in some heaven.)

Even recent visionaries like Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, and the evolutionists were necessarily resigned to the inevitability of human mortality and confinement to this planet. Progress was believed possible only up to a limit. Certain barriers of Time and Space were considered impossible to transcend. The human situation was viewed as basically and unalterably tragic.

Martin Heidegger, the existentialist philosopher, neatly defined humanity's classical situation in Time and Space. Transcendences are *within* the world, he wrote. We surpass ourselves, but always in the confines of the intramundane. We are of this world. Then too, we are in a world limited by death and experienced in anguish. My future finite, limited and I knowing it — that is my tragic situation in the world.

It is understandable therefore that during our entire history there has not been a single philosophy or ideology that has viewed our potential as totally limitless. Such an open-ended categorical optimism was not possible or realistic.

"Why has there been no philosophy, no religion that has said yes to life?" wrote Nietzsche. In view of humankind's tragic plight this age-old pessimistic *no* is understandable.

Today we are still saying *no* to life though for the first time our evolutionary triumphs are loudly saying *yes*. Pessimism remains a fashionable intellectual posture still equated with realism even though *Realism* is being turned upside down.

At a time when we are committing our genius and mobilizing our tremendous energies and resources to deal with all our earthly problems, when people are floating in other worlds and human evolution is beginning to be engineered, optimism is still equated with naïveté, though obviously it is pessimism that is now glaringly naïve.

Our intellectual community, which ought to be fully aware of our Evolutionary Turning Point and therefore ought to project a new revolutionary spirit in keeping with our new cosmic situation and exploding potentials, still goes on echoing the same old weary lamentations.

I have cited four factors which account for the persistence of pessimism as a philosophy. These and other factors interrelate and reinforce one another.

But pessimism is on its way out. The world began outgrowing fatalism as it extended control over nature and realized that its destiny rests in its own hands. Pessimism as a philosophy is also losing relevance. I will briefly explain this in the light of my thesis of the preceding pages.

First, because the human psyche is growing stronger. Modern children grow up in permissive supportive milieus, treated with love and made to feel they matter. As a rule, they are spared the ego-crippling repressions and survival problems that oldworld children faced. For modern children things work out — they work out enough to engender in them this self-confidence that things can be *made* to work out.

Second, the loosening of puritanism is weakening the iron grip of guilt. Modern youngsters grow up conditioned to comfort, leisure, abundance, success. Less and less do they question their moral right to be happy and fulfilled. Unlike older generations they are not propelled by anxiety and anguish, or resigned to suffering. Hope and optimism do not arouse guilt.

Third, global communication and world travel are helping us acquire historical perspective. Having witnessed at first hand the dehumanizing impact of backwardness modern individuals are less likely to romanticize the past. They are daily witnessing for themselves that robotlike conformity, alienation, estrangement, violence, intolerance — all these and other related problems are far more pervasive in oldworld communities than in the modern world. Historical perspective is creating a more realistic, optimistic view of human progress and potential.

Finally the cumulative impact of our monumental achievements is rendering it increasingly apparent that our heritage of pessimism is dead. Our successes are helping recondition our self-image and attitude to the future.

One night in the old town of Bushire, Iran, I sat with several local children on a cliff overlooking the Persian Gulf. "Look out there," I said. "That shining star is a satellite. It was sent out recently."

The youngsters looked up and followed the satellite as it's slowly glided across the sky. One of them whispered, "Did *we* send that up there?"

"Who do you mean by *we*?" I asked.

"I mean *we* — people."

"Yes *we* sent that out there, *we* — people. Not the Russians, not the Americans, but *we* — humans."

Those youngsters and millions like them around the world are growing up with a more confident view of humankind and its potential.

This new confidence is evident in the new music, the new dances, the new philosophies.

The great tragedians and pessimists of the past no longer speak for our age. Their stunted views are no longer compatible with our open liberated visions.

What do Eastern philosophies and theologies of self denial mean in an age when the self — the individual self — is now for the first time heard from? What relevance does the nihilism of the Kafka have in our modern world where children and adults will not allow anyone to reduce them to puniness?

How does age-old resignation to the mundane apply at a time when we have transcended the mundane? We are realizing that although we occupy an infinitesimal speck in this vast universe, we are resolutely spreading out and tomorrow we will all roam the universe. "We will storm the universe," as a Soviet space scientist put it.

What does any philosophy predicated on the mortality of the human individual mean at a time when we are redefining the very meaning of death, when we are able to keep a person alive long after the heart and other vital organs have died — at a time when we are resolutely striving to transcend our finiteness?

How relevant are the old philosophies which view us as limited and puny, at a time when we are realizing that we have come this far from slimy origins in the deep oceans?

What relevance does any nihilism or despair about the human situation have at a time when our achievements daily prove that we are not permanently bound by any laws, that there are no gods above us, that we are free agents in a universe suddenly not limited, not predetermined, not unalterable?

But optimism about our human situation and about our limitless potential does not preclude awareness of the many pressing problems still confronting us. We are optimists precisely because we are realists. We know that we have come a long way, that we have overcome myriads of *insurmountable* obstacles. We also know that we face many more — but are confident that we shall overcome.

Pessimism on the other hand is unrealistic precisely because it emanates from a deflated view of people and potentials. The pessimist overestimates problems and underestimates the ability to deal with those problems.

Not surprisingly pessimists have a short attention span. Today they fasten on some problem to confirm private anxieties. In a few months, even weeks, when today's problem appears on its way to being solved or has lost its shock value, they give themselves a new scare.

But while concern over problems is constructive, the pessimism that usually accompanies problems is not. To resolve our problems it is not necessary to emulate Sunday evangelists of doom, encouraging self hate, and a sense of hopelessness.

We are daily surging ahead because somehow we believe in the future. Let us no longer be afraid to *openly* acknowledge our phenomenal progress. Let us no longer cringe from idealism.

Even idealism has changed. At one time idealists were those whose visions were so far ahead of their times that they lacked realism and credibility. In our rapidly changing world to be an idealist is to be only a few steps ahead of the times. What is an ideal today will be reality in ten or twenty years.

Read the following words aloud. SINGLES REVOLUTION...SEXUAL LIBERATION...LEISURE BOOM...SOLAR ENERGY...COMPUTER...LASER...ORGAN TRANSPLANT...COMMON MARKET...UNITED NATIONS...GLOBAL COMMUNICATION...ASTRONAUT...SPACE COLONIES...SUSPENDED ANIMATION...GENETIC IMPROVEMENTS...

Until the 1960s all these were futuristic. Only a few people discussed them seriously. Today they are reality.

We need and deserve more and more idealism. More and more optimism.

Optimism is revolutionary.

Pessimism is oldworld and reactionary.

We must rebel against the fashionable pessimism of our heritage.

We deserve more than self-hate and cynicism. We have come too far, undergone too much, triumphed over too many impossible obstacles, to allow ourselves now to remain bogged down in the deflated spirit of another age.

Pessimism as a philosophy of life is not in keeping with the monumental achievements of our times.

Unrelenting emphasis on our shortcomings erodes the will, encouraging apathy. One-sided emphasis on our brutalities itself brutalizes. In stressing our unresolved crudities we stigmatize ourselves with an ugly self-image.

We can encourage self-confidence and a will to action by stressing our great achievements as well.

We must begin *identifying* with our accomplishments. We must not think of ourselves as merely spectators.

When the United Nations is in session a part of each one of us is involved in global dialogue. When the emotionally troubled or the criminally disturbed are transferred from prison cells to psychiatric hospitals, it is the human in us that is at last asserting itself. Look out into the sky any clear night and you will see bright stars that were not there before. It is our collective genius that has altered the solar system. You should remind yourself, *I* helped send those stars out there.

Nothing humanizes us more than examples of our humanness. Nothing emboldens us to do more and more than examples of our great achievements.

We have always been quick to berate ourselves for our failings. It is time we paused to say,
Bravo to the human spirit.

21st Century Visions

Our world is now undergoing unprecedented changes.

New Ages are emerging — post family Universal Life, nonparenthood, biological liberation, global mobility, pleasure and leisure ethics, planetization of all our institutions, world economy, world politics, abundant resources, Space colonies, altered anatomies, life extension...

Breakthroughs are overturning basic premises of Earthly life. For instance the reality of individuals from earth living in Space demands a complete reversal of all the concepts, all the notions, all of the props and defenses with which we have lived for millennia. This is why many people were actually resentful at the first landing on the moon, protesting, ridiculing, even falling off to sleep while watching the event. It was simply *too* radical an event for the psyche and the intellect to assimilate right away.

This is also why people react resentfully when told that they can live on and on.

People can cope with the old "radicalism" that seeks to overthrow the government, a religious establishment, or an economic system. This is familiar radicalism. It can be coped with. But this new radicalism of our age that is altering our very situation in Time and Space — this is too emotionally threatening, too monumental to cope with right away. It is a revolution in an entirely New Order of Things, introducing a new set of premises. It demands a total psychological and social reorientation.

In the light of our cosmic and biological revolutions *all* violent uprisings are now child's play. Those who still resort to violence for whatever cause are no longer revolutionary. They are reactionary, their methods archaic, their contributions nil.

There was a time when the revolutionaries gave their lives to undo wrongs or generate changes. In those slow-moving times this supreme sacrifice was often an effective way of making a dent in the granitelike status quo. Moreover militants ready to risk life for a cause were often sure of a life after death. The leader said, "Give your life for our cause and you will go to heaven. The gods will reward you."

What can the leader today promise? Give your life for what? To overthrow tyranny? To undo oppression and injustice? Is there a tyranny or an injustice greater than death? Death itself is the end of freedom, the end of progress.

Today more than ever, life — *life itself* — has become too valuable, too full of promise and potential to squander for *any* cause.

"Give me liberty or give me death." Two hundred years ago this may have had some logic. Today it is a sure sign of stupidity.

Today's revolutionary is too aware of the fantastic potentials of life to want to die on some stinking battlefield of causes.

The real revolutionaries of today fight a different battle. They want to be alive in the year 2050 and in the year 20,000 and the year 2,000,000. Is there anything more radical than this determination?

Who are the new revolutionaries of our times? They are the global travelers, global planners, world citizens, normative philosophers, inventors, telepsychists, cyberneticists. Space scientists, astronauts, Space architects, radio astronomers, exobiologists, cosmologists. Geneticists, biologists, physicists, biochemists, reconstructive surgeons, immortalists, post humanists.

They and others are revolutionizing the human condition in fundamental ways. Their achievements and goals go far beyond traditional radicalisms.

A totally new set of premises and goals are now emerging.

We are no longer striving only to increase food production. We want to do away with the primitive dependence on agriculture. We want to do away with the very dependence on food — switching to nonfood nourishment.

We are no longer content with simply building shelters for the homeless, better houses, towns, and cities. We are on the way to eliminating the very concept of fixed shelters, homes, towns. We do not want to remain rooted or space bound but space-free.

We can no longer settle for better family life, more compatible marriages, more enlightened parent-child relations. We are on our way to dispensing with the very institution of family. We will settle for nothing less than the total elimination of neuroses, insecurities, and competitiveness with such inherently exclusivist systems as family, clan, nation invariably engender. In time we want to dispense with the primitive act of procreation itself. We want to regenerate life in the living.

We no longer strive for better schools, more teachers, better textbooks. Schools, colleges, and textbooks are anachronisms. We need more and more communication satellites, lasers, magnetic tapes to transmit knowledge and information to every individual anywhere on this planet. Literacy itself is no longer a prerequisite for progress. What does literacy mean in a world where electronic communication is replacing the written word?

We are no longer content to simply refine the capitalist and socialist systems. We recognize existing trends toward cybarnation, cashless economies, international economics, etc. But we will not settle for anything less than the complete elimination of money and labor.

We are no longer content to simply strive for democracy or government by the proletariat. All this is now too modest. We want instant universal participation that will do away with the very institution of government.

We are no longer content with simply diverting the course of rivers, reclaiming seas and deserts, creating islands, producing rain, harnessing solar energy. All this is now increasingly commonplace. We want to make alterations in the solar system and beyond. We want to reclaim the planets, create new moons, nudge old ones to more suitable orbits, harness the life-bestowing energies of more giant suns.

We are no longer content with only developing better communication systems, more satellites, telecomputers, picturephones, lasers. We also want to communicate telepsychically.

We are no longer content to simply striving for social, economic, and political equality. What do these rights mean so long as people are *born* biologically unequal? So long as some are born strong others weak, some healthy others sickly, some beautiful others ungainly, some tall others short, some brilliant others dumb — in other words so long as we do not have biological equality — all social inequalities mean very little. We will settle for nothing less than the elimination of biological inequality which is at the very root of all human inequalities.

We can never again be content with civil rights, human rights, the right to self-determination. These rights by themselves are no longer enough.

We now want cosmic rights.

We want the freedom to roam the universe.

We want nothing less than the right to determine our own evolution.

We want the right to live forever.

So long as we have not overthrown the tyranny of death no one is free.

As revolutionaries in a rapidly expanding world we concede nothing, accept no despair, believe in no ultimate mysteries, abide by no absolute truths, adhere to no eternal values, settle for no ultimate goals, consider no human problems irreversible, nothing unattainable — not even dimensions beyond Time and Space.