

Unprecedented Evolutions

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Contents

Threats and Opportunity	4
Unexampled Supranational Laws and Institutions	7
Synthesism	9
Toward a Re-Orientaion of our Foreign Policy	18

In view of the nearly unanimous determination of social scientists to remain competently within the realm of their own disciplinekeeping away from the sea of troubles in which all of us, wittingly or unwittingly, are floundering—I am not unwilling to accept the role of scapegoat by offering a programmatic paper in the name of the most formidable and imperative problem that man has ever faced, from the solution and repeated solution of which he will never be exempt.

In refocusing attention on this dilemma, I shall be sustained by the surmise that scientists who are trained to detach themselves at will from the events and passions of their own space-time and to review what is known of the temporal span and global scope of human history, as if seated with uncommitted curiosity on a Martian hilltop, are equipped—more as consequence of this trained capacity than of their grasp of theory—to contribute an essential attitude and dimension to the total endeavor of the makers of our foreign policy to foresee different possible consequences of present trends and devise long-range, transforming strategies.

And so, with apologies to science and its venerable valued standards, I shall conclude this preamble and turn toward the unknown future—toward two obvious and unquestionable threats and one obvious but very questionable opportunity, none of which requires knowledge of evolutionary principles to perceive.

Threats and Opportunity

Threat 1: the stage by stage expansion of the political sovereignty and ideology of the USSR and/or China, directed toward the domination of the world from Moscow or Peiping. The eyes of the United States government have been focused steadily on this threat.

Threat 2: the initiation of a series of wars with absolute weapons, resulting in massive exterminations in both northern hemispheres (with the extinction of democracy and freedom), leading on to more extensive and disastrous incinerations—universal agony, an intolerable earth, and loss of the will to live. The eyes of the United States government have been largely diverted from this threat.

The possibility of an atomic hell is mentioned every day—blandly, casually with a shrug or quip, fatalistically, despairingly—and then dismissed for the sake of pleasantness and intestinal composure, or denied as a Christian Scientist may deny the existence of a malignant cancer. There are also people who dare to look intently at this possibility but insist that the traumatic consequences of a nuclear attack on this country would not be catastrophic—no more than 20,000,000 persons are likely to be killed, and, if proper measures are adopted, eventual recovery can be confidently predicted. But these cool calculators never seem to take account of the possession of absolute weapons (atomic, chemical, and biological) by a score of nations, and a chain of subsequent wars resulting in an insufferable environment, with that proud, self-styled paragon of animals—by then wholly impersonalized and mechanized—reduced to an ignominious, molelike existence underground.

Opportunity: (a) the unprecedented abolition of war—impossible without (b) the unprecedented establishment of unprecedented world laws, government, and police—impossible without (c) the unprecedented widespread conversion of peoples and governments to an unprecedented vision of world unity and fellowship—impossible without (d) the composition of a book, say, a sort of philosophical history of the world with multifarious components, a love-engendered book (to supersede the hate-engendered gospel of Karl Marx), which would end by realistically directing thought and passion toward the inauguration of mutually beneficent international reciprocities and the settlement of differences without resorting to massive atrocities and murders.

Now, with the possible exception of the last proposal—a sort of cry in the wilderness for a testament of human genius at its best—none of this is new. It has been said and resaid by innumerable men entitled by their acknowledged learning, wisdom, and goodwill to a considerate public hearing. What could be more rational than the argument for some form of world government—government, by definition, being the only class of

institutions empowered to suppress violence? In view of the history-making behavior of contentious and ferocious social units, however, the idea is likely to be dismissed as a patently absurd hope. But then, is it any more absurd than being towed, as we are now, by a cable of primitive, blind passions nearer and nearer to the verge of a meaningless, universal holocaust? The enemy is a lunatic within our psyches, on the threshold of a tantrum and yet not unsusceptible to conversion.

That the atomic age called for a radical transformation of a sufficient number of personalities to make a difference was immediately apparent to Norman Cousins, who, within a few weeks after Hiroshima, had published *Modern Man Is Obsolete*. Six months later Albert Einstein said substantially the same thing in a now famous passage (italics mine):

We can only sound the alarm, *again and again*; we must *never* relax our efforts to rouse in the peoples of the world, and especially in their governments, an awareness of the unprecedented disaster which they are *absolutely* certain to bring on themselves unless there is a *fundamental change in their attitude toward one another as well as in their concept of the future. . . .* The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything except *our ways of thinking* [*The New York Times*, 25 May 1946].

Although this passage has often been quoted, I have yet to hear of a serious attempt to define exactly what fundamental changes in attitude and in our concept of the future are required to avert catastrophe. First of all, assuredly, we need men of imagination and goodwill with enough fortitude to keep staring at the current trend of events and its inevitable outcome until they realize in what respects they—as well as all the rest of us—are no longer fitted for survival, and then, in the fight of this conclusion, commence a painful process of radical self-conversion. The atom has revised the rules of evolution.

With these necessities in mind, I would suggest that another subsidiary threat is the fact that so little concentrated thought is being seriously devoted to this greatest of man's perils. How does it happen that the American people, American leaders, American intellectuals are not wrestling day and night with the heroic task of devising ways to induce the peoples of the world to abolish war and establish a sound foundation for enduring peace? In dealing with the fanaticism of Communists—to whom the bulk of the world's disturbances can certainly be attributed—shaking deterrent weapons with righteous indignation seems to be our only strategy. Are we so unconsciously convinced, perchance, of their ideology's greater holding power, so awed by it, so uncertain of our own faith, that we are incapable of thinking there are ways, therapeutic ways, of converting them to a modified version of their doctrine? Why are not all the resources of creative minds, all the resources of higher education brought to bear on the solution of this problem? Is not the prevention of national suicide the government's foremost obligation? and the perpetuation and creation of culture the first responsibility of

intellectuals? Though conscious of heritage, trust, and danger, we are willing, it would seem, to be utterly ineffectual, superfluous, even frivolous. Whatever the explanation, most of us—each preoccupied with his own work—have been afflicted by catatonia of the political and ideological imagination, temporal and spatial, living in the present by animal time and hence reacting with our government to a succession of unexpected stimuli (usually emanating from our proclaimed enemies), instead of living by human time in relation to the known past and to programs for a better future.

Almost the whole of this communication—for the initially-given reasons—consists of an attempt, slight as it may prove to be, to atone in part for my recurrent infidelities to the paramount (in my scales) obligation of our time, to do this by offering a number of psychological considerations bearing on a possible program to strengthen (a) the fifty-year-old, often defeated, and currently weak and halting trend toward the establishment of institutions and of grounds for peace, and, conceivably thereby, to weaken (b) the currently strong trends of expansion of both the political sovereignty and ideology of the USSR and China, and (c) the currently strong trend of multiplying animosities and multiplying armaments for war.

Unexampled Supranational Laws and Institutions

Law and government being entirely outside my sphere of competence, I cannot pass judgment on the relative merits of this or that proposal for an institution to prevent war. I can only confess my inability to imagine the permanent abolition of wars, in the absence of institutionalized procedures for settling disputes between infuriated states and of sufficient force to insure conformity to the decisions reached. A great deal of solid, brilliant thought has already been applied to this bi-horned problem by Grenville Clark and many others, here and abroad, and it is quite conceivable that creative legal minds from both sides of the iron curtain will eventually collaborate, as did the fathers of our nation, in bringing forth a workable constitution—the substance of the first world conscience, or *superego*—for a loose and flexible federation of nations dedicated to the preservation of peace. Beyond this simple avowal of faith and the skeptical avowal that this is not likely to occur without a widespread revolutionary change of attitude (to be discussed in the next section), I have but two comments to make.

The justification for war has been based either on the primitive (adolescent) worship of sheer physical power—might is right as well as glorious—or on the assumption that military power is correlated with other valued manifestations of energy and vitality, on the level, let us say, of material, social, political, moral, religious, scientific, and aesthetic well-being; and, consequently, the expansion of a society's territorial sovereignty by military force results in a corresponding expansion and multiplication of better forms and higher standards of sociocultural transactions. Since it is in these terms that progressive evolution is defined, it is in these terms that a nation which grows in strength relative to other nations is inclined to vindicate, often in the name of God or Destiny, its importunate ambition to extend its boundaries, obliterating, if necessary, less viable societies. A nation in this phase of its career, puffed up with self-esteem and arrogance, will inevitably oppose the idea of a supranational institution—a world court—for the arbitration of quarrels between sovereign states, because, like any criminal, it perceives law and justice as an impeding force in the service of the weak, and also as an intolerable block to its self-appointed evolutionary role.

Today the great powers, particularly the USSR and China, are still thinking in these terms, regardless of the fact that they are obsolescent. From now on, it is precisely the proudest and mightiest nations, the possessors of absolute weapons, that are earmarked for extermination.

Now that we realize that war is no longer the servant of evolution but is its prime enemy, we are in a better position to measure its previous incompetence as arbiter of the worth of a religion, ideology, philosophy, morality, form of government, or way of life. The traditional function of war has been to make enduring decisions, despite our recognition that physical force is utterly impertinent to questions of the relative merit or truth of different intellectual propositions, ethical codes, or patterns of behavior. Still, there is no denying that in many instances wars have served to accelerate the processes of cultural diffusion and expansion; and so, if legal decisions are to replace wars, they must not all result in the perpetuation of a static global order, but allow for gradual changes and expansions determined by relevant and rational criteria, instead of by the irrationalities of force.

Those who take part in the administration of supranational affairs will have to be extraordinary characters, especially trained and educated in several different countries, experienced, mature, and sagacious citizens of the world, as disciplined and dedicated as the best Jesuits, as trustworthy, gentle, and tolerant as the best Quakers, of irreproachable integrity, and with the cultural breadth and universality of the best anthropologists—saints, in fact, of an unprecedented type.

Synthesism

This whole paper is founded on a single questionable premonition, namely, that we are confronted by two long-range options: the virtual abolition of war or the virtual abolition of man. The first would be an unparalleled accomplishment which looks impossible today, partly because the creativity of humanists has not yet produced the specifications of an effective method. The second would also be an unparalleled accomplishment, but this one is not impossible, the creativity of scientists having already produced several perfectly effective methods. Even if we had the blueprint of a method, the first accomplishment would be far more difficult than the second. Extraordinary genius, courage, and devotion would be required to convert people in sufficient numbers to an ideal of world fellowship protected by law and government, but no genius to give the word to those who are waiting to press buttons in the name of patriotism. The abolition of war calls for a radical transformation of modern human nature; the abolition of half the population of the earth calls for nothing but submission to the existing drift of passions, national and ideological.

According to Jung (who first recognized this basic difference in people), extraverts, who are disposed to act by impulse, by suggestion, or by custom, can be taught to behave differently only by repeated failures. They must act, err, suffer the unhappy consequences, and only then, if painfully impressed, will they revise the values by which they have been living. Introverts, on the other hand, are more apt and able to revise their values on the basis of trial-and-error experiments carried on in their imaginations. Through such anticipations, some of them may become allies of the future, though often alien to the apparent practicalities of the day. Since ours is an age of rampant extraversion—the dominance in the United States of thousands of uncomplicated extraverts and in the USSR of extraverts combined with a hard core of extraverted introverts—one might surmise that only after a thorough catharsis of aggression and after experiencing the hell of nuclear explosions, will men arrive at the unambiguous conviction that modern war is of all evils the most abominable, diabolical, and lunatic, and that the continuing prospect of other, more devastating wars cancels, definitely and forever, the hope of any life that is worthy anybody's living.

There are some people, in other words, with sympathies circumscribed by a deficiency of imagination or by egocentrism, who have to feel the agony in their own bodies, realize that they themselves are crippled and disfigured for the rest of their days, before they will cry out against the enormity of war, and against those who are in any way responsible, and finally against themselves as sharers of this responsibility. But fortunately there are people of another grain, whose vivid images of horrors to be

endured a hundred years from now are enough to motivate persistent efforts to abolish war, or to cope with the conditions, the grievances and anxieties, the misconceptions and fanaticisms that lead to war. The question is, how soon will the forces of imagination bring enough influential people on both sides of the now permeable curtain to the point of certainty that world concord is a "must"? Can this point of enlightenment be reached without the profound anguish of a genocidal global war? Or will it take one, two, three, or four wars to drive mankind to sanity? One guess—this side of utter pessimism—would be that before this earth is wholly rid of our ferocious race, a saving remnant will bring forth a new religion celebrating spiritual unity amid diversity, with a covenant of sacred pledges, disciplines, and rituals conducive to the perpetuation of peace.

It is strange that the actual present prospect for human life on this planet—a broad road to an atomic hell or a narrow path to a federation of humane societies—corresponds in the abstract to yesterday's extravagant Christian formula for inducing individuals to repent (through dread of everlasting torture) and to live virtuously (in hopes of an eternity of bliss). At first blush it might seem that the task of the apostles and priests of Christianity was more formidable than ours, since they had to convince men and women of the reality of two contrasting after-lives, unaided by the slightest evidence of the kind required by those who hold that "seeing is believing." In the absence, say, of irrefutable exhibits and moving pictures, such as those of Hiroshima, they had only invented images to rely on.

But in several other respects those who undertake today's great task of transformation are at a decided disadvantage: (a) they cannot seriously claim (without being committed to an asylum) that they are the chosen spokesmen of God's revealed purpose; (b) their advocated course of action is not appealing to self-interest, since the goal (world peace) is not within the reach of the private faith and works of single individuals; and, if finally attained by an immense collective effort, its benefits are more likely to be enjoyed by others (posterity) than by those who toil and suffer for it now; (c) since the goal (an institution to prevent war) can be established and maintained only by the rulers of the various sovereign states, it is, above all, these (often insensitive, aggressive, and myopic) rulers of these traditionally vain, amoral social units who constitute the ultimate target of the transformation process; (d) the realization of the goal will depend on the determination, wisdom, patience, and exertions of all the major powers—which introduces a radical psychological difference, since no single nation, inflated with self-esteem, can claim the credit: every power must be prepared to share the glory of this superlative achievement; and (e) as yet, no specifically inviting images of realizable rewards—convincing illustrations of mutually advantageous and enjoyable reciprocations between peoples of different nations—have been proffered. For the chief motivators of constructive efforts, therefore, one is left with threats of punishment (atomic hell-fire), which, according to contemporary theory of learning, are less effective in the long run than promises of reward.

Basic to several of these impediments is the hereditary egotism and pride of nations, especially of the big nations—that is to say, the compacted egotism and pride of the majority of their members, greedy for material possessions, power, and prestige, who, in dread of having to part with any of these sources of satisfaction or of having to reduce their hopes of more, are stoutly opposed to having their nation share even a small portion of its precious sovereignty with other nations. What can be done to override these granite blocks of national avarice and vanity—condemned in other peoples but applauded in ourselves—in order that we all may become worthy of survival in a potentially explosive world? If our present peril can be attributed in the last analysis to the dispositions that sustain the ideology of nationalism, must not our hope of deliverance be attached to the creation, acceptance, and efficacious operation of a transforming supranational ideology, an unprecedented and essentially religious vision, or ideal, for the ultimate concern of all mankind?

That an unexampled supranational ideal—a complete refutation of the glorified egotism and material grandeur of monarchs, states, and individuals—can emerge, make headway against relentless persecutions as well as against all the judgments and predictions of learned rationality, and finally triumph by officially converting the greater and lesser rulers of the entire known world—that this can happen is evidenced by the early history of Christianity. In those first centuries, the prime task was that of radically transmuting the instinctive tendencies of individuals, of turning egotism into altruism, pride and arrogance into humility and submission, wrath and brutality into charity and pity, sadism into masochism, avarice into generosity, and lust into chastity. On the basis of what historical knowledge, at the time of Augustus, could a statesman or some hypothetical social scientist have foreseen that the proudful *thesis* of the almighty Roman Empire, represented by the superordination of that common, all-too-human trinity of values—material possessions, power and prestige—and the deification of the emperor, would, to a marked extent, eventually succumb to its exact *antithesis*—*meekness* coming out of Palestine?

Much of the moral activity of Western minds subsequent to the establishment of Christianity can be represented as a long succession of attempts—desperate, futile, arbitrary, casuistic, contentious, bloody, irrational, delusional, neurotic, hypocritical, spurious, superficial, or cynical, continued or abandoned—to resolve obsessional conflicts between these two irreconcilable sets of values. Egotism or altruism? Vengeance or forgiveness? Defiance or compliance? Wealth or poverty? Hedonism or asceticism? Sexuality or chastity? More bitter were the conflicts over inconsequential points of faith, and, after centuries of meaningless disputations, of inquisitions and atrocious tortures, of savage religious wars and massacres, of ruthless suppressions of thought and speech, the Western mind woke up as from a nightmare, rubbed its eyes and, freed of ancient phantoms, enjoyed for the first time lucid impressions of the world around it, as had the Greeks two thousand years before. But no substitute for Christian morality was forthcoming, and now, except for a stout strand of humanitarianism, a detestation of brutality, and episodic acts of charity, we are returning, as many students of history

have noted, to the chaotic state of morals and morale that prevailed in the Roman Empire just previous to its decline and fall. We are in the throes, it is generally agreed, of a period of transition, searching for a resolving symbol, or ideal. What could it be?

My own unhesitating answer, the only basic, positive proposal in this paper—obvious as the earth and yet scarcely communicable in any words available to me—consists of the multifarious phenomena included in a concept which, with serious misgivings, I shall term *synthesism*. *Synthesism*TM means an evaluative stress—at a certain stage of development, the greatest evaluative stress—on the production and continuation of a synthesis (combination, creation, integration, union, federation, procession of developing reciprocities or transactions) particularly of opposites (positive and negative, male and female, contrary or antagonistic entities, groups or principles).

Though applicable to the integration of *numerous* entities, synthesism can be more easily defined when it refers to the formation and perpetuation of a *dyadic system*, that is, a unity of *two* interacting and in some ways antithetical components. Novel chemical and genetical combinations, as postulated by the theory of creative, or emergent, evolution, constitute low-level analogies of the phenomena in question; but the simplest, valued human paradigm is provided by sexual conjugation when mutually and synchronously enjoyed by both participating members of an enduring affectional relationship, or dyad. Synthesism stresses the value of the dyad as such, over and above the value of the two component individuals, and judges the worth of the system in terms of such criteria as intensity, depth, scope, freedom of expression, flexibility, variation, exposure and settlement of conflicts, creative transformation, stability, and duration. A friendship that is markedly characterized by these qualities would constitute another example of dyadic synthesism on the personal level. And then, to jump to two levels of the broadest compass, we have dyadic representational synthesism illustrated by the integration of two, in some ways antithetical religions, ideologies, philosophies, scientific theories, or art forms, and dyadic societal synthesism, illustrated by the enduring friendship or federation of two previously antagonistic nations.

The word “synthesis” was derived from chemistry, but also with a new meaning, from the thesis, antithesis, and synthesis of Hegel’s metaphysics. As suggested above, the egotism (pride, vainglorious ambition, competitive greed, military force and crimes) of nations could be termed the thesis, a thesis which from here on can lead only to catastrophe and hence calls for some controlling principle or reaction formation, such as Christian altruism, the antithesis of egotism. But Christianity, being concerned with the morality of single individuals, never seriously advocated altruism as an ideal for sovereign states. In Whitehead’s words: “As society is now constituted a literal adherence to the moral precepts scattered throughout the Gospels would mean sudden death.” Something which does not lead to catastrophe or sudden death, however, is the synthesis of this thesis of national egotism and this antithesis of national altruism, namely, international friendship, affiliation, or dyadism (each party both giving and receiving), esteemed in its own right over and above the self-estimation of each reciprocating nation. A comparable dichotomy of values on the individual level is illustrated

by the personality of Jesus, whose optimally egotistical thesis (the claim that he was not just another enlightened Hebrew teacher in the prophetic tradition, but the Son of God and possibly, in a spiritual sense, the King of the Jews) was balanced, in a health-giving, fruitful way, by its extreme antithesis, a life devoted to relieving physical and spiritual distress in others. But no synthesis occurred, no entangling and exacting, joyous and vexatious commitment to a marriage or even to a friendship of *equals*—an avoidance which, with ultimately fatal consequences, excluded a good half of human life—body, woman, Eros, creativity—from the nuclear mythology of Christianity.

The experience of fellowship, in-group fellowship, is as old as society, and published expositions of the virtues of male comradeship as old as Aristotle's *Ethics*, and celebrations of courtly, or romantic, love as old as Dante's *Vita Nuova* and the legend of Tristan and Isolde. We, being familiar for so long with these traditional phenomena and their designating dictionary terms (e.g., fellowship, love, etc.), can easily overlook the crucial difference between these conceptions and the one I am attempting to set forth. This is the chief reason for the introduction of a new word, "synthesism."

Synthesism—qx dyadic synthesism—Gist of all, calls for the elevation of the hardly utterable, shared values of participation in the creation and development of better forms and qualities of relationship (continuity of union, of mutual affection and respect, amid diversity of patterns of interaction) from a subordinate to a superordinate position, that is to say, the experience and fruits of affectional reciprocations, interpersonal and international, would be more highly prized than personal and national superiority and aggrandizement. To appreciate the emotional revolution involved in this transposition of values, we have only to remind ourselves that all formerly venerated models of excellence or greatness have been glorifications of a single person, a single group or nation, a single theory or religion. The monadic myth of the hero, or the monadic myth of the society with a mission, appointed by God or Destiny, is the prototype of all impelling visions—masculine visions—of the past. What chance is there of moving it to second place? of substituting a masculine-feminine dyadic myth? On the personal level, this might be effected with greater ease today than was the revolutionary change during the first centuries a.d. from the monadic Caesar myth (the deification of force and grandeur) to the monadic Christ myth (the deification of compassion and blessedness). But the wrench should not be underestimated: some time must be allowed for the reduction of the prevalent, cool monadic myth of conspicuous success (say, egocentric pride in one's heralded achievements) and the elevation of the passionate dyadic myth of mutually creative love (say, shared pride in the qualities of a periodically recreated marriage). As many social scientists have noted, there has been a decided trend in this direction since the end of World War II, especially among the young.

The second point is that we are abysmally ignorant today about the potentialities for joy and growth that reside in marriage, the potentialities of a different sort and of less degree that reside in friendship, and, of course, still more ignorant of the potentialities that reside in international reciprocities. Certainly we must acquire, interpret,

and transmit far more explicit knowledge and wisdom than is now at hand about various types of dyads and the necessary stages in their development, about impeding and facilitating, frustrating and fructifying modes of interaction, about varieties of experienced penalties and rewards, about ways of settling critical disputes, and about temporal changes in the characters of the two participants. Without this knowledge we can hardly say anything definite or profound about synthesisism. The bulk of the scientific literature on marriage—there is very little on friendship—is either statistical and superficial or is chiefly concerned with the determinants of unhappiness, discord and divorce. One reason for the deficiency of knowledge and wisdom about better ways and directions of self-realization and development *within* an evolving dyad is that these have yet to be imagined, tried, experienced, evaluated, and suitably represented.

In other words, *dyadism* (which stresses shared experiences of cycles of relational creation, conservation, and re-creation) calls for the focusing of thought and representational abilities on the progression of these processes. Heretofore, the creative energies of men have been almost invariably directed toward other goals—in some cases toward the invention of weapons to destroy human relationships—rarely toward the invention of multifarious ways of enriching, deepening, and sustaining them most happily. As suggested earlier, the gravest flaw in Christianity, in contrast to certain Hindu sects, is the absence of an inviting and illuminating myth, a set of guiding symbolic models, to represent the evolution of a passionate erotic dyad, and so today the young who enter marriage in the hope of fulfilling their deepest needs and highest aspirations have no possibility of succeeding unless they are disposed and able to create as they proceed a mythology consonant with their experiences.

If some serious and gifted modern writers and painters could arrive at the realization that the meaning of nature, the meaning of human history, the meaning of experience are never *given* by nature, history, or experience, but are always created by man's imagination (in sensible or conceptual language), they might be cured of their addiction to excremental representations of chaos, formlessness, meaningless violence and absurdity, combined with their feelings of disgust, impotence, and alienation. Why do they not choose to play some part in the creation and symbolic representation of new forms of meaning, instead of wasting their time deploring the demise of Christianity or the resulting hollowness of modern men?

My third and final point is that satisfying creative reciprocations is the key concept, or *sine qua non*, of synthesisism, with cooperations and goodnatured competitions and oppositions included as subsidiary values. There has always been an abundance of in-group cooperation in the world, no society could exist without it, and today it is more widespread and insistent than it ever has been, it is being enforced in the Soviet Union on a total scale, and enforced in the United States and other countries on an institutional scale (e.g., military and industrial "organization men"). Necessary as they are and enjoyable as they certainly can be, cooperations do not constitute the core of synthesisism, being, as they are in war, so often directed towards the exact opposite—destruction rather than creation.

If successful, one world would constitute a social condition unprecedented on this planet: a single society of diverse nations, united by bonds of affiliation and reciprocity, which were formed and which maintained their holding power without the compelling stimulus of a threatening outside competitor or enemy. History informs us that intrasocietal solidarity is almost invariably increased by the necessity to cooperate, felt whenever a whole society is challenged by the awareness of danger to its integrity or by the exciting prospect of conquest, of gaining more territory, wealth, power, and glory, in which all might have a share. The regularity of this phenomenon has entitled it to the status of a political axiom, so generally accepted that a ruler who has become the focus of his people's hate will search for some pretext, or invent one, for declaring war in order to set up another target for the catharsis of their hostility. But cooperations of this sort, within groups and between groups (alliances, axes, blocs) are likely to fall apart when the need for them ceases to be urgent. Consequently, although many forms of cooperation—scientific cooperation, cooperation to solve the population problem, the hunger problem, the cancer problem, and so forth—are effective and fruitful ways of forming and solidifying bonds of affiliation between peoples, patterns of reciprocity (which may, of course, occur in the course of a collaborative enterprise) are nevertheless more basic to the achievement of a synthesis.

Many forms of valued reciprocations (transmissions and receptions)—of affection and respect, appreciation and encouragement, material goods and services, information and special knowledge (theoretical and technical), interpretations and evaluations, new ideas and programs, entertainment, dramatic, gymnastic, and musical performances, and so forth—have occurred—with certain rigid limits of discourse, to be sure, and yet sometimes to a notable degree— between Russians and Americans in their meetings here and there outside the domain of political strife and agitation. The extraordinary degree of spontaneous enthusiasm and good-will (especially on the part of the Russians) repeatedly displayed on these occasions— at conferences, recitals, athletic contests, and scores of less formal meetings—shows that the *peoples* of these two lands have much in common temperamentally, they are a virtual well of potentialities for fruitful affiliations, and, when separated from their governments, they have not the slightest inclination to exterminate each other. But all this leaves out imbedded ideological and moral differences, and, until synthesisism is successful on this superordinate level, no dependable future can be anticipated.

Let this suffice as a summary account of synthesisism operating at different levels. I have illustrated the concept by more references to dyadic interpersonal than to polyadic international transactions, because the former are simpler, closer to everyday experience, already partly achieved by some people, and more intimately related both to primitive human nature and to Christianity (singularly unsuccessful in preventing wars). Furthermore, synthesistic experiences on the personal level would ordinarily be antecedent to participations on the higher levels.

To hold that synthesisism provides the basis for a positive and creative morality (as a necessary supplement to the negative, prohibitive, static morality we have inherited)

and that it constitutes the fundamental answer to the world's dilemmas at all levels of violent opposition sounds extremely simplistic, sentimental, and utopian. Well, it *is* simple in the sense that it depends on one thing: a radical conversion of heart and mind marked by the explicit adoption of a new, positive, superordinate direction of creative effort by two or more parties. Once this emotional shift has taken place, once the participants have veritably pledged themselves to persist in *a* united effort to resolve their differences and to surmount conflicts by devising better, more varied and more rewarding interaction, then *everything* is simplified, the accomplishment of all tasks greatly facilitated, and, if the compact holds, no problems, however complicated, should permanently resist solution. But, of course, I am not suggesting for a moment that this transformation—the way out of the obsolescent states of rampant egotism and rampant nationalism—is simple in the sense that it is easy, or even that it is likely to occur soon and on a large enough scale to make a vital difference.

As indicated earlier, I do not believe that any such a revolutionary conversion of human nature is conceivable without the composition of a book, or book of books, the skeleton of which might well consist of a condensed metahistory of mankind (say, encompassing and correcting Marx and Toynbee), brought to life by myths, legends, stories, anecdotes, parables, aphorisms, and poetic passages illustrative of human relations and their vicissitudes, of war and peace, of feuds and friendships, of conflicts and their resolutions, a book which would end by setting forth in some detail, with pithy and telling examples, the principles of synthesism, so briefly and inadequately outlined in this section. Such a book would be designed to provide the needed philosophical and moral basis for a creative foreign policy, as well as for the dispositional education and self-development of individuals. I believe that we can find scattered through the various literatures of the Orient and Occident many suitable passages and chapters for this book of books, some written centuries ago and some quite recently. And, just as the body of scholars appointed by King James produced within seven years the authorized version of the Bible, so today, granted some genius in the marrow, a similar body might compose, partly by writing and partly by judicious cullings from other authors, a preliminary version of such a transforming book to guide the peoples of the world toward unity and peace.

Since the present international furore has its origin in the frantic, fanatical mystique of Communism—initiated and sustained by the testament of Marx—and since this programmatic doctrine—having proved to have unprecedented power to rejuvenate, energize, solidify, and orient underprivileged societies *en masse*—evidently has some future on this earth, in part or as a whole, and since we cannot possibly come to peaceful terms with its existing form and current modes of operation, and cannot possibly exterminate it totally with bombs (threats serve only to increase its furious momentum), only one possibility remains, namely, to transform it: to alter, to some extent, the nature of its objectives, to reduce the magnitude of its aim, and to moderate the violence and importunity of its propagating methods. This may be less difficult than we imagine, since the doctrine of Marx, valid as it is in several of its basic

tenets, is full of flaws and errors: for example, its metaphysics of human nature, its restricted economic focus, its hate-engendered delusions of monstrous robber barons, its absurd visions of an utopian end state, and, naturally, its omission of atomic energy and the possibility of an utter defeat of all efforts to improve society. Anyhow, the book I have in mind, written with a clear understanding and appreciation of the instigations, doctrines, and purposes of Communists, would address itself to the task of their conversion to a synthesis of value orientations, and to a policy of gradualism. Like children, we are prone to feel that we shall win this serious and portentous war for men's minds—not with better ideas, not with a deeper and better book that comes to grips with the basic realities of human nature and defines a realizable vision for mankind—but by better spacemanship and missiles, better spies in the sky, and better recoveries of better astronautic chimpanzees.

Toward a Re-Orientation of our Foreign Policy

In the United States pretty nearly everybody is allowed to speak his piece: catharsis reduces tension, and who can say in advance from what head or what class of people a usable idea will emanate.

Whether the occasional advent of a really good idea from an unlikely source is sufficient remuneration for the enormous amount of time spent attending to a perpetual parade of poor ones is a moot question. But whatever the cost, freedom of speech is guaranteed to all of us by an enlightened and resilient government—not a right to be taken for granted or abused, but (in the history of nations) a rare privilege, especially prized by those who have aspirations for their country and feel involved somehow in a joint push toward their attainment. The high probability that speaking in public will merely add to the circulating sum of poor ideas is certainly a deterrent. But who knows? Who can foresee the interplay of chance and circumstance, good-will and bad-will, sanity and madness?

The few things I have to say in this last section are based on the belief that the abolition of war would seriously disturb, strain and dislocate large sectors of the economic, social, and political structure of this and other countries, thereby giving rise to a multiplicity of formidable problems of reconstruction, but that these could eventually be solved, provided the determination to abolish war was strong and resolute. Nothing can be done without a firm, widespread, sovereign desire for a world of friendly nations. With this in mind I shall restrict myself to several unsolicited suggestions as to a few fairly obvious ways of reducing tensions between the great, warready, clenched antagonists of our time, as a necessary prelude to the reception of a world view and plan which will be set forth in broad outlines at some timely moment in the future, its details to be worked out later, step by step.

My assumption is that we shall maintain our military striking power until a suitable schedule of disarmament and a dependable method of inspection have been definitely established, and that in the meanwhile we shall approach the Russians and the Chinese with a bomb in our retracted left hand (not brandishing it in the worlds face) and an olive branch in our extended right, ready to seize any opportunity to break through whatever tactical postures and poses a dictator may present and get at the heart of his version of the crucial issues. My suggestions are as follows:

1. Change from a negative to a positive orientation. Announce at a strategic moment that our objective is the abolition of war, or world concord, with the settlement of international conflicts by the institution of a new form of world law and government, and a world police force as deterrent against war. Set forth this vision as the only alternative to world domination by one state. What country wants to operate under the heel of the USSR or China? Point out that the adoption of Communism by every state in the world—many of them in possession of atomic weapons—would be no guarantee of peace.
2. So far as the resources of courage and persuasion will permit, encourage the latent potentialities of heart, intellect, and art in the American people to become involved in the process of converting ourselves and other peoples to the paramount ideal of world fellowship and to the ways and disciplines of attaining, enjoying, and sustaining it. The announcement of this aim should stimulate, in due course, the gradual creation of an imaginative symbolism, or mythology, leading to new art forms, to international and interpersonal rituals and festivals, which would restore to human life the missing depth dimension. The ideology of synthesism is based on the conviction that most people in their innermost selves prefer harmony to discord, affection to disaffection, peace to war, life to death, and, in view of these realizable possibilities, can be educated from birth to moderate their excessive aspirations for profit, property, power, and prestige.
3. Stop defining the current situation as a religious or ideological war. So far as possible, stop using the word “Communism”: stop proclaiming that our policy is to “fight Communism” wherever it exists:
 - (a) Because “Communism” is a word with a religious significance and potency, symbol of a mystique, to which millions of people are devoted as their tested remedy of ancient ills. Expressions of implacable hatred of Communism can only serve to increase the fanatical energy and drive—and hence the achievements—of its supporters. So long as we provide veritable ground for the magnification of the image of our nation as the dragon enemy of their whole system, the morale and present degree of productivity of the peoples of the USSR and China will certainly persist or mount. Under ordinary circumstances, the basic problem of a socialist economy is how to maintain the motivation of the workers, but if fate happens to present them with the challenge of a menacing competitor or opponent, the problem ceases to exist. Moral: lessen the menace.
 - (b) Because by announcing that we are irrevocably opposed to Communism, we strengthen the bonds of affiliation between Communist countries. They will stand solidly together so long as they have a powerful and belligerent common enemy. But if we say— what is closer to the truth—that we are opposed to any single state that purposes to dominate the world, our position will accord with the sentiments of other countries, even of the satellite countries (such as Jugoslavia,

Hungary, and Poland), and conceivably of the Soviet Union itself *vis-d-vis* the inflated ambitions of China. In any case, we shall be weakening the links that now unite the Communist bloc.

(c) Because if we hold that it is Communism we are fighting, we shall automatically become the enemy of every country that is converted to Communism, being the presupposed cause of all the grievances of its masses and hence the target of their vindictiveness.

(d) Because—though sturdily opposed to Communism in our own country and fully justified in suppressing the virulent activities of its agents here—it is against our avowed principles to dictate to other states what religion or what form of political or economic system they should have. Today, Moslems, Buddhists, and adherents of numerous other religious faiths, as well as virtual dictatorships and socialist states, are all included as potential allies among the recipients of our aid.

4. Break up the ideological dichotomy of Communism and antiCommunism into its component opposites, say:
 - (a) state capitalism (or economic socialism) *vs.* private capitalism,
 - (b) autocracy and total control *vs.* democracy and partial control,
 - (c) naturalism *vs.* supematuralism,
 - (d) hypertrophy of ambition for world power *vs.* moderation or suppression of this ambition, and
 - (e) the importunate conversion of other peoples by covert penetration, deceit, and violence *vs.* their gradual conversion, if any is attempted, by forthright persuasion and demonstration.

The effect of doing this should be to deprive the word “Communism” of part of its unholy power to arouse bellicose emotions— aggressive enthusiasm, on the one hand, and aggressive detestation, on the other—and should allow us to define the real enemy of our nation and of all other nations, namely the exorbitant ambition for world power and the devilish means employed in furthering this ambition by the USSR and China.

5. Define the irrevocable position of this nation as grounded in democracy with its partial controls and partial freedoms. Do not use “freedom” indiscriminately as an absolute, but couple it with “responsibility,” and specify the kinds and degrees of freedom which we as a people have enjoyed and with what consequences (some of which, we must admit, have been beneficent neither to the country as a whole nor to the individuals [e.g., juvenile delinquents] who abused them). Acknowledge that up to now only a small proportion of the world’s nations have succeeded in maintaining a democratic form of government and perhaps de Tocqueville was

correct in concluding that the Anglo-Saxon temperament—cool, patient, and empirical, in contrast, say, to Latin, Germanic, and Slavic temperaments—was peculiarly fitted for the operation of a system of this nature. It seems that even highly civilized, individualistic France requires at this late date a fairly large degree of autocracy at the seat of government. Consequently, the only realistic position for us to take is that democracy is definitely good for us, after generations, first of British and then of American, political experience and discipline, and evidently it is equally good for Switzerland, the Scandinavian countries, and certain others, in several of which it has proved itself compatible with a considerable degree of economic socialism—but that we have no intention of pressuring any other country to adopt it, particularly if they are not sufficiently prepared, or of condemning those who fail to make it work.

6. If numerous knowledgeable American observers are correct in their conclusion that state capitalism (coupled with some measure of autocracy) is the only feasible economic structure for those more or less primitive societies (e.g., in Indonesia and in Africa) in which no private capital exists, we are faced with the probability, if not the certainty, that sooner or later *this* will be the structure of their adoption (with the confiscation, as in Cuba, of all property owned by foreigners). If this is true, we can either gain their friendship by helping them inaugurate the forms of industrialization that are most suitable to their needs, or turn them into enemies by letting China or the Soviet Union bring them round to it in *their* way. Also, it certainly looks as if the future will bring forth a succession of economic and social revolutions throughout Latin America, the only question being whether they will take place in terms of Communist or other dictatorships, or in terms of democracy and liberty. It is probably within our power to decide.
7. Assured that democracy, with a wide range of personal freedoms, is the ideal political structure, and, therefore, that all countries will desire and achieve it in the near or very distant future—if there is to be one for humanity—assured of this, we should applaud every step toward a more representative form of government or a greater degree of individual freedom that is taken by other peoples (instead of criticizing them, as we do now, for their failure to meet our standards). I happen to believe that, despite its present tyranny, Russian Communism constitutes (when compared to the previous Czarist tyranny) an advance in the direction of democracy, largely because of the enormous expansion of education and of the practice (within set limits) of discussion and decision-making on the lower levels of the social hierarchy.
8. Besides commenting favorably on every extension of the range of freedom in the USSR (conspicuous since Stalin), we should congratulate them on their truly astonishing achievements in several different fields. Respectful of our judgments, they are as hungry for praise as we were for fifty years or more after our own

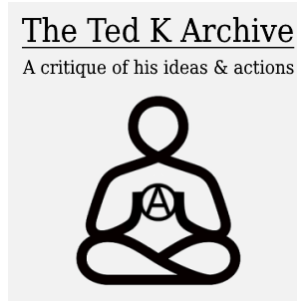
glorified Revolution (though—boasting as loudly as we did—we rarely succeeded with the British). Instead of complacently focusing our derision on their meagre supplies of purchasable utilities (as if we, so addicted to our comforts, were unable to realize that most of them were proud to go without such things for the sake of an envisaged future), we should welcome every increase in the flow of their consumer goods, because the possession of these will make them more like us—more satisfied with their present lot, more bourgeois than they are already, nearer to corruption.

9. Instead of exaggerating differences between the Soviet system and our own, we should stress in what respects and to what degree we are alike and every year becoming more alike: for example, class distinctions have been increasing in the Soviet Union, decreasing here; and the unavoidable involvement of the United States Federal government in the support or partial control of numerous, formerly independent systems of activity—industry, business, agriculture, communications, transportation, health, education, scientific research, social security—constitutes a decided trend toward socialism, as does the differential taxation of incomes. Also, for some years now, athletics (among other things) in the USSR have adopted numerous American forms and been pursued with the same "sporting spirit" that we inherited from England.
10. Establish an anthropological, social science institute, as an adjunct of the State Department, devoted to the collection, interpretation, codification, and transmission of knowledge about the peoples of other countries, especially Middle Eastern, African, Indonesian, and South American: (1) to serve as a center, clearing-house, and coordinator of numberless independent enterprises of this class that are being carried on in the field and at home, under the sponsorship, most commonly, of a university; (2) to serve as a center of instruction and preparation for suitable young men—chosen after six months of military training—who, after learning the language and customs of the people of a particular country, would live there as *they* do for a period of years, fulfilling one helpful function or another. This could be facilitated by bringing to the institute, as informants and as teachers of the given language, appropriate representatives of each country who would live with the American students in dormitories during their period of residence. This plan comes out of information I have received to the effect that hundreds of Americans involved in various foreign aid programs have not been sufficiently prepared linguistically, ideologically, or psychologically, to make the most of the opportunities that are offered them: to respect and win the respect of those with whom they live, to influence them in beneficial ways.

Naturally, like everybody else, I have plenty of other possibilities in mind: on the ideological level (how to learn to convert Communists), on the diplomatic level (how to talk to the Russians, analytically and candidly, with cards on the table, as they do in

Thucydides' history), on the psychological level (intimate psychoanalyses of each dictator as background illumination in planning conferences), on the home-front (changes in certain American modes of life, in the treatment of minorities, in the way that nearly everything of worth and dignity is commercialized and vulgarized *ad nauseam*), and so on. But this is enough, more than enough for one paper.

A critique of his ideas & actions.



Henry Murray
Unprecedented Evolutions

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