

THE PATHOS OF POWER: A PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE¹

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THREAT AND CHALLENGE OF A PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

THERE is something about the aura of the term "presidential address" which makes it a special burden and a special source of anxiety for everyone involved. Every speech, address, article, or essay exposes an important part of oneself for critical examination by an audience or by readers. For a long time, I have tried to persuade my students that everything that a person writes—all forms of communication—may be viewed as projective materials which reveal aspects of the totality and the complexity of his personality to sensitive observers. If this is true it would follow that to communicate to psychologists, who view themselves as experts in the analysis of personality and character, is to invite not only an analysis of the substance of what one communicates, but also to expose oneself to probing and critical examination. There must be an incorrigible ego drive which propels one to assume the risks of exposure to an audience of psychologists, given the fact that the threat of exposure is greater the more accurate are the judgments concerning the character and wisdom of the speaker.

There remains the problem of how can one make a presidential address in some way worth the anxieties and risks? One could use it as an opportunity to try to clarify the underlying conceptual framework implicit in his thoughts, research, writing, teaching, and social action. In one's personal and professional life, it is possible to move from project to project and from encounter to encounter, and to take on a variety of responsibilities and roles without having the time to give thought to the theo-

retical and philosophical perspectives which, hopefully, unify and give some coherence to one's life and activities. It would be reassuring, especially in the latter stages of one's life, to discover that there is theoretical coherence and unity in one's professional activities and his role as a person and as a citizen.

A search for congruence and consistency among the various aspects of one's being would seem mandatory, if not inevitable, for those who are arrogant enough to use the discipline of psychology to legitimize their functioning. The luxury and safety of defining scientific objectivity in terms of a detached, disciplined, isolated, and amoral use of human intelligence are not available to those who have chosen to work in the social, psychological, and behavior sciences or for that matter in the biological and medical sciences.

The research topics, findings, and analyses and insights of a psychologist cannot be divorced from the total complexity of his being. Psychological phenomena do not seem to consist of absolute realities. Their reality is the tantalizing, persistent reality of the subjective. This fact of relativistic reality differentiates the science of psychology from all other sciences. This difference between psychology and the physical sciences remains in spite of the fact that the evidence of all sciences—indeed, the inevitable basis of all knowledge—must be filtered through the limits of human observational powers and refined by limited human intelligence.

Psychologists and other social scientists must seek to organize their findings within a conceptual framework which hopefully will expand knowledge and broaden and deepen insights into the nature of man and his society. There remains, also, for psychology, the ultimate test of the validity of all sciences, namely, a demonstration of an effective technology—the ability to predict or control the phenomena which we purport to understand. The criti-

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cal questions for a contemporary science of psychology and for other behavioral sciences are: What are their contributions to the understanding and control of the behavior of human beings? How can the knowledge, the insights, and the related technology contribute directly or indirectly to effectiveness of individual human beings, to stability in human society, and increase the chances of survival of the human species?

These are important questions, and there is now a special urgency in finding and implementing affirmative answers to them within the context of respect for human values. What follows are the views of a person who has spent his adult life in research, teaching, writing, and social action within the discipline of social psychology as to the basis for and the direction within which humane affirmative answers might be found. It is also an attempt to share with others the process—the intellectual and emotional turbulence—by which these views and related suggestions concerning the dynamics of man and society emerged.

INFLUENCE OF EARLY RESEARCH ON DEVELOPING IDEAS

My first serious scientific involvement in the larger theoretical concerns with the nature of man and society emerged as a result of the need to interpret the findings of the early research on the nature and development of the self and the problems of ego and racial identification. In these studies I was a collaborator with my wife, Dr. Mamie Clark. This fascinating and somewhat illusive "pure" research problem was initially my wife's Master's thesis problem. As she saw the larger implications of the first stages of this work, she was kind enough to invite me to join her in a more probing empirical and theoretical exploration of the nature and determinants of the self-image.

As we collected and analyzed the data obtained through the methods we used, we became impressed with the implications of the observation that in the initial stages of the emerging sense of self in children the substance and the dynamics of the functioning ego were determined almost exclusively by external pressures, determinants, and evaluative agents. These findings provided the first clues for insights concerning the fragility, vulnerability, dependence, indeed, the pathos of the human ego. This early research on the emergence of self-

awareness and preference in Negro children illuminated for us the larger pattern of problems related to ego development in human beings. Among these insights were:

- The functional substance of the self is not indigenous to the human organism, but is determined by the nature and pattern of human interaction as this is influenced by the status of the individual in a familial and social hierarchical system. (By the way the individual is perceived and generally treated.)

- The qualitative effect of the external determinants of the individual's sense of self is inevitably evaluative; that is, the resulting emerging self-image inevitably brings with it a positive or negative sense of the worth of self.

- This positive or negative evaluative component of self is inevitable and pivotal—and in its most primary and basic sense is not controlled by the individual himself but by others over whom he has no control.

- In the most formative and susceptible stage of a child's life, that period within which there is the beginning of the ability to cope with ideas, the idea of the self and the worth and status of the self are inextricable.

- This initial external definition of the nature, worth, and status of self tends to persist throughout the life of the individual, in that it is reinforced by consistent experiences, is internalized as the core of personality, and establishes the patterns of defense and protection which the individual uses in interpersonal and other forms of social interaction.

- In spite of the above, human beings—except those who have been totally defeated by negative evaluation of others and by consistent rejection, or those who are organically deficient—persist in the struggle for self-affirmation and the attainment of that minimum self-esteem required to continue to function as a human being. It remains one of the mysteries of psychological science that individual human beings differ—whether markedly or minimally is still open to question—in the physical equipment, intellectual strengths and general life force, and other personal resources which they can mobilize in the continuing struggle for personal affirmation and an effective self-esteem.

My research on the social and attitudinal factors influencing memory and recall—related to the larger

problem of the effect of social factors on perception and cognition—tended to reinforce my ideas concerning the fragility of the human ego. This early study, conducted in partial fulfillment for the doctorate at Columbia University incidentally, not only anticipated some of the later research on cognitive styles but also foreshadowed some of the concerns of the Women's Liberation movement in the finding that men and women differed markedly in the recall of the activities of a dominant woman. The finding that human beings tended to recall events in terms consistent with their attitudes and within the context of their personality seemed to provide further supportive evidence of the human need to use all available sensory and intellectual resources in the attempt to obscure the tenuousness of our being—and to assert an inner certainty and absoluteness as having reality and existence primarily because they are asserted.

Further studies of the effects of social pressures and the consequences of rejection and acceptance of individuals and groups by the larger society culminated in the publication of *Dark Ghetto*. While the writing of *Dark Ghetto* drew on earlier research insights, this specific study of the psychological effects of a ghetto community resulted in a more focused picture of the effects of adverse, persistent social negatives on the distortion of personality and on the impairment of psychological effectiveness of the victims of persistent rejection. Here, again, the persistent fact of the fragility and vulnerability of the human ego, somewhat tempered by insights concerning the counterstruggle for self-esteem and resilience of human beings, was reinforced by the findings of this community psychology research.

It may be of some value to point out that the earlier studies of the development of self-identification and evaluation in children with Mamie Clark were not motivated by or conducted with any direct concern for their applied or policy implications and consequences. The fact that the United States Supreme Court in handing down the *Brown* decision in May 1954 cited these findings and other relevant research which I summarized in the document, *The Effects of Prejudice and Discrimination on Personality Development*, was a gratifying illustration of the possibility that even in the social and psychological sciences what is called "pure" research can sometimes have some direct social policy and applied social change effects. The *Dark*

Ghetto research on the other hand, from its inception, was clearly motivated by the desire to influence social policy and influence the decisions of those with power to facilitate, block, or determine the rate of desired social change. The *Dark Ghetto* study cannot be described with candor as an exercise in "pure" research on a problem of culture and personality. This study of the dynamics of a systematically dehumanizing community on the humanity and effectiveness of the personalities confined within it was not conducted without concern for the implications of these findings for social justice and social change.

The Harlem Youth Opportunities (HARYOU) report, *Youth in the Ghetto*, expanded and revised into *Dark Ghetto*, was modeled after investigations in public health and preventive medicine. These reports did seek to analyze and describe the effects of social policy and practice; diagnose the nature and manifestations of social instability; and suggested remedies for the persistent social insensitivities and resulting pathologies which robbed human beings of self-esteem, reinforced negative self-images, and destroyed the chances of personal and social effectiveness.

In a recent analysis of a sample of antipoverty programs—*A Relevant War Against Poverty*, co-authored with Jeannette Hopkins—it was clear that the *Dark Ghetto* findings had influenced the rationale and programmatic structure of federally funded antipoverty and community-based action programs. But, this detailed study of these programs within the first two years of the programs' existence predicted their failure by revealing the controlling and inhibiting fact that those human beings with power are deeply unwilling or unable to share even a modicum of real power with those who have been powerless. The poor and the powerless are perceived and treated as if they are objects to be manipulated, taunted, played with, and punished by those with power. They are required to be grateful for the verbalizations and the crumbs of power—and are rejected as incorrigibly inferior, childlike, or barbaric if they rebel against and otherwise disturb the convenience of their more powerful benefactors. Antipoverty programs based on these social realities were doomed to failure because they reflected a total lack of commitment to eliminate poverty, to share power with the powerless. Above all, they reflected the inability of the

decision makers and the society as a whole to change the set of perceiving and treating the poor and dark-skin minorities as justifiably rejected inferior human beings. These programs did not and would not operate in terms of the rationale and the goals of the potential equality of all human beings. They did not seek to accept and strengthen the humanity of the deprived through compassion, empathy, and a serious sharing of power.

AN EMERGING CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

There is no doubt that these research projects, the developing ideas, and the related forms of social action were influenced most fundamentally by the psychodynamic theories of Alfred Adler. The late Francis Cecil Sumner, Professor of Psychology at Howard University, introduced me to the ideas of Adler. It was Professor Sumner who first introduced me as an undergraduate to the promises of the science of psychology for the understanding of man and society. It was he who gave me my first serious appreciation of the complexities of the meanings of humanity. In his characteristic style, Professor Sumner presented Adler's thoughts within the framework of other psychoanalytic and psychodynamic theories and within the larger context of religion and philosophy. This experience had a profound influence on my thoughts, research, and professional and personal action.

The gestalt, wholistic, and organismic theories also exerted a strong influence on my developing ideas. Kurt Goldstein's ability to interpret his observations of the meaning of the symptoms of the brain-injured patients in a unified psychodynamic perspective of the struggle of human beings to maintain an integrated ego—to minimize their deficiencies and maximize their available assets—reinforced the basic significance of Adlerian and organismic theory in my thinking. As one of Goldstein's graduate students at Columbia University, I struggled to understand his lectures. I admired his ability to present and document a wholistic, organismic view of man as a biosocial organism.

In spite of the more dramatic, fashionable, provocative, and, in many respects, profound ideas of Freud, my thoughts and scientific activities were only peripherally influenced by the fundamental Freudian premises. My persistent concerns with the effects of the social system on the functioning and effectiveness of individuals and groups pro-

pelled me more toward the social-psychological emphasis of Adler and made me somewhat resistant to the Freudian emphasis on deeper intrapsychic dynamics. In its emphasis on innate instinctive processes and its related inability to emphasize the effects of social problems and continued social pressures on the individual's effectiveness, traditional Freudian theory seemed inadequate—limited and constricted—for a dynamic social psychology. Freudian theory does not appear to offer a theoretical basis for a psychology concerned with social change or a psychotechnology other than one-to-one psychoanalytic therapy. Adler's concern with man's social interaction and his emphasis on the human struggle for self-esteem were much more compatible with my main research and action in seeking a humane technology to enhance the chances of humanity among men. The quest for a more enlightened social policy, morally and rationally determined social change, could not proceed from the premise that man is a totally or primarily non-rational organism whose most powerful drives are instinctive and animalistic. In this regard, my resistance to the Freudian perspective of man and society was not unlike the objections of the late Gordon Allport who refused to accept the Freudian view of man as an essentially nonrational being. Allport insisted that the rational components of the complexities of human motivation must be given at least an equal if not a dominant role with the non-rational.

The core Adlerian idea which persists in its influence on my thinking is the idea concerning the nature of psychological power in understanding human beings and human society. Bertrand Russell's assertion that "the fundamental concept in social science is Power, in the same sense in which Energy is a fundamental concept in physics" reinforced the influence of Adlerian theory in my thinking. In his not too well-known book, *Power*, Bertrand Russell stated, "The laws of social dynamics are—so I shall contend—only capable of being studied in terms of power in its various forms." He defines power rather pragmatically as "the production of intended effects."

In earlier exploration of the phenomenon of social power, I defined it operationally as "the force or energy required to bring about, to sustain or to prevent social, political or economic change." As my research and my interest in social change in-

terests tended to converge and eventually fuse, I became preoccupied with the problem of a theory of social power as a unifying conceptual framework. More and more I tended to see social power, in its manifest forms, as that force or combination of forces which facilitated, blocked, or determined the rate and direction of social change. In a dynamic social situation, power expresses itself as a gestalt or a quantum expression of the power aspirations and competition among significant individuals and groups.

Observations of the manifestations of power in social and institutional situations suggested that one could not hope to understand the dynamics of social power without trying to understand competition for power and the complex pattern of conflicts between power and competition on the one hand and love, kindness, and rationality on the other hand. These interrelated problems, conflicts, and contradictions reveal the stark pathos of power and betray the predicament of the human ego.

A simple and obvious example may be helpful at this point. The pathetic vulnerability of the human ego may be illustrated by the insight that the most ruthless, power-competitive individual may be driven by an insatiable need to be loved and accepted by others. Nowhere can such an individual obtain enough actual power to disguise from himself the essential fact—the intolerable fact—of his own essential inner powerlessness. In such extreme cases, the drive for power blocks or destroys the capacity to love and be loved and thereby strengthens the cycle of self-defeating obsession with power.

A contemporary example of human power pathos is found in the anguished cries of the advocates of black power. In this phenomenon it is clear that the verbalizations of power betray the reality of powerlessness. The frustrations, the rejection, the denial of the ability to fulfill legitimate aspirations are compensated for among extreme advocates of black power by the posture and the delusional rhetoric of a power which is persistently denied them. This insight into the nature of this particular form of diversionary pseudo-power paradoxically led me into a more empathic understanding of the human pathos and psychological predicament of white racial extremists. Through my understanding and racial identification with compensatory black extremists, I came to understand that whites who

need to use the crutches of racial cruelty and extremism are also forlorn, deprived, desperately pathetic human beings.

When one dares to confront the many examples of the mocking pathos of power, one finds oneself going beyond Adler even as he remains dependent upon fundamental Adlerian insights. The Adlerian emphasis on the affirmative struggle for self-esteem and status becomes intensified by the disturbing, almost intolerable reality that a positive self-esteem, what Freud calls narcissism, is not determined by forces inherent within the human organism, but is dependent upon external supports and reinforcements, and controlled by the judgments of others who themselves are also afflicted with the universal human anxiety of self-doubt.

The essence of the human predicament is the inescapable reality that the human ego is a most fragile and delicate phenomenon. It is difficult, if not impossible, to be human without embarrassment—an embarrassment rooted in the ever-imminent and intolerable insight into the reality of the tenuousness and transitory quality of the all powerful and at the same time powerless human ego.

Consciousness provides the flimsy substantive base of the human ego. The concrete base of human consciousness is the mysterious substances and the quality of interactions among the human cortical cells. All we seem to know about these cells is that they are unique among all of the combinations of matter and energy which are known to exist in the universe. They make possible perception, awareness, evaluation, self-reflection, anxiety, reflection on the past, and anticipation of the future. They are unique in that they make the human ego real—sometimes painfully real. They create and validate humanity, and they sustain the struggle for justice and decency in human relationship even as they provide the basis for rationalizing cruelties and inhumanity.

To make these abstractions real, these mysterious human cortical cells require a rather specific biochemical environment. They require that oxygen and nourishment be provided and regulated through an elaborate capillary system. The unstable equilibrium within and around these cells must be maintained within a tolerable range of variation if the human ego and the complexities of function and continuity inherent in the sense of self are to be sustained.

The normal functioning and the identity of the self can be disrupted through one or any combination of disturbances within the internal environment. Disruption in continuity of a personal identity—loss of social and psychological continuity and existence—can occur in spite of the continuation of biological existence if there is any significant deprivation in the specific biochemical requirements of these cortical cells. With such deprivation there can be changes in temperament and fundamental changes in the threshold of positive and negative responses or sensitivity to external environmental forces.

In short, these cortical cells hold within them the keys to the mystery of the definition and the functional quality of the self. They control by their ability to intensify, reduce, or obliterate the basic reality that is the self. And they are fragile. And it is upon the basis of their fragility that the human ego remains a fragile and delicate thing. To be human is not determined merely by the concretes of sensory functions, neural integration, and skeletal muscular behavior of the human organism. The essence of being human is defined by the normal functioning of the uniquely complex human brain.

These insights are fraught with anxieties and probably should best be handled by denial or repression. Even before the ennui of youth became a fashionable topic of discussion, one of my students once suggested in a brilliant paper for my class in human motivation that the fundamental fear of man was the fear of confronting the *void within*. The sense of inner emptiness, a sense of limited experiential time, a sense of essential powerlessness, as the basic realities of the human experience—these are not tolerable insights. They must be compensated for with more positive, substantive concepts of self. Fortunately, the human brain that made this human predicament possible can also create, invent, or rationalize ideational substance up to and including indefinite continuity for the human ego.

The idea of the void within is abhorrent. The void must be filled. The creative activities of man—his religion, his philosophy, his art, his literature, his buildings, his cults, his cruelties, his science, his technologies—are attempts to fill this void or to obscure its existence. Human civilizations are

objectifications of the inner turbulence of man. In proving to himself that his life is more than the continuous transformation of one form of biological and chemical energy into other forms of physical and behavioral energy, man seems compelled to mobilize and use psychological and social power constructively or destructively. The alternative would be to accept a level of desperation and stagnation, indistinguishable from psychological death.

Among the paradoxes of the human predicament is that these disturbing insights, complicated as they are by the inevitability of evaluation inherent in the operation of human consciousness, demand that the human beings define human existence in terms greater than an interval between the accidents of conception and birth and the infinite nothingness of death. The mysterious power and forces which culminate in human consciousness insist that to be human is to be more than the awesome and finite mystery of existential life. Human beings must affirm humanity and assert that there is purpose to and sacredness to human life despite all threatening evidence to the contrary. This is the dynamic and the compensatory pathos of power. Affirmation in spite of—is the common denominator of human creativity and destructiveness; of human love and kindness and human hostility and cruelty; of human compassion and human egocentric posturing and bombast. It provides the basis for all that is sacred and barbaric in man.

In his discussion of the psychic fictions which are essential in providing substance to human psychological existence, Adler stated in his *Understanding Human Nature*:

We can realize how relative are the values of sensations, when not even these are absolute quantities; these elements of our psychic activity are influenced by the striving for a definite goal, our very perceptions are prejudiced by it, and are chosen, so to speak, with a secret hint at the final goal toward which the personality is striving.

We orient ourselves according to a fixed point which we have artificially created, which does not in reality exist, a fiction. This assumption is necessary because of the inadequacy of our psychic life. . . . In the case of all psychic fictions we have to do with the following: we assume a fixed point even though closer observation forces us to admit that it does not exist. The purpose of this assumption is simply to orient ourselves in the chaos of existence, so that we can arrive at some apperception of relative values. The advantage is that we can categorize every sensation and every sentiment according to this fixed point, once we have assumed it.

These psychic fictions, these ideational inventions and objective creations of man which constitute his culture and civilizations, ordinarily seem sufficient to quell temporarily the incipient anguish of the imminence of nonbeing. They frequently postpone the ultimate embarrassment of the acceptance of personal and collective nonimportance.

Of all the compensatory protective agents invented or created by the human brain as a cushion against the intolerable realities of human flimsiness, probably the most flexible and effective has been the idea of God. Man has invested God with both omnipotence and permanence. An analysis of the characteristics of God, the powers and functions of God, betrays the pathos and the vulnerability of man. One of the most important functions of God is that of protecting man against accepting and coming to terms with the realities of human limitations. In a most literal and basic psychological sense, God is the primary source of power for man. Man created God to create man with introjective strengths, with solidity, and with purpose and substance. To perform this awesome and important task there must be an ideationally literal God. If for no other reason, therefore, God is not only not dead, man cannot permit God to die. If God were to die, human beings would have to die psychologically, even though alive as organisms.

The importance of God as a protection against the fragility of the human ego is revealed in the demigods, the directly observable gods, created by the human mind and also invested with protective power. Magicians, medicine men, priests, bishops, kings, generals, father figures, movie stars, all serve similar if not identical divine functions. These charismatic figures, these personifications of power, are anointed and given virtues and powers beyond those found in ordinary men. Through identification with them and their projected power, the average man can obscure his weaknesses and affirm his ego. These human gods sometimes internalize the god-like powers attributed to them. They soon believe and act as if they are gods—or are required to engage in a continuous struggle against this tantalizing temptation. From this point of view, paradox emerges as the major characteristic or quality of a bemused God—a God of the inescapable practical joke of the human predicament.

A similar protective and power brokerage function is played by the variety of groups that human

beings have invented and emotionally identified with. Tribes, cults, religions, nations, and their coercive and protective dogmas and ideologies may be seen as group gods, which bestow substance and strengths upon otherwise vulnerable individuals. The strength and power of a group seem directly proportional to the degree to which it can compensate for the fragility or obscure the insignificance and pathos of its individual members. These group benefits appear to be enhanced by the group's demonstrated ability to exercise power over and inflict cruelty upon other groups of human beings.

SOCIAL POWER: A STRUGGLE FOR INTEGRATION FOR ORGANISMIC AND SOCIAL SYSTEMS

There is the tendency among many of us who are concerned with studying more systematically the crucial role of social power in human affairs to present our case as if power is the only significant motivational force and as if it can operate in isolation from the total complexity of structure and integrated functions of organismic and social systems.

A realistic view of social power requires that it be seen as a pervasive and integrative force, operating in relationship to other forces in the dynamic constellation of the human personality.

Personality is defined here as the characteristic way in which the individual human organism mobilizes and uses all of its available resources in its struggle for survival, satisfaction, status, meaning, and moral integrity.

This definition suggests a hierarchy of the motivational components of personality: in this hierarchy, power or status needs fall midway between the more primitive drives toward survival and sensual satisfactions and the uniquely human motives of the quest for meaning and moral integrity. Power may, therefore, operate toward either end of the motivational continuum to reinforce or make dominant either the primitive or the human propensities of man. Power may make stark and rigid, or determine fixation on or regression to, one or another of the other motivational levels; and it may determine the pattern of relationship among the motivational levels. It can also intensify, obscure, or contaminate one or more of them as they function in the dynamic system of interaction which is the totality of the personality. Power

and status needs can determine whether other needs will be gratified in animalistic, egocentric, or non-adaptive ways or in human, empathic, and socially constructive channels.

This is the dilemma of power from whence the pathos of power arises.

CONTEMPORARY CRISES OF THE PATHOS OF POWER

Power cannot be exercised without inducing some form of reaction or counterreaction. Social power in its manifest forms, therefore, almost always involves confrontations and conflicts; and generally results in either accommodation, with or without residual resentment; or in acute defiance, sporadic counterreaction, or prolonged and smoldering resistance. This is the psychodynamic base for the cycle of power: reaction to power and counterreaction.

The rewards of the exercise of power are transitory, and the gratifications of power and status needs are frequently nonadaptive and self-defeating. The following are some specific symptoms of the nonadaptive pathos, futility, of power.

1. When the exercise of power does not, in fact, increase or when it interferes with the chances of gratifying the more basic needs of survival and satisfaction.

2. When the exercise of power is ambiguous, random, arbitrary, regressive, disproportionately intense and rigid in spite of consequences.

3. When the exercise of power becomes so functionally autonomous and extreme in its intensity as to subvert and pervert the critical, rational, and moral capacities of individuals and groups.

4. When the attainment of the symbols of power or the unchallenged actuality of power results in a sense of futility and ennui and the dissipation of the desire or the capacity to use power constructively or creatively.

The continuation, intensification, and cumulative effect of any combination of these symptoms are major threats to the organism or the social system. This crisis betrays the fact that the power system has become self-directing and is no longer being controlled by the organism and social system in terms of their adaptive needs. The survival of the system would then seem to depend on its capacity to redirect the power drives and channel their energy toward constructive ends within the imperative period of time.

Certainly, the normal brain has the necessary survival alert systems which ordinarily can be put into operation to prevent the organism from pursuing rigidly the paths of self-destruction. Whether the brain of man can provide the basis for resolving the contemporary survival crises of social power positively and constructively remains a matter of conjecture. It is a mocking fact that the human brain can provide intellectual and moral rationalizations for a nonadaptive, ultimately destructive use of social power. It can invent ideational, delusional realities that provide the crutches for the fragile human ego. It can justify human pomp and pretense as a myriad of non-rational forces propels man toward disaster. But the human brain is also the only source of positive alternatives—alternatives to personal anxieties, humiliations, intergroup tensions, violence—alternatives to suicide, homicide, and the barbarities of war.

Contemporary man's technological mastery of matter and energy, and the related ultimate thermonuclear weaponry, confronts us with the fact that it is now possible to destroy the human species through the nonadaptive use of human intelligence and the destructive, pathetic use of social power. This threat is so ultimate and so urgent that it is understandable that human beings would seek to deny or repress it in order to continue to function as if it did not exist. But it does exist. And it must be handled if human beings are to be able to function without the gnawing and debilitating anxieties inherent in the imminence of extinction.

This survival crisis requires immediate mobilization of all that is positive within man to provide us with the time necessary to prevent man from destroying the human species—and to provide man with the time required to evolve and to develop a more stable organismic base for the rational and moral exercise of social power.

ERA OF PSYCHOTECHNOLOGY

The present generation of human beings is required to develop psychological and social sciences with that degree of precision, predictability, and moral control essential to the survival of man. The awesome advances in the physical and biological sciences have made psychotechnology imperative. Man can no longer afford the luxuries of a leisurely, trial-and-error, trivia-dominated approach

to the behavioral sciences. The behavioral sciences are now the critical sciences; they will determine the answer to the ultimate moral question of human survival.

Given the urgency of this immediate survival problem, the psychological and social sciences must enable us to control the animalistic, barbaric, and primitive propensities in man and subordinate these negatives to the uniquely human moral and ethical characteristics of love, kindness, and empathy. The redirecting of power away from the absurd, the pathetic, and the self-defeating can be and now must be seen as a responsibility and goal of science and psychotechnology. We can no longer afford to rely solely on the traditional, prescientific attempts to contain human cruelty and destructiveness. The techniques and appeals of religion, moral philosophy, law, and education seemed appropriate and civilized approaches to the control of man's primitive and egocentric behavior in a prenuclear age. They are, in themselves, no longer appropriate because they permit too wide a margin of error and a degree of unpredictability that is rationally inconsistent with the present survival urgency. Furthermore, moral verbalizations of the past have been prostituted by the pathos of power; they have been perverted by the pretenses of rationality in the service of inhumanity if not barbarity.

The traditional perspective and training of psychologists, educators, and moral philosophers would lead them to continue to argue that moral controls of human primitive and egocentric impulses be sought by redoubling our efforts in developing more effective forms of moral education designed to produce individual human beings with ethical autonomy and integrity. They would argue that it is still possible to preserve human civilization by training human beings toward a higher quality of interpersonal relationships; by developing within individual human beings greater personal and social effectiveness through greater ego strengths. They would continue to assert that a variety of behavioral modification techniques, imposed particularly in childhood, could be expected to reinforce altruism, empathy, and group commitment and subordinate egocentricity in normal human beings.

An objective appraisal of the results of these approaches to a control of the negatives in man and the enhancement of his positives would seem to suggest that not only are they unpredictable in

results but that they require continuous reinforcement and a prolonged period of time in order to demonstrate positive results. We do not now appear to have the amount of time which these techniques require for hoped-for success.

This present era of psychotechnology comes with the abrupt recognition of this fact of a very limited time within which the human brain can obtain and use that knowledge required to control, protest, and affirm humanity with precision and predictability. Already there are many provocative and suggestive findings from neurophysiological, biochemical, and psychopharmacological and psychological research. The work on the effects of direct stimulation of certain areas of the brain; the role of specific areas of the midbrain in controlling certain affects; the effects of certain drugs on exciting, tranquilizing, or depressing the emotional and motivational levels of the individual; and the effects of externally induced behavioral changes on internal biochemistry of the organism suggest that we might be on the threshold of that type of scientific biochemical intervention which could stabilize and make dominant the moral and ethical propensities of man and subordinate, if not eliminate, his negative and primitive behavioral tendencies.

On the basis of the presently available evidence, it is reasonable to believe that this type of precise, direct psychotechnological intervention geared toward strengthening man's moral and positive human characteristics could be obtained and implemented within a few years, and with a fraction of the cost required to produce the atom bomb; and much less than the present cost of our explorations in outer space.

It is here being suggested that with the mobilization of the necessary scientific personnel, financial resources, and research facilities, it is now possible—indeed, imperative—to reduce human anxieties, tensions, hostilities, violence, cruelty, and the destructive power irrationalities of man which are the basis of wars. This contemporary approach to assuring the survival of the human species offers a scientific basis for William James' philosophical wish for a moral equivalence or alternative to wars.

In reducing the negatives and enhancing the positive potentials in human beings, in addition to the political organizational and administrative problems to be resolved, there would be a number of important psychological barriers to be faced and

solved with realism and due regard for that essential humanity which differentiates human beings from mere organisms or living machines. The process and techniques of direct biochemical intervention or any form of effective psychotechnology must take into account the totality, the inter-relatedness, the complex gestalt of the human motivational, affective, and cognitive system. In seeking to enhance the positives of empathy and kindness and reduce the cruel and the barbaric in man, psychotechnology must not destroy the creative, evaluative, and selective capacities of human beings. Without the desire to explore, to reorganize things and ideas, to vary moods, and to produce, at least with the illusions of flexibility and volition, the human being would indeed be an empty organic vessel and it would be difficult to justify the mere fact of survival under these conditions. In addition to precision and predictability, this suggested psychotechnological intervention into human affairs must be affirmatively humane. An inviolable sense of moral responsibility is the essential new ingredient which this new era of the psychological sciences must bring to the contemporary requirements of science.

The implications of a precise and predictable psychotechnological intervention into the whole arena of human interaction are of such vast importance as to demand that the most careful and rigorous planning, research, and testing precede any attempts to apply these findings on a larger scale. Because these are uniquely human problems with which this program is concerned, the pretest subjects would have to be human beings. The implications of an effective psychotechnology for the control of criminal behavior and the amelioration of the moral insensitivities which produce reactive criminality in others are clear. It would seem, therefore, that there would be moral and rational justification for the use of compulsive criminals as pretest subjects in seeking precise forms of intervention and moral control of human behavior. This suggestion is based on the assumption that no human being who is not impelled by some forms of internal, biochemical or external, social forces—or some combination of both—would choose to be a criminal if he were provided with options.

It is a fact that a few men in the leadership positions in the industrialized nations of the world now have the power to determine among them-

selves, through collaboration or competition, the survival or extinction of human civilization. They can, in fact, exercise this power only within the present limitations of the pathos and contradictions of power for temporary good or unpredictable ultimate evil. There is no way of predicting the personal and emotional stability of these leaders with the life and death power over mankind. Nor do we now know the relationship between those personal characteristics which are related to success in obtaining positions of political and governmental power on the one hand and the degree of personal, emotional, and moral stability on the other hand. The masses of human beings are now required to live and continue to work on faith, hope, denial, and the acceptance of the chances that their powerful leaders will have the strength to use their power wisely and morally.

Given these contemporary facts, it would seem logical that a requirement imposed on all power-controlling leaders—and those who aspire to such leadership—would be that they accept and use the earliest perfected form of psychotechnological, biochemical intervention which would assure their positive use of power and reduce or block the possibility of their using power destructively. This form of psychotechnological medication would be a type of internally imposed disarmament. It would assure that there would be no absurd or barbaric use of power. It would provide the masses of human beings with the security that their leaders would not or could not sacrifice them on the altars of their personal ego pathos, vulnerability—and instability.

It is possible to object to the era of psychotechnology on "moral" grounds and to assert that these suggestions are repugnant because they are manipulative and will take away from man his natural right to make errors—even those errors which perpetrate cruelties and destruction upon other human beings. In the light of the realities of and possible consequences of nuclear weaponry, these allegedly moral arguments seem mockingly, pathetically immoral. It would seem that man could afford to indulge in this type of abstract, pre-scientific moralizing in the past when his most destructive weapons were clubs, bow and arrows, or even gunpowder. To continue this type of thinking in an age when nuclear weapons are capable of destroying millions of human beings in a single

irrational man-made event would seem to be a form of self-defeating and immoral rigidity.

There could be the further objection that biochemical intervention into the inner psychological recesses of motivation, temperament, and behavior of human beings is an unacceptable, intolerable tampering with the natural or God-given characteristics of man. The negative connotations presently associated with discussions of drugs and the drug culture, particularly among young people, could be invoked to support this objection. One could also object on the ground that, in effect, what is here being suggested under the guise of an imperative psychotechnology is just another form of utopian mechanization of human beings through drugging the masses and their leaders.

These objections seem to be based on semantic grounds rather than on essential substance. In medicine, physical diseases are controlled through medication. Medicines are prescribed by doctors to help the body overcome the detrimental effects of bacteria or viruses—or to help the organism restore that balance of internal biochemical environment necessary for health and effectiveness. Medicines are not only used to treat the diseases of individ-

uals, but are also used preventively in the form of vaccines. All medicines are drugs—and all drugs used therapeutically are forms of intervention to influence and control the natural processes of disease. Selective and appropriate medication to assure psychological health and moral integrity is now imperative for the survival of human society.

The era of psychotechnology, having been imposed upon man by the physical scientific advances of man, cannot now be avoided. It must be used affirmatively, wisely, and with compassion. To fulfill these requirements, it must have a sound scientific, factual base. It must also be firmly rooted in rational morality. It must respect and enhance that which is uniquely human in man—those positive qualities which promise a future of human grandeur. In meeting these and related requirements, a rigorous, tough-minded science and technology of psychology will save man from the more destructive consequences of his absurdities and propensities—the pathos of power—and will provide him with the time necessary to evolve and stabilize those centers of his brain which will make social morality and human survival no longer a matter of chance.