

665 Pages

A VERY DANGEROUS BOOK

GOVERNMENT MIND CONTROL AGENDA

MIKULTRA
MIKNAOMII
MIKSEARCIH

Albrecht Giddings



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ANYBODY KNOWN TO BE WRITING ABOUT DRUGS CAN COUNT UPON getting countless ideas and suggestions and occasionally a valuable lead towards books or authors he has never heard of. I have been very lucky, in this respect; finding myself more than once in possession of a scrap of paper with some reference on it, and remembering only that I had received it from some chance acquaintance at a party. To all those who have helped me in this way, my thanks; and especially to Frances Fitzgerald, Dr. Griffith Edwards, Professor Max Gluckman, Professor Bernard Lewis, Dr. Jonathan Miller, Dr. Neal E. Miller, Professor Michael Shepherd, Dr. Gerry Stimson, Frances Verrinder, R. G. Wasson, and Lyall Watson. Francis Huxley made some suggestions about the section on drugs in primitive societies which I was glad to incorporate; Raye Farr, and Bill Grundy read a preliminary draft (I hope I have profited from their astringent comments) and, along with Bernard Levin (I wish I could have included some of his asides) somehow also found the time to do the invaluable chore of proof-reading. I am also grateful to Jasper Woodcock and his team at the Institute for the Study of Drug Dependence; but my chief debt is to the London Library, for the help from its staff, and for the access to its shelves, where I could browse at random in the—to me—often unfamiliar territory into which the research so often lured me.

IN HIS BOOK ON COCA, PUBLISHED IN 1901, W. G. MORTIMER WAS able to boast that he had collected 600 titles of articles and books on that drug alone. The bibliography compiled a few years ago by the U.N. Economic and Social Committee on Narcotic Drugs listed nearly 2,000 sources of material on cannabis. In its interim report on drugs in Canada, the Le Dain Committee stated that there were already some 3,000 reports on LSD in scientific journals.

When Joseph Robert wrote his history of tobacco, in 1949, the standard research guide contained over 6,000 titles; when he came to revise the book in 1967, he found that the guide, which was also being revised, was expected to include a further 4,000 titles. Nobody, so far as I know, has tried to keep count of the works on opium and its derivatives, but they would certainly reach five figures. As for alcohol, the library at Rutgers University, which specialises in the subject, is reputed to contain 40,000 items.

The writer of any work purporting to be a history is ordinarily anxious that his bibliography should display the extent and depth of his research; in admitting that mine has been far from comprehensive, I can only plead these figures in mitigation. And there has been another difficulty. As my concern had been mainly with the social rather than the pharmacological effects of drugs, several academic disciplines have been involved. Information about attitudes to drugs can be found not only in many social histories, but in works on anthropology, ethnology, mythology, theology, phenomenology, ecology, etymology and archeology, as well as in the descriptions of travellers, explorers and botanists.

It has consequently been an enormous advantage when some professional—or an inspired amateur, like R. G. Wasson—has already researched some part of the territory, and published his findings; but such ventures have been regrettably few.

There are also some gaps, which cannot be filled until more—or more reliable—information becomes available; drug use behind the Iron Curtain, for example. So the structure of the book, with each chapter devoted to a theme, is designed as far as possible to make use of the material which is available, to illustrate developments in attitudes, to, and legislation about, drugs, rather than to try to cover all the historical ground.

Where I have quoted from early sources, I have where necessary translated the text into modern English; standardized spelling (sometimes to personal preference: peyotl rather than the now more common peyote); and occasionally modified punctuation or grammar, for clarity.

THE GAME

FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE presents a series of reports with a goal of examining ancient tribal customs of consuming hallucinogens in order to experience the “voice” and “presence” and “commands” of God. Included are modern experiments using hallocinogens to create the same or similar visions.

Could it be that the knowledge of good and evil, the concept of God and religion, came from visions experienced after our tribal ancestors consumed hallucinogens?

PARADISE LOST

Paranoia, guilt, fear and mistrust overcome Eve and Adam after they have eaten the forbidden fruit. These are the descriptions of symptoms suffered by modern youth who have used hallucinogenic drugs illegally.

Nectarine fruits which the compliant boughs yielded them, side-long as they sat recline on the soft downy bank damasked with flowers: the savoury pulp they chew, and in the rind, still as they thirsted, scoop the brimming stream; nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles wanted, nor youthful dalliance, as beseems fair couple, linked in happy nuptial league,

alone as they.

Covered, but not at rest or ease of mind, they sat them down to weep; nor only tears rained at their eyes, but high winds worse within began to rise, high passions, anger, hate, mistrust, suspicion, discord; and shook sore their inward state of mind, calm region once and full of peace, now tost and turbulent: for understanding ruled not, and the will heard not her lore; both in subjection now to sensual appetite, who from beneath usurping over sovereign reason claimed superior sway: from thus distempered breast, Adam, estranged in look and altered style, speech intermitted thus to Eve renewed.

FOREWORD

SO MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN about the Eleusinian Mysteries and for so long a time that a word is needed to justify this presentation of three papers dealing with them. For close to 2,000 years the Mystery was performed every year (except one) for carefully screened initiates in our month of September. Everyone speaking the Greek language was free to present himself, except only those who had the unexpiated blood of a murdered man on their hands. The initiates lived through the night in the telesterion of Eleusis, under the leadership of the two hierophantic families, the Eumolpids and the Kerykes, and they would come away all wonder-struck by what they had lived through: according to some, they were never the same as before. The testimony about that night of awe-inspiring experience is unanimous and Sophocles speaks for the initiates when he says:

Thrice happy are those of mortals, who having seen those rites depart for Hades; for to them alone is granted to have a true life there. For the rest, all there is evil.

Yet up to now no one has known what justifies utterances such as this, and there are many like it. Here lies for us the mystery of the Eleusinian Mysteries. To this mystery we three have applied ourselves and believe we have found the solution, close to 2,000 years after the last performance of the rite and some 4,000 years since the first.

And the Lord God planted a garden eastward of Eden; and there He put man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

And the Lord God commanded of man, saying, Of every tree of this garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Genesis 2: 8-9; 16-17: KJV

For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was

good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

Genesis 3: 5: KJV

“...the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden” is the only reference in the Old Testament to that tree which has become known as the “tree of knowledge.” In the Garden of Eden man was given a choice between this tree, which conferred mortality on mankind, and the tree of life, which granted immortality. Given no other indication, artists and writers have envisioned the tree of knowledge as an apple, a fig, a pear, dragon’s blood, and a banana tree! The most bizarre interpretation comes from a 13th c. cathedral in Indres, France, which contains a fresco showing Eve encountering a female serpent entwined around a giant branching mushroom common in Europe - the slightly toxic and hallucinogenic *Amanita muscaria*, often referred to as “*the flesh of God*.”

A PRELUDE—DOORS OF PERCEPTION

Aldous Huxley

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If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite. —William Blake

IN 1886 the German pharmacologist, Louis Lewin, published the first systematic study of the cactus, to which his own name was subsequently given. Anhalonium lewinii was new to science. To primitive religion and the Indians of Mexico and the American Southwest it was a friend of immemorially long standing. Indeed, it was much more than a friend. In the words of one of the early Spanish visitors to the New World, “they eat a root which they call peyote, and which they venerate as though it were a deity.”

Why they should have venerated it as a deity became apparent when such eminent psychologists as Jaensch, Havelock Ellis and Weir Mitchell began their experiments with mescaline, the active principle of peyote. True, they stopped short at a point well this side of idolatry; but all concurred in assigning to mescaline a position among drugs of unique distinction. Administered in suitable doses, it changes the quality of consciousness more profoundly and yet is less toxic than any other substance in the pharmacologist’s repertory.

Mescaline research has been going on sporadically ever since the days of Lewin and Havelock Ellis. Chemists have not merely isolated the alkaloid; they have learned

how to synthesize it, so that the supply no longer depends on the sparse and intermittent crop of a desert cactus. Alienists have dosed themselves with mescaline in the hope thereby of coming to a better, a first-hand, understanding of their patients' mental processes. Working unfortunately upon too few subjects within too narrow a range of circumstances, psychologists have observed and catalogued some of the drug's more striking effects. Neurologists and physiologists have found out something about the mechanism of its action upon the central nervous system. And at least one Professional philosopher has taken mescaline for the light it may throw on such ancient, unsolved riddles as the place of mind in nature and the relationship between brain and consciousness.

There matters rested until, two or three years ago, a new and perhaps highly significant fact was observed.* Actually the fact had been staring everyone in the face for several decades; but nobody, as it happened, had noticed it until a Young English psychiatrist, at present working in Canada, was struck by the close similarity, in chemical composition, between mescaline and adrenalin. Further research revealed that lysergic acid, an extremely potent hallucinogen derived from ergot, has a structural biochemical relationship to the others. Then came the discovery that adrenochrome, which is a product of the decomposition of adrenalin, can produce many of the symptoms observed in mescaline intoxication. But adrenochrome probably occurs spontaneously in the human body. In other words, each one of us may be capable of manufacturing a chemical, minute doses of which are known to cause Profound changes in consciousness. Certain of these changes are similar to those which occur in that most characteristic plague of the twentieth century, schizophrenia. Is the mental disorder due to a chemical disorder? And is the chemical disorder due, in its turn, to psychological distresses affecting the adrenals? It would be rash and premature to affirm it. The most we can say is that some kind of a prima facie case has been made out. Meanwhile the clue is being systematically followed, the sleuths—biochemists, psychiatrists, psychologists—are on the trail.

By a series of, for me, extremely fortunate circumstances I found myself, in the spring of 1953, squarely athwart that trail. One of the sleuths had come on business to California. In spite of seventy years of mescaline research, the psychological material at his disposal was still absurdly inadequate, and he was anxious to add to it. I was on the spot and willing, indeed eager, to be a guinea pig. Thus it came about that, one bright May morning, I swallowed four-tenths of a gram of mescaline dissolved in half a glass of water and sat down to wait for the results.

We live together, we act on, and react to, one another; but always and in all circumstances we are by ourselves. The martyrs go hand in hand into the arena; they are crucified alone. Embraced, the lovers desperately try to fuse their insulated ecstasies into a single self-transcendence; in vain. By its very nature every embodied spirit is doomed to suffer and enjoy in solitude. Sensations, feelings, insights, fancies—all these are private and, except through symbols and at second hand, incommunicable. We can pool information about experiences, but never the experiences themselves. From family to nation, every human group is a society of island universes.

Most island universes are sufficiently like one another to Permit of inferential understanding or even of mutual empathy or “feeling into.” Thus, remembering our own bereavements and humiliations, we can condole with others in analogous circumstances, can put ourselves (always, of course, in a slightly Pickwickian sense) in their places. But in certain cases communication between universes is incomplete or even nonexistent. The mind is its own place, and the Places inhabited by the insane and the exceptionally gifted are so different from the places where ordinary men and women live, that there is little or no common ground of memory to serve as a basis for understanding or fellow feeling. Words are uttered, but fail to enlighten. The things and events to which the symbols refer belong to mutually exclusive realms of experience.

To see ourselves as others see us is a most salutary gift. Hardly less important is the capacity to see others as they see themselves. But what if these others belong to a different species and inhabit a radically alien universe? For example, how can the sane get to know what it actually feels like to be mad? Or, short of being born again as a visionary, a medium, or a musical genius, how can we ever visit the worlds which, to Blake, to Swedenborg, to Johann Sebastian Bach, were home? And how can a man at the extreme limits of ectomorphy and cerebrotonia ever put himself in the place of one at the limits of endomorphy and viscerotonia, or, except within certain circumscribed areas, share the feelings of one who stands at the limits of mesomorphy and somatotonia? To the unmitigated behaviorist such questions, I suppose, are meaningless. But for those who theoretically believe what in practice they know to be true—namely, that there is an inside to experience as well as an outside—the problems posed are real problems, all the more grave for being, some completely insoluble, some soluble only in exceptional circumstances and by methods not available to everyone. Thus, it seems virtually certain that I shall never know what it feels like to be Sir John Falstaff or Joe Louis. On the other hand, it had always seemed to me possible that, through hypnosis, for example, or auto-hypnosis, by means of systematic meditation, or else by taking the appropriate drug, I might so change my ordinary mode of consciousness as to be able to know, from the inside, what the visionary, the medium, even the mystic were talking about.

From what I had read of the mescaline experience I was convinced in advance that the drug would admit me, at least for a few hours, into the kind of inner world described by Blake and AE. But what I had expected did not happen. I had expected to lie with my eyes shut, looking at visions of many-colored geometries, of animated architectures, rich with gems and fabulously lovely, of landscapes with heroic figures, of symbolic dramas trembling perpetually on the verge of the ultimate revelation. But I had not reckoned, it was evident, with the idiosyncrasies of my mental make-up, the facts of my temperament, training and habits.

I am and, for as long as I can remember, I have always been a poor visualizer. Words, even the pregnant words of poets, do not evoke pictures in my mind. No hypnagogic visions greet me on the verge of sleep. When I recall something, the memory does not present itself to me as a vividly seen event or object. By an effort of the will, I can evoke a not very vivid image of what happened yesterday afternoon, of how the

Lungarno used to look before the bridges were destroyed, of the Bayswater Road when the only buses were green and tiny and drawn by aged horses at three and a half miles an hour. But such images have little substance and absolutely no autonomous life of their own. They stand to real, perceived objects in the same relation as Homer's ghosts stood to the men of flesh and blood, who came to visit them in the shades. Only when I have a high temperature do my mental images come to independent life. To those in whom the faculty of visualization is strong my inner world must seem curiously drab, limited and uninteresting. This was the world—a poor thing but my own—which I expected to see transformed into something completely unlike itself.

The change which actually took place in that world was in no sense revolutionary. Half an hour after swallowing the drug I became aware of a slow dance of golden lights. A little later there were sumptuous red surfaces swelling and expanding from bright nodes of energy that vibrated with a continuously changing, patterned life. At another time the closing of my eyes revealed a complex of gray structures, within which pale bluish spheres kept emerging into intense solidity and, having emerged, would slide noiselessly upwards, out of sight. But at no time were there faces or forms of men or animals. I saw no landscapes, no enormous spaces, no magical growth and metamorphosis of buildings, nothing remotely like a drama or a parable. The other world to which mescaline admitted me was not the world of visions; it existed out there, in what I could see with my eyes open. The great change was in the realm of objective fact. What had happened to my subjective universe was relatively unimportant.

I took my pill at eleven. An hour and a half later, I was sitting in my study, looking intently at a small glass vase. The vase contained only three flowers—a full-blown Belie of Portugal rose, shell pink with a hint at every petal's base of a hotter, flammier hue; a large magenta and cream-colored carnation; and, pale purple at the end of its broken stalk, the bold heraldic blossom of an iris. Fortuitous and provisional, the little nosegay broke all the rules of traditional good taste. At breakfast that morning I had been struck by the lively dissonance of its colors. But that was no longer the point. I was not looking now at an unusual flower arrangement. I was seeing what Adam had seen on the morning of his creation—the miracle, moment by moment, of naked existence.

“Is it agreeable?” somebody asked. (During this Part of the experiment, all conversations were recorded on a dictating machine, and it has been possible for me to refresh my memory of what was said.)

“Neither agreeable nor disagreeable,” I answered. “it just is.”

Istigkeit—wasn't that the word Meister Eckhart liked to use? “Is-ness.” The Being of Platonic philosophy—except that Plato seems to have made the enormous, the grotesque mistake of separating Being from becoming and identifying it with the mathematical abstraction of the Idea. He could never, poor fellow, have seen a bunch of flowers shining with their own inner light and all but quivering under the pressure of the significance with which they were charged; could never have perceived that what rose and iris

and carnation so intensely signified was nothing more, and nothing less, than what they were—a transience that was yet eternal life, a perpetual perishing that was at the same time pure Being, a bundle of minute, unique particulars in which, by some unspeakable and yet self-evident paradox, was to be seen the divine source of all existence.

I continued to look at the flowers, and in their living light I seemed to detect the qualitative equivalent of breathing—but of a breathing without returns to a starting point, with no recurrent ebbs but only a repeated flow from beauty to heightened beauty, from deeper to ever deeper meaning. Words like “grace” and “transfiguration” came to my mind, and this, of course, was what, among other things, they stood for. My eyes traveled from the rose to the carnation, and from that feathery incandescence to the smooth scrolls of sentient amethyst which were the iris. The Beatific Vision, Sat Chit Ananda, Being-Awareness-Bliss—for the first time I understood, not on the verbal level, not by inchoate hints or at a distance, but precisely and completely what those prodigious syllables referred to. And then I remembered a passage I had read in one of Suzuki’s essays. “What is the Dharma-Body of the Buddha?” (“the Dharma-Body of the Buddha” is another way of saying Mind, Suchness, the Void, the Godhead.) The question is asked in a Zen monastery by an earnest and bewildered novice. And with the prompt irrelevance of one of the Marx Brothers, the Master answers, “The hedge at the bottom of the garden.” “And the man who realizes this truth,” the novice dubiously inquires, “what, may I ask, is he?” Groucho gives him a whack over the shoulders with his staff and answers, “A golden-haired lion.”

It had been, when I read it, only a vaguely pregnant piece of nonsense. Now it was all as clear as day, as evident as Euclid. Of course the Dharma-Body of the Buddha was the hedge at the bottom of the garden. At the same time, and no less obviously, it was these flowers, it was anything that I—or rather the blessed Not-I, released for a moment from my throttling embrace—cared to look at. The books, for example, with which my study walls were lined. Like the flowers, they glowed, when I looked at them, with brighter colors, a profounder significance. Red books, like rubies; emerald books; books bound in white jade; books of agate; of aquamarine, of yellow topaz; lapis lazuli books whose color was so intense, so intrinsically meaningful, that they seemed to be on the point of leaving the shelves to thrust themselves more insistently on my attention.

“What about spatial relationships?” the investigator inquired, as I was looking at the books.

It was difficult to answer. True, the perspective looked rather odd, and the walls of the room no longer seemed to meet in right angles. But these were not the really important facts. The really important facts were that spatial relationships had ceased to matter very much and that my mind was perceiving the world in terms of other than spatial categories. At ordinary times the eye concerns itself with such problems as Where?—How far?—How situated in relation to what? In the mescaline experience the implied questions to which the eye responds are of another order. Place and distance cease to be of much interest. The mind does its Perceiving in terms of intensity of existence, profundity

of significance, relationships within a pattern. I saw the books, but was not at all concerned with their positions in space. What I noticed, what impressed itself upon my mind was the fact that all of them glowed with living light and that in some the glory was more manifest than in others. In this context position and the three dimensions were beside the point. Not, of course, that the category of space had been abolished. When I got up and walked about, I could do so quite normally, without misjudging the whereabouts of objects. Space was still there; but it had lost its predominance. The mind was primarily concerned, not with measures and locations, but with being and meaning.

And along with indifference to space there went an even more complete indifference to time.

“There seems to be plenty of it,” was all I would answer, when the investigator asked me to say what I felt about time.

Plenty of it, but exactly how much was entirely irrelevant. I could, of course, have looked at my watch; but my watch, I knew, was in another universe. My actual experience had been, was still, of an indefinite duration or alternatively of a perpetual present made up of one continually changing apocalypse.

From the books the investigator directed my attention to the furniture. A small typing table stood in the center of the room; beyond it, from my point of view, was a wicker chair and beyond that a desk. The three pieces formed an intricate pattern of horizontals, uprights and diagonals—a pattern all the more interesting for not being interpreted in terms of spatial relationships. Table, chair and desk came together in a composition that was like something by Braque or Juan Gris, a still life recognizably related to the objective world, but rendered without depth, without any attempt at photographic realism. I was looking at my furniture, not as the utilitarian who has to sit on chairs, to write at desks and tables, and not as the cameraman or scientific recorder, but as the pure aesthete whose concern is only with forms and their relationships within the field of vision or the picture space. But as I looked, this purely aesthetic, Cubist’s-eye view gave place to what I can only describe as the sacramental vision of reality. I was back where I had been when I was looking at the flowers—back in a world where everything shone with the Inner Light, and was infinite in its significance. The legs, for example, of that chair—how miraculous their tubularity, how supernatural their polished smoothness! I spent several minutes—or was it several centuries?—not merely gazing at those bamboo legs, but actually being them—or rather being myself in them; or, to be still more accurate (for “I” was not involved in the case, nor in a certain sense were “they”) being my Not-self in the Not-self which was the chair.

Reflecting on my experience, I find myself agreeing with the eminent Cambridge philosopher, Dr. C. D. Broad, “that we should do well to consider much more seriously than we have hitherto been inclined to do the type of theory which Bergson put forward in connection with memory and sense perception. The suggestion is that the function of the brain and nervous system and sense organs is in the main eliminative and not pro-

ductive. Each person is at each moment capable of remembering all that has ever happened to him and of perceiving everything that is happening everywhere in the universe. The function of the brain and nervous system is to protect us from being overwhelmed and confused by this mass of largely useless and irrelevant knowledge, by shutting out most of what we should otherwise perceive or remember at any moment, and leaving only that very small and special selection which is likely to be practically useful.”

According to such a theory, each one of us is potentially Mind at Large. But in so far as we are animals, our business is at all costs to survive. To make biological survival possible, Mind at Large has to be funneled through the reducing valve of the brain and nervous system. What comes out at the other end is a measly trickle of the kind of consciousness which will help us to stay alive on the surface of this Particular planet. To formulate and express the contents of this reduced awareness, man has invented and endlessly elaborated those symbol-systems and implicit philosophies which we call languages. Every individual is at once the beneficiary and the victim of the linguistic tradition into which he has been born—the beneficiary inasmuch as language gives access to the accumulated records of other people’s experience, the victim in so far as it confirms him in the belief that reduced awareness is the only awareness and as it bedevils his sense of reality, so that he is all too apt to take his concepts for data, his words for actual things. That which, in the language of religion, is called “this world” is the universe of reduced awareness, expressed, and, as it were, petrified by language.

The various “other worlds,” with which human beings erratically make contact are so many elements in the totality of the awareness belonging to Mind at Large. Most people, most of the time, know only what comes through the reducing valve and is consecrated as genuinely real by the local language. Certain persons, however, seem to be born with a kind of by-pass that circumvents the reducing valve. In others temporary by-passes may be acquired either spontaneously, or as the result of deliberate “spiritual exercises,” or through hypnosis, or by means of drugs. Through these permanent or temporary by-passes there flows, not indeed the perception “of everything that is happening everywhere in the universe” (for the by-pass does not abolish the reducing valve, which still excludes the total content of Mind at Large), but something more than, and above all something different from, the carefully selected utilitarian material which our narrowed, individual minds regard as a complete, or at least sufficient, picture of reality.

The brain is provided with a number of enzyme systems which serve to co-ordinate its workings. Some of these enzymes regulate the supply of glucose to the brain cells. Mescaline inhibits the production of these enzymes and thus lowers the amount of glucose available to an organ that is in constant need of sugar. When mescaline reduces the brain’s normal ration of sugar what happens? Too few cases have been observed, and therefore a comprehensive answer cannot yet be given. But what happens to the majority of the few who have taken mescaline under supervision can be summarized as follows.

(1) The ability to remember and to “think straight” is little if at all reduced. (Listening to the recordings of my conversation under the influence of the drug, I cannot discover that I was then any stupider than I am at ordinary times.)

(2) Visual impressions are greatly intensified and the eye recovers some of the perceptual innocence of childhood, when the sensum was not immediately and automatically subordinated to the concept. Interest in space is diminished and interest in time falls almost to zero.

(3) Though the intellect remains unimpaired and though perception is enormously improved, the will suffers a profound change for the worse. The mescaline taker sees no reason for doing anything in particular and finds most of the causes for which, at ordinary times, he was prepared to act and suffer, profoundly uninteresting. He can't be bothered with them, for the good reason that he has better things to think about.

(4) These better things may be experienced (as I experienced them) “out there,” or “in here,” or in both worlds, the inner and the outer, simultaneously or successively. That they are better seems to be self-evident to all mescaline takers who come to the drug with a sound liver and an untroubled mind.

These effects of mescaline are the sort of effects you could expect to follow the administration of a drug having the power to impair the efficiency of the cerebral reducing valve. When the brain runs out of sugar, the undernourished ego grows weak, can't be bothered to undertake the necessary chores, and loses all interest in those spatial and temporal relationships which mean so much to an organism bent on getting on in the world. As Mind at Large seeps past the no longer watertight valve, all kinds of biologically useless things start to happen. In some cases there may be extra-sensory perceptions. Other persons discover a world of visionary beauty. To others again is revealed the glory, the infinite value and meaningfulness of naked existence, of the given, unconceptualized event. In the final stage of egolessness there is an “obscure knowledge” that All is in all—that All is actually each. This is as near, I take it, as a finite mind can ever come to “perceiving everything that is happening everywhere in the universe.”

In this context, how significant is the enormous heightening, under mescaline, of the perception of color! For certain animals it is biologically very important to be able to distinguish certain hues. But beyond the limits of their utilitarian spectrum, most creatures are completely color blind. Bees, for example, spend most of their time “deflowering the fresh virgins of the spring”; but, as Von Frisch has shown, they can recognize only a very few colors. Man's highly developed color sense is a biological luxury—inesestimably precious to him as an intellectual and spiritual being, but unnecessary to his survival as an animal. To judge by the adjectives which Homer puts into their mouths, the heroes of the Trojan War hardly excelled the bees in their capacity to distinguish colors. In this respect, at least, mankind's advance has been prodigious.

Mescaline raises all colors to a higher power and makes the percipient aware of

innumerable fine shades of difference, to which, at ordinary times, he is completely blind. It would seem that, for Mind at Large, the so-called secondary characters of things are primary. Unlike Locke, it evidently feels that colors are more important, better worth attending to, than masses, positions and dimensions. Like mescaline takers, many mystics perceive supernaturally brilliant colors, not only with the inward eye, but even in the objective world around them. Similar reports are made by psychics and sensitives. There are certain mediums to whom the mescaline taker's brief revelation is a matter, during long periods, of daily and hourly experience.

From this long but indispensable excursion into the realm of theory, we may now return to the miraculous facts—four bamboo chair legs in the middle of a room. Like Wordsworth's daffodils, they brought all manner of wealth—the gift, beyond price, of a new direct insight into the very Nature of Things, together with a more modest treasure of understanding in the field, especially, of the arts.

A rose is a rose is a rose. But these chair legs were chair legs were St. Michael and all angels. Four or five hours after the event, when the effects of a cerebral sugar shortage were wearing off, I was taken for a little tour of the city, which included a visit, towards sundown, to what is modestly claimed to be the World's Biggest Drug Store. At the back of the W.B.D.S., among the toys, the greeting cards and the comics, stood a row, surprisingly enough, of art books. I picked up the first volume that came to hand. It was on Van Gogh, and the picture at which the book opened was "The Chair"—that astounding portrait of a Ding an Sich, which the mad painter saw, with a kind of adoring terror, and tried to render on his canvas. But it was a task to which the power even of genius proved wholly inadequate. The chair Van Gogh had seen was obviously the same in essence as the chair I had seen. But, though incomparably more real than the chairs of ordinary perception, the chair in his picture remained no more than an unusually expressive symbol of the fact. The fact had been manifested Suchness; this was only an emblem. Such emblems are sources of true knowledge about the Nature of Things, and this true knowledge may serve to prepare the mind which accepts it for immediate insights on its own account. But that is all. However expressive, symbols can never be the things they stand for.

It would be interesting, in this context, to make a study of the works of art available to the great knowers of Suchness. What sort of pictures did Eckhart look at? What sculptures and paintings played a part in the religious experience of St. John of the Cross, of Hakuin, of Hui-neng, of William Law? The questions are beyond my power to answer; but I strongly suspect that most of the great knowers of Suchness paid very little attention to art—some refusing to have anything to do with it at all, others being content with what a critical eye would regard as second-rate, or even, tenth-rate, works. (To a person whose transfigured and transfiguring mind can see the All in every this, the first-rateness or tenth-rateness of even a religious painting will be a matter of the most sovereign indifference.) Art, I suppose, is only for beginners, or else for those resolute dead-enders, who have made up their minds to be content with the ersatz of Suchness, with symbols rather than with what they signify, with the elegantly composed recipe in lieu of actual

dinner.

I returned the Van Gogh to its rack and picked up the volume standing next to it. It was a book on Botticelli. I turned the pages. "The Birth of Venus"—never one of my favorites. "Mars and Venus," that loveliness so passionately denounced by poor Ruskin at the height of his long-drawn sexual tragedy. The marvelously rich and intricate "Calumny of Apelles." And then a somewhat less familiar and not very good picture, "Judith." My attention was arrested and I gazed in fascination, not at the pale neurotic heroine or her attendant, not at the victim's hairy head or the vernal landscape in the background, but at the purplish silk of Judith's pleated bodice and long wind-blown skirts.

This was something I had seen before—seen that very morning, between the flowers and the furniture, when I looked down by chance, and went on passionately staring by choice, at my own crossed legs. Those folds in the trousers—what a labyrinth of endlessly significant complexity! And the texture of the gray flannel—how rich, how deeply, mysteriously sumptuous! And here they were again, in Botticelli's picture.

Civilized human beings wear clothes, therefore there can be no portraiture, no mythological or historical storytelling without representations of folded textiles. But though it may account for the origins, mere tailoring can never explain the luxuriant development of drapery as a major theme of all the plastic arts. Artists, it is obvious, have always loved drapery for its own sake—or, rather, for their own. When you paint or carve drapery, you are painting or carving forms which, for all practical purposes, are non-representational—the kind of unconditioned forms on which artists even in the most naturalistic tradition like to let themselves go. In the average Madonna or Apostle the strictly human, fully representational element accounts for about ten per cent of the whole. All the rest consists of many colored variations on the inexhaustible theme of crumpled wool or linen. And these non-representational nine-tenths of a Madonna or an Apostle may be just as important qualitatively as they are in quantity. Very often they set the tone of the whole work of art, they state the key in which the theme is being rendered, they express the mood, the temperament, the attitude to life of the artist. Stoical serenity reveals itself in the smooth surfaces, the broad untortured folds of Piero's draperies. Torn between fact and wish, between cynicism and idealism, Bernini tempers the all but caricatural verisimilitude of his faces with enormous sartorial abstractions, which are the embodiment, in stone or bronze, of the everlasting commonplaces of rhetoric—the heroism, the holiness, the sublimity to which mankind perpetually aspires, for the most part in vain.

And here are El Greco's disquietingly visceral skirts and mantles; here are the sharp, twisting, flame-like folds in which Cosimo Tura clothes his figures: in the first, traditional spirituality breaks down into a nameless physiological yearning; in the second, there writhes an agonized sense of the world's essential strangeness and hostility. Or consider Watteau; his men and women play lutes, get ready for balls and harlequinades, embark, on velvet lawns and under noble trees, for the Cythera of every lover's dream; their enormous melancholy and the flayed, excruciating sensibility of

their creator find expression, not in the actions recorded, not in the gestures and the faces portrayed, but in the relief and texture of their taffeta skirts, their satin capes and doublets.

Not an inch of smooth surface here, not a moment of peace or confidence, only a silken wilderness of countless tiny pleats and wrinkles, with an incessant modulation—inner uncertainty rendered with the perfect assurance of a master hand—of tone into tone, of one indeterminate color into another. In life, man proposes, God disposes. In the plastic arts the proposing is done by the subject matter; that which disposes is ultimately the artist's temperament, proximately (at least in portraiture, history and genre) the carved or painted drapery. Between them, these two may decree that a *fête galante* shall move to tears, that a crucifixion shall be serene to the point of cheerfulness, that a stigmatization shall be almost intolerably sexy, that the likeness of a prodigy of female brainlessness (I am thinking now of Ingres' incomparable Mme. Moitessier) shall express the austere, the most uncompromising intellectuality.

But this is not the whole story. Draperies, as I had now discovered, are much more than devices for the introduction of non-representational forms into naturalistic paintings and sculptures. What the rest of us see only under the influence of mescaline, the artist is congenitally equipped to see all the time. His perception is not limited to what is biologically or socially useful. A little of the knowledge belonging to Mind at Large oozes past the reducing valve of brain and ego, into his consciousness. It is a knowledge of the intrinsic significance of every existent. For the artist as for the mescaline taker draperies are living hieroglyphs that stand in some peculiarly expressive way for the unfathomable mystery of pure being. More even than the chair, though less perhaps than those wholly supernatural flowers, the folds of my gray flannel trousers were charged with "is-ness."

To what they owed this privileged status, I cannot say. Is it, perhaps, because the forms of folded drapery are so strange and dramatic that they catch the eye and in this way force the miraculous fact of sheer existence upon the attention? Who knows? What is important is less the reason for the experience than the experience itself. Poring over Judith's skirts, there in the World's Biggest Drug Store, I knew that Botticelli—and not Botticelli alone, but many others too—had looked at draperies with the same transfigured and transfiguring eyes as had been mine that morning. They had seen the *Istigkeit*, the Allness and Infinity of folded cloth and had done their best to render it in paint or stone. Necessarily, of course, without success.

For the glory and the wonder of pure existence belong to another order, beyond the Power of even the highest art to express. But in Judith's skirt I could clearly see what, if I had been a painter of genius, I might have made of my old gray flannels. Not much, heaven knows, in comparison with the reality, but enough to delight generation after generation of beholders, enough to make them understand at least a little of the true significance of what, in our pathetic imbecility, we call "mere things" and disregard in favor of television.

“This is how one ought to see,” I kept saying as I looked down at my trousers, or glanced at the jeweled books in the shelves, at the legs of my infinitely more than Van-Goghian chair. “This is how one ought to see, how things really are.” And yet there were reservations. For if one always saw like this, one would never want to do anything else. Just looking, just being the divine Not-self of flower, of book, of chair, of flannel. That would be enough. But in that case what about other people? What about human relations? In the recording of that morning’s conversations I find the question constantly repeated, “What about human relations?”

How could one reconcile this timeless bliss of seeing as one ought to see with the temporal duties of doing what one ought to do and feeling as one ought to feel? “One ought to be able,” I said, “to see these trousers as infinitely important and human beings as still more infinitely important.” One ought-but in practice it seemed to be impossible. This participation in the manifest glory of things left no room, so to speak, for the ordinary, the necessary concerns of human existence, above all for concerns involving persons. For Persons are selves and, in one respect at least, I was now a Not-self, simultaneously perceiving and being the Not-self of the things around me. To this new-born Not-self, the behavior, the appearance, the very thought of the self it had momentarily ceased to be, and of other selves, its one-time fellows, seemed not indeed distasteful (for distastefulness was not one of the categories in terms of which I was thinking), but enormously irrelevant.

Compelled by the investigator to analyze and report on what I was doing (and how I longed to be left alone with Eternity in a flower, Infinity in four chair legs and the Absolute in the folds of a pair of flannel trousers!), I realized that I was deliberately avoiding the eyes of those who were with me in the room, deliberately refraining from being too much aware of them. One was my wife, the other a man I respected and greatly liked; but both belonged to the world from which, for the moment, mescaline had delivered me “e world of selves, of time, of moral judgments and utilitarian considerations, the world (and it was this aspect of human life which I wished, above all else, to forget) of self-assertion, of cocksureness, of overvalued words and idolatrously worshipped notions.

At this stage of the proceedings I was handed a large colored reproduction of the well-known self-portrait by Cézanne—the head and shoulders of a man in a large straw hat, red-cheeked, red-lipped, with rich black whiskers and a dark unfriendly eye. It is a magnificent painting; but it was not as a painting that I now saw it. For the head promptly took on a third dimension and came to life as a small goblin-like man looking out through a window in the page before me. I started to laugh. And when they asked me why, “What pretensions!” I kept repeating. “Who on earth does he think he is?” The question was not addressed to Cézanne in particular, but to the human species at large. Who did they all think they were?

“It’s like Arnold Bennett in the Dolomites,” I said, suddenly remembering a scene, happily immortalized in a snapshot, of A.B., some four or five years before his death, toddling along a wintry road at Cortina d’Ampezzo. Around him lay the virgin snow; in the background was a more than gothic aspiration of red crags. And there was dear,

kind, unhappy A.B., consciously overacting the role of his favorite character in fiction, himself, the Card in person. There he went, toddling slowly in the bright Alpine sunshine, his thumbs in the armholes of a yellow waistcoat which bulged, a little lower down, with the graceful curve of a Regency bow window at Brighton—his head thrown back as though to aim some stammered utterance, howitzer-like, at the blue dome of heaven. What he actually said, I have forgotten; but what his whole manner, air and posture fairly shouted was, “I’m as good as those damned mountains.” And in some ways, of course, he was infinitely better; but not, as he knew very well, in the way his favorite character in fiction liked to imagine.

Successfully (whatever that may mean) or unsuccessfully, we all overact the part of our favorite character in fiction. And the fact, the almost infinitely unlikely fact, of actually being Cézanne makes no difference. For the consummate painter, with his little pipeline to Mind at Large by-passing the brain valve and ego-filter, was also and just as genuinely this whiskered goblin with the unfriendly eye.

For relief I turned back to the folds in my trousers. “This is how one ought to see,” I repeated yet again. And I might have added, ‘These are the sort of things one ought to look at.’ Things without pretensions, satisfied to be merely themselves, sufficient in their Suchness, not acting a part, not trying, insanely, to go it alone, in isolation from the Dharma-Body, in Luciferian defiance of the grace of god.

“The nearest approach to this,” I said, “would be a Vermeer.” Yes, a Vermeer. For that mysterious artist was truly gifted—with the vision that perceives the Dharma-Body as the hedge at the bottom of the garden, with the talent to render as much of that vision as the limitations of human capacity permit, and with the prudence to confine himself in his paintings to the more manageable aspects of reality; for though Vermeer represented human beings, he was always a painter of still life. Cézanne, who told his female sitters to do their best to look like apples, tried to paint portraits in the same spirit.

But his pippin-like women are more nearly related to Plato’s Ideas than to the Dharma-Body in the hedge. They are Eternity and Infinity seen, not in sand or flower, but in the abstractions of some very superior brand of geometry. Vermeer never asked his girls to look like apples. On the contrary, he insisted on their being girls to the very limit—but always with the proviso that they refrain from behaving girlishly. They might sit or quietly stand but never giggle, never display self-consciousness, never say their prayers or pine for absent sweethearts, never gossip, never gaze enviously at other women’s babies, never dirt, never love or hate or work. In the act of doing any of these things they would doubtless become more intensely themselves, but would cease, for that very reason, to manifest their divine essential Not-self.

In Blake’s phrase, the doors of Vermeer’s perception were only partially cleansed. A single panel had become almost perfectly transparent; the rest of the door was still muddy. The essential Not-self could be perceived very clearly in things and in living creatures on the hither side of good and evil. In human beings it was visible only when

they were in repose, their minds untroubled, their bodies motionless. In these circumstances Vermeer could see Suchness in all its heavenly beauty—could see and, in some small measure, render it—in a subtle and sumptuous still life. Vermeer is undoubtedly the greatest painter of human still lives. But there have been others, for example, Vermeer's French contemporaries, the Le Nain brothers.

They set out, I suppose, to be genre painters; but what they actually produced was a series of human still lives, in which their cleansed perception of the infinite significance of all things is rendered not, as with Vermeer, by subtle enrichment of color and texture, but by a heightened clarity, an obsessive distinctness of form, within an austere, almost monochromatic tonality. In our own day we have had Vuillard, the painter, at his best, of unforgettably splendid pictures of the Dharma-Body manifested in a bourgeois bedroom, of the Absolute blazing away in the midst of some stockbroker's family in a suburban garden, taking tea.

Ce qui fait que l'ancien bandagiste renie

Le comptoir dont le faste alléçait les passants,

C'est son jardin d'Auteuil, où, veufs de tout encens,

Les Zinnias ont l'air d'être en tôle vernie.

For Laurent Taillade the spectacle was merely obscene. But if the retired rubber goods merchant had sat still enough, Vuillard would have seen in him only the Dharma-Body, would have painted, in the zinnias, the goldfish pool, the villa's Moorish tower and Chinese lanterns, a corner of Eden before the Fall.

But meanwhile my question remained unanswered. How was this cleansed perception to be reconciled with a proper concern with human relations, with the necessary chores and duties, to say nothing of charity and practical compassion? The age-old debate between the actives and the contemplatives was being renewed—renewed, so far as I was concerned, with an unprecedented poignancy. For until this morning I had known contemplation only in its humbler, its more ordinary forms—as discursive thinking; as a rapt absorption in poetry or painting or music; as a patient waiting upon those inspirations, without which even the prosiest writer cannot hope to accomplish anything; as occasional glimpses, in Nature, of Wordsworth's "something far more deeply interfused"; as systematic silence leading, sometimes, to hints of an "obscure knowledge."

But now I knew contemplation at its height. At its height, but not yet in its fullness. For in its fullness the way of Mary includes the way of Martha and raises it, so to speak, to its own higher power. Mescaline opens up the way of Mary, but shuts the door on that of Martha. It gives access to contemplation—but to a contemplation that is incompatible with action and even with the will to action, the very thought of action. In the intervals between his revelations the mescaline taker is apt to feel that, though in one way every-

thing is supremely as it should be, in another there is something wrong. His problem is essentially the same as that which confronts the quietist, the arhat and, on another level, the landscape painter and the painter of human still lives. Mescaline can never solve that problem; it can only pose it, apocalyptically, for those to whom it had never before presented itself. The full and final solution can be found only by those who are prepared to implement the right kind of *Weltanschauung* by means of the right kind of behavior and the right kind of constant and unstrained alertness. Over against the quietist stands the active-contemplative, the saint, the man who, in Eckhart's phrase, is ready to come down from the seventh heaven in order to bring a cup of water to his sick brother.

Over against the arhat, retreating from appearances into an entirely transcendental Nirvana, stands the Bodhisattva, for whom Suchness and the world of contingencies are one, and for whose boundless compassion every one of those contingencies is an occasion not only for transfiguring insight, but also for the most practical charity. And in the universe of art, over against Vermeer and the other Painters of human still lives, over against the masters of Chinese and Japanese landscape painting, over against Constable and Turner, against Sisley and Seurat and Cézanne, stands the all-inclusive art of Rembrandt. These are enormous names, inaccessible eminences. For myself, on this memorable May morning, I could only be grateful for an experience which had shown me, more clearly than I had ever seen it before, the true nature of the challenge and the completely liberating response.

Let me add, before we leave this subject, that there is no form of contemplation, even the most quietistic, which is without its ethical values. Half at least of all morality is negative and consists in keeping out of mischief. The Lord's Prayer is less than fifty words long, and six of those words are devoted to asking God not to lead us into temptation. The one-sided contemplative leaves undone many things that he ought to do; but to make up for it, he refrains from doing a host of things he ought not to do. The sum of evil, Pascal remarked, would be much diminished if men could only learn to sit quietly in their rooms. The contemplative whose perception has been cleansed does not have to stay in his room. He can go about his business, so completely satisfied to see and be a part of the divine Order of Things that he will never even be tempted to indulge in what Traherne called "the dirty Devices of the world."

When we feel ourselves to be sole heirs of the universe, when "the sea flows in our veins... and the stars are our jewels," when all things are perceived as infinite and holy, what motive can we have for covetousness or self-assertion, for the pursuit of power or the drearier forms of pleasure? Contemplatives are not likely to become gamblers, or procurers, or drunkards; they do not as a rule preach intolerance, or make war; do not find it necessary to rob, swindle or grind the faces of the poor.

And to these enormous negative virtues we may add another which, though hard to define, is both positive and important. The arhat and the quietist may not practice contemplation in its fullness; but if they practice it at all, they may bring back enlightening reports of another, a transcendent country of the mind; and if they practice it in the

height, they will become conduits through which some beneficent influence can flow out of that other country into a world of darkened selves, chronically dying for lack of it.

Meanwhile I had turned, at the investigator's request, from the portrait of Cézanne to what was going on, inside my head, when I shut my eyes. This time, the inscape was curiously unrewarding. The field of vision was filled with brightly colored, constantly changing structures that seemed to be made of plastic or enameled tin.

"Cheap," I commented. "Trivial. Like things in a five-and-ten."

And all this shoddiness existed in a closed, cramped universe.

"It's as though one were below decks in a ship," I said. "A five-and-ten-cent ship."

And as I looked, it became very clear that this five-and-ten-cent ship was in some way connected with human pretensions, with the portrait of Cézanne, with A.B. among the Dolomites overacting his favorite character in fiction. This suffocating interior of a dime-store ship was my own personal self; these gimcrack mobiles of tin and plastic were my personal contributions to the universe.

I felt the lesson to be salutary, but was sorry, none the less, that it had had to be administered at this moment and in this form. As a rule the mescaline taker discovers an inner world as manifestly a datum, as self-evidently "infinite and holy," as that transfigured outer world which I had seen with my eyes open. From the first, my own case had been different. Mescaline had endowed me temporarily with the power to see things with my eyes shut; but it could not, or at least on this occasion did not, reveal an inscape remotely comparable to my flowers or chair or flannels "out there." What it had allowed me to perceive inside was not the Dharma-Body, in images, but my own mind; not Suchness, but a set of symbols—in other words, a homemade substitute for Suchness.

Most visualizers are transformed by mescaline into visionaries. Some of them—and they are Perhaps more numerous than is generally supposed—require no transformation; they are visionaries all the time. The mental species to which Blake belonged is fairly widely distributed even in the urban-industrial societies of the present day. The poet-artist's uniqueness does not consist in the fact that (to quote from his *Descriptive Catalogue*) he actually saw "those wonderful originals called in the Sacred Scriptures the Cherubim." It does not consist in the fact that "these wonderful originals seen in my visions, were some of them one hundred feet in height ... all containing mythological and recondite meaning." It consists solely in his ability to render, in words or (somewhat less successfully) in line and color, some hint at least of a not excessively uncommon experience. The untalented visionary may perceive an inner reality no less tremendous, beautiful and significant than the world beheld by Blake; but he lacks altogether the ability to express, in literary or plastic symbols, what he has seen.

From the records of religion and the surviving monuments of poetry and the plas-

tic arts it is very plain that, at most times and in most places, men have attached more importance to the inscape than to objective existents, have felt that what they saw with their eyes shut possessed a spiritually higher significance than what they saw with their eyes open. The reason? Familiarity breeds contempt, and how to survive is a problem ranging in urgency from the chronically tedious to the excruciating. The outer world is what we wake up to every morning of our lives, is the place where, willy-nilly, we must try to make our living. In the inner world there is neither work nor monotony. We visit it only in dreams and musings, and its strangeness is such that we never find the same world on two successive occasions.

What wonder, then, if human beings in their search for the divine have generally preferred to look within! Generally, but not always. In their art no less than in their religion, the Taoists and the Zen Buddhists looked beyond visions to the Void, and through the Void at “the ten thousand things” of objective reality. Because of their doctrine of the Word made flesh, Christians should have been able, from the first, to adopt a similar attitude towards the universe around them. But because of the doctrine of the Fall, they found it very hard to do so. As recently as three hundred years ago an expression of thoroughgoing world denial and even world condemnation was both orthodox and comprehensible. “

We should feel wonder at nothing at all in Nature except only the Incarnation of Christ.” In the seventeenth century, Lallemand’s phrase seemed to make sense. Today it has the ring of madness.

In China the rise of landscape painting to the rank of a major art form took place about a thousand, in Japan about six hundred and in Europe about three hundred, years ago. The equation of Dharma-Body with hedge was made by those Zen Masters, who wedded Taoist naturalism with Buddhist transcendentalism. It was, therefore, only in the Far East that landscape painters consciously regarded their art as religious. In the West religious painting was a matter of portraying sacred personages, of illustrating hallowed texts. Landscape painters regarded themselves as secularists. Today we recognize in Seurat one of the supreme masters of what may be called mystical landscape painting. And yet this man who was able, more effectively than any other, to render the One in the many, became quite indignant when somebody praised him for the “poetry” of his work.

“I merely apply the System,” he protested. In other words he was merely a pointilliste and, in his own eyes, nothing else. A similar anecdote is told of John Constable. One day towards the end of his life, Blake met Constable at Hampstead and was shown one of the younger artist’s sketches. In spite of his contempt for naturalistic art, the old visionary knew a good thing when he saw it—except of course, when it was by Rubens. “This is not drawing,” he cried, “this is inspiration!”

“I had meant it to be drawing,” was Constable’s characteristic answer. Both men were right. It was drawing, precise and veracious, and at the same time it was inspiration—inspiration of an order at least as high as Blake’s. The pine trees on the Heath had

actually been seen as identical with the Dharma-Body. The sketch was a rendering, necessarily imperfect but still profoundly impressive, of what a cleansed perception had revealed to the open eyes of a great painter. From a contemplation, in the tradition of Wordsworth and Whitman, of the Dharma-Body as hedge, and from visions, such as Blake's, of the "wonderful originals" within the mind, contemporary poets have retreated into an investigation of the personal, as opposed to the more than personal, subconscious and to a rendering, in highly abstract terms, not of the given, objective fact, but of mere scientific and theological notions. And something similar has happened in the held of painting, where we have witnessed a general retreat from landscape, the predominant art form of the nineteenth century.

This retreat from landscape has not been into that other, inner divine Datum, with which most of the traditional schools of the past were concerned, that Archetypal World, where men have always found the raw materials of myth and religion. No, it has been a retreat from the outward Datum into the personal subconscious, into a mental world more squalid and more tightly closed than even the world of conscious personality. These contraptions of tin and highly colored plastic—where had I seen them before? In every picture gallery that exhibits the latest in nonrepresentational art.

And now someone produced a phonograph and put a record on the turntable. I listened with pleasure, but experienced nothing comparable to my seen apocalypses of flowers or flannel. Would a naturally gifted musician hear the revelations which, for me, had been exclusively visual? It would be interesting to make the experiment. Meanwhile, though not transfigured, though retaining its normal quality and intensity, the music contributed not a little to my understanding of what had happened to me and of the wider problems which those happenings had raised.

Instrumental music, oddly enough, left me rather cold. Mozart's C-Minor Piano Concerto was interrupted after the first movement, and a recording of some madrigals by Gesualdo took its place.

"These voices," I said appreciatively, "these voices—they're a kind of bridge back to the human world."

And a bridge they remained even while singing the most startlingly chromatic of the mad prince's compositions. Through the uneven phrases of the madrigals, the music pursued its course, never sticking to the same key for two bars together. In Gesualdo, that fantastic character out of a Webster melodrama, psychological disintegration had exaggerated, had pushed to the extreme limit, a tendency inherent in modal as opposed to fully tonal music. The resulting works sounded as though they might have been written by the later Schoenberg.

"And yet," I felt myself constrained to say, as I listened to these strange products of a Counter-Reformation psychosis working upon a late medieval art form, "and yet it does not matter that he's all in bits. The whole is disorganized. But each individual frag-

ment is in order, is a representative of a Higher Order. The Highest Order prevails even in the disintegration. The totality is present even in the broken pieces. More clearly present, perhaps, than in a completely coherent work. At least you aren't lulled into a sense of false security by some merely human, merely fabricated order. You have to rely on your immediate perception of the ultimate order. So in a certain sense disintegration may have its advantages. But of course it's dangerous, horribly dangerous. Suppose you couldn't get back, out of the chaos..."

From Gesualdo's madrigals we jumped, across a gulf of three centuries, to Alban Berg and the Lyric Suite.

"This" I announced in advance, "is going to be hell."

But, as it turned out, I was wrong. Actually the music sounded rather funny. Dredged up from the personal subconscious, agony succeeded twelve-tone agony; but what struck me was only the essential incongruity between a psychological disintegration even completer than Gesualdo's and the prodigious resources, in talent and technique, employed in its expression.

"Isn't he sorry for himself!" I commented with a derisive lack of sympathy. And then, "Katzenmusik—learned Katzenmusik." And finally, after a few more minutes of the anguish, "Who cares what his feelings are? Why can't he pay attention to something else?"

As a criticism of what is undoubtedly a very remarkable work, it was unfair and inadequate—but not, I think, irrelevant. I cite it for what it is worth and because that is how, in a state of pure contemplation, I reacted to the Lyric Suite.

When it was over, the investigator suggested a walk in the garden. I was willing; and though my body seemed to have dissociated itself almost completely from my mind—or, to be more accurate, though my awareness of the transfigured outer world was no longer accompanied by an awareness of my physical organism—I found myself able to get up, open the French window and walk out with only a minimum of hesitation. It was odd, of course, to feel that "I" was not the same as these arms and legs "out there," as this wholly objective trunk and neck and even head. It was odd; but one soon got used to it. And anyhow the body seemed perfectly well able to look after itself. In reality, of course, it always does look after itself.

All that the conscious ego can do is to formulate wishes, which are then carried out by forces which it controls very little and understands not at all. When it does anything more—when it tries too hard, for example, when it worries, when it becomes apprehensive about the future—it lowers the effectiveness of those forces and may even cause the devitalized body to fall ill. In my present state, awareness was not referred to as ego; it was, so to speak, on its own. This meant that the physiological intelligence controlling the body was also on its own. For the moment that interfering neurotic who,

in waking hours, tries to run the show, was blessedly out of the way.

From the French window I walked out under a kind of pergola covered in part by a climbing rose tree, in part by laths, one inch wide with half an inch of space between them. The sun was shining and the shadows of the laths made a zebra-like pattern on the ground and across the seat and back of a garden chair, which was standing at this end of the pergola. That chair—shall I ever forget it? Where the shadows fell on the canvas upholstery, stripes of a deep but glowing indigo alternated with stripes of an incandescence so intensely bright that it was hard to believe that they could be made of anything but blue fire. For what seemed an immensely long time I gazed without knowing, even without wishing to know, what it was that confronted me.

At any other time I would have seen a chair barred with alternate light and shade. Today the percept had swallowed up the concept. I was so completely absorbed in looking, so thunderstruck by what I actually saw, that I could not be aware of anything else. Garden furniture, laths, sunlight, shadow—these were no more than names and notions, mere verbalizations, for utilitarian or scientific purposes, after the event. The event was this succession of azure furnace doors separated by gulfs of unfathomable gentian. It was inexpressibly wonderful, wonderful to the point, almost, of being terrifying. And suddenly I had an inkling of what it must feel like to be mad. Schizophrenia has its heavens as well as its hells and purgatories.

I remember what an old friend, dead these many years, told me about his mad wife. One day in the early stages of the disease, when she still had her lucid intervals he had gone to talk to her about their children. She listened for a time, then cut him short. How could he bear to waste his time on a couple of absent children, when all that really mattered, here and now, was the unspeakable beauty of the patterns he made, in this brown tweed jacket, every time he moved his arms? Alas, this Paradise of cleansed perception, of pure one-sided contemplation, was not to endure. The blissful intermissions became rarer, became briefer, until finally there were no more of them; there was only horror.

Most takers of mescaline experience only the heavenly part of schizophrenia. The drug brings hell and purgatory only to those who have had a recent case of jaundice, or who suffer from periodical depressions or a chronic anxiety. If, like the other drugs of remotely comparable power, mescaline were notoriously toxic, the taking of it would be enough, of itself, to cause anxiety. But the reasonably healthy person knows in advance that, so far as he is concerned, mescaline is completely innocuous, that its effects will pass off after eight or ten hours, leaving no hangover and consequently no craving for a renewal of the dose. Fortified by this knowledge, he embarks upon the experiment without fear—in other words, without any disposition to convert an unprecedentedly strange and other than human experience into something appalling, something actually diabolical.

Confronted by a chair which looked like the Last Judgment—or, to be more accu-

rate, by a Last Judgment which, after a long time and with considerable difficulty, I recognized as a chair—I found myself all at once on the brink of panic. This, I suddenly felt, was going too far. Too far, even though the going was into intenser beauty, deeper significance. The fear, as I analyze it in retrospect, was of being overwhelmed, of disintegrating under a pressure of reality greater than a mind, accustomed to living most of the time in a cosy world of symbols, could possibly bear. The literature of religious experience abounds in references to the pains and terrors overwhelming those who have come, too suddenly, face to face with some manifestation of the *Mysterium tremendum*. In theological language, this fear is due to the in-compatibility between man's egotism and the divine purity, between man's self-aggravated separateness and the infinity of God.

Following Boehme and William Law, we may say that, by unregenerate souls, the divine Light at its full blaze can be apprehended only as a burning, purgatorial fire. An almost identical doctrine is to be found in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, where the departed soul is described as shrinking in agony from the Pure Light of the Void, and even from the lesser, tempered Lights, in order to rush headlong into the comforting darkness of selfhood as a reborn human being, or even as a beast, an unhappy ghost, a denizen of hell. Anything rather than the burning brightness of unmitigated Reality—anything!

The schizophrenic is a soul not merely unregenerate, but desperately sick into the bargain. His sickness consists in the inability to take refuge from inner and outer reality (as the sane person habitually does) in the homemade universe of common sense—the strictly human world of useful notions, shared symbols and socially acceptable conventions. The schizophrenic is like a man permanently under the influence of mescaline, and therefore unable to shut off the experience of a reality which he is not holy enough to live with, which he cannot explain away because it is the most stubborn of primary facts, and which, because it never permits him to look at the world with merely human eyes, scares him into interpreting its unremitting strangeness, its burning intensity of significance, as the manifestations of human or even cosmic malevolence, calling for the most desperate countermeasures, from murderous violence at one end of the scale to catatonia, or psychological suicide, at the other. And once embarked upon the downward, the infernal road, one would never be able to stop. That, now, was only too obvious.

“If you started in the wrong way,” I said in answer to the investigator's questions, “everything that happened would be a proof of the conspiracy against you. It would all be self-validating, You couldn't draw a breath without knowing it was part of the plot.”

“So you think you know where madness lies?”

My answer was a convinced and heartfelt, “Yes.”

“And you couldn't control it?”

“No I couldn't control it. If one began with fear and hate as the major premise, one would have to go on to the conclusion.”

“Would you be able,” my wife asked, “to fix your attention on what The Tibetan Book of The Dead calls the Clear Light?”

I was doubtful.

“Would it keep the evil away, if you could hold it? Or would you not be able to hold it?”

I considered the question for some time. “Perhaps,” I answered at last, “perhaps I could—but only if there were somebody there to tell me about the Clear Light. One couldn’t do it by oneself. That’s the point, I suppose, of the Tibetan ritual—someone sitting there all the time and telling you what’s what.”

After listening to the record of this part of the experiment, I took down my copy of Evans-Wentz’s edition of The Tibetan Book of the Dead, and opened at random. “O nobly born, let not thy mind be distracted.” That was the problem—to remain undistracted. Undistracted by the memory of past sins, by imagined pleasure, by the bitter aftertaste of old wrongs and humiliations, by all the fears and hates and cravings that ordinarily eclipse the Light. What those Buddhist monks did for the dying and the dead, might not the modern psychiatrist do for the insane? Let there be a voice to assure them, by day and even while they are asleep, that in spite of all the terror, all the bewilderment and confusion, the ultimate Reality remains unshakably itself and is of the same substance as the inner light of even the most cruelly tormented mind. By means of such devices as recorders, clock-controlled switches, public address systems and pillow speakers it should be very easy to keep the inmates of even an understaffed institution constantly reminded of this primordial fact. Perhaps a few of the lost souls might in this way be helped to win some measure of control over the universe—at once beautiful and appalling, but always other than human, always totally incomprehensible-in which they find themselves condemned to live.

None too soon, I was steered away from the disquieting splendors of my garden chair. Drooping in green parabolas from the hedge, the ivy fronds shone with a kind of glassy, jade-like radiance. A moment later a clump of Red Hot Pokers, in full bloom, had exploded into my field of vision. So passionately alive that they seemed to be standing on the very brink of utterance, the flowers strained upwards into the blue. Like the chair under the laths, they protected too much. I looked down at the leaves and discovered a cavernous intricacy of the most delicate green lights and shadows, pulsing with undecipherable mystery.

Roses :

The flowers are easy to paint,

The leaves difficult.

Shiki's haiku (which I quote in R. H. Blyth's translation) expresses, by indirection, exactly what I then felt—the excessive, the too obvious glory of the flowers, as contrasted with the subtler miracle of their foliage.

We walked out into the street. A large pale blue auto-mobile was standing at the curb. At the sight of it, I was suddenly overcome by enormous merriment. What complacency, what an absurd self-satisfaction beamed from those bulging surfaces of glossiest enamel! Man had created the thing in his own image—or rather in the image of his favorite character in fiction. I laughed till the tears ran down my cheeks.

We re-entered the house. A meal had been prepared. Somebody, who was not yet identical with myself, fell to with ravenous appetite. From a considerable distance and without much interest, I looked on.

When the meal had been eaten, we got into the car and went for a drive. The effects of the mescaline were already on the decline: but the flowers in the gardens still trembled on the brink of being supernatural, the pepper trees and carobs along the side streets still manifestly belonged to some sacred grove. Eden alternated with Dodona. Yggdrasil with the mystic Rose. And then, abruptly, we were at an intersection, waiting to cross Sunset Boulevard. Before us the cars were rolling by in a steady stream—thousands of them, all bright and shiny like an advertiser's dream and each more ludicrous than the last. Once again I was convulsed with laughter.

The Red Sea of traffic parted at last, and we crossed into another oasis of trees and lawns and roses. In a few minutes we had climbed to a vantage point in the hills, and there was the city spread out beneath us. Rather disappointingly, it looked very like the city I had seen on other occasions. So far as I was concerned, transfiguration was proportional to distance. The nearer, the more divinely other. This vast, dim panorama was hardly different from itself.

We drove on, and so long as we remained in the hills, with view succeeding distant view, significance was at its everyday level, well below transfiguration point. The magic began to work again only when we turned down into a new suburb and were gliding between two rows of houses. Here, in spite of the peculiar hideousness of the architecture, there were renewals of transcendental otherness, hints of the morning's heaven. Brick chimneys and green composition roofs glowed in the sunshine, like fragments of the New Jerusalem. And all at once I saw what Guardi had seen and (with what incomparable skill) had so often rendered in his paintings—a stucco wall with a shadow slanting across it, blank but unforgettably beautiful, empty but charged with all the meaning and the mystery of existence. The revelation dawned and was gone again within a fraction of a second. The car had moved on; time was uncovering another manifestation of the eternal Suchness. "Within sameness there is difference. But that difference should be different from sameness is in no wise the intention of all the Buddhas. Their intention is both totality and differentiation." This bank of red and white geraniums, for example—it was entirely different from that stucco wall a hundred yards up the road. But the "is-

ness” of both was the same, the eternal quality of their transience was the same.

An hour later, with ten more miles and the visit to the World’s Biggest Drug Store safely behind us, we were back at home, and I had returned to that reassuring but profoundly unsatisfactory state known as “being in one’s right mind.”

That humanity at large will ever be able to dispense with Artificial Paradises seems very unlikely. Most men and women lead lives at the worst so painful, at the best so monotonous, poor and limited that the urge to escape, the longing to transcend themselves if only for a few moments, is and has always been one of the principal appetites of the soul. Art and religion, carnivals and saturnalia, dancing and listening to oratory—all these have served, in H. G. Wells’s phrase, as Doors in the Wall. And for private, far everyday use there have always been chemical intoxicants. All the vegetable sedatives and narcotics, all the euphorics that grow on trees, the hallucinogens that ripen in berries or can be squeezed from roots—all, without exception, have been known and systematically used by human beings from time immemorial. And to these natural modifiers of consciousness modern science has added its quota of synthetics—chloral, for example, and benzedrine, the bromides and the barbiturates.

Most of these modifiers of consciousness cannot now be taken except under doctor’s orders, or else illegally and at considerable risk. For unrestricted use the West has permitted only alcohol and tobacco. All the other chemical Doors in the Wall are labeled Dope, and their unauthorized takers are Fiends.

We now spend a good deal more on drink and smoke than we spend on education. This, of course, is not surprising. The urge to escape from selfhood and the environment is in almost everyone almost all the time. The urge to do something for the young is strong only in parents, and in them only for the few years during which their children go to school. Equally unsurprising is the current attitude towards drink and smoke. In spite of the growing army of hopeless alcoholics, in spite of the hundreds of thousands of persons annually maimed or killed by drunken drivers, popular comedians still crack jokes about alcohol and its addicts. And in spite of the evidence linking cigarettes with lung cancer, practically everybody regards tobacco smoking as being hardly less normal and natural than eating. From the point of view of the rationalist utilitarian this may seem odd. For the historian, it is exactly what you would expect. A firm conviction of the material reality of Hell never prevented medieval Christians from doing what their ambition, lust or covetousness suggested. Lung cancer, traffic accidents and the millions of miserable and misery-creating alcoholics are facts even more certain than was, in Dante’s day, the fact of the Inferno. But all such facts are remote and unsubstantial compared with the near, felt fact of a craving, here and now, for release or sedation, for a drink or a smoke.

Ours is the age, among other things, of the automobile and of rocketing population. Alcohol is incompatible with safety on the roads, and its production, like that of tobacco, condemns to virtual sterility many millions of acres of the most fertile soil. The

problems raised by alcohol and tobacco cannot, it goes without saying, be solved by prohibition. The universal and ever-present urge to self-transcendence is not to be abolished by slamming the currently popular Doors in the Wall. The only reasonable policy is to open other, better doors in the hope of inducing men and women to exchange their old bad habits for new and less harmful ones. Some of these other, better doors will be social and technological in nature, others religious or psychological, others dietetic, educational, athletic.

But the need for frequent chemical vacations from intolerable selfhood and repulsive surroundings will undoubtedly remain. What is needed is a new drug which will relieve and console our suffering species without doing more harm in the long run than it does good in the short. Such a drug must be potent in minute doses and synthesizable. If it does not possess these qualities, its production, like that of wine, beer, spirits and tobacco will interfere with the raising of indispensable food and fibers. It must be less toxic than opium or cocaine, less likely to produce undesirable social consequences than alcohol or the barbiturates, less inimical to heart and lungs than the tars and nicotine of cigarettes. And, on the positive side, it should produce changes in consciousness more interesting, more intrinsically valuable than mere sedation or dreaminess, delusions of omnipotence or release from inhibition.

To most people, mescaline is almost completely innocuous. Unlike alcohol, it does not drive the taker into the kind of uninhibited action which results in brawls, crimes of violence and traffic accidents. A man under the influence of mescaline quietly minds his own business. Moreover, the business he minds is an experience of the most enlightening kind, which does not have to be paid for (and this is surely important) by a compensatory hangover. Of the long-range consequences of regular mescaline taking we know very little. The Indians who consume peyote buttons do not seem to be physically or morally degraded by the habit. However, the available evidence is still scarce and sketchy. * Although obviously superior to cocaine, opium, alcohol and tobacco, mescaline is not yet the ideal drug. Along with the happily transfigured majority of mescaline takers there is a minority that finds in the drug only hell or purgatory. Moreover, for a drug that is to be used, like alcohol, for general consumption, its effects last for an inconveniently long time. But chemistry and physiology are capable nowadays of practically anything. If the psychologists and sociologists will define the ideal, the neurologists and pharmacologists can be relied upon to discover the means whereby that ideal can be realized or at least (for perhaps this kind of ideal can never, in the very nature of things, be fully realized) more nearly approached than in the wine-bibbing past, the whisky-drinking, marijuana-smoking and barbiturate-swallowing present.

The urge to transcend self-conscious selfhood is, as I have said, a principal appetite of the soul. When, for whatever reason, men and women fail to transcend themselves by means of worship, good works and spiritual exercises, they are apt to resort to religion's chemical surrogates—alcohol and “goof pills” in the modern West, alcohol and opium in the East, hashish in the Mohammedan world, alcohol and marijuana in Central America, alcohol and coca in the Andes, alcohol and the barbiturates in the more up-to-

date regions of South America. In *Poisons Sacrés, Ivresses Divines* Philippe de Felice has written at length and with a wealth of documentation on the immemorial connection between religion and the taking of drugs. Here, in summary or in direct quotation, are his conclusions. The employment for religious purposes of toxic substances is "extraordinarily widespread.... The practices studied in this volume can be observed in every region of the earth, among primitives no less than among those who have reached a high pitch of civilization. We are therefore dealing not with exceptional facts, which might justifiably be overlooked, but with a general and, in the widest sense of the word, a human phenomenon, the kind of phenomenon which cannot be disregarded by anyone who is trying to discover what religion is, and what are the deep needs which it must satisfy."

Ideally, everyone should be able to find self-transcendence in some form of pure or applied religion. In practice it seems very unlikely that this hoped for consummation will ever be realized. There are, and doubtless there always will be, good churchmen and good churchwomen for whom, unfortunately, piety is not enough. The late G. K. Chesterton, who wrote at least as lyrically of drink as of devotion, may serve as their eloquent spokesman.

The modern churches, with some exceptions among the Protestant denominations, tolerate alcohol; but even the most tolerant have made no attempt to convert the drug to Christianity, or to sacramentalize its use. The pious drinker is forced to take his religion in one compartment, his religion-surrogate in another. And perhaps this is inevitable. Drinking cannot be sacramentalized except in religions which set no store on decorum. The worship of Dionysos or the Celtic god of beer was a loud and disorderly affair. The rites of Christianity are incompatible with even religious drunkenness. This does no harm to the distillers, but is very bad for Christianity.

Countless persons desire self-transcendence and would be glad to find it in church. But, alas, "the hungry sheep look up and are not fed." They take part in rites, they listen to sermons, they repeat prayers; but their thirst remains unassuaged. Disappointed, they turn to the bottle. For a time at least and in a kind of way, it works. Church may still be attended; but it is no more than the Musical Bank of Butler's Erewhon. God may still be acknowledged; but He is God only on the verbal level, only in a strictly Pickwickian sense. The effective object of worship is the bottle and the sole religious experience is that state of uninhibited and belligerent euphoria which follows the ingestion of the third cocktail.

We see, then, that Christianity and alcohol do not and cannot mix. Christianity and mescaline seem to be much more compatible. This has been demonstrated by many tribes of Indians, from Texas to as far north as Wisconsin. Among these tribes are to be found groups affiliated with the Native American Church, a sect whose principal rite is a kind of Early Christian agape, or love feast, where slices of peyote take the place of the sacramental bread and wine. These Native Americans regard the cactus as God's special gift to the Indians, and equate its effects with the workings of the divine Spirit.

Professor J. S. Slotkin, one of the very few white men ever to have participated in the rites of a Peyotist congregation, says of his fellow worshipers that they are “certainly not stupefied or drunk.... They never get out of rhythm or fumble their words, as a drunken or stupefied man would do.... They are all quiet, courteous and considerate of one another. I have never been in any white man’s house of worship where there is either so much religious feeling or decorum.” And what, we may ask, are these devout and well-behaved Peyotists experiencing? Not the mild sense of virtue which sustains the average Sunday churchgoer through ninety minutes of boredom. Not even those high feelings, inspired by thoughts of the Creator and the Redeemer, the Judge and the Comforter, which animate the pious. For these Native Americans, religious experience is something more direct and illuminating, more spontaneous, less the homemade product of the superficial, self-conscious mind. Sometimes (according to the reports collected by Dr. Slotkin) they see visions, which may be of Christ Himself. Sometimes they hear the voice of the Great Spirit. Sometimes they become aware of the presence of God and of those personal shortcomings which must be corrected if they are to do His will. The practical consequences of these chemical openings of doors into the Other World seem to be wholly good. Dr. Slotkin reports that habitual Peyotists are on the whole more industrious, more temperate (many of them abstain altogether from alcohol), more Peaceable than non-Peyotists. A tree with such satisfactory fruits cannot be condemned out of hand as evil.

In sacramentalizing the use of peyote, the Indians of the Native American Church have done something which is at once psychologically sound and historically respectable. In the early centuries of Christianity many pagan rites and festivals were baptized, so to say, and made to serve the purposes of the Church. These jollifications were not particularly edifying; but they assuaged a certain psychological hunger and, instead of trying to suppress them, the earlier missionaries had the sense to accept them for what they were, soul-satisfying expressions of fundamental urges, and to incorporate them into the fabric of the new religion. What the Native Americans have done is essentially similar. They have taken a pagan custom (a custom, incidentally, far more elevating and enlightening than most of the rather brutish carousals and mummeries adopted from European paganism) and given it a Christian significance.

Though but recently introduced into the northern United States, peyote-eating and the religion based upon it have become important symbols of the red man’s right to spiritual independence. Some Indians have reacted to white supremacy by becoming Americanized, others by retreating into traditional Indianism. But some have tried to make the best of both worlds, indeed of all the worlds—the best of Indianism, the best of Christianity, and the best of those Other Worlds of transcendental experience, where the soul knows itself as unconditioned and of like nature with the divine. Hence the Native American Church. In it two great appetites of the soul—the urge to independence and self-determination and the urge to self-transcendence—were fused with, and interpreted in the light of, a third—the urge to worship, to justify the ways of God to man, to explain the universe by means of a coherent theology.

Lo, the poor Indian, whose untutored mind

Clothes him in front, but leaves him bare behind.

But actually it is we, the rich and highly educated whites, who have left ourselves bare behind. We cover our anterior nakedness with some philosophy—Christian, Marxian, Freudo-Physicalist—but abaft we remain uncovered, at the mercy of all the winds of circumstance. The poor Indian, on the other hand, has had the wit to protect his rear by supplementing the fig leaf of a theology with the breechclout of transcendental experience.

I am not so foolish as to equate what happens under the influence of mescaline or of any other drug, prepared or in the future preparable, with the realization of the end and ultimate purpose of human life: Enlightenment, the Beatific Vision. All I am suggesting is that the mescaline experience is what Catholic theologians call “a gratuitous grace,” not necessary to salvation but potentially helpful and to be accepted thankfully, if made available. To be shaken out of the ruts of ordinary perception, to be shown for a few timeless hours the outer and the inner world, not as they appear to an animal obsessed with survival or to a human being obsessed with words and notions, but as they are apprehended, directly and unconditionally, by Mind at Large—this is an experience of inestimable value to everyone and especially to the intellectual. For the intellectual is by definition the man for whom, in Goethe’s phrase, “the word is essentially fruitful.”

He is the man who feels that “what we perceive by the eye is foreign to us as such and need not impress us deeply.” And yet, though himself an intellectual and one of the supreme masters of language, Goethe did not always agree with his own evaluation of the word. “We talk,” he wrote in middle life, “far too much. We should talk less and draw more. I personally should like to renounce speech altogether and, like organic Nature, communicate everything I have to say in sketches. That fig tree, this little snake, the cocoon on my window sill quietly awaiting its future—all these are momentous signatures. A person able to decipher their meaning properly would soon be able to dispense with the written or the spoken word altogether.

The more I think of it, there is something futile, mediocre, even (I am tempted to say) foppish about speech. By contrast, how the gravity of Nature and her silence startle you, when you stand face to face with her, undistracted, before a barren ridge or in the desolation of the ancient hills.” We can never dispense with language and the other symbol systems; for it is by means of them, and only by their means, that we have raised ourselves above the brutes, to the level of human beings. But we can easily become the victims as well as the beneficiaries of these systems. We must learn how to handle words effectively; but at the same time we must preserve and, if necessary, intensify our ability to look at the world directly and not through that half opaque medium of concepts, which distorts every given fact into the all too familiar likeness of some generic label or explanatory abstraction.

Literary or scientific, liberal or specialist, all our education is predominantly verbal and therefore fails to accomplish what it is supposed to do. Instead of transforming children into fully developed adults, it turns out students of the natural sciences who are completely unaware of Nature as the primary fact of experience, it inflicts upon the world students of the humanities who know nothing of humanity, their own or anyone else's.

Gestalt psychologists, such as Samuel Renshaw, have devised methods for widening the range and increasing the acuity of human perceptions. But do our educators apply them? The answer is, No.

Teachers in every field of psyche-physical skill, from seeing to tennis, from tight-rope walking to prayer, have discovered, by trial and error, the conditions of optimum functioning within their special fields. But have any of the great Foundations financed a project for coordinating these empirical findings into a general theory and practice of heightened creativeness? Again, so far as I am aware, the answer is, No.

All sorts of cultists and queer fish teach all kinds of techniques for achieving health, contentment, peace of mind; and for many of their hearers many of these techniques are demonstrably effective. But do we see respectable psychologists, philosophers and clergymen boldly descending into those odd and sometimes malodorous wells, at the bottom of which poor Truth is so often condemned to sit? Yet once more the answer is, No.

And now look at the history of mescaline research. Seventy years ago men of first-rate ability described the transcendental experiences which come to those who, in good health, under proper conditions and in the right spirit, take the drug. How many philosophers, how many theologians, how many professional educators have had the curiosity to open this Door in the Wall? The answer, for all practical purposes, is, None.

In a world where education is predominantly verbal, highly educated people find it all but impossible to pay serious attention to anything but words and notions. There is always money for, there are always doctorates in, the learned foolery of research into what, for scholars, is the all-important problem: Who influenced whom to say what when? Even in this age of technology the verbal humanities are honored. The non-verbal humanities, the arts of being directly aware of the given facts of our existence, are almost completely ignored. A catalogue, a bibliography, a definitive edition of a third-rate versifier's *ipsissima verba*, a stupendous index to end all indexes—any genuinely Alexandrian project is sure of approval and financial support:

But when it comes to finding out how you and I, our children and grand-children, may become more perceptive, more intensely aware of inward and outward reality, more open to the Spirit, less apt, by psychological malpractices, to make ourselves physically ill, and more capable of controlling our own autonomic nervous system—when it comes to any form of non-verbal education more fundamental (and more likely to be of some practical use) than Swedish drill, no really respectable person in any really respectable university or church will do anything about it. Verbalists are suspicious of the non-ver-

bal; rationalists fear the given, non-rational fact; intellectuals feel that “what we perceive by the eye (or in any other way) is foreign to us as such and need not impress us deeply.” Besides, this matter of education in the non-verbal humanities will not fit into any of the established pigeonholes. It is not religion, not neurology, not gymnastics, not morality or civics, not even experimental psychology. This being so the subject is, for academic and ecclesiastical purposes, non-existent and may safely be ignored altogether or left, with a Patronizing smile, to those whom the Pharisees of verbal orthodoxy call cranks, quacks, charlatans and unqualified amateurs.

“I have always found,” Blake wrote rather bitterly, “that Angels have the vanity to speak of themselves as the only wise. This they do with a confident insolence sprouting from systematic reasoning.”

Systematic reasoning is something we could not, as a species or as individuals, possibly do without. But neither, if we are to remain sane, can we possibly do without direct perception, the more unsystematic the better, of the inner and outer worlds into which we have been born. This given reality is an infinite which passes all understanding and yet admits of being directly and in some sort totally apprehended. It is a transcendence belonging to another order than the human, and yet it may be present to us as a felt immanence, an experienced participation. To be enlightened is to be aware, always, of total reality in its immanent otherness—to be aware of it and yet to remain in a condition to survive as an animal, to think and feel as a human being, to resort whenever expedient to systematic reasoning.

Our goal is to discover that we have always been where we ought to be. Unhappily we make the task exceedingly difficult for ourselves. Meanwhile, however, there are gratuitous graces in the form of partial and fleeting realizations. Under a more realistic, a less exclusively verbal system of education than ours, every Angel (in Blake’s sense of that word) would be permitted as a sabbatical treat, would be urged and even, if necessary, compelled to take an occasional trip through some chemical Door in the Wall into the world of transcendental experience. If it terrified him, it would be unfortunate but probably salutary. If it brought him a brief but timeless illumination, so much the better. In either case the Angel might lose a little of the confident insolence sprouting from systematic reasoning and the consciousness of having read all the books.

Near the end of his life Aquinas experienced Infused Contemplation. Thereafter he refused to go back to work on his unfinished book. Compared with this, everything he had read and argued about and written—Aristotle and the Sentences, the Questions, the Propositions, the majestic Summas—was no better than chaff or straw. For most intellectuals such a sit-down strike would be inadvisable, even morally wrong. But the Angelic Doctor had done more systematic reasoning than any twelve ordinary Angels, and was already ripe for death. He had earned the right, in those last months of his mortality, to turn away from merely symbolic straw and chaff to the bread of actual and substantial Fact. For Angels of a lower order and with better prospects of longevity, there must be a return to the straw. But the man who comes back through the Door in the Wall will never

be quite the same as the man who went out. He will be wiser but less cocksure, happier but less self-satisfied, humbler in acknowledging his ignorance yet better equipped to understand the relationship of words to things, of systematic reasoning to the unfathomable Mystery which it tries, forever vainly, to comprehend.

*See the following papers: "Schizophrenia. A New Approach." By Humphry Osmond and John Smythies. *Journal of Mental Science*. Vol. XCVIII. April, 1952.

"On Being Mad." By Humphry Osmond. *Saskatchewan Psychiatric Services Journal*. Vol. I. No. 2. September. 1952.

"The Mescaline Phenomena." By John Smythies. *The British Journal of the Philosophy of Science*. Vol. III. February, 1953.

"Schizophrenia: A New Approach." By Abram Hoffer, Humphry Osmond and John Smythies. *Journal of Mental Science*. Vol. C. No. 418. January, 1954.

Numerous other papers on the biochemistry, pharmacology, psychology and neurophysiology of schizophrenia and the mescaline phenomena are in preparation.

*In his monograph, *Menominee Peyotism*, published (December 1952) in the *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, Professor J. S. Slotkin has written that "the habitual use of Peyote does not seem to produce any increased tolerance or dependence. I know many people who have been Peyotists for forty to fifty years. The amount of Peyote they use depends upon the solemnity of the occasion; in general they do not take any more Peyote now than they did years ago. Also, there is sometimes an interval of a month or more between rites, and they go without Peyote during this period without feeling any craving for it. Personally, even after a series of rites occurring on four successive weekends. I neither increased the amount of Peyote consumed nor felt any continued need for it." It is evidently with good reason that "Peyote has never been legally declared a narcotic, or its use prohibited by the federal government." However, "during the long history of Indian-white contact, white officials have usually tried to suppress the use of Peyote, because it has been conceived to violate their own mores. But these attempts have always failed." In a footnote Dr. Slotkin adds that "it is amazing to hear the fantastic stories about the effects of Peyote and the nature of the ritual, which are told by the white and Catholic Indian officials in the Menominee Reservation. None of them have had the slightest first-hand experience with the plant or with the religion, yet some fancy themselves to be authorities and write official reports on the subject."

FORBIDDEN FRUIT, FORBIDDEN GAME

WE TAKE DRUGS FOR TWO MAIN REASONS; EITHER TO RESTORE ourselves to the condition we regard as normal—to cure infections, and to take away pain; or to release us from normality—to enable us to feel more lively, or more relaxed; to alter our mood, or our perceptions. It is with this second category (of drug use, not of drugs; the

drugs themselves may be the same) that I am concerned. For some reason, there is no generally accepted colloquial description. 'Narcotic' is quite familiar, but it has acquired a pejorative tinge, and in any case it should properly be used only about a drug used to induce drowsiness or stupor. For a while 'dope' did service, but by the time Tom Lehrer was singing about the old dope peddler spreading joy wherever he went, it had begun to slip out of favour, and is now more commonly used to describe what is taken by athletes to improve their form, or given to racehorses to upset the odds. I have stuck simply to the term 'drugs'.

I have used words like 'addiction' in their colloquial rather than their more specialised clinical sense; and I have tried to avoid the jargon of the pharmacologists, except when quoting it. Their term for the mood-altering drugs, 'psychotropic', has established itself; but they have yet to agree on how best to describe a drug used to alter perception. The term most often employed, 'hallucinogen', is both ugly and misleading, as the experiences are not necessarily hallucinatory; but the commonest alternative, 'psychotomimetic', is even uglier and more misleading, as the experiences do not often resemble psychosis. 'Phantastica', which Louis Lewin tried to popularise, has not caught on; nor, mercifully, have 'psychotogenic' or 'psycholitic'; and Humphrey Osmond's 'psychedelic' has shifted its meaning, in popular usage. I have preferred 'vision-inducing'.

There is another category of drugs which I had intended to include; aphrodisiacs. I found, though, that virtually all the drugs known to man, not to mention all sorts of food-stuffs and drinks which are not ordinarily regarded as drugs, have had the reputation at one time or another of stimulating sexual appetite, or improving sexual performance. As the same drugs, at other times, have often had the reputation of diminishing desire, and spoiling performance, it is doubtful whether the category of aphrodisiac can be accepted, except subjectively.

I have also dealt only in passing with the economic consequences of drug use. For centuries, a vast acreage has been given over to growing the plants which provide the raw material of drugs. Huge sums have been spent on processing, distributing and retailing the finished products, and on providing the accessories, from public houses to hubble-bubbles. States have extracted immense revenues from drug duties and used them to pay for everything from social services to guided missiles. Obviously the influence of drugs on the world's economy has been incalculable; but to deal adequately with this aspect of the subject would require another, and a very different, book.

The reasons for some other omissions will be found in the section on sources. But there is also one inclusion, which I find sometimes causes surprise. Alcohol is clearly a drug; the drug, of our civilisation and many before. But it has also long been consumed, often primarily, as a beverage. I have dealt with attitudes to drink, and legislation designed to control drinking, only when they have been inspired by fears of its effects when used as a drug.

DRUGS AND SHAMANISM

WHY DID MAN FIRST TAKE TO DRUGS?

IT IS UNLIKELY THAT we will ever know for certain; archaeological discoveries—the seeds of drug plants found in pots; cave drawings of the plants themselves—indicate that the practice must be many thousands of years old, and the information is too scanty to justify anything more than speculation. Our main source of evidence about early drug practices comes from explorers, missionaries, traders and colonial administrators, and more recently from anthropological field workers, who have described what they have seen in primitive communities. Unluckily, what they saw was often so alien to the preconceptions which they brought with them from civilisation that they rarely described it with detachment. Still, certain patterns emerge, with a reasonable consistency.

FROM THE NEW WORLD

The most revealing accounts of drug use by savages, as they were long described by men accounting themselves civilised, are in the chronicles of the followers of Columbus, reporting what they saw and heard in the Caribbean islands, and later in North and South America. They found a great variety of plant drugs in use there: cohoba, coca, peyotl, certain species of mushroom, datura (jimsonweed), ololiuqui (morning glory), caapi, and others—tobacco being the commonest. None of these plants was known in Europe at the time; nor was any drug in use there for the purpose for which they were most widely taken in the New World, to generate energy. The only drug then in common use in Europe was alcohol; and wine or beer were ordinarily taken mainly for refreshment. The American Indians, the chroniclers reported, chewed tobacco or coca leaves as a substitute for refreshment—to give themselves a psychological ‘lift’, as if into a mild form of trance.

This, they claimed, enabled them to work long hours, or travel long distances, or fight protracted battles, without the need for food, drink, or sleep.

Drugs were also taken in America as alcohol was in Europe, for intoxication—but again, with a difference. As Girolamo Benzoni reported in one of the early published accounts of life there, an Indian would settle down to fill himself up with tobacco smoke until to outward appearances he was hopelessly drunk. But he was putting himself out of his mind with a purpose; for ‘on returning to his senses, he told a thousand stories of his having been at the council of the gods, and other high visions’; and such stories were taken very seriously by the tribe.

Although the same drug might be taken both for everyday working purposes and for intoxication, it would as a rule be used as an intoxicant only by—or with the supervision of—a medicine man, qualified by character and training to interpret what was seen or heard. The visions, the Indians believed, were glimpses of a world on a different plane of reality, but just as real; inhabited by spirits who had access to useful sources of knowledge. In particular, they would reveal what was in store for the tribe, or individual members of it. The process was described by the chronicler Gonzalvo Fernando d’Oviedo y

Valdez. The Indians of Hispaniola, he wrote, had secret means of putting themselves in touch with spirits whenever they wished to predict the future. This is how they set about the matter. When a chief called one of those priests of the desert, this man came with two of his disciples, one of whom bore a vase filled with some mysterious drink, and the other a little silver bell. When he arrived, the priest sat himself down between the two disciples on a small round seat in presence of the chief and some of his suite. He drank the liquor which had been brought, and then began his conjurations, calling aloud on the spirits; and then, highly agitated and furious, he was shaken by the most violent movements . . . He then seemed to be plunged into a kind of ecstasy and to be suffering curious pains. During all this time one of the disciples rang the little bell. When the priest had calmed down, and while he lay senseless on the ground, the chief, or some other, asked what they desired to know, and the spirit replied through the mouth of the inspired man in a manner perfectly exact.

The Spanish chroniclers did not doubt the accuracy of the information collected. They were quite prepared to believe that the drugs induced visions, and that in them, the future could be foretold. But the whole process—the convulsions, the strange voices—was reminiscent of what they knew, and feared, as diabolic possession. Such visions, they were aware, might come from God; but it was unthinkable that God should have provided such a valuable service for the heathen. The only possible explanation was that, as the Dominican Diego Duran put it, ‘the devil must be speaking to them in that drunken state’. As it was not considered safe to investigate the devil’s handiwork, for fear of falling into his clutches—or, later, the Inquisition’s—the opportunity to investigate drug-induced divination was not grasped.

TRAVELLERS’ TALES

Ironically, the emergence of a more sceptical attitude also discouraged inquiry; for a reason hinted at by Nicolas Monardes in his *Joyful News out of the New Found World*, which contained the first attempt at a survey of the American plant drugs. Monardes did not dispute that the devil was involved. Having knowledge of herbal lore, the devil must have revealed it to the Indians, ‘that they might see the visions he had prepared for them, and so deceive them’. But Monardes doubted the authenticity of the information transmitted by the medicine men. It was simply their attempt to make sense of their incoherent visions, he felt—and had often to be deliberately left obscure, so that whatever happened the medicine men could claim to have predicted it. As a member of the Church, in other words, he took divination seriously; as a man of science he was reluctant to do so.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, though reports continued to filter back to Europe from time to time of remarkable divinatory feats by medicine men under the influence of drugs, they attracted attention only as curiosities. A typical example was the reaction to the account which Count Filip von Strahlenberg, a Swedish army officer who had spent years as a prisoner of war in Siberia, gave of the Koryak tribesmen, in which he described how they used the red-capped *amanita muscaria* mushroom—the ‘fly agaric’—as an intoxicant. Only the better-off families, Strahlenberg ex-

plained, could afford to buy them, and store them for the winter. Whenever they had a feast, they would pour water over them, boil them, and enjoy the visions. 'The poorer sort', he went on, who cannot afford to lay in a store of these mushrooms, post themselves on these occasions round the huts of the rich, and watch the opportunity of the guests coming down to make water; and then hold a wooden bowl to receive the urine, which they drink off greedily, as having still some virtue of the mushroom in it, and by this way, they also get drunk.

A story like this helped to give 'travellers' tales' their derisory reputation. It slipped easily into the repertory of the *ranconteur*—and of the satirist; Oliver Goldsmith used it to lend point to some remarks on the degeneracy of the English nobility. And even when later visitors to Siberia—voluntary or involuntary—were to confirm that it was true, they were interested less in the purposes for which the drug was taken, than by the fact that it could retain its intoxicating properties even when recycled through urine four or five times; and that reindeer, too, were susceptible—a discovery which the Koryaks had been able to exploit. Gavril Sarychev, who spent from 1785 to 1793 in the region, found that the Chuckchi herdsman kept a sealskin container for his urine; whenever he wanted to round up his reindeer, 'he only has to set this container on the ground and call out 'Girach, Girach!', and they promptly come running toward him from afar'.

Only rarely did commentators note that the intoxication which the fly agaric induced was of a very different kind from that which followed the consumption of alcohol; or that it was used by the Siberian shamans for the same purpose as the American medicine men used tobacco or peyotl. But an account by another exile, Stephan Kraseninnikov, of his enforced residence in Kamchatka land showed the similarities. A man under the influence of the fly agaric, he wrote in 1755, could be recognised by the shaking of the extremities, which will follow after an hour or less, after which the persons thus intoxicated have hallucinations, as in a fever; they are subject to various visions, terrifying or felicitous, depending on differences in temperament; owing to which some jump, some dance, others cry and suffer great terrors, while some might deem a small crack to be as wide as a door, and a tub of water as deep as the sea. But this applies only to those who over-indulge, while those who use a small quantity experience a feeling of extraordinary lightness, joy, courage and a state of energetic well-being.

ANTHROPOLOGY

Travellers' tales merge imperceptibly into anthropology; but one of the landmarks on that road was *Travels in Peru*, by the respected Swiss naturalist J. J. von Tschudi. He had read accounts by Pizarro's followers, describing how the Indians could perform prodigious feats of endurance by chewing coca leaves; and he was able to verify them when he arrived in the 1830s, finding that the porters he employed could go for five days and nights with no food and very little sleep. Coca was also used by the medicine men; but datura was preferred, being more potent—as Tschudi reported, after watching its effects on an Indian who took it.

Shortly after having swallowed the beverage, he fell into a heavy stupor. He sat with his eyes vacantly fixed on the ground, his mouth convulsively closed, and his nostrils dilated. In the course of about a quarter of an hour his eyes began to roll, foam issued from his half-opened lips, and his whole body was agitated by frightful convulsions. These violent symptoms having subsided, a profound sleep of several hours succeeded. In the evening, when I saw him again, he was relating to a circle of attentive listeners the particulars of his vision, during which he alleged he had held communication with the spirits of his forefathers.

Accounts of this kind, from investigators whose trustworthiness was not in question, began to be increasingly common—particularly from South America, where new tribes, and new drugs, were continually being discovered. In his geographical survey of Ecuador, published in 1868, Manuel Villavicencio described the effects of ayahuasca—also known as caapi, or yage

In a few moments it begins to produce the most rare phenomena. Its action appears to excite the nervous system; all the senses liven up and all faculties awaken; they feel vertigo and spinning in the head, then a sensation of being lifted into the air and beginning an aerial journey; the possessed begins in the first moments to see the most delicious apparitions, in conformity with his ideas and knowledge. The savages say that they see gorgeous lakes, forests covered with fruit, the prettiest birds who communicate to them the nicest and the most favourable things they want to hear, and other beautiful things relating to their savage life. When the instant passes they begin to see terrible horrors about to devour them, their first flight ceases and they descend to earth to combat the terrors who communicate to them all adversities and misfortunes awaiting them.

By 1871, when Edward Tylor published his *Primitive Culture*—the first serious attempt at a comparative survey of tribal life and lore—a mass of such information had become available, and it was remarkably consistent. Almost all communities, in every part of the world, had their medicine men, witch doctors, or shamans, selected mainly on account of their ability to communicate with the spirits. To visit the spirit world, the medicine man had to be able to enter a state of trance; and this was frequently attained with the help of drugs. In this state he behaved as if he were drunk, or in a kind of fit; but he would be able to recall his visions when he recovered. Or he might appear to be possessed, describing what he was seeing (or hearing) in a voice not his own. Either way, his function was to bring back information of use to his tribe: the answers to such questions as what the enemy tribes were planning; where more game might be found; how to detect a witch; and what treatment to give a sick member of the tribe.

The evidence presented Tylor with an embarrassing problem. His great ambition was to divest anthropology of its 'travellers' tales' label, and secure its recognition as an academic discipline (as eventually he was to do; he became the holder of the first Chair of Anthropology at Oxford). He was aware that the scientific Establishment of the time rejected the validity of divination, and he agreed, describing it as a 'monstrous farrago'. But they also refused to admit the existence of the trance state, and possession. Review-

ing the evidence, Tylor found it impossible to accept that the state of 'ecstasy', as it was then commonly called, in which a man is transported out of his right mind, was always spurious. But to accept it, let alone to admit its importance to primitive man, might lead to the anthropologist being classified with the mesmerists, hypnotists and spiritualists, all at the time busy trying to batter down orthodoxy's defences; and this would have been fatal to his academic prospects. So Tylor skirted round the subject, with such discreet phrases as 'North American Indians held intoxication by tobacco to be supernatural ecstasy, and the dreams of men in this state to be inspired'. In doing so, he set the fashion followed by Sir James Frazer in *The Golden Bough*, and by most orthodox anthropologists to this day.

Reports from explorers, naturalists and anthropologists, however, continued to pour in, revealing the great respect in which the drug-induced trance state was held by primitive tribes. In Guiana in the 1870s, for example, Everard Im Thurn discovered that before a youth was initiated into his tribe he had to move away from it for a period of fasting, and at the same time accustom himself to drink 'fearfully large draughts' of tobacco juice mixed with water. Then, 'maddened by the draughts of nicotine, by the terrors of his long solitary wanderings, and fearfully excited by his own ravings, he is able to work himself at will into those most frantic passions of excitement during which he is supposed to hold converse with the spirits, and to control them'. If he learned to control them, he could become a medicine man, second only in importance to the chief of the tribe, and sometimes even more influential.. Was it really possible that these and other primitive tribes, throughout history, throughout the world, had been taken in by a total imposture?

At last, in the 1890s, experiments with hypnosis finally convinced the scientific establishment that the trance state existed; and the way was opened for a fresh look at the phenomenon. But the investigators arrived as blinkered as before; because orthodoxy, in accepting the trance state, classified it as a form of mental disorder. In retrospect, this is understandable; medicine men under the influence of drugs tended to behave in ways which, in any civilised country, would have led to their being certified insane. Russian anthropologists, in particular, investigating shamanism—a term loosely applied to the whole medicine man/witch doctor/ shaman complex—lent confirmation by attributing it to the fearful sub-Arctic living conditions, and dismissing the visions which the shamans claimed to see under the influence of the fly agaric as no more meaningful than the pink elephants seen by an alcoholic with delirium tremens. 1

The 'Arctic mania' was a preposterous theory, in view of the fact that shamanism in one form or another existed wherever primitive tribes were found. But research of a kind which might have led to a more plausible explanation was hampered not only by continuing scientific scepticism, but by the undisguised hostility of missionaries—hoping to stamp out what they felt were pagan drug cults; and of colonial administrators, anxious to demonstrate that they, rather than the shaman, witch doctor or medicine man, were in command. In the early years of the century, therefore, when it would still have been possible to investigate drug-induced trances in tribes untainted by much contact

with civilisation, little serious research was done, except by a few interested individuals, and they were often frustrated.

Frank Melland, who in the early years of the century was a shrewd observer of African customs in Rhodesia, described in a book about his experiences how he had the good fortune to hear about some secret native dances. One was named after the drug taken by the dancers, which gave them extraordinary endurance; those who took it, he was told, could travel a hundred miles in the course of a night. In the other the participants, after taking the drug, were hypnotised by the witch doctor so that they too could enter the spirit world. But he was unable to verify the information, because the Africans feared that if the colonial government came to know the dances were held, they would be banned; and Melland, as a magistrate, would be required to enforce the prohibition.

THE POSSESSED

It was only when young anthropologists began to undertake intensive field work, which involved staying long enough with a tribe to win its trust and to understand its customs, that drug-induced divination began to be taken a little more seriously. One of these field workers was destined to be influential: Edward Evans-Pritchard, subsequently Professor of Social Anthropology at Oxford University. When he went out to the Sudan in the 1920s to study the Azande, he watched the witch doctors at work; and from his observations, he drew a revealing picture of the process, and the part drugs played in it.

A predecessor there, Monsignor Lagae, had described how the witch doctor's object was to reach a state where the drug he had taken 'glows (brille) through his body, and through it he begins to see witchcraft clearly'. This, Evans-Pritchard found, was an accurate description. The 'medicine', as they thought of it—not so much the drug itself, when one was used, but its effect—'goes to their stomachs, and dancing shakes it up and sends it all over their bodies, where it becomes an active agent, enabling them to prophesy'. The prophecies were not necessarily verbalised; the witch doctor 'does not only divine with his lips, but with his whole body. He dances the questions that are put to him.' Evans-Pritchard's houseboy, who himself qualified as a witch doctor, described the process. While he was dancing, he had to await the verdict of the drugs. 'When the medicines take hold of him, a man begins to dance with reference to someone. He dances in vain, and goes in the soul of the medicine and arrives at another man. He sees him and his heart cools about that man. The witch doctor says to himself: that man does not bewitch people.' But eventually 'his heart shakes about him' and he knows that the man in front of him IS a witch. Even if the witch should be from his own family, the medicine will stand alert within him', compelling him to reveal the truth.

By the time Evans-Pritchard's work on the Azande appeared, in 1937, there was more willingness to concede that shamanism might not be simply a form of hysteria. Though Freud's theories still met with resistance, his basic premise of an unconscious mind had come to be accepted; and he had surmised that from the unconscious man could have access to information which was not available to him through his five senses—

a proposition that Jung accepted and expanded. If so, was it not possible that what the diviner was trying to explain, when he claimed that the medicine 'stood alert within him, was that in some way it liberated instinct, which answered the required questions without the intervention of consciousness? In primitive communities, after all, instinct may well be a surer guide, on many issues, than imperfect reasoning ability. There seems no reason to doubt', M. J. Field concluded from her long experience working in Ghana, 'that the utterances of a possessed person, concentrating on a narrowed field, may exceed in wisdom those he can achieve when exposed to all the distractions of normal consciousness.' However odd such a method of getting information might appear to the materialist, Field found that it worked—'by their fruits ye shall know them, and the fruits of most spirit possession in Ghana are wholesome and sustaining' Michael Gelfand came to a similar conclusion from his experience in Rhodesia. Irrational though their technique might seem, it could be very effective; the practitioner might be no scientist—he wrote in his *Witch Doctor*—'but he practices his art with superb skill'.

In any case, the fact was that most primitive communities used divination as a guide in their everyday affairs; and anthropologists began to realise that to ignore or depreciate its influence was like an atheist refusing to study the effect of Christianity on history on the ground that he did not believe in God. And gradually, a hypothesis has evolved to account for divination, and to explain its social role. Like other forms of animal life, man originally had instinct as his guide, supplemented by the five senses. But with the development of consciousness, reasoning power, and memory, the capacity to consult instinct was gradually lost, except when it broke through as the 'sixth sense', or intuition. For primitive man, the loss would have been serious, had it not been for the fact that certain individuals retained the ability to dissociate—to throw off consciousness, and to liberate instinct.

Dissociation took various forms. The diviner might dance out the required answers, as Evans-Pritchard had observed; he might become possessed, as if taken over by a disembodied personality; or he might have visions in which the spirits would show him or tell him what he wanted to learn. How the information was secured, though, did not much matter, so long as it appeared to be relevant and useful. But as man came to rely more on memory and reasoning power he found it more difficult to enter the required trance state; and it was at this point that drugs came to be used, to induce it—man being guided, perhaps, by instinct to the required plant drugs, just as animals are guided to the right plants to make up for vitamin deficiencies. 2

In his *Shamanism*, published in 1951, Professor Mircea Eliade interpreted this development as being a sign of decadence. Narcotics—as he called them, with obvious distaste, lumping tobacco, alcohol and the fly agaric together—were a recent innovation, 'only a vulgar substitute for pure trance', and 'an imitation of the state which the shaman is no longer capable of attaining otherwise'. Recently, however, this verdict has been challenged, notably by R. G. Wasson in his *Soma*, and by some of the contributors to the first full scale academic symposium on plant drugs, held at the University of California in 1970—the proceedings of which were subsequently edited by Professor Peter

T. Furst and published as *Flesh of the Gods*. Drugs are indeed a substitute for the ability to enter the trance state voluntarily, but that is not necessarily a symptom of decadence; if man can find such substitutes for faculties which he has lost in his evolution, that may be held to be to his credit. And there is no evidence that the trance state induced by drugs is necessarily any different from the state attained by other means.

HORIZONS BEYOND

One question remains unanswered. Until very recently, to take divination seriously enough even to consider the possibility that extra-sensory perception might be involved, as a product of the drug-induced trance state, was to court ridicule. But orthodox science has been shifting its stance, moving towards guarded acceptance of the proposition that some phenomena, formerly regarded as supernatural, may acquire scientific respectability. Certainly the former prejudice against research studies in this field is disappearing.

The historical evidence for links between taking certain drugs and the ability to practise divination would fill a book. Constantly men have believed that they have been on the verge of proving it—like Joseph Kopek, a Polish general exiled to Siberia in the 1790s, whose experiments with the fly agaric not merely made him believe he was a diviner, but enabled him to correct the mistakes of the local shaman ('I warned him to improve in those matters; and I noticed that he took those warnings almost as the voice of revelation'). Could anybody now deny, Kopek went on, that in spite of our vast knowledge of natural phenomena, there still exist almost countless phenomena about which we can only guess? Can one put a limit to nature at a point that delimits the possibilities of enquiries and discoveries of human research? Innumerable effects of recently discovered magnetic forces; effects that cannot be detected by physical means nor pinpointed with any degree of precision to some specification on the human body, seem to reconcile in some measure the controversy concerning this mushroom. It is possible that in the sleep brought by the influence of this mushroom, a man is able to see at least some of his real past and, if not the future, at least his present relations.

In the letters and memoirs of travellers, missionaries and colonial administrators over the past century and a half there are countless stories, some of them well attested, of witch doctors accurately describing what was happening in distant places, or correctly forecasting future events. But they were all, by their nature, 'anecdotal'; and it was always possible to pick holes in an anecdote—as, for example, in the case of an episode recounted at the turn of the century by the respected South African merchant David Leslie, who had decided out of curiosity to test a local diviner. Leslie had eight native hunters out working for him, searching for elephant; could the diviner tell him how they were faring? The diviner made eight fires, and threw roots into them; then, he took a drug, and fell into a convulsive trance. When he came round, he raked out the fires one by one, describing as he did so what was happening to each hunter; how some had been fortunate; others had done badly; and two had been killed. The account, Leslie claimed, had proved to be true in every particular. But could the diviner not have cheated? Dudley

Kidd argued in *The Essential Kafir*, published in 1902, that he could have combined local knowledge with intelligent guesswork. Leslie, though he might be convinced that this explanation was inadequate, had no way of proving that the diviner really had been using second sight.

Tales of the kind that Leslie told have continued to be heard from many parts of the world, particularly from those regions of America where peyotl can be found. Dr. Rafael Bayon, working in Colombia at the beginning of the century, became convinced that with its help the local shaman could see and hear distant events on behalf of a patient, 'consistent with exact observations of things of which the patient neither has, nor could have, the least previous knowledge'. Twenty years later the French missionaries assured the pharmacologist Andre Rouhier that shamans who were asked a question only needed to take peyotl 'and they obtain a solution to the problem before them in an auditory form—a person appearing to them and telling them what they want to know; or visually—as if, for example, they were to see the landscape, the persons or the plants which would serve them to the end desired'. Recently, Carlos Castaneda has described Don Juan's paranormal faculties in his books; and in *Flesh of the Gods*, Douglas Sharon—an anthropological field worker—has given a convincing account of the powers of the Peruvian shaman Eduardo Calderon Palomino.

When Palomino realised that he had a vocation to be a curandero, a healer/diviner, he began to practise with the help of tobacco, which gave him 'very rapid sight, mind and imagination'. (It was for this purpose, he surmised, that people had originally taken snuff; the curanderos found it helped to clear their minds and speed their thoughts.)

But when he wanted to induce visions, he took the potent San Pedro cactus. He described the effects to Sharon: . . . first, a slight dizziness that one hardly notices. And then a great vision, a clearing of all the faculties of the individual. It produces a slight numbness in the body and afterwards a tranquillity. And then comes a detachment, a type of visual force in the individual, inclusive of all the senses; seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, etc.—all the senses, including the sixth sense, the telepathic sense of transmitting oneself across time and matter.

The cactus drug, Palomino thought, developed the power of perception, enabling a man to 'distinguish powers or problems of disturbances at a great distance, so as to deal with them'. This evidence—and there is a great deal more of it—suggests that drug-induced divination as practised in primitive communities deserves more serious attention than it has received. If it can be demonstrated that drugs are capable of liberating the clairvoyant faculty in certain individuals, so that with the help of their training as shamans they can use it for the benefit of the tribe, there will have to be a radical reappraisal both of shamanism and of the drugs associated with it. R. G. Wasson has even suggested that they may have had an evolutionary role, by giving primitive man a glimpse 'of horizons beyond any that he knew in his harsh struggle for survival'.

1. The anthropologists did, however, fully confirm the old travellers' tale. Accord-

ing to Vladimir Jochelson, writing in 1905, reindeer no longer even needed to be summoned with the call Girach! Girach!

Frequently the reindeer come running to camp from a far off pasture to taste of snow saturated with urine, having a keen sense of hearing and of smell, but their sight is rather poor. A man stopping to urinate in the open attracts reindeer from afar, which, following the sense of smell, will run to the urine, hardly discerning the man, and paying no attention to him. The position of a man standing up in the open white urinating is rather critical when he becomes the object of attention from reindeer coming down on him from all sides at full speed.

2. Compare 'Palinurus'—Cyril Connolly—in *The Unquiet Grave*:

The mystery of drugs: how did savages all over the world, in every climate, discover in frozen tundras or remote jungles the one plant, indistinguishable from so many others of the same species, which could, by a most elaborate process, bring them fantasies, intoxication, and freedom from care? How unless by help from the plants themselves?

DRUGS AND THE PRIESTHOOD

THE CHANGE OF ATTITUDE TO DRUGS, BY WHICH THEY CAME TO BE regarded as a threat rather than as an asset to society, was connected with the decline of shamanism and the emergence in its place of organised religions and their priesthoods; an evolution which the earlier anthropologists took to be a sign of progress, towards less irrational forms of belief, but which can now be interpreted rather differently.

SHAMAN TO PRIEST

As man's reasoning power developed, and his capacity to consult instinct declined, fewer men could be found who had the ability, with or without a drug, to slip into the trance state; and it became progressively more difficult to interpret the pronouncements of those who could. More powerful doses of whatever drug was in use could not have helped, as they would have promoted simple intoxication, without benefit of revealing visions. The medicine no longer 'stood alert' within the shaman, leading him inexorably to the answer he was seeking, uncovering the identity of witch or thief. He began to need aids, as if to pick up and amplify instinct's weak transmissions. Just as there are some water diviners who search for underground sources unaided, while others need to use a forked hazel twig or a pendulum, so there were (and still are) some shamans who needed no aids, while others had to employ devices—horns, say, which they could hold, and which seemed to dictate their movements. And in the next stage, they began to seek their visions in smoke, or in bowls of liquid—much as a present-day fortune teller consults a crystal ball; or to throw bones, and observe the pattern they formed as they fell; or to examine the entrails of animals.

So long as these techniques were employed as a means to induce a trance—so long as the smoke or the entrails were simply a way of rousing the unconscious mind to take over—drugs still had their part to play in making the process easier. But the time was to come when divination by such means became standardised. The pattern in which the bones fell, the state of the entrails, were consciously ‘read’, as were omens; a bird flying past from one direction meant one forecast; from another direction, a different forecast. In time, divination was reduced to rote—to routine. Dissociation was then no longer needed; and drugs became superfluous.

At the same time, the development of patterns of belief— religions—made dissociation an untrustworthy and unnerving experience, because the material pouring out of the unconscious might be at variance with approved doctrine. A safer way was to employ ritual; the regular repetition of words and actions, designed to break down consciousness without inducing a full trance. Ritual required more self-control on the shaman’s part, in order that he should be able to reproduce the formula exactly, time after time. Dissociation was no help; and drugs were a positive handicap. As a result shamans began to be chosen on other grounds than their ability to induce trances; and it was at this point that, in effect, they became priests.

The priest, as the American anthropologist A. L. Kroeber defined him half a century ago, is an official recognised by the community. He has duties and powers. He may inherit, be elected, or succeed by virtue of lineage subject to confirmation. But he steps into a specific office which existed before him and continues after his death. His power is the result of his induction into the office, and the knowledge and authority that go with it. He thus contrasts sharply with the shaman—logically at least. The shaman makes his position. Any person possessed of the necessary mediumistic faculty, or able to convince a part of the community of his ability to operate supernaturally, is thereby a shaman. His influence is essentially personal.

The demarcation line, as Kroeber emphasised, cannot always be clearly drawn; in early civilizations, shamanism and religion often co-existed, particularly where potent plant drugs were available—peyotl, datura, the fly agaric. The most striking example emerges from the verses of the Rig Veda—the testimonies of the shaman/priesthood which was one outcome of the Aryan influx into India, three thousand years ago

We have drunk soma, have become immortal
Gone to the light have we, the gods
discovered
What can hostility do against us?

These hymns to a plant deity, as Wasson pointed out in his *Soma*, were composed over a period of centuries, by men who lived far remote from each other, but shared the same experiences from it; . . . In the hierarchy of Vedic gods certain others took precedence over Soma: but since Soma was a tangible, visible thing, its inebriating juice to be ingested by the human organism in the course of the ritual, a god come down and manifesting himself to the Aryans, Soma played a singular role in the Vedic pantheon. The poets never tire of stressing Soma’s sensuous appeal . . . The priests, after imbibing the

juice, seem to have known, for the nonce, the ecstasy of existence in the World of the Immortals. The divine element was not just a symbol of spiritual truth as in the Christian communion: Soma was a miraculous drink that spoke for itself.

It remains uncertain from which plant Soma was extracted. (Wasson's contention that it must have been the fly agaric makes more sense than most early theories, which even proffered such unlikely candidates as rhubarb); and the testimonials cannot be regarded as a wholly reliable source of information about its qualities—a similar collection of eulogies of beer or tobacco could be collated from English sources which would be hardly less idolatrous. Nevertheless the impression left of Soma's transcendental qualities is significant, because it reveals that the drug— whatever it may have been—was being taken for a different end. The purpose was no longer basically functional—to secure access to useful information. Rather, it was to lift the mind to a higher plane of perception. The suggestion has even been made that the shaman priests did not take the drug to try to achieve artificially the exalted state of mind that mystics achieved through yoga. The mystics, through yoga, may have been trying to recapture the exalted states of mind which formerly had required the assistance of Soma for their attainment.

In many other parts of the world, plant drugs which had originally been used to facilitate access to the spirits came to be regarded, and later worshipped, as spirits, or deities, in their own right. In Peru, Tschudi reported, 'it was believed that any business undertaken without the benediction of coca leaves could not prosper, and to the shrub itself, worship was rendered'. Chewed coca was thrown on veins of ore in the Peruvian mines, in the belief they would be softened, and easier to work. A few years later the French traveller H. A. Weddell, exploring Bolivia, found that married men going on a journey would throw a dollop of chewed coca leaf on to a rock, in the belief that if it did not still adhere to the rock when they returned, it would be proof that in their absence their wives had not adhered to their marital vows. Many innocents, Weddell feared, must have suffered a bastonnade, as a result. In the 1920s Alexander Goldenweiser described how the Chuckchi tribesmen in Siberia took the fly agaric in the expectation that the mushrooms would appear to them in the guise of mushroom men, who would 'lead the dreamer through the world and show him real and imaginary things'. Later, Wasson observed the same process in Mexico, where the mushrooms had begun to take command:

They speak through the curandero or shaman. He is as though not present. The mushrooms answer the questions put to them about the sick patient, about the future, about the stolen money or the missing donkey . . . similarly the eater of the fly agaric comes under the command of the mushrooms, and they are personified as amanita girls or amanita men, the size of the fly agaric,

THE FRUIT OF THE VINE

Drugs, therefore, remained an essential part of shamanism, where it survived. But wherever religions established themselves in its place, and in particular where the religion was monotheistic, the need for them disappeared, because the kind of divina-

tion they inspired was regarded as a threat. Rulers did not care for untamed sources of information, which might turn out to be subversive; and priests, brooding over their entails, looked with envy on shamans, drawing their information directly from the spirit world —'the priest realises clearly where the danger lies', as Michelet observed in his study of sorcery; 'an enemy, a menacing rival, is to be feared in this High-Priestess of Nature he pretends to despise'. Divination in such circumstances became regarded as the devil's doing—unless the diviner's probity or position was such that this interpretation was unthinkable, or perhaps unmentionable. It was equated with witchcraft, and the death penalty imposed for anybody who practised it—except when, as in the case of the witch of Endor, it happened to be the State, in the person of King Saul, who needed the prognostication. And drugs which had been used to induce the trance state were naturally suspect.

There was one drug available, however, which in this respect was relatively safe: wine. Whereas other drugs appeared to give access to information transmitted from a different world, what wine released—though it was often revealing: *in vino veritas*—was mundane. It induced visions only when taken in excess, over a protracted period; and they were not of any divinatory value to a shaman, or anybody else. As an intoxicant, in fact, alcohol's function was—in the phrase that has been so often echoed—to 'take away understanding'. It removed a man from the cares of the world, without precipitating him into another. Although his behaviour when in this condition might be anti-social and dangerous to himself and his companions, it presented no real threat to the authority of Church or State.

Wine, though, was taken chiefly as a beverage. It was decidedly safer to drink, in many regions, than water—as well as tasting agreeable. The Old Testament writings demonstrate that wine was never, in that era, looked on with suspicion. Drunkenness was condemned as a sin, but wine was no more held responsible for it than meat was held responsible for the sin of gluttony. So far from wine being suspect, it was usually coupled with bread as God's great gift to man. An abundant grape harvest signified divine pleasure; a superabundant harvest was taken to herald the coming of the Messiah. Temperance reformers were later to point to the existence of tribes or sects who renounced wine; but this was not because of disapproval of its intoxicating properties, but because they objected to the cultivation of the grapes. Nomads tended to despise those who settled down to the sedentary life of the farmer or town dweller; the Rechabite injunction 'ye shall drink no wine' was accompanied by 'neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed'. And where ascetic sects emerged, their worry was that wine-bibbing was a form of self-indulgence. John the Baptist would have objected as strenuously to the consumption of agreeably flavoured non-alcoholic drinks.

Wine had two effects, however, which eventually aroused debate on whether it ought to be—in effect—reclassified as a drug. One was the possible consequences for society of intoxication, when it unfitted men to do their jobs. It was up to the individual to regulate his own drinking, Plato's Athenian argued in the *Laws*; but the State had a right and a duty to protect citizens from the effects of that drinking, should it put them at risk.

. . if the practice is treated as mere play, and free licence is to be given to any man to drink whenever he pleases, in what company he pleases, and when engaged on any undertaking he pleases, I could no longer vote for allowing any indulgence in the wine-cup to such a city, or such a man. I would even go further than the practice of Crete and Lacedaemon and propose an addition to the Carthaginian law which prohibits the very taste of this liquor to all soldiers in the field, and enforces water-drinking throughout the duration of a campaign.

I would absolutely prohibit its taste in civic life to slaves of both sexes, to magistrates throughout the year of their office, and equally absolutely to captains of vessels and jurymen when on duty, and likewise to any member of an important council when about to attend its meetings. Further I would prohibit its use during the day absolutely, except under the orders of a trainer or physician, and at night also to any person of either sex contemplating the procreation of children, to pass over the many other cases in which wine is not to be drunk by rational men with a sound law.

The Greeks were concerned only about how to prevent drinking from becoming a security risk. Some early Christian sects, however, began to take the argument a stage further, and suggest that there was a more serious hazard: that it would imperil men's souls. Gnostics, Manicheans and others argued that as wine was notoriously an aphrodisiac, and the occasion of sin, to drink it must be sinful, and wine itself must be inherently evil. Against them were ranged those fathers of the Church on whom Greek thought still exercised a decisive influence, and who contended that 'it is not what entereth in that defileth a man'—as Clement of Alexandria put it in the second century A.D.—'but that which goes out of his mouth'; a view echoed by St. Chrysostom, two centuries later:... the simple ones among our brethren, when they see any person disgracing themselves from drunkenness, instead of reproving such, blame the fruit given them by God, and say, 'Let there be no wine'. We should say then in answer to such, 'let there be no drunkenness; for wine is the work of God, but drunkenness is the work of the devil'. Wine makes not drunkenness, but intemperance produces it. Do not accuse that which is the workmanship of God, but accuse the madness of a fellow mortal.

HASHISH

The knowledge that Jesus had been a wine drinker—and had even promised the disciples at the last supper that he would enjoy wine with them in Paradise—did not prevent the leaders of early Christian sects from arguing that wine was the occasion of sin, because they could claim that as Jesus was without sin, wine had no power over him. But to the ordinary believer, the argument sounded specious; and when Mahomet decided to instruct his followers to forgo wine, one of the reasons—it has been suggested—was that this would help to distinguish them from the wineloving Christians.

As this was the first attempt of its kind to prohibit the consumption of a popular drug, it would be interesting to know more about how the ban worked. Given a zealous priesthood, it would have been relatively easy to enforce, because the location of the

vineyards would be known. They could easily have been destroyed; and wine is too bulky to be easily smuggled in any quantity on camel caravans. The evidence, however, has yet to be sifted, to find what were the prohibition's effects. Ironically we know more—thanks to the work of Franz Rosenthal—about one of the side-effects of Mahomet's law: the controversy which followed in the Moslem world whether hashish, the drug made from the hemp plant, ought also to come under the ban, though it had not been formally indicted in the Koran. In *The Herb*, published in 1971, Rosenthal presented an illuminating sample of the opinions of philosophers and priests, public health officials and poets, on the issue of whether and how the consumption of hashish should be restricted, or stopped altogether: a foretaste of many a similar campaign to come.

To judge from a brief account in Herodotus of the way the Scythians threw hemp on heated stones and 'carried away by the fumes, shout aloud', the hemp plant must long have been known to have intoxicating qualities; and Moslem sects, such as the Sufis, continued to take it in traditional shamanist ways. By Mahomet's time, though, it seems to have been utilised chiefly as a medicine for, among other disorders, dandruff, diarrhoea, earache, gonorrhoea and worms.

But then—perhaps because of the ban on wine—hemp came again to be eaten, or drunk in some form of infusion in the Moslem world. There are difficulties, Rosenthal warned, in the way of any assessment of its precise effects on people, because 'hashish', the term ordinarily used, not merely covered a variety of different hemp preparations, but also took in opium and henbane, and was loosely used about herbs in general. Hemp, Rosenthal surmised, must gradually have come to be identified with hashish because it was regarded as the herb; 'the most representative and, probably, the most widely used of the hallucinatory drugs employed by medieval Muslims'.

And when the authorities realised it was being increasingly adopted as a substitute for wine, they began to cast around for excuses to stop it. The Koran, they argued, banned wine because it could be an intoxicant; hashish was being taken as an intoxicant; therefore hashish should be banned. The upper classes tended to agree—particularly employers: hashish-eating was mainly a working class habit. It was bad for the working man's health, they explained; damaging his complexion, giving him halitosis, and eventually leading him to immorality, insanity, and mental exhaustion (much the same arguments, in fact, as were later to be used in England against masturbation).

The supporters of hashish argued that it had not been banned in the Koran precisely because it did not intoxicate—not, at least, in the same way as wine. Wine caused quarrelsomeness; hashish induced 'languid placidity'—as even its critics appear to have conceded; in the attacks on the drug, Rosenthal could find no mention of any really violent actions against others under its influence. In some people, it created a pleasant stupor; in others it excited the imagination; that was all. It could not be condemned as anti-social. The law should therefore not meddle with it. As a Jurist put it ingeniously in a verse:

Hashish intoxication contains a hidden secret

Too subtle for minds to explain

They have declared it forbidden without any justification on the basis of reason and tradition

Declaring forbidden what is not forbidden is forbidden

As hashish was admitted to be less intoxicating than such alternatives as opium and henbane—and even nutmeg, which enjoyed a considerable reputation as a narcotic—any attempt to suppress it, its supporters added, might only lead its purchasers to more dangerous drugs.

These arguments did not impress the authorities, who determined to try to curb the consumption of hashish. But how? Should it be banned outright; or should it be permitted for specific purposes, with penalties for misuse? Periodically, outright prohibition was attempted; but enforcement proved impracticable. The hemp plant grew wild; and even if it had not, it would have been impossible to stop cultivation, as it was valuable for other purposes—for making fibre, as well as medicine. It was quite easy to transport, or if necessary to smuggle, to those who wanted it; and because it was cheap there was a ready demand even from the poorest classes—'I am satisfied', as a poet put it: . . . with a morsel of porridge And a round pill of hashish, Why should I reproach time from which individual Destiny proceeds, by complaining about lack of means?

The pattern which emerges from Rosenthal's research is significant, because it has recurred again and again up to the present day. Drugs come under attack because they make Church and State uneasy, for fear that they will render people, particularly the young, less amenable to discipline. As the authorities do not care to admit that this is their real reason for wanting to stop drug-taking, they claim they are only concerned with their subjects' health, morals, and welfare. They then find that prohibition simply does not work. The anti-hashish campaigners, according to Rosenthal, were forced to admit that they were 'fighting a losing battle with the reality of the social environment', and eventually they sank into 'complete resignation'. It was the first in a long line of such losing battles in authority's protracted war to control drugs.

WITCH'S BREW

There are other gaps in the history of drugs in this era which will have to await research like Rosenthal's to fill in. Some are unlikely ever to be filled. We will probably never know for certain what the constituents were of Homer's nepenthe; or what drug was used in the shamanist Eleusinian cult in ancient Greece, in which the initiate was given a potion designed to induce delectable visions, after which he could never be the same again. In general, the information about drugs and their social effects in classical times, and in the Middle Ages, is too scanty and unreliable to serve as the basis for any-

thing more than enjoyable speculation. And although there is plenty of evidence about the attempts to control drunkenness—Solon established the death penalty for magistrates who were found under the influence and numerous regulations were made to prohibit slaves, or minors, or women from drinking—there is very little evidence how such laws worked in practice.

Apart from wine, there does not seem to have been any drug in common enough use in Europe to disturb the authorities' peace of mind. Drugs crop up chiefly in connection with witchcraft. Professor Michael Harner has recently argued that they were of central importance to witchcraft in Europe, but that this has been obscured by the fact that so much of the source material, most of it in Latin, has never been studied by anybody with an interest in this aspect of the subject. From the later evidence of witchcraft trials, it is clear that witches employed such plants as henbane and deadly nightshade—sometimes making them into unguents, and smearing them on parts of their bodies—as a way of liberating themselves to undertake their Sabbat rides. It is also clear that, like shamans, they believed that while they were under the influence of these drugs they really could fly through the air. One seventeenth-century witch, more fortunate than many in that she had a shrewd priest dealing with her, boasted she could prove it; rubbing ointment on herself to the accompaniment of magic incantations, she lay her head back and immediately fell asleep. With the labor of the devil she dreamed of Mistress Venus and other superstitions so vividly that, crying out with a shout and striking her hands about, she jarred the bowl in which she was sitting and, falling down from the stool, seriously injured herself about the head. As she lay there awakened, the priest cried out to her that she had not moved; 'for heaven's sake, where are you? You were not with Diana and as will be attested by these present, you never left this bowl'. Thus, by this act and by thoughtful exhortations he drew out this belief from her abominable soul.

Harner cites a number of similar examples, suggesting that witchcraft was not, as some historians have suggested, a symptom of mass hysteria, having no existence in its own right, but a debased form of shamanism, which the hostility of the Church had prevented from coming out into the open.

The prevailing belief in diabolic possession, however, meant that the drugs a witch used were not regarded as responsible for her conduct; and there is no indication that drugs were otherwise employed, except as medicines. Consequently, they were not an issue. Drunkenness continued to be condemned, and legislated against—but as a social nuisance rather than as a sin. So when Columbus's men returned with their descriptions of the purposes for which drugs were used in the New World, they were too unfamiliar to be feared as a threat to faith or morals in Europe. They could be welcomed, in fact, for the medicinal properties they were believed to possess.

THE IMPACT OF DRUGS ON CIVILISATION

TOBACCO: HERBA PANACEA

THERE WAS SOME DISPUTE AT THE TIME—AMONG SCHOLARS, THERE still is—over who deserved the praise or execration for introducing tobacco into Europe. The Spanish colonists soon took to it, in spite of official disapproval. Bartholomew de las Casas found some of them on the island of Hispaniola who had been reported for smoking; when remonstrated with for indulging in so vicious a habit, they had replied it was 'not in their power to stop'. And sailors brought the habit home. But it gained its initial popularity in Europe as a medicine. Its value in treating fevers and other disorders led Jean Nicot, French Ambassador at the Portuguese Court, to take tobacco plants to France, when he returned there in 1561, as a present for Catherine de Medici; and by the time Nicholas Monardes published his *Joyful News out of the New Found World*, a few years later, it had begun to be regarded as the great cure-all: herba panacea, valuable whether taken into the lungs, or into the digestive system—or applied externally, to wounds; effective alike against headaches carbuncles, chilblains, worms, or venereal disease.

This was not illogical, in the prevailing climate of orthodox medical opinion, based on the assumption that health depended on a correct balance of the humours: blood, bile, and phlegm. A medicine which could 'cleanse the superfluous humors of the brain' could be expected to remove whatever symptoms that superfluity had brought on, mental or physical; and also to preserve health—those who took it, according to the mathematician Thomas Hariot, who was with Raleigh's expedition to Virginia in 1585, were 'not subject to many grievous diseases with which we in England are sometimes afflicted'.

It was for this reason, presumably, that Raleigh brought tobacco plants back from Virginia to plant on his Irish estate; his friend Edmund Spenser, who used to stay there, listed 'divine tobacco' in *The Faery Queen* as one of the herbs Belpheobe gathered to staunch the flow of blood from Timais's wound. But Raleigh began to enjoy tobacco in its own right, smoking it in a pipe as the Indians did in Virginia. Friends and acquaintances, introduced to smoking, caught the habit; and soon, it became the fashion.

Tobacco caught on not because it induced a trance state, and visions. Young Englishmen of the time would have been terrified if it had. They took to the drug simply because it was fashionable and—as soon as they got over the initial reaction of giddiness or nausea—enjoyable. It provided a mild 'lift', when that was desired; or it assisted relaxation. But it had one unwelcome consequence. It created a craving so powerful that by the 1890s, the writer of an English herbal was complaining that some men could not restrain themselves from having a smoke, 'no, not in the middle of their dinner'.

Smoking happened to become fashionable in England at a time when Puritanism was also establishing itself, based on an ethic closer to that of John the Baptist than of Jesus. The Puritan was not then in a position to deny tobacco's medicinal virtues, but it did not escape him that the people who smoked it were rarely concerned for their health. It was consequently possible to argue that because tobacco 'drinking' (as it was then often described, in the sense of 'drinking it all in') was not confined to specific doses at certain times of day, it could actually be harmful—like other drugs whose dosage was inadequately regulated: particularly to the young. Here, the Puritan found allies in the

nobility and gentry who, even if they themselves liked to smoke, were apt to be indignant when their sons insisted on following the fashion. Ben Jonson portrayed the type—the clown Sogliardo in *Every Man out of his Humour*, ‘so enamoured of the name of a gentleman that he will have it, though he buys it. He comes up every term to learn to take tobacco’. The parents suffered—‘the patrimony of many noble young gentlemen’, Edmund Gardner, author of the *Trial of Tobacco*, observed, had ‘vanished clear away with this smoky vapour’.

It was this aspect of the dangers of tobacco that ‘Philaretus’ emphasised in his *Work for Chimney Sweepers*, which appeared in 1602, denouncing smoking as a ‘pestiferous vice’. Still fresh in the memory, he recalled, were reports that divers young Gentlemen, by the daily use of this tobacco, have brought themselves to fluxes and dysenteries, and of late at Bath a scholar of some good account and worshipful calling was supposed to have perished by this practice, for his humours being sharpened and made thin by the frequent use of tobacco, after that they had once taken a course downward, they ran in such violence, that by no art or physician’s skill could they be stayed, till the man most miserably ended his life, being then in the very prime and vigour of his age.

Philaretus explained how this had happened. Tobacco, he asserted, worked by evaporating man’s ‘unctuous and radical moistures’—as was demonstrated in the fact that it was employed to cure gonorrhoea by drying up the discharge. But this process, if too long continued, could only end by drying up ‘spermatical humidity’, too, rendering him incapable of propagation. Experience also showed that tobacco left men in a state of depression, ‘mopishness and sottishness’, which in the long run must damage memory, imagination and understanding. Nor was it any use the defenders of tobacco arguing that the Indians took it without such ill-effects; the Indians had accustomed themselves to taking it from childhood.

TOBACCO: COUNTERBLAST

Work for Chimney Sweepers was the first of scores of similar pamphlets which were to appear later on the same theme, denouncing the use of tobacco—and later of other drugs—for non-medical purposes. Whatever the drug, the writer was likely to claim that it was physically and mentally destructive, if not in its immediate effects, then in the long term; that it put the youth of the country particularly at risk—as some scarifying illustration from Bath (or Baden, or Ballston Spa, N.Y.) would demonstrate; and that it had a sinister past record. As the composer of the prototypical broadside, Philaretus could be cited as deserving of some small niche in the history of drugs. But his offering was to be overshadowed by the more famous *Counterblast to Tobacco* which came out two years later, in 1604—its anonymous author’s identity not being concealed for long: James I, newly ascended to the British throne.

In certain respects, the *Counterblast* was ahead of its time. James did not waste time trying to explode tobacco’s reputation as a cure-all by citing examples of its failures; he contented himself with exposing the contradictions in the claims made on its

behalf.

It cures the gout in the feet and (which is miraculous) in that very instant when the smoke thereof—light—flies up into the head, the virtue thereof—as heavy—runs down to the little toe. It helps all sorts of agues. It makes a man sober that was drunk. It refreshes a weary man, and yet makes a man hungry. Being taken on going to bed, it makes one sleep soundly; and yet being taken when a man is sleepy and drowsy, it will, as they say, awake his brain, and quicken his understanding. As for the curing of the Pox, it serves for that use only among the poxy Indian slaves. Here in England it is refined, and will not deign to cure here any other than cleanly and gentlemanly diseases. Omnipotent power of tobacco!

James also emphasised tobacco's most commonly encountered pernicious effect: 'many in this kingdom have had such a continual use of taking this unsavoury smoke, they are not now able to resist the same, no more than an old drunkard can abide to be long sober'. But he spoiled his case by clearly hinting at one of the reasons for his dislike of tobacco: his hatred of Raleigh. Nor could he resist the temptation to set out his arguments against tobacco in the form of literary conceits. Tobacco, he sought to prove, was 'the lively image and pattern of hell', because it had in it all the vices for which man might expect hell to await him: to wit; first, it was a smoke; so are the vanities of this world. Secondly, it delighteth them who take it; so do the pleasures of the world delight the men of the world. Thirdly, it maketh men drunken, and light in the head; so do the vanities of the world, men are drunken therewith. Fourthly, he that taketh tobacco saith he cannot leave it, it doth bewitch him; even so, the pleasures of the world make men loath to leave them, they are for the most part so enchanted with them; and further, besides all this, it is like hell in the very substance of it, for it is a stinking loathsome thing; and so is hell.

It was a little too pat, confirming that James was less the shrewd observer of the effects of the drug that he appeared to be, than the diligent collector of all the possible rationalisations which could be mustered against it.

That autumn, James informed the High Treasurer of England that all importers of tobacco would have to pay, in addition to the customs duty of 2d a pound that Elizabeth had imposed, the sum of 6/8d; an increase of 4,000 per cent. It was the first attempt of its kind to get rid of a drug by indirect prohibition—by imposing a tax so heavy that only the very rich would be able to afford to buy it. And this discrimination was deliberate. When tobacco had been discovered, the preamble recalled, it had been taken 'by the better sort', only as physic. But it had recently, 'through evil custom and the toleration thereof, been taken in excess by a number of riotous and disorderly persons of mean and base condition who, contrary to the usages of which persons of good calling and quality make, spend most of their time in idle vanity, to the evil example and corrupting of others'. They also spent too much of their wages, which they ought to be spending on their families, 'not caring at what price they buy'; so that people's health was being impaired, making them unfit for work, and consuming their resources, and also the country's,

because 'a great part of the treasure of our land is spent and exhausted by this drug alone'. James, in other words, had been moved to action less because of the drug's effect on his subjects' health, than because it might make them less loyal and hard-working. Men who took time off to smoke could be expected to expend much of that time in talk; and the talk might turn to gunpowder, treason and plot . . .

To judge by the Counterblast, James would have preferred to ban tobacco outright; but that could possibly have been dangerous, with so many pipe-smokers among the Court circle; and it would certainly have been difficult, with tobacco in such demand as a medicine. So the intention—the preamble continued—was simply to provide a restraint on consumption, in order to reduce the amount being imported, while leaving 'sufficient store to serve for the necessary use of those who are of the better sort, and have and will use the same with moderation to preserve their health'.

But the new duty, James soon found, had precisely the opposite effect to that which he had intended. The people who used tobacco to cure ailments, finding it so expensive, were forced back on older herbal remedies which cost little or nothing. Those who had begun to smoke for pleasure, however, and become addicted could not bear to do without their pipefuls. And although with so heavy a duty to be paid, merchants did indeed, as James had hoped, find it less profitable to import tobacco, this only meant that they found it more profitable to smuggle it. In the decade that followed the introduction of the duty, tobacco consumption continued to increase, not least among the poor. 'There is not so base a groom'—the pamphleteer Barnabe Rich complained in 1614—that comes into the alehouse to call for his pot, but he must have his pipe of tobacco, for it is a commodity that is now as saleable in every tavern, inn, and ale house, as either wine, ale or beer, and in apothecaries' shops, grocers' shops, chandlers' shops, they are (almost) never without company, that from morning to night are still taking of tobacco; what a number are there besides, that keep houses, or open shops, which have no other trade to live by but the selling of tobacco.

TOBACCO: FUND-RAISER

In ordinary circumstances James, with his sublime intellectual arrogance, would have been likely to try stiffer measures to check smuggling. But that would have meant increased expenditure, which he was in no position to undertake. He was chronically desperate for funds; and the signs that tobacco smoking was on the increase had suggested a way to secure them. In 1608 he had ordered a reduction in the duty to a shilling a pound, selling the right to collect it to one of his favourites, Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery. Tobacco imports began to rise so rapidly that James found he had sold himself short; in 1615 he revoked the deal (paying Montgomery compensation) so that he could sell the right to collect the duty for a sum more closely approximating to what it would be worth to the patent holder—£16,000 a year, by 1620.

For the remainder of James's reign solvency was the essential consideration. By farming out the duty, he in effect ensured that it would be kept as high as it could go

without causing the importer to switch to smuggling. But the importers were not the only problem. Distributors and retailers, it was found, were stretching their stocks by adulterating the tobacco with ground up stalks and leaves of other plants, and disguising the thinness of the flavour by adding small quantities of spirits, and spices, to delude the customer—unlike Jonson's Abel Druggier:

He lets me have good tobacco, and he does not Sophisticate it with sack, lees, or oil Nor washes it in muscadel and grains Nor buries it in gravel, underground Wrapped up in greasy leather, or piss'd clouts.

'Sophistication' was frowned on by the authorities because it lost them revenue. When half of what was sold was no longer pure tobacco, this meant, in effect, that duty was being paid only on one out of two pipefuls smoked. The practice became so notorious that James had to intervene to authorise the inspection of stocks held by retailers. As a result, before the end of his reign he found himself setting himself up as guardian of the purity of the drug which twenty years before he had tried to suppress. And the irony only began there. The British colonists in Virginia, who for some years had almost despaired of being able to survive, experimented in 1611 with growing tobacco. The flavour happened to appeal to the British smoker. It was very much in James's financial interest that this taste should be encouraged because, as the House of Commons was told in 1620, the amount of sterling leaving the country in bullion to pay for tobacco had reached six figures. Such vast (for that period) sums were better channelled into British colonies—helping them to become self-supporting, and eventually to contribute to the Treasury—than shipped to swell the treasure chests of Portugal and Spain.

Without wishing it, therefore—to the end of his life, James continued to recall 'the dislike which we have always had of the use of tobacco in general', and to share the uneasiness of the Virginia Company about allowing the colony's economy to rely on a 'deceivable weed', the fashion for which 'must soon vanish into smoke'—the British Government had embarked upon a course of economic imperialism, based on two assumptions. One was that as colonies were revenue-raising enterprises—or at least, it was hoped, financially self-supporting—they must be allowed, and if necessary encouraged, to produce any commodity which could be sold profitably, even if it were not regarded as desirable in itself. The other was that if the commodity were not regarded as desirable in itself, its manufacture and sale could always be excused by pointing out that people were going to buy it anyway, so they might as well buy a British product. By this means, quality would be ensured; and the profits would benefit the British taxpayer.

TOBACCO: BANNED

Hypocritical though James's attitude to tobacco became, at least his policies were flexible enough to be administratively feasible. In other parts of the Old World, the reaction of rulers to the introduction of tobacco was generally the same, but they often preferred to take what must have appeared to be the simplest course; outright prohibition of the drug, with severe penalties for anybody caught selling or taking it.

Visiting Constantinople in 1611, George Sandys was told that on the orders of the Sultan Amurath a man caught smoking had been paraded through the streets mounted facing backwards on an ass, with a pipe drawn through the cartilage of his nose. In Iran, the Sultan's brother Shah Abbas imposed similar penalties; Sir Thomas Herbert, arriving there with a British delegation in 1628, found that Abbas had sentenced two merchants who had been caught importing tobacco to have their noses and ears cut off; and their consignment, forty camel loads, was burned—its 'black vapour gave the whole city infernal incense for two whole days and nights together'. Both rulers, when such punishments proved insufficient to check smuggling, introduced the death penalty. Jean Tavernier, visiting Iran in the 1670s, was told that some rich merchants found smoking in an inn had been punished, by Abbas's heir, as befitted the nature of their crime, by having molten lead poured down their throats. In India, the Great Mogul Jehangir Khan decreed that anybody found smoking should have his lips slit. When ambassadors from the Duke of Holstein arrived in Moscow in 1634, they saw eight men and a woman publicly knouted for selling tobacco, and the death penalty was decreed that year for habitual offenders.

The fashion of tobacco-smoking for some reason took longer to spread through Europe; but by the middle of the seventeenth century several states had laws against it. In the Canton of Berne, where the laws were related to the Ten Commandments, tobacco smoking was put in the same category as adultery, punishable by fines, the pillory, and imprisonment. And when this failed, the Canton set up a special Tobacco Court, modelled on the Inquisition, with payments for informers and harsh penalties for those who were convicted.

These laws and penalties, admittedly, were not based exclusively on the objection to tobacco as a drug. The Tsar Michael claimed also to be concerned about fire hazards; there were objections to the fumes and the spitting which accompanied smoking; and there was the fear that where men smoked together, they might be conspiring together. But whatever the motive, and however savage the penalties, the result was everywhere the same; prohibition was an utter failure. Sandys noted that in spite of the warning given by the sight of the convicted smoker paraded round Constantinople, people continued to smoke clandestinely. Tavernier found men and women in Persia 'so addicted to tobacco that to take their tobacco from them, is to take away their lives'.

Everywhere, eventually, the ban had to be lifted, and tobacco allowed in. Its consumption was in future to be restricted only by a variety of Government expedients to make money out of it by the levying of customs or excise duties—or by a state monopoly of the kind Richelieu introduced in France and which lasts to this day; and by local by-laws, directed not against tobacco as a drug, but against its unwelcome social side-effects.

TOBACCO: TAMED

How did it come about that tobacco, from being the drug most commonly used to

induce visions in the New World, should have soon been domesticated in Europe; so that, as the flow of tributes from essayists and poets reveal, it was welcomed as a mild mental stimulant, stirring ideas, and as a mild tranquilliser, soothing away nervous tensions? The tobacco smoked in Europe may not have been as strong as that used by the Indians, and it was probably not taken in such powerful doses; but that is not sufficient to account for the difference. The most likely explanation is that the European mind had been carried too far from its moorings in instinct for tobacco to be capable of producing the trance state; and there was no shamanist tradition which could have been taken up to exploit tobacco in the way the medicine man was accustomed to do.

When tobacco smokers were seen to be physically no worse off for their indulgence—their semen did not dry up, and many of them lived on into old age—suspicions died; and during the Great Plague, tobacco attained respectability even among those who, like Samuel Pepys, had feared it as a dangerous drug. In the spring of 1665 he saw how a cat could be killed by ‘the oil of tobacco’; but a month later the sight of doors marked with a red cross and the inscription ‘Lord Have Mercy Upon Us’ prompted him to resort to it: ‘I was forced to buy some roll-tobacco to smell and to chew, which took away the apprehension.’ And with a growing sense of Britain’s maritime destiny, the tobacco trade attained full respectability, coming to be regarded not simply as a commercial, but as a national asset. When an increase in the tobacco duty was mooted in 1685, a critic of the project was quick to point out that in addition to bringing in so much revenue, and providing the colonists with the wherewithal to buy vast quantities of English manufactures, ‘the tobacco trade employed nearly two hundred ships, the breeding ground of many mariners’.

In America, too, tobacco-smoking among the colonists followed the pattern newly established in Europe. Even the Indians began to use it more for ritual and symbolic purposes—the ‘pipe of peace’. In some States where tobacco was not grown attempts were made to curb consumption: Massachusetts banned smoking in company (even among consenting adults) in 1632, and three years later tried to stop its sale by retailers. But such regulations proved unenforceable, and tobacco developed into an industry second only in importance to alcoholic liquor. The effects on the health of the community cannot now be estimated; but some idea of the social and economic significance of the development was provided by Joseph C. Robert in *The Story of Tobacco in America*, published in 1949.

Tobacco not merely saved the Virginia settlement; it created the pattern of the Southern plantation; encouraged the introduction of Negro slavery, then softened the institution; begot an immortal group of colonial leaders; strained the bonds between mother country and Chesapeake colonies; burdened the diplomacy of the post-Revolutionary period; promoted the Louisiana purchase; and, after the Civil War, helped to create the New South . . . Dispute and violence are milestones along this tobacco road; Culpeper’s Rebellion marked the seventeenth century, the Black Patch war the twentieth. Colonial Virginians used tobacco as money; in the confusion following the Second World War the American cigarette was currency ‘from Paris to Peking’.

TEA: COFFEE

Tobacco was the only drug from the Americas which caught on in the Old World; but in the middle of the seventeenth century two other drugs which had not been known before in Europe began to appear from the East: tea—which Pepys recorded as a novelty in 1661—and coffee. Both were originally introduced, as tobacco had been, for medicinal purposes—the apothecary telling Mrs. Pepys it was ‘good for her cold and defluxions’. Both, like tobacco, aroused authority’s suspicion when it was found they were being taken for pleasure.

Coffee came from the Middle East, where its appearance had so alarmed the authorities in Mecca and Cairo that they had tried to prohibit its sale, with regulations that all stocks found should be burned, and all people found drinking it punished. As with Indian hemp, earlier, the accusation was that coffee was an intoxicant—a reputation which Sir Anthony Shirley, one of three brothers with a reputation as travellers in far-away lands, confirmed after he had tasted it in Aleppo in 1598. So when it was introduced into Europe, a number of rulers reacted to it as their forbears had reacted a century before to tobacco, decreeing fines, imprisonment and corporal punishment for those involved in its distribution or consumption. But the tendency was to regard it as a danger chiefly to the lower orders; the aristocracy reserved the right to drink coffee. Inevitably such qualified prohibition proved unworkable; and rulers soon switched to the method King James had pioneered, taxing it instead.

Tea did not attract the same hostility because, except in Britain, it continued for two centuries to be sold by druggists, and bought by the public, chiefly as a remedy for internal disorders (it was to surprise the town of Angouleme when Balzac’s Mme Bargeton gave a tea party, as tea was still sold there in chemists’ shops for indigestion—for which purpose the cure of Yonville was to recommend it to Madame Bovary). In Britain, where it became popular as a pick-me-up, it provoked some virulent attacks from satirists and from politicians; Henry Savile told Mr. Secretary Coventry in 1678 that it was a base, unworthy and filthy substitute for wine. But by then it was too late. One of Charles II’s first acts at his restoration had been to impose a duty on tea; and it had proved to be one of his most profitable fiscal expedients. When the traveller and philanthropist Jonas Hanway tried to launch a campaign against it a century later, he had against him not only Dr. Johnson—‘a hardened and shameless tea drinker’ as he described himself, ‘who with tea amuses the evening, with tea solaces the midnight, and with tea welcomes the morning’—but also almost the entire population of Britain, poor and rich alike, who by this time were consuming it in such quantities that it had become one of the State’s chief sources of revenue.

THE IMPACT OF CIVILISATION

THE FACT THAT SO SMALL A NUMBER OF PLANT DRUGS WERE KNOWN in the Old World, compared to the new, has naturally led to speculation: why? The reason, the American anthropologist Professor Weston La Barre has suggested, is simple; that sha-

manism had survived in the Americas, and it was 'so to speak, culturally programmed for an interest in hallucinogens and other psychotropic drugs'. And not only for an interest in them: the medicine man, by training as well as by instinct, knew how to exploit drugs. The Europeans, taught as they were to regard divination as the work of the devil, were culturally programmed to regard vision-inducing plant drugs as his instrument. In Europe, this was not a problem; though witches might use them, they were not ordinarily encountered in everyday life, and few people would have thought of experimenting with them. But the drugs found in use in the New World appeared to be a direct threat to Church and State—not then differentiated; and the tendency, wherever shamanist drug-practices were found, was to try to suppress them.

COCA

Drugs came under attack even when they were widely used for secular purposes, as medicines, or to increase endurance—as in the case of coca, in Peru. The Inca religion had retained an element of shamanism, and coca was one of the drugs used by the diviner-priests to help themselves into a trance; or, where that art had been lost, the diviner burned the leaves so that he could 'see' coming events in the curling smoke. Infusions of coca were taken at festivals; corpses were buried with coca, to help them over the Inca equivalent of the Styx; there was a 'Coca Mama'—the equivalent of the Corn Mother of other cults; and coca was included in sacrifices, on the principle that whatever was most valued should be given up to the gods. Appalled at these manifestations of idolatry, missionaries and priests were soon denouncing coca. It was formally condemned at the first Ecclesiastical Council held in Lima in 1551, and again in 1567 as connected with the work of idolatry and sorcery, 'strengthening the wicked in their delusions, and asserted by every competent judge to possess no true virtues; but, on the contrary, to cause the deaths of innumerable Indians, while it ruins the health of the few who survive.'

The civil authorities had their own reasons for mistrusting coca. Anything so closely linked with Inca tradition was likely to become identified with it, in the minds of those who cherished the hope of overthrowing Spanish rule. There was also a more practical reason for suppressing the use of the drug. It was taken by workers throughout the day, pouched in the cheek, and replenished when necessary. The need for replenishment did not suit employers, who felt it was an unnecessary expense. By a simple device, they had ensured that labour in Peru would be both readily available and cheap; a tax had been imposed on every Indian of working age, which meant that the male population had to find work, in order to be able to pay it. The tax was nicely judged to leave the worker with only nominal wages—a penny a day—and his keep. As part of his keep, however, he expected a ration of coca. Why, employers naturally asked themselves, should they have to provide him not only with food and water but with a luxury—worse, a drug condemned by the Church?

Prohibition was demanded, and in ordinary circumstances, could have been expected to follow. But those Spaniards who had established themselves as the owners of

the coca plantations on the slopes of the Andes had quickly made their fortunes. From 1548 to 1551, the Spanish chronicler Cieza de Leon recalled, 'there was not a root, nor anything gathered from a tree, except spice, which was in such estimation', and they grew rich on the proceeds. They were not inclined to let the source of their wealth be wrested from them; and their profits gave them the means to campaign in Lima and in Madrid to save their business from extinction. Prohibition, they claimed, would be impracticable. The coca plantations might be ploughed up, but this would not stop the plant from being grown illicitly. And what evidence was there that coca was bad for the Indians? On the contrary, not merely did it help them to work long hours; it provided them with the necessary stimulus to do the work—coca being the only currency available to them.

These were arguments which could be expected to make some impression on the Government, in its capacity as an employer. More surprisingly, they also made an impression on the Church. A Spanish priest, Blas Valera, who worked in Peru in the early years of the seventeenth century—and who thought highly of coca, particularly as a medicine—described how the change of heart came about. Some people, he recalled, had been hostile, 'moved only by the fact that in former times the heathen offered coca to their idols, as some wizards and diviners still do'. Because of this, they had argued that coca should be suppressed. If the Incas had offered coca and nothing else in their sacrifices, this might have been reasonable. But they had also sacrificed cattle; was beef therefore to be banned? On reflection, it had been decided that it would be best not to ban coca, but instead, to instruct the natives how to avail themselves of God's gifts in a Christian fashion. This resolution, Valera noted, had not been without its benefits to the Church; 'the income of the bishop, canons and other priests of the Catholic Church of Cuzco is derived from the tithe on the coca leaf'. So the Indians, though they were punished if they were caught using coca in religious observances, were allowed to take it while working, in order that they might be able to put in still longer hours. The consequences were to be summarised four centuries later by John Hemming, in *The Conquest of the Incas*:

Coca plantations lay at the edge of humid forests, thousands of feet below the natural habitat of the Andean Indians. This did not deter Spanish planters and merchants who made huge profits from the coca trade. They forced highland natives to leave their *encomiendas* and work in the hot plantations. The change of climate was devastating to Indians with lungs enlarged by evolution to breathe thin air. Antonio de Zuniga wrote to the King: 'Every year among the natives who go to this plant a great number of Your Majesty's vassals perish.' There were also ugly diseases in the plantations. A tiny mosquito-like dipterous insect that lives between 2,500 and 9,500 feet in the Andean foothills carries the destructive 'verruca' or wart disease, in which victims die of eruptive nodules and severe anemia. Coca workers also caught the dreaded 'mal de los Andes' or *uta*, which destroys the nose, lips and throat and causes a painful death. Bartolome de Vega described the native hospital of Cuzco 'where there are normally two hundred Indians with their noses eaten away by the cancer'. Those who escaped the diseases returned to their mountain villages debilitated from the heat and undernourishment; they

were easily recognisable, pale, weak and listless. Contemporary authorities estimated that between a third and half of the annual quota of coca-workers died as a result of their five-month service.

Decrees from Lima, and even from King Philip in Madrid, tried to regulate working hours and conditions. The frequency with which they had to be repeated—one Viceroy, Francisco de Toledo, issued over twenty ordinances designed to protect the Indians—suggests that they were not obeyed; not, at least, until wastage reduced the supply of labour to the point when the employers in their own self-interest had to begin to treat their workers with more consideration, or risk having too few of them to harvest the coca crop.

This pattern was to be repeated in colonised territories. Missionaries disliked shamanism and the drugs associated with it because they were pagan; the colonial authorities, because they might be a focus for unrest, and for law-breaking. But where a plant drug could be exploited commercially, farmers, entrepreneurs and traders would find reasons for permitting, and encouraging, its consumption. They would use their influence to persuade the colonial authorities that it was essential to the colony's economy; and—particularly if they could extract revenue out of the drug—the colonial authorities would usually allow themselves to be persuaded.

PEYOTL

Where commercial considerations were unimportant, either because the drug was taken exclusively in shamanist rites, or because it could not be cultivated, the Church was more likely to have its way: as it did with the peyotl cactus. As late as the middle of the seventeenth century, when Francisco Hernandez published his pioneering work on the flora and fauna of Mexico, he was still careful to intimate his disapproval of the way certain of the plants he described were used. By eating peyote he noted, the Indians 'can foresee and predict anything; for instance, whether enemies are going to attack them the following day? Whether they will continue in favourable circumstances? Who has stolen household goods?

And other things of this sort.' Far from being impressed, when Hernandez described what peyotl looked like he observed that it 'scarcely issues forth, as if it did not wish to harm those who discover it and eat it'. Similarly with *ololiuqui*—the 'morning glory'; when the priests wished to commune with their gods, and to receive messages from them, they ate it to induce a delirium, in which 'a thousand visions and satanic hallucinations appeared to them'. A catechism used in Mexico in that period reveals the priests' attitude. 'Art thou a soothsayer?' each convert would be asked.

Dost thou foretell events by reading signs, or interpreting dreams, or by water, making circles and figures on the surface? Dost thou suck the blood of others, or dost thou wander about at night, calling upon the demon to help thee? Hast thou drunk peyote or hast thou given it to others to drink, in order to find out secrets or to discover where

stolen or lost articles were ?

In 1620, peyotl was formally denounced:

We, the Inquisitors against heretical perversity and apostasy, by virtue of apostolic authority declare, inasmuch as the herb or root called peyotl has been introduced into these provinces for the purposes of detecting thefts, of divining other happenings, and of foretelling future events, it is an act of superstition, to be condemned as opposed to the purity and integrity of our holy Catholic faith. The fantasies suggest intervention of the devil, the real authority of this vice.

The civil authorities shared the Inquisition's views. They, too—according to the chronicler Fr Joseph de Acosta—were impressed by the evidence that under the influence of peyotl shamans were able 'to report mutinies, battles, revolts and death occurring 200 or 300 leagues distant, on the very day they took place, or the day after'. That divination could provide such a rapid communication service was an excellent reason for banning consumption of the drug. With characteristic cunning, however, the devil had provided alternatives; as well as ololiuqui, there were tobacco, datura and certain types of mushroom. All that Church and State could do was ban the drug cult ceremonies; and when the risk of holding them openly became too great, the cults continued underground.

ALCOHOL: SIBERIA

Suppression was not the only weapon with which colonists could attack indigenous drug cults. They brought their own substitute drug with them: alcohol. Along with beer and wine, they introduced spirits: brandy, whiskey, gin and rum. Traders found it convenient to use them to lubricate negotiations, buying and selling; and then, as merchandise in their own right.

The results were often depressing. When the Russians began the conquest of Siberia at the end of the sixteenth century, they determined to put down shamanism; and to that end they banned the consumption of the fly agaric—a futile gesture; the naturalist Nikolai Sljunin observed in 1900 that the law was 'completely ignored'. The introduction of vodka by traders proved a more effective weapon. Vodka was cheap—and readily available, unlike mushrooms, all the year round. But not merely did it fail to provide the shaman with visions; it actually blocked them—coming to be regarded, according to Sljunin, as an antidote to the mushroom's effects. The evidence, in fact, suggests that it was not drugs which made Siberian shamanism decadent, as Mircea Eliade claimed; it was one particular drug, alcohol, which destroyed the shaman's ability to induce a trance, and tempted him to fake it, and delude the company with conjuring tricks.

ALCOHOL: TAHITI

Traditionally, the saddest story of the effects of alcohol concerns Tahiti. When the

island was discovered in the 1760s, the crews who had been there returned with glowing accounts of a paradise, where the people lived free from worldly cares, doing little work because most of their wants were provided for by nature; enjoying sexual relations uninhibitedly because they were untroubled by the taboos or the guilt which Christianity had attached to them; and in general appearing to lead a wonderfully contented existence. Their only mild intoxicant came from a root which, when ground up, could be made into the drink kava; and was taken only on ceremonial occasions. Though Captain Cook's crew were told that it could make men drunk, they never saw this happen. When first offered alcoholic drinks, their Tahitian guests took them in all innocence, became drunk, and—after experiencing hangovers—took care not to get drunk again, 'shunning a repetition of it', Joseph Banks observed in his account of the visit, 'instead of greedily desiring it as most Indians are said to do'. It was as if the islanders, close to nature as they were, had no need of artificial intoxication; they lived in the happy state which Europeans tried in vain to reach with the help of alcohol.

Before long, however, as more ships began to call, some Tahitians began to develop a taste for alcohol; particularly members of the ruling families, who were recipients of much of the hospitality. The missionaries, who by this time were establishing themselves, abetted the process. On arrival, they had determined to compel the Tahitians to cover their nakedness, and to cease their uninhibited sexual play. They were also anxious to put an end to Tahitian religious rites—among them, the ceremonial drinking of kava—because they were pagan. To implement these reforms, however, they had to win the Paramount Chief's support. The heir, Pomare II, intimated that he was willing to back the missionaries, so long as they did not interfere with his personal pleasures. Arriving in 1802 on his voyage round the world John Turnbull found the royal family demoralised by excess, and Pomare an alcoholic and a public menace. Under the influence of drink, Turnbull feared, he would not scruple to kill anybody who annoyed him.

What possible benefit—Diderot had asked—could Christians with their hypocrisy, guilt and ambition, bring to the South Sea islanders? They would arrive, he warned, 'with crucifix in one hand and dagger in the other, to cut your throats or force you to accept their customs and opinions'. Gin bottle in the other, would have been nearer the mark; but Diderot's warning—'one day under their rule you will be almost as unhappy as they are'—was soon shown to be justified. Tahitians lost their childlike innocence, which made even their pilfering endearing; they had to wear 'Mother Hubbards'; they had to work; they were no longer happy; and they drank. When William Ellis arrived on Tahiti as a missionary in 1817, he found Turnbull's fears had been justified. Under Pomare, intemperance prevailed 'to an awful and unprecedented degree'. On impulse, men would get together to erect a still, and then over a period of days consume its product, 'sinking into a state of indescribable wretchedness, and often practising the most ferocious barbarities'. While the liquor lasted they were more like demons than human beings; and after it was finished, sometimes in a deserted still-house might be seen fragments of the rude boiler, and the other appendages of the still, scattered in confusion on the ground; and among them, the dead and mangled bodies of those who had been murdered with axes or billets of wood in the quarrels that had terminated their debauch.

As soon as they had established their authority, the missionaries tried to stop the islanders from drinking spirits; but with so many ships coming in, the task was hopeless. Among the arrivals was the Beagle, in 1835. When Darwin offered the Tahitian guides a drink they 'put their fingers before their mouths and uttered the word "missionary" '— but they did not refuse. 'The natives having nothing at all to do', Gauguin reported half a century later, 'think of one thing only: drinking.'

Was alcohol the cause of the destruction of Tahiti's island paradise, or were there more insidious reasons? Other Pacific islands were given much the same introduction to colonialism and Christianity; not all of them were so marked by it. Pondering this on his tour of the Pacific, early in the 1890s, Robert Louis Stevenson came to the conclusion that it was unwise to put the blame for what had happened there either on gin or on 'Tartuffe insisting on unhygienic clothes'. No single cause, he felt, was responsible for decay, where it was to be found. What was decisive was the amount of dislocation involved in the islanders' way of life: 'where there have been fewest changes, important or unimportant, salutary or hurtful, there the race survives. Where there have been most, important or unimportant, salutary or hurtful, there it perishes.'

J. W. Anderson, who had travelled around among the Pacific islands in the 1870s, was of the same opinion. He cited the stability of Fiji as an example. There, he found, yangona (as kava was known) was still taken in an elaborate ritual. First, young men and women with good teeth were employed to chew the root, until it was of the right consistency to be put in a bowl of water and its juices squeezed out. The resulting liquid appeared 'greenish-grey and muddy-looking'; it tasted to him like 'a mixture of rhubarb, magnesia and soapsuds'; and it left those who drank it rather unsteady on their feet. So the missionaries wanted to ban the ceremony—as did some employers, who disapproved of the time it wasted; islanders would drop whatever they were doing to attend. But it had not been banned; rightly, Anderson felt. The chewing process might appear to be disgusting (and to spread unmentionable diseases); the kava itself might be debilitating, to anybody who took it to excess.

But in moderation it did no harm. The islanders, in fact, regarded it as a purifier of the blood. And even those who took so much of it that they became intoxicated displayed 'neither unseemly behaviour nor incoherency of speech', but rather showed 'an inclination to remain mute in a mood of happy dreaminess'. In the circumstances, Anderson hoped, kava drinking would continue, 'for the chances are that by and by, its substitute will be "yangona papalangi" that is, white man's grog; and we are too well aware what havoc the fire water plays among savages who once take a liking to it'.

ALCOHOL: AMERICA

As Anderson's reference showed, alcohol had become notorious for its effects on primitive communities; particularly in North America, where distilled liquors had been unknown before the arrival of the colonists from Europe. As in the Pacific, it was the traders who introduced the American Indians to 'fire water'; and the Indians, unaccus-

tomed to intoxication (tobacco was ordinarily used for that purpose by the shaman, but not by members of the tribe, except under his guidance) developed a craving for it. Towards the end of the seventeenth century missionaries were beginning to report the dire consequences, 'Lewdness, adulteries, incest, and several other crimes which decency keeps me from naming'—Father Chrestien Le Clerq wrote of a tribe on the Gulf of St. Lawrence—'are the usual disorders which are committed through the trade in brandy, of which some traders make use in order to abuse the Indian women, who yield themselves readily during their drunkenness to all kinds of indecency.' The places where the Indians drank brandy, another missionary wrote in 1705, were 'an image of hell. Fire flies in all directions, blows with hatchets and knives make the blood flow on all sides. They commit a thousand abominations—the mother with her sons, the father with his daughters, and brothers with their sisters. They roll about on the cinders and coals, and in blood.'

It was stories such as these to which Anderson (and Banks, a century earlier) were referring; the assumption then being that alcohol had been the really destructive influence. But this view has recently been challenged by Craig MacAndrew and Robert Edgerton in their *Drunken Comportment: a social explanation*, published in 1969. They were able to show that the American Indians, like the Tahitians, when they first tried spirits were attracted by the novelty of the experience—'a merry-go of the brain', as one of them described it—but for a while were not adversely affected. So long as their experience was 'untutored by expectations to the contrary'—MacAndrew and Edgerton claimed—'the result was neither the development of an all-consuming craving nor an epic of drunken mayhem and debauchery'. That epic only came when their way of life had been destroyed by the settlers, and their culture debased—another instance of the destructive power of change which Stevenson had observed.

But there was more to it, MacAndrew and Edgerton decided, than simple change. The consumption of spirits brought out a trait which had already existed in their tribal societies: cruelty. The Red Indians had been notoriously cruel to captured foes, practising tortures on them of the most savage but sophisticated kind. They now learned from the white traders that a man should not be held responsible for what he did under the influence of drink. Alcohol therefore provided them both with the stimulus and the excuse to repeat the kind of behaviour they had formerly indulged in, with tradition's sanction, when they captured a member of an enemy tribe.

It was not the drug, therefore, that was responsible for the way people behaved under its influence. The drug was simply the release mechanism, the behaviour being largely conditioned by expectations. Where the expectations from an established drug were of gentle intoxication, as with kava, it was in the colonists' self-interest to encourage it, and discourage the sale of spirits; and where this became settled policy, as on Fiji, the results appeared satisfactory—as Basil Thomson, who spent many years in Fiji around the turn of the century, recalled in his memoirs. Although the missionaries had continued to wage their campaign against yangona with 'a fiery zeal', the civil authorities had contented themselves with regulations chiefly designed to try to restrict its use to pre-

cisely the ceremonial occasions that the missionaries most deplored. As a magistrate, Thomson had to enforce this policy; and he came to the conclusion it was justified, because the vice of kava drinking 'if it is a vice at all, cannot reasonably be condemned for bringing in its train any of these social evils that are due to alcohol'.

But colonial authorities were sometimes less far-sighted; and they could not, as a rule, stop the introduction of alcohol. Nor was it easy for them to prevent the erosion of traditional cultures and beliefs. Shamanism had been based on certain assumptions which Christianity and, later, the even more powerful force of rationalism challenged. Inexorably, the shaman's authority was eroded. He might still get his visions from tobacco, or other drugs. But they were of little comfort to the tribe if they predicted, correctly, that it was futile to oppose the superior power wielded by the white man—and disastrous when they incorrectly roused expectations, as occasionally they did, that the white man was going to be destroyed by a whirlwind, or some other form of divine retribution. When Sitting Bull smoked, and gave a hundred pieces of his flesh, before dancing the Sun Dance, his aim was to receive a vision; and he had one, which revealed that white soldiers were coming, and that the Sioux would slaughter them. The Sioux duly did, when Custer and his force appeared. But the vision had not revealed what was to follow: the massacre of the Indians at Wounded Knee, which banished their last hope of successful resistance.

In such circumstances, vision-inducing drugs were a hazard; and shamanist observances came to rely more upon ritual—or on alcohol. Where alcohol was involved, they often came to resemble saturnalia, of the kind Ruth Underhill described in her study of the religion of the Papago Indians. At the annual rainmaking ceremony the shaman was still employed, but only as a subordinate. The most important role was that of the brewer, who made the fermented liquor from cactus fruit; the shaman being required simply to protect the brew from harmful influences. If he failed, he rather than the brewer would suffer for it. The principle which had attached itself to the ceremony was that 'the saturation of the body with liquor typifies and produces the saturation of the earth with rain'; the aim was to get everybody concerned 'full', without any expectation of visions, let alone of clairvoyance. Neophytes, admittedly, were encouraged to 'dream' songs which could be added to the tribal repertoire: but to judge by the samples Underhill obtained suitability was not equated with any great originality of insight.

Come and sing!

Come and sing!

Sing for the evening!

The sun stands there.

Sing for it!

For the liquor delightfully sing!

And in the traditional songs and speeches, the emphasis was on the pleasures of inebriation for its own sake. To each recipient of the brew, the cup-bearer would say

Drink, friend ! Get beautifully drunk Hither bring the wind and the clouds.

Nor did the use of the term 'beautifully' mean that the Papagos were under any illusions as to the effects of the liquor—as one of the songs sung during the progress of the ceremony indicated:

On the morning of the second day

They come hastening from all directions

They grow drunk, they stagger, they grow very drunk

They crawl around in their vomit

Much dizziness, Much dizziness

Within me is swelling

And more and more

Every which way I am falling

SPIRITS

GIN

IT WAS NOT, THEN, ALCOHOL AS SUCH WHICH WAS THE DESTRUCTIVE influence, but the fact that a potent variety—spirits—was introduced to communities suffering from social dislocation after the loss of their old stability. And Britain, in the early seventeenth century, was taught the same lesson by gin.

Until 'Geneva', as it was originally known, began to become popular, distilled liquors had not been drunk in Europe on any substantial scale—except among the rich, who enjoyed their brandy. But in the seventeenth century Geneva drinking spread to Holland, and among those who acquired a taste for it was William of Orange. Chronically in need of funds to finance his campaigns against the French, he had become aware of the value of drugs as a source of revenue; part of the price he demanded for consenting to oust James II was that he should be awarded the revenue from the tobacco duties; and when he and Mary ascended the throne, one of his first actions was to break the London Distillers' Guild monopoly, and allow anybody to manufacture spirits on payment of a duty. The conflict with France, checking the import of brandies, provided a further inducement to British distillers; and production began rapidly to increase.

That spirits could have the attributes of a drug was remarked upon by the economist Charles D'Avenant in 1695. Brandy-drinking, he wrote, was becoming a growing vice among the common people (he was presumably using brandy as a synonym for spirits, as few of the common people could have afforded cognac), 'and may in time prevail as much as opium with the Turks, to which many attribute the scarcity of people in the East'—opium having won the reputation of diminishing sexual appetite, and eventually of weakening sexual performance. So far as Government and Parliament were concerned, though, the new taste for spirits was a godsend. 'It pays rent for our land, employs our people', Daniel Defoe noted in his Review in 1713; distilling had become 'one of the most essential things to support the landed interest' (which happened to be supporting him, at the time; he was working as an undercover agent for the Government). It should consequently, he urged, be 'specially preserved, and tenderly used'.

Distilling was tenderly used—more tenderly even than brewing. Gin cost around 18p a gallon to manufacture, so it could be sold at a price which would enable anybody who wished to get drunk to do so for less than it would cost to get drunk on beer. It began to replace beer as the tippable of the poor, at least in London; and the results alarmed the London magistrates. A committee they appointed to investigate reported in 1726 that gin was sold in one house in ten in some London parishes (one house in five, in one parish); that as a result of its availability and cheapness, the poor were giving themselves over to vice and debauchery; and that even in the workhouses, where the sodden creatures ended their days, gin was smuggled in. The inmates were prepared to suffer any punishment 'rather than live without it, though they cannot avoid seeing its fatal effects by the death of those among them who had drunk most freely of it'.

The fate of the poor in workhouses was of little concern to Members of Parliament. What was disturbing to them about the report was the suggestion that soldiers and, worse, servants were being daily suborned by gin; it was scarcely possible for them to go anywhere 'without being drawn in either by those who sell it or by their acquaintances, whom they meet with in the street, who generally begin by inviting them to a dram'. M.P.s, though, shared a landed interest. Distilling from grain pushed up their income. The Prime Minister, Robert Walpole, did not want to lose his majority; nor did he care to sacrifice the revenue from the duty paid by the distillers. Even when increasingly horrifying reports drove him in 1729 to put a curb on the sale of gin, the outcry from the farmers, coupled with the fact that enforcement proved impossible, soon led to its being withdrawn.

The London magistrates—responsible for the city's health, as well as for law and order—began again to warn that the situation was deteriorating; and in a further report in 1736 they presented a picture of the degeneration of the poor too ugly to be ignored. Spirits were clearly responsible. The workers were being encouraged to drink the whole week 'upon score', and 'too often without minding how fast the score runs against them, whereby at the week's end they find themselves without any surplusage to carry home to their families, which must of course starve, or be thrown on the parish'. Their wretched wives were also becoming gin drinkers 'to a degree hardly possible to be conceived.

Unhappy mothers habituate themselves to these distilled liquors, whose children are born weak and sickly, and often look shrivel'd and old as though they had numbered many years. Others again daily give it to their children.'

GIN: PROHIBITION

The worry was not that gin made men and women drunk. Drunkenness, as distinct from what people might do when they were in that condition, was not in this period regarded as a heinous offense: 'an honest drunken fellow', Defoe had noted in 1702, 'is a character in man's praise'. If the Londoner had got roaring drunk on gin the way the Irish and the Scots were reputed to get drunk on whiskey—because they liked to get drunk on whiskey, from time to time—he would have caused the magistrates little concern. But he was using gin as a quick, cheap way of escape—not as an intoxicant, but as a narcotic. This was, in fact, the prototype of future drug scares, presenting many of the features which were to become so familiar; among them, the first reported parliamentary debate on the issue of prohibition.

Appalled by the evidence, Sir John Jekyll proposed in the Commons that a duty of 20 shillings a gallon should be put on spirits sold by retail. The motion was opposed by Sir William Pulteney. This was not, Pulteney emphasised, because he had anything to say in favour of the consumption of spirits, which had become excessive and mischievous, sapping the people's health and morals. His criticism was that the measure amounted to prohibition.

Prohibition, Pulteney explained, was doubly unjust; in principle, because it struck at spirits, rather than at their misuse (nobody had argued that spirits consumed in moderation did harm, so to stop them being sold for consumption in moderation was 'carrying the remedy much farther than the disease'); and in practice, because it was the Government itself which had encouraged men to sink capital in distilleries and in shops—it is a dangerous, it is, Sir, a terrible thing to reduce many thousands of families at once to a state of despair'. But the essential objection to prohibition was that it did not work—as the earlier experience of the Walpole government had shown. The spirits which had previously been available were simply replaced by an illicit liquor 'which, I believe in derision of the Act, they called "Parliament Brandy"'. If legal channels dried up, spirits would inevitably begin to flow in through other, illegal channels.

Parliamentary debates were not at the time legally reported and only the outline of the prohibitionists' reply to Pulteney survives, but it indicates why they were not prepared to listen to his warning. He had concluded by saying that in so far as the measure did not amount to total prohibition—spirits could still be bought by the hogshead—this too was unjust, because it would allow the rich to buy and drink as much as they liked, when they liked, while stopping the poor from buying a glass of gin over the counter. This, Jekyll's supporters made clear, was precisely their aim. As one of them put it, the justification for the Bill was that it would keep spirits out of the reach of 'persons of inferior rank', who were 'the only sort of people apt to make a custom of getting drunk with

such liquor'. Nor was it possible to cater for those who would, if allowed to drink, drink in moderation. Where spirits were available in the shops, 'few would keep themselves within any bounds, because a small quantity deprived them of their reason, and the companions they usually met with at such places encouraged them to drink to excess'. The only concession the supporters of the measure were prepared to make was that spirits should still be available when prescribed by a physician, in cases of illness. Otherwise, if the law was found to amount in practice to prohibition so far as the poor were concerned, so much the better.

Against Walpole's advice—he was mainly concerned with the loss of revenue, but he agreed with Pulteney that prohibition would not work—the measure was passed. The consequences were to be described by Walpole's biographer, Coxe. The people, he recalled, reacted in the usual mode of riot and violence. Numerous desperadoes availed themselves of the popular discontents, and continued the clandestine sale of gin in defiance of every restriction. The demand of penalties, which the offenders were unable to pay, filled the prisons, and removing every restraint, plunged them into courses more audaciously criminal. It was found that a duty and penalty so severe as to amount to an implied prohibition, were as little calculated to benefit the public morality, as the public revenue.

The Act failed partly because the Government's enforcement officers, the excisemen, were universally hated. When they were active, they were in danger of their lives; but frequently they were inactive, because they preferred to come to terms with the lawbreakers. Where demand was strong enough, as Walpole had warned after his earlier experience, the smuggler could afford 'to blind the officer with a large bribe', especially as he knew that once a bribe had been accepted, the officer 'is, and must be, his slave for ever'.

The means which were adopted to enforce the Act also had unfortunate consequences. To catch those who manufactured, sold, or purchased illicit spirits, a reward of £5 had been offered for information leading to a conviction. The preliminary results were gratifying: over four thousand such convictions were secured, and payments made for them, in the first two years. By that time, though, it was becoming apparent that an unascertainable but substantial proportion of the convictions had been obtained by perjury, to get the £5 which, to an unskilled labourer, represented almost three months' wages. And many other people who had been detected consuming drink purchased illicitly had paid the standard blackmail fee of £10 to avoid prosecution.

GIN: LICENSING

After Walpole's fall, his successors decided to repeal the Act. As Lord Bathurst [as reported from memory by Samuel Johnson, then working for the Gentleman's Magazine] explained to the House of Lords in 1743, perjuries had become so common and flagrant, 'that the people thought all informations malicious; or at least, thinking themselves oppressed by the law, they looked upon every man that promoted its execution,

as their enemy'. Intimidation and violence—some informers had been murdered in the streets—had made it impossible to bring offenders to court, 'so that the law, however just might be the intention with which it was enacted, or however reasonable the methods prescribed by it, has been now for some years totally disused'.

Experience, therefore, had shown that it was impossible to prevent the retailing of spirits. 'What then'—Bathurst asked the House— 'are we to do? Does not common sense point out the most proper method, which is to allow their being publicly retailed but to lay such a duty upon the distillery and upon licenses as without amounting to a prohibition will make them come so dear to the consumer that the poor will not be able to launch out into an excessive use of them?'

The expedient was not new; James I had resorted to it with tobacco, when prohibition failed. And the motive on this occasion appeared to Opposition peers to be the same: the Treasury's need for more revenue, to pay for Britain's contribution to the war on the Continent. This was deplorable, Lord Chesterfield thought. If spirit-drinking were a vice, it ought to be punished as such.

Would you lay a tax upon a breach of the Ten Commandments? Would not such a tax be wicked and scandalous because it would imply an indulgence to those who would pay the tax? No reasonable man would suppose you intend to discourage, much less prohibit, this vice, by giving every man that pleases an indulgence to break out himself, or to promote it in others upon condition of his paying a small tax annually.

Lord Hervey was equally scathing. All that was wrong with the law, he insisted, was that it had not been enforced. Now, instead, they were to have a duty whose proceeds were being mortgaged to pay for the war. In other words, they were establishing the worst sort of drunkenness to pay for an expense which in his opinion was both unnecessary and ridiculous, 'like a tradesman mortgaging the prostitution of his wife or daughter, for the sake of raising money to supply his luxury or extravagance'. And he went on to inveigh against drunkenness, 'of all vices the most abominable'.

Drunkenness happened not to be one of Hervey's vices; drink gave him gall-bladder trouble. But when Lord Sandwich, who entertained his Hell Fire Club friends to drunken orgies at which the Black Mass was celebrated, told the House that his regard for the morals of the people compelled him to oppose the Bill, Bathurst could not resist remarking that he hoped that all public houses were not going to be regarded as chapels of the devil, simply because a man might eat or drink too much in them. 'According to this way of reasoning, I am afraid, many of your lordships' own houses would come under the same denomination, and you yourselves would not be quite free from the character of being devils.'

Patiently, Bathurst explained that though the Government hoped to make money from the duty, the measure must at the same time reduce spirit-drinking, because spirits would cost more. To those critics who wondered whether, if the price rose, the measure

could be enforced, he replied that this time the Government would have allies; if, as had been surmised, 50,000 publicans took out licences to sell spirits, 'there will likewise be 50,000 informers against unlawful traders'. In any case, as spirits would now be legally available, the public would no longer side with the sellers of illicit liquor.

So it was eventually to prove. For a while the distillers, fearing for their profits, managed to secure a modification of the Act; but by 1751 the consequences were so manifestly shocking—reflected in Henry's Fielding's *Reasons for the Late Increase in Robbers*, and Hogarth's 'Gin Lane'—that the Act's original provisions were reimposed. The dire warnings of Chesterfield and Hervey were quickly shown to have been unjustified. The consumption of spirits in Britain, which had been estimated at eight million gallons in 1743, fell to two million in the 1760s and to around one million in the 1780s. Only one of Chesterfield's forecasts proved correct; that if Governments once began to enjoy the considerable revenue which would accrue to them from the duty, they would never let it go. They never did.

GIN: SCAPEGOAT

Gin-drinking had spread 'with the rapidity and the violence of an epidemic', the historian Lecky was to write: 'small as is the place which this fact occupies in English history, it was probably, if we consider all the consequences that have flowed from it, the most momentous in the eighteenth century—incomparably more so than any event in the purely political or military annals of the country.' And in a celebrated passage, he went on to describe the degradation that gin had wrought, with the retailers 'accustomed to hang out painted boards announcing to their customers they could be made drunk for a penny, dead drunk for twopence, and have straw for nothing; cellars strewn with straw were accordingly provided into which those who had become insensible were dragged, and where they remained until they had sufficiently recovered to renew their orgies'.

Contemporary accounts suggest that Lecky did not exaggerate. Speaker after speaker in the 1743 debate, regardless of his politics showed how appalling the effects of drinking spirits had become producing 'not only momentary fury', Lord Lonsdale claimed 'but incurable debility and lingering diseases; they not only fill our streets with madmen, and prisons with criminals, but our hospitals with cripples'. The statistical evidence points the same way. The birth rate in London fell, in the early part of the century; so did the expectation of life among young children. Nearly ten thousand children under the age of five were dying annually, the Commons were told in 1751, because of the effects of 'the grand destroyer' on their parents. 'Inquire from the several hospitals in this city' Corbyn Morris wrote the same year, 'whether any increase of patients, and of what sort, are daily brought under their care? They will all declare, increasing multitudes of dropsical consumptive people arising from the effects of spirituous liquors.'

Yet those spirituous liquors were not really to blame for what had happened in England—any more than for what was to happen on Tahiti. It was the way that gin had been virtually thrust down Londoners' throats which had been responsible; coupled with

the condition of London's poor at the time. Gin drinking was not merely, as Dorothy George described it in her *London Life in the Eighteenth Century*, 'essentially a disease of poverty'; it was a disease of the ugly kind of poverty portrayed by Fielding, Morris and many another writer. The picture that emerges is of a squalor and degradation far worse even than in the London of the Great Plague; and it was from this that the London poor were seeking escape.

Even so, had spirits come gradually into use Londoners might have learned to come to terms with them, as the Dutch had. But not only were they a novelty in Britain; their sale was relentlessly pushed by the distillers (whose trade, Hervey complained, became the most profitable of any in the kingdom—'except that of being broker to a Prime Minister'). And the distillers themselves had been given every encouragement by the Government, hungry for more revenue—and by the landowner M.P.s, hoping for higher rents.

It was the way gin was introduced, coupled with the environment, that made its effects destructive. When Bishop Berkeley boasted that Britain was the freest country in Europe, the Bishop of Gloucester wrote to him to say there was indeed freedom of a kind—for unbounded licentiousness: 'there is not only no safety living in this town' he wrote from London, 'but scarcely in the country now, robbery and murder are grown so frequent . . . Those accursed spirituous liquors which, to the shame of our government, are so easily to be had, and in such quantities drunk, have changed the very nature of our people.' The crimes which so disturbed the Bishop, though, were not as a rule committed in drink—or even for drink, in the sense of a man robbing to pay for it, though that must have been common enough.

The worst crimes were committed by those who worked for the illicit distiller and the smuggler, because the demand for his illicit goods was sufficient to enable him to pay them well enough not merely to work for him, but if necessary to commit crimes of violence, even murder, for him. Nor was it simply the London gin-drinkers who had provided the demand. Long before they had begun to worry the magistrates, the British ruling class had shown that they were determined to continue to buy their claret and their cognac, regardless of whether the Government wanted to exclude them, as when Britain was at war with France. And at other times, when they were admitted legally on payment of duty, the M.P.s who voted for the tax had no compunction in buying their own supplies more cheaply, knowing they must have been smuggled in.

The lesson the gin plague taught, in fact, was not so much that prohibition was futile, as that it was futile unless the Government enjoyed public confidence and support. Where it was known that the members of the ruling class—Walpole himself being notoriously one of them—did not feel that prohibition should apply to them, the law fell into contempt. Efforts to enforce it, therefore, tended simply to inflame the public; often even those citizens who were not spirit drinkers, and would have liked to see consumption stopped, but were more deeply concerned about the corruption that attempts to stop it involved. That was why, as Bathurst had realised, prohibition had been unwork-

able. It was impossible to find anybody willing to undertake 'a task at once odious and endless, or to punish offences which every day multiplied, and on which the whole body of the common people—a body very formidable when united—was universally engaged'.

THE OPIUM WARS

THE GIN PLAGUE OF LONDON HAD SHOWN HOW A GOVERNMENT, and a governing class, could encourage the spread of drug-taking in its own financial interest, with destructive consequences; but at least it had been possible for them to reverse the policy when those consequences became apparent. A plant drug which grew in Britain's new colonial territory in India was to prove even more profitable; and as the bulk of it was sold away from British territory, there was no need to worry what the consequences might be.

Opium had long been manufactured from the sap of the poppies grown in the Middle East and in India; and traveller after traveller in those regions had reported that unlike in Europe, where it was employed mainly as a sedative, it was taken as a stimulant, particularly when Dutch courage was required. 'There is no Turk who would not buy opium with his last penny', the French naturalist Belon noted in the sixteenth century, 'because they think that they become more daring, and have less fear of the dangers of war.' In India, John Fryer observed in the 1670s, wrestlers took it to help them to perform feats ordinarily beyond their strength, and warriors, 'to run up on any enterprise with a raging resolution to die or be victorious'.

Had the British arrived in India as colonists, they would probably have felt bound to try to suppress opium consumption as a danger to law and order—and to health; it could create a powerful craving, as Robert Clive, who became addicted to it, was to find. But apart from the risk of addiction, opium represented no threat to the East India Company, so long as it remained primarily a mercantile body. The Moguls possessed a monopoly of opium production in Bengal, and they were disposed to restrict consumption, as far as possible, to themselves and their circle. They were willing, though, to sell it to the Company; and the Company's ships began to take it to the East Indies and to China.

WARREN HASTINGS

Opium had long been used in China medicinally; and in the seventeenth century people had begun to burn small quantities of it in the flame of a candle, to inhale the fumes—the idea presumably deriving from seeing tobacco smoked. Disturbed by reports of the spread of the new fad, the Emperor decreed in 1729 that opium must no longer be imported, except under licence. But by this time it had won too many adherents. The flow continued in defiance of the ban, just as with tobacco in those countries which had tried to enforce prohibition a century before.

Most of the opium was brought in from the Middle East by the Portuguese, through Macao; but when the East India Company inherited the Mogul empire after Clive's vic-

tory at Plassey, they also inherited the Mogul's opium monopoly, and the prospect of selling more of it in China, with her estimated 300,000,000 population, was attractive. There was a snag, however: foreigners were permitted to trade with China only through Canton. The Company enjoyed a monopoly of British trade there—including opium brought in under licence. Its rights might be forfeited if it were caught smuggling. The Company therefore began to sell its opium in India to the owners of merchant ships who were prepared to smuggle it into China; and these 'country ships', as they came to be called, took it to Macao.

For a while, the operations were on a very small scale; but when Warren Hastings took over the management of the Company in 1772, becoming Governor-General of British India, he soon grasped the tremendous potential of the traffic and set about expanding it for the benefit of the Company's finances. Hastings had no illusions about what he was doing. He described opium as a 'pernicious' commodity, 'which the wisdom of the Government should carefully restrain from internal consumption'—that is, from consumption in British India. Foreign commerce was a different matter. When war with the Dutch temporarily closed the opium market in their colonies in the East Indies, Hastings switched a consignment to Canton, in a privateer armed at the expense of the Company. The venture was not a success. Blackmailed by the Canton merchants' guild with the threat of disclosure, the Company's Canton agents had to sell the opium to them for a derisory price. But the 'country ships' continued to provide a safe and increasingly lucrative method of distribution.

Shortly before the end of the century another imperial edict against opium was promulgated; and it was to be followed by many more, pleading, warning, threatening. Far from paying any attention, the 'country ships' began to extend their activities; 'some ill-disposed individuals', the Emperor was informed in 1807, had even begun to carry the opium they brought over the mountain passes into the interior. Soon, it reached Peking. In 1813 he discovered to his horror that members of his bodyguard, and some of the court eunuchs, had become enslaved by the habit. Stiffer penalties were decreed, flogging and the wearing of the cangue—a kind of portable pillory; but without success. The lower classes, it was found, were taking to the habit; 'vagabonds clandestinely purchase and eat it' a further edict complained in 1815, 'and eventually become sunk into the most stupid and besotted state, so as to cut down the powers of nature and destroy life.'

The situation was unprecedented. Doubtless the French Government had been very willing, a century earlier, that French wine and brandy should continue to be smuggled into Britain, the proceeds going to help the French wine industry, and at the same time depriving the British Government of needed revenue. But the French Government had not itself acted as a principal; whereas the Government of British India—as the Company had virtually become—were by this time purchasing the entire poppy harvest in their territories, with the deliberate intention of processing the opium and sending the bulk of it to China.

To avoid jeopardising their legal commercial undertakings—in particular, the tea

trade, which had reached massive proportions—they still had to pretend that they were not engaged in smuggling. Nor, technically, were they, as the ‘country ships’ did not sail under the Company’s flag. But they were licensed by the Company—no ship could take opium out of India without such a licence. Their operations, too, were financed by the Company, whose Canton agents received the price for the opium from the Chinese merchants who purchased it.

The Company’s money was also laid out, where necessary, in bribes. When a new Governor from Peking arrested some of the Cantonese who were involved in the traffic, and compelled them under torture to confess, the Company’s Canton agents warned that sales might be subject to some delay; but they made it clear that this would be only until a new bribery scale had been agreed with the ‘officers and police people employed to prevent the sales’, to compensate them for the additional risk they had run.

If criticised for this involvement in drug smuggling, the Company’s line was that it was up to the Chinese, if they wanted, to enforce their own laws; and in this the Company was doing its best to help by restricting production, and keeping up the price, so that most people would not be able to afford it. ‘Were it possible to prevent the use of the drug altogether’, the Governor-General virtuously claimed in 1817, ‘except strictly for the purpose of medicine, we would gladly do it in compassion to mankind’. The Company’s directors in London expressed their approval, but added that restriction of the supply was a policy which would be acceptable only so long as it meant higher profits; otherwise, ‘the expediency of proportionately increasing the annual provision will naturally engage your attention’.

Very soon, the Indian Government’s attention was duly engaged. Attracted by the rising price of opium, Princes in the Indian Native States were beginning to encourage production; and in quantity and quality ‘Malwa’, as it was known, began to rival the Company’s opium from Bengal. The Company hastily abandoned its policy of restricting consumption, reduced its prices, and in 1827 resorted to what was described as a policy of ‘voluntary persuasion’ of the Princes to sell their opium only through the Company, in Calcutta or Bombay. The voluntary persuasion took the form of telling the Princes that they had to make a choice between keeping the friendship, or incurring the enmity, of the British Government. Past experience had shown that an Indian ruler who incurred the enmity of the British Government was liable to lose his throne, and sometimes his life. Friendship, on the other hand, meant a subsidy to compensate for the loss of revenue from opium. It was not long before the great bulk of the Malwa opium produced in the Native States was under the Company’s control.

THE NAPIER INCIDENT

At the Canton end the Company had also had a setback; but it, too, had turned out in the end to be an advantage. By 1820 the system of bribery had become so well-established that the ‘country ships’ were actually sailing up the Canton estuary to Whampoa, the port of Canton, confident that officials would look the other way when the consign-

ments were unloaded. Once again, however, a new Governor, determined to carry out Pekin's instructions—or at least appear to be carrying them out—arrested a number of the Chinese involved. He also ordered that all ships coming up the Canton river must be searched; any ship found carrying any opium would have not merely the opium, but its entire cargo confiscated, and would thereafter be banned from the China trade.

The smugglers departed—but only as far as Lintin island, at the mouth of the estuary. There, they set up what was in all but name, a British base. The opium clippers were fast and well-armed, more than a match for Chinese junks which were sent to intercept them. They brought their cargoes to Lintin, packed in chests-of-drawers, containing about 140 lbs of opium made up into balls about the size of a small grapefruit; discharged the chests in depot ships; and returned to India for more. From Lintin, the opium was either taken by country ships farther along the coast, or transferred locally to 'fast crabs', or 'scrambling dragons'—the names by which the Chinese authorities denounced them, in a proclamation in 1826—shallow-beamed boats manned by thirty or forty oarsmen, designed so that they could skim over bars and shallows, and along remote creeks.

The penalty for being caught was death; but this actually helped the traffic, because the smugglers had no hesitation in fighting it out if, owing to some breakdown in the bribery chain, they were intercepted. Lintin was ideally suited to 'fast crab' activities. It also saved port dues for the larger ships; and it was free from Chinese interference. During the 1820s, as a result, the amount of Indian opium imported into China quadrupled.

There was no question, as yet, of the Company's trying to justify the opium traffic on any other ground than caveat emptor. The taking of opium for pleasure was still regarded as a destructive vice—and not just in India; Stamford Raffles denounced it as a malign influence on the people of Java, 'degrading their character and enervating their energies'. De Quincey's *Confessions*, too, when they were published in 1821, alerted public opinion at home to the agonies of addiction. So when the House of Commons Committee was set up to investigate the affairs of the East India Company in 1830, the Company's line was that it must be allowed to retain its opium monopoly, because only in that way could production be restricted, and consumption kept down by 'making the price as high as possible'. It would have required little research by the Committee to find that so far from trying to keep the price up and consumption down, the Company was selling four times as much opium to the Chinese at a considerably lower price than it had ten years before; but the Company had another argument in reserve, which was to prove decisive.

The value of the opium sold in China amounted to well over two million pounds—getting on for half the amount then annually devoted to paying for the Crown and the Civil Service in Britain. If the Government of India was deprived of the revenue from opium, it would have to be raised from other sources, and the British taxpayer might have to be called upon. It would not be desirable, the Committee recommended, 'to abandon so important a source of revenue as the opium trade, the duty upon opium be-

ing one which falls principally on the foreign consumer'. The Government gratefully accepted the recommendation; and although the Company was stripped of its other privileges, the opium monopoly was retained.

This meant, in effect, that the British Government was now directly responsible for the opium traffic, through the Government of India, 'the Company' being hardly distinguishable from the Indian civil service. Even the pretence that production was being kept down to keep prices high and consumption low was abandoned. The Company's agents were instructed to put pressure on the Bengal peasants to sow more poppies; as the agents were paid on a commission basis, they needed no inducement, using various forms of blackmail to bring recalcitrant peasants into line.

Largely due to the pioneer efforts of Jardine Matheson's 'opium clippers', too, new areas were opened up to the smuggling traffic along the Chinese coast to the north of Canton. Language was a difficulty; William Jardine shrewdly solved it by employing a missionary, Charles Gutzlaff, as interpreter. 'We look up to the ever-blessed Redeemer, to whom China with all its millions is given', Gutzlaff wrote; 'in the faithfulness of His promise we anticipate the glorious day of a general conversion, and are willing to do our utmost to promote the good work'; the good work being the introduction of the Chinese to the bibles, tracts, and ointments, which he distributed wherever his duties as interpreter, in the haggling over opium prices—which brought much satisfaction and profit to Jardine Matheson—permitted.

Some members of the Whig Government, though, were uneasy about the traffic. It did not pass unnoticed abroad that the Government which, in 1833, had paraded its devotion to the cause of humanity by abolishing the slave trade, had now taken over the role of principal in the most massive smuggling operation the world had ever known, designed to keep the Chinese people supplied with a notoriously dangerous drug, consumption of which was generally restricted, and in some places prohibited, on British territory. The remedy, Lord Palmerston decided, was to persuade the Chinese Government to end the Canton monopoly, and to open up other ports to foreign trade—which would be accompanied, the expectation was, by the legalisation of opium. In 1834 he despatched Lord Napier to China, to negotiate the deal.

A naval officer turned sheep farmer, Napier knew nothing of China or the Chinese, and succeeded only in irritating the Canton authorities. Recriminations followed; and the viceroy put a ban on trade of any kind by British ships. Napier's reply was a show of force: two British frigates managed to fight their way up the river to Canton. The Chinese blocked their way back, with stakes and fireships. Napier realised he was trapped. Harassed, and suffering from fever, he had to accept the offer of a Chinese boat for his return journey from Canton down to the sea. It deposited him at Macao where, a few days later, he died.

THE PROHIBITION DEBATE

Up to this point, information about the effects of the opium on the Chinese had been scanty; and it was never to be wholly reliable. But in 1832 two American missionaries founded the Chinese Repository, a monthly magazine which, amongst other things, provided translations of Chinese documents ranging from imperial decrees to fly-posters; and the evidence pointed to growing alarm about the drug. The army, in particular, had succumbed. Of a thousand soldiers sent as reinforcements to help put down a rising in the province of Canton, the commanding officer had had to reject two hundred as unfit for service; and opium was blamed when the rebels defeated the imperial force. The son of the Governor of Canton, it also transpired, had been smuggling it through to his friends in Peking in the equivalent of the diplomatic bag. Chinese historians have suggested that this attraction opium smoking had for the sons of men of wealth and position may have been decisive, in what was to follow: for the Emperor himself—Tao-Kwang, who had succeeded to the throne in 1820—was a victim; his three eldest sons all died of opium addiction.

The difficulty which confronted the Emperor was how to suppress the opium traffic, now that it had obtained such a hold. The story of the opium in the diplomatic bag had come out only because it turned out to be of such poor quality that the merchant concerned was to be proceeded against, just as if it were legal merchandise; and how deeply both merchants and civil authorities were involved was revealed again in 1834.

The Repository reported that the new Governor of Canton (the old one having been sacked for his failure to suppress the traffic), angry at finding that he had been overcharged for his opium supply, had attempted to arrest the suppliers, only to find they had already absconded. When the authorities did take action against smugglers—the Repository explained—it was not to stop smuggling, but to ensure that it was kept in existing channels: 'it would seem that the smuggling trade is becoming a monopoly of the Government.'

The fact, too, that so many respectable citizens—or their sons—were opium smokers encouraged extortion and blackmail. Since the beginning of the century, the American merchant Charles W. King—one of the very few merchants of any nationality in Canton who had refused to have anything to do with the traffic—complained in a letter to the British Superintendent of Trade: the British merchants, led on by the East India Company, have been driving a trade in violation of the highest laws and the best interests of the Chinese empire. This cause has been pushed so far as to derange its currency, to corrupt its officers, and ruin multitudes of its people. The traffic has become associated, in the politics of the country, with the axe and the dungeon; in the breasts of men in private life, with the wreck of property, virtue, honour and happiness.

All ranks, from the Emperor on the throne to the people of the humblest hamlets, have felt its sting. To the fact of its descent to the lowest classes of society, we are frequent witnesses; and the Court gazettes are evidence that it has marked out victims for disgrace and ruin even among the imperial kindred.

Law-abiding citizens were not necessarily safe as Gutzlaff was to lament, when he came to write the life of the Emperor. The great bane of China, Gutzlaff—of all people—argued, had been the introduction of opium by foreigners. The rewards offered to informers in the attempt to suppress it made them ‘both numerous and unscrupulous; whoever had a grudge against his neighbour, denounced him as a transgressor of the laws against the drug’; and the excuse ‘searching for the drug’, had been used by officials to commit thefts, and other outrages. Thousands of innocent people, Gutzlaff lamented, had been the victims.

The failure of the prohibition policy, and the disastrous consequences arising out of the effort to enforce it, had attracted the attention of some of the teachers at an academy which had been founded in 1820 in Canton. Perhaps because it had not settled into the traditional academic grooves, the possibility of legalising opium imports, subject to a duty, had been discussed; and among those influenced by the arguments in favour of that course was Hsü Nai-chi, who had later become an imperial official in the province of Kwantung, and seen for himself the effects of the failure of prohibition.

In May 1836 he addressed a memorial to the Emperor, putting the case for admitting opium legally, on payment of duty.

Hsü did not dispute that ‘so vile a practice’, and the evils arising out of it, should if possible be stopped. His argument was that prohibition not merely had failed to stop the evils, but had created many more; and the severer the interdicts against it became, ‘the more widely do the evils arising therefrom spread’. When it had first been found that prohibition was not working, flogging and the cangue had been introduced; then, exile, imprisonment, and even death. Yet ‘the smokers of the drug have increased in number, and the practice has spread almost through the whole empire’.

Supporters of the prohibition policy had been forced back on the argument that it was not the regulations, but how they were carried out, that was the trouble; ‘it is said, the daily increase is owing to the negligence of officers in enforcing the interdicts!’ But this negligence, Hsü insisted, was the fault of the interdicts. The more severe they became, the greater the incentive to criminals to employ violence, or corruption, or both.

In its general approach, the memorial was remarkably similar in its line of argument to Bathurst’s in the House of Lords nearly a century before. But Hsü’s analysis went a little deeper in its recognition of why the severity of a penal code, so far from helping in the effort to suppress a drug, must make it easier for the importer. As he was not himself at risk, the penalties did not matter to him. At worst, all that he had to worry about was having to pay out more in bribes. But even that could be, in the end, to his advantage. The higher the payment offered, the easier it became to find officials who would succumb.

The Emperor was sufficiently impressed by Hsü’s memorandum to refer it, in June, to the Governor of Canton, Teng T’ing-chen, who had taken office earlier that year. Teng

had already been converted to the legalisation policy: his recommendations followed the line Hsü had laid down. But other advisers expressed horror at the proposal—in much the same terms as Hervey and Chesterfield had used about the Spirits Licensing Bill. ‘When have not prostitution, gambling, treason, robbery, and suchlike infractions of the laws afforded occasion for extortionate underlings and worthless vagrants to benefit themselves, and by falsehood and bribery to amass wealth?’, Chu T’sun, Sub-Chancellor of the Grand Secretariat, asked. ‘But none, surely, would contend that the law, because in such instances rendered ineffectual, should therefore be abrogated!’ The consequences of such a step would be disastrous:

The laws that forbid the people to do wrong may be likened to the dykes which prevent the overflowing of water. If any one, then, urging that the dykes are very old, and therefore useless, should have them thrown down, what words could express the consequences of the impetuous rush and all-destroying overflow!

The damage, Chu feared, might already have been done, simply by the knowledge that there was a move in favour of legalisation: ‘the instant effect has been, that crafty thieves and villains have on all sides begun to raise their heads and open their eyes, gazing about and pointing the finger, under the notion that when once these prohibitions are repealed, thenceforth, and forever, they may regard themselves as free from every restraint’.

Another memorialist added a recommendation which may well have been decisive. The opium sellers, he pointed out, were actually living in Canton: even Jardine himself. Why? Why not arrest them, for breaking the imperial law? Why not send all their ships back, and allow no resumption of trade of any kind until all opium smuggling activities had ceased? ‘If commands be issued of this plain and energetic character, in language strong, and in sense becoming, though their nature be the most abject—that of a dog, or a sheep—yet, having a care for their own lives, they will not fail to seek the gain, and to flee the danger.’

This was the policy that the Emperor elected to follow. For having raised the hopes of the opium smokers that the drug might be legalised, Hsü Nai-chi was removed from his post. An official who had sent in detailed plans showing how prohibition could be enforced, Lin Tse-Hsü, was despatched early in 1839 to Canton as Imperial Commissioner, charged with the suppression of the opium traffic.

THE FIRST OPIUM WAR

The story of Lin’s commissionership, which provoked the first Opium War, has often been told; in recent years by, among others, Maurice Collis, in *Foreign Mud*; Arthur Waley, in *The Opium War through Chinese Eyes*; and Hsin-Pao Chang in *Commissioner Lin and the Opium War*. It represents the classic example of the limitations of honesty, integrity and assiduity in carrying out a campaign to suppress the traffic in a drug. Yet Lin felt he was well-placed to achieve his aim. He had a half-Nelson on the British mer-

chants, because he knew they could not afford to risk the loss of the tea trade, through Canton; and he determined to exploit the hold this gave him. The British merchants, he announced after his arrival, must surrender all their opium stocks. When, thinking to placate him, they offered to surrender a thousand chests, he took the opportunity to show that he knew exactly how much more opium they had, and to inform them that until they handed it over, all trade with British vessels, and all movement of British shipping up and down the Canton river, would cease.

At this point the Chief Superintendent of Trade, Captain Charles Elliot, managed to get up to Canton. As Chief Superintendent, he was a kind of unofficial British Consul in China; and he had written time after time to Palmerston to warn him that if the opium traffic was allowed to develop unchecked, a crisis must develop. It now had; and, though he had no official powers, he decided there was no help for it but to hand over all the opium: more than 20,000 chests. Lin put an end to the blockade, took delivery of the opium, and personally supervised its destruction. It was mixed with salt and lime, dissolved in water, and flushed away into the sea.

Lin had achieved his first objective; but it availed him nothing. Elliot ordered all British subjects and all British ships out of the Canton river, so that they could no longer be held virtually as hostages—the American merchants, most of whom had been involved in the opium traffic, staying in Canton to act as agents for the British, so that the tea trade would not be disrupted. The opium arriving from India was simply switched to points along the coast, as an Imperial Censor, Pu Chi-t'ung, had warned would happen, in a memorial to the Emperor. And Lin found himself unable to check the smuggling. After the destruction of the opium, he intended to have a purge of the customs officials; but too many of them, he found, were implicated in the traffic. Even where he managed to stir them to action, this only—as he explained to the Emperor in the spring of 1840—led to the smugglers adopting more ingenious ruses to circumvent them. Sometimes opium would be hidden in the rear apartments of houses, where the women lived, their presence embarrassing the searchers.

Sometimes it was buried in forests, or in the precincts of temples. It had even been put into chests disguised as coffins, and laid to rest, until required, in tombs. And Lin was finding it hard to get informers, because they were no use to him unless they knew the traffic—in which case they would work for the smugglers, who could afford to pay them more.

What was being demonstrated, for the first time on such a large scale, was the impracticability of prohibition as a way to suppress the traffic in a drug, particularly in a drug as addictive as opium. Addicts, who felt they had to have it, would pay whatever the smugglers charged. If supplies dwindled owing to more effective customs work, the price rose, allowing a bigger margin of profit out of which to bribe the customs officials into connivance. And as smuggling was so extensive, many thousands of people, from the rowers of the fast crabs to the opium smokers, had a common interest in breaking the law, and protecting others who broke it. Where respectable citizens or officials were

involved, there were opportunities for extortion and for blackmail; and the higher the legal penalties for opium offenses, the greater the risk that those involved would commit acts of violence and even murder, rather than allow themselves to be caught.

All this, Lin was to learn in the months which elapsed between the departure of the British from Canton, and the arrival of the expeditionary force which Elliot had asked for, to punish the Commissioner for his presumption. Elliot had not altered his views about opium. 'No man entertains a deeper detestation of the disgrace and sin of this forced traffic', he wrote to Palmerston, in November 1839 'than the humble individual who signs this despatch. I see little to choose between it and piracy.' But British property had been extorted by compulsion, and destroyed; that, he felt, was 'the most shameless violence which one nation has ever yet dared to perpetrate against another'. While awaiting Palmerston's instructions, he used the small naval force he had at his disposal to protect the British merchant fleet, which lay at anchor off Hong Kong, and to inflict some punishment on presumptuous Chinese naval junks.

The British force arrived in June 1840; including what Lin described as 'cartwheel ships, that can put the axles in motion by means of fire, and can move rather fast'. Still more important, the new steamships could move in a flat calm, or directly up wind. They did not, however, waste any time trying to move up the river to Canton. They went north, to put more direct pressure on Peking. Lin, who had been basking in the Imperial favour, was abruptly removed from his post, and sent into exile. His mistake—as the Censor, Pu, had realised—lay in imagining that the threat of closure of the legitimate British trade would suffice to bring the opium traffic to an end. It mattered little to the British merchants that instead of picking up their tea at Canton, they had to leave the Americans to collect it there, and receive it from them at Hong Kong. What was vital was that the flow of their imports of opium should continue; and Lin had been unable to stop it.

It was not seriously impeded even by the hostilities which followed, as militarily the resistance was insignificant. By some judicious diplomatic manoeuvres and some injudicious attempts at deception, the Chinese managed to avoid capitulation until the summer of 1842, when they were finally compelled to accept the British terms. By then, the opium traffic was back to normal.

THE TREATY OF NANKING

The war had not, admittedly, been fought exclusively to legitimise the opium traffic. Palmerston could claim that he was mainly concerned with compelling the Chinese to accept free trade. But opium happened to be by far the most profitable commodity involved. 'Had there been an alternative', Commissioner Lin's biographer Hsin-pao Chang commented, '—say, molasses, or rice—the conflict might have been called the Molasses War, or the Rice War'. But there was no alternative. Not merely was opium the only British import for which there was any substantial demand in China: the demand had grown enormously. In the late 1820s the Company exported an average of less than 10,000 chests annually to China; that figure had increased, in the year before Lin was

appointed, to 40,000. Palmerston was fully aware of the situation; Sardine, who had returned to England just before Lin arrived at Canton, had been called in to brief him, 'I have to instruct you'—Palmerston accordingly informed Captain Elliot—'to make some arrangement with the Chinese Government for the admission of opium to China as an article of lawful commerce.'

Palmerston knew, though, that it would be unwise to make this instruction public. The Chinese plenipotentiaries, he went on, must not be given the idea that it was 'the intention of H.M. Government to use any compulsion'. Had H.M. Government been seen to be forcing the Chinese to legalise opium, its enemies abroad and at home would have been handed a serviceable weapon; and its shaky majority, which had narrowly survived a debate on its China policy in the Commons in 1840, would have been again imperilled. The line to take to the Chinese, Palmertson suggested, was that they should offer to legalise opium in their own interest. They should be reminded that they could not stop it coming in, for even if the supply of opium from India could be checked, 'plenty of it would be produced in other countries, and would thence be sent to China'; and they should allow themselves to be gently persuaded to profit out of necessity by taxing it.

When Elliot was sacked in 1841, similar instructions were given to his successor, Sir George Pottinger. The British Government, the Chinese plenipotentiaries were to be told, did not insist; but it must be impressed on the Chinese how very much in their own interest the legalisation of opium would be. Pottinger duly presented Palmerston's view, only to be met with a blank refusal even to discuss the possibility of legalisation. Opium, they told him, was an evil, growing daily worse. They could not, even if they wanted to, countenance the proposal, as the Emperor would repudiate them. Pottinger's instructions left him no room to manoeuvre; and the change of Government in Britain in 1841 promised to make his task still more difficult—the Tories in Opposition having come out strongly against the opium traffic in a debate in the Commons the year before.

In the event, though, the Tories' principles underwent a rapid change when they crossed the floor of the House. They did not care to put any further pressure on the Chinese to admit opium; Pottinger was told he could accept the continuance of the ban. But he was instructed to warn the Chinese that, so far as British shipping was concerned, they 'need not trouble themselves whether our vessels bring opium or not'. In other words, British ships suspected of smuggling must not be searched. As the Chinese would presumably ask the British Government, in these circumstances, not to allow British ships to be used for smuggling, Pottinger was told he should instruct their owners to conform—leaving the traffic to 'Chinese fast boats and other craft', as before. And it was this system—'mutual connivance', as Pottinger's successor Sir John Davis tetchily described it—that came into operation after the peace settlement.

THE ARROW WAR

Mutual connivance was an unsatisfactory basis for peace. It survived only because in the immediate post-war period, the Chinese were in no mood to risk a resumption of

hostilities. In 1850 the new Emperor, Hsien-feng, issued a fresh edict against opium smoking, giving offenders a brief period of grace in which to break the habit, after which anybody caught would be beheaded, and his family sent into slavery. But a few months later the Taiping—the ‘long-haired ones’—rose in rebellion; and although they were opposed to the use of drugs of any kind—tobacco smoking, even, was punishable by death—their victories benefited the opium traffic. The leaders of the Taiping were too preoccupied with the struggle against the imperial troops; and at the same time, it became difficult for the Emperor to enforce prohibition, even in those regions which still nominally adhered to his cause.

The traffic, too, was greatly facilitated by the fact that under the terms of the Treaty of Nanking the British had taken Hong Kong. Pottinger had assured the Chinese plenipotentiaries that the exportation of opium from Hong Kong to China would be forbidden; and it was. But the ban was never enforced. There was nothing to prevent opium from being smuggled out to the mainland. As soon as the smugglers realised that the Canton authorities, rather than risk precipitating another war, were not searching British vessels, they began to register the smuggling craft as British, and sail them openly up the Canton estuary, with the Union Jack as their flag of convenience.

Opium also poured into Northern China through Shanghai which, as the northernmost of the ports opened to foreigners by the Pottinger treaty, served a hitherto largely inaccessible region. In the ten years following the treaty, the opium traffic to China doubled. This roused British hopes that the Emperor, realising his ban had failed and needing funds to mount more effective operations against the Taiping, might be converted to the policy of legalisation, as some of his courtiers desired. But he remained determined to stamp out opium smuggling. To this end, he had sent Yeh Ming-Chen, a disciple and friend of Commissioner Lin's, to Canton to resume Lin's policies. Caution, and the need to deal with the Taiping, meant that there was no immediate confrontation of the kind Lin had precipitated; but Yeh cleverly fanned the anti-British feeling which had arisen since the war among the Cantonese. There were ugly incidents, and the British merchants began to realise that they and their commerce were in growing danger.

An excuse would be needed, though, for a new campaign. Yeh provided it in the autumn of 1856, when Mandarins arrested the crew of the lorcha *Arrow*, lying off Canton. Lorchas were a hybrid species, with a Western-style hull and eastern-style sails; they had been found convenient for smuggling, and the *Arrow* was one of many which, though Chinese-owned, had been registered as British for that purpose in Hong Kong. For form's sake, the master was British; but the crew were Chinese, some of them being criminals known to the Chinese authorities.

So far as the British authorities were concerned, this made no difference. Criminals or not, they were under the protection of the British flag. (The discovery that the *Arrow's* registration had expired, so that it was no longer a British vessel, caused only momentary embarrassment; it could legally have re-registered, the explanation was, the next time it arrived in Hong Kong.) When Yeh refused to apologise, the navy was

called in, and proceeded to shell his official residence in Canton.

The Tory Opposition were outraged. The Arrow affair, they complained, was a shoddy excuse for the war which Palmerston now clearly proposed to wage; and in an impassioned debate in the Commons, they did what they had failed to do in 1840, winning the Radicals to their side and defeating the Government in a vote. It was just the opportunity Palmerston had needed. He held a general election, taking care to ensure it was fought on the issue of the insult to the British Crown. 'An insolent barbarian wielding authority at Canton,' he told the electors of Tiverton, 'has violated the British flag, broken the engagement of treaties, offered rewards for the heads of British subjects in that part of China, and planned their destruction by murder, assassinations and poisons.' The electorate, their patriotic passions aroused, enthusiastically voted him and his supporters back into office.

The Emperor managed to delay the final capitulation, as his predecessor had, by some judicious stalling, and some injudicious deception. Lord Elgin, leading the British expeditionary force, had to occupy Peking and burn down the Emperor's Summer Palace, to convince him that when terms were accepted, even under duress, they must be kept. And one of the terms imposed, on this occasion, was that in future imports of opium would be legally permitted, on payment of a duty.

As before, it was possible to maintain that this was not what the war had been fought about—a view which suited Elgin, who personally thought the flimsy Arrow pretext scandalous, and was so disgusted with what he saw of the effects of opium in China that he declined to treat it as a significant item on the negotiation agenda. It had, in fact, by this time become part of a much wider set of objectives: shared by the French, who had commercial designs on China, and had joined in the fighting, and the Americans, who had helped in spite of their neutrality. The common aim was to compel the Chinese to conform to the ways of the West in diplomacy and in trade. Nevertheless opium was still, for the British, the main consideration.

The returns of the years between the wars had shown no great improvement in legal exports to China; the East India Company and the opium merchants, not British manufacturers, had been the chief beneficiaries of the opening of Shanghai to foreigners. How much importance the British delegation attached to opium was demonstrated when they persuaded the American plenipotentiary, William B. Reed, who had been formally instructed to accept the right of the Chinese to maintain prohibition, to repudiate his brief.

As expected, legalisation produced a rapid increase in the demand, which the manufacturers in India were ready to meet. From fewer than 60,000 chests in 1859-60, the figure rose almost to 90,000 ten years later, and to over 105,000 in 1879-80. And as it was no longer possible to hope that opium could be kept out, the Chinese had a powerful incentive to cultivate poppies, from which to manufacture their own. There had been occasional reports since the early 1830s of illicit poppy cultivation, but not on a scale

sufficient to cause the Imperial government much alarm.

Now, farmers who grew poppies could feel they were performing a patriotic duty, helping to reduce the drain of currency out of the country. For a while, though, the home product did not pose any threat to imports. In the Treaty negotiations the Chinese plenipotentiaries, anxious to demonstrate that there had been no change of view—that the drug was still objectionable on moral grounds—had argued for a high import duty, to reduce consumption.

The British, determined to keep the price of their product competitive, demanded the right to decide what rate of duty should be levied, and reduced by half the rate the Chinese had proposed, so that when the cost of smuggling operations was taken into account, the new selling price need not be substantially higher than the old. As the Indian product was considered greatly superior, there need be no immediate fear of any abatement of demand.

For form's sake, the Government's argument was that the Chinese had voluntarily abandoned prohibition; but few who were in a position to know their attitude were deceived. 'Nothing that has been gained was received from the free will of the Chinese', Sir Thomas Wade, one of the British negotiators, was to write ten years later; 'the concessions made to us have been from the first to the last extorted against the conscience of the nation—in defiance, that is to say, of the moral convictions of its educated men.' And Wade was in no doubt that the consequences for the Chinese had been terrible. In all the cases in his experience, opium had led to 'the steady descent, moral and physical, of the smoker'.

OPIUM: BANE OR BENEFIT?

Up to this point, the assumption that opium was injurious to the health and morals of the Chinese had hardly been questioned. The most commonly cited authority on the subject was the missionary W. H. Medhurst, who had gone out in 1816, and whose book *China* was published in 1840. By his reckoning, the amount of opium smuggled in at that time was enough to demoralise nearly three million people

When the habit is once formed, it becomes inveterate; discontinuance is more and more difficult, until at length, the sudden deprivation of the accustomed indulgence produces certain death. In proportion as the wretched victim comes under the power of the infatuating drug, so is his ability to resist temptation less strong; and debilitated in body as well as mind, he is unable to earn his usual pittance, and not infrequently sinks under the cravings of an appetite which he is unable to gratify. Thus they may be seen, hanging their heads by the doors of the opium shops, which the hard-hearted keepers, having fleeced them of their all, will not permit them to enter; and shut out from their own dwellings, either by angry relatives or ruthless creditors, they die in the streets unpitied and despised.

The opium habit, Medhurst estimated, reduced life expectation by about ten years, destroyed health while life lasted, and at the same time ruined countless families because of the drain on the smoker's resources. In the 1840 Commons debate, a few voices had been raised in opium's defence, but the contention had been simply that its evils had been greatly exaggerated, and that its effects were no worse than those of over-indulgence in ardent spirits, all too familiar in the West. Between the opium wars, however, there were occasional intimations that opium need not have dire effects. The comments from Chinese sources remained implacably hostile, and so did the bulk of the reports from missionaries; but Dr. Benjamin Hobson, who had worked for years as a doctor among the poor in Canton, was one of those who realised that there was not necessarily any inevitability about the process of degeneration, even for addicts. 'I have found' he wrote, the habitual use of opium even compatible with longevity . . . though its tendency is to undermine the constitution, and only support the system by a false and dangerous stimulus, yet, if it can be taken regularly and of good quality, it does not abridge the duration of life to the extent that might reasonably be expected that it should do.

The opium merchants took their cue. The ending of prohibition after the second Opium War relieved them of their worries in China; but they still had to watch public opinion in Britain. The Palmerston era was ending; the Conservatives had always been hostile to his China policy; and the anti-opium campaign, led by Lord Shaftesbury, was gaining influential non-party support. It was time, the merchants realised, to present their wares in a more positively favourable light; and on November 28th, 1867, Jardine Matheson put them in a letter to the Governor of Hong Kong. The ugly picture formerly drawn of the effects of opium on the Chinese, they claimed, had been forgotten; 'since 1860 it has been rendered abundantly clear that the use of opium is not a curse, but a comfort and a benefit to the hard-working Chinese'.

Had it been only Jardine Matheson who took this line, it could safely have been ignored. And when similar views were expressed by British consuls in the Treaty Ports in China, and transmitted to the Foreign Office, it was possible to suspect that they might be more concerned with British trade than with British moral prestige. But the cause was eventually supported by men who had no direct interest in opium, and who were unlikely to have been deluded or suborned; including Sir George Birdwood, a former Professor of *Materia Medica* in Bombay. Opium smoking, he told the readers of *The Times* in a letter published on December 26th, 1881, was 'almost as harmless an indulgence as twiddling the thumbs, and other silly-looking methods of concentrating the jaded mind'. The following year a book by William Bretherton, a retired Hong Kong solicitor, cited a number of testimonials to opium from men of standing on the island; and in 1892, an even more impressive array of its supporters was paraded by G. H. M. Batten, a former Indian civil servant, in a paper read in London to the Society of Arts.

The opportunity to solve the mystery came in 1893, when the pressure of public opinion in England, and a motion in the House of Commons, pushed the Government into setting up a Royal Commission to investigate the subject. Their verdict was that opium in general was used in moderation, and led 'to no evident ill effects'. One member of the

Commission, admittedly, dissented in a scathing minority report; and later, Joseph Rowntree was able to produce quite a damning critique of the report itself—showing, for example, that although forty-nine out of the fifty-two missionaries from China who had given evidence had condemned opium, the report had quoted only the opinions of two of the three who had been less critical. Nevertheless the minutes of evidence showed that as well as merchants and colonial civil servants, many doctors and some missionaries believed that the opium habit was on balance harmless, and could even be regarded as socially desirable.

How was it possible that two such mutually contradictory sets of evidence could each be supported by so much knowledgeable and trustworthy testimony? There was one obvious clue. Most of the witnesses who condemned opium had worked in China. In India, where the Commission had held most of its sittings, most witnesses were in opium's favour. Could it not be—some of them had suggested—that the explanation was simple; the Chinese smoked opium, whereas the Indians ate it, or drank it?

But evidence from other colonies failed to support this proposition. In the Malay peninsula, the colonial authorities agreed, the reverse was the case; 'Opium eating in all its forms', the Auditor-General of the Straits Settlements claimed, 'when once established as a habit, produces an invariable bodily and mental condition which imperatively calls for a constant, if graduated, increase of the drug. Now, this is not the case with opium smoking.' And evidence from the same region upset another hypothesis; that the Chinese might be in some way hereditarily susceptible to addiction. In the Straits Settlements, Major McCullum informed the Commission, only the 'indolent Malays' suffered ill-effects from the drug. For the Chinese it was 'a harmless, even a beneficial stimulant'.

Reading between the lines it is clear that the Royal Commission, baffled, came to assume that the explanation must be looked for in the circumstances in which opium addiction was observed. The 'anti-opiumists', as they were described, must have seen the effects of the abuse of opium; they must have seen, or heard about, only the addicts, and been thereby misled into thinking that addiction was inevitable. Again and again, in the reports from China, the emphasis was on the inescapable nature of the perdition awaiting the opium smoker.

As the Rev. A. Elwin, a missionary in China for over twenty years, put it, there was no such thing as a moderate smoker; 'the dose is always, I believe, increased by degrees'. But there were scores of witnesses in India to demonstrate this was nonsense—including missionaries; Dr. H. Martyn Clark testified that he knew of no 'hardier, thriftier or more careful people' than the peasants of the Punjab, where he had worked; yet most of them regularly took opium, a habit which 'seems to interfere neither with their longevity nor with their health'. The most reasonable explanation, therefore, was that the missionary, an alien in China, had been dealing with the cast-offs, the derelicts; whereas in India, he was familiar with all levels of the community.

Although there was a measure of truth in this, it would not account for the whole

range of different reactions to opium described over the course of the century, in different regions—or in the same region, in different periods. When opium had been introduced into Assam, along with cheap labour for the new tea plantations, an official had protested in 1839 that in the course of a few years the opium plague had ‘depopulated this beautiful country, turned it into a land of wild beasts’; and in the process, it had ‘degenerated the Assamese from a fine race of people to the most abject, crafty and demoralised race in India’. Yet fifty years later, though the consumption of opium there was higher per head than in any other part of India, it was giving no trouble. ‘They take their opium’, Commissioner Driberg reported, ‘just as a good Englishman would take his “peg”.’

Again, R. L. Stevenson’s surmise—that it was the rapidity of the social changes which was disruptive, leading as it did to the abuse of drink or drugs—seems the most likely explanation. Opium had come suddenly into Assam, along with an influx of cheap labour, disrupting the community’s old way of life. It did the same in Burma, the only British colony where it gave serious trouble. And it was a menace in China, in those regions which the smugglers could reach to ‘push’ the Indian produce. But in India itself, it posed no problem, being used mainly not as a narcotic, but, like coca in Peru, as a way of ‘enabling the taker to undergo severe and continuous physical exercise’—Dr. Francis Anstie noted in his treatise on drugs in the 1860s—‘without the assistance of ordinary food’. It was for this purpose, Dr. W. Myers told the Royal Commission, that the chair-bearers, couriers and coolies of Formosa took opium. He had been forced to alter his ‘preconceived prejudices with reference to the universally baneful effects of the drug’, when he found that they used it every day, as a matter of course, rarely needing to increase the amount.

Significantly, where the Chinese were allowed to smoke opium, outside their own country’s jurisdiction, they did nothing to disturb the authorities. The opium smoker learned to discriminate, choosing his own brand, and savouring it with the relish of a connoisseur. In a book describing his experiences as an attaché in Peking, published in 1900, A. B. Freeman Mitford—the future Lord Redesdale—could seriously claim that to deprive the Chinaman of his Indian opium, and to condemn him to the ‘miserable substitute’ grown in China, ‘would be like forbidding the importation of champagne and Chateau Lafitte into England, and driving our epicures and invalids to the necessity of falling back on cheap and nasty stimulants’.

Mitford, though, had lived in a region where the inhabitants had come to terms with opium. He had never seen, as missionaries had seen, the destruction and misery that the drug could cause before it was domesticated. In any case, the British Government could not claim that it had only been trying to keep the Chinese supplied with an agreeable pastime, because it had not made that its excuse. Throughout the century, its aim had been to make the maximum profit from the drug, regardless of its effect on the Chinese. For a brief period at the beginning production had been restricted, but this was to increase profits; the pretence that it was to keep down consumption was abandoned the moment profits began to fall.

Two campaigns—three, if Napier's is included—had been undertaken mainly to compel the Chinese to take the drug, preferably legally. The reasons given, that they were designed to punish the Chinese for seizing British property, and for insulting the British flag, were transparently spurious; the property was a smuggled drug, in the first instance, and the flag was flown by a drug smuggler in the second. It was the most protractedly sordid episode in British Imperial history; and it was also an intimation that where revenue was involved, a government could be just as grasping, and just as unscrupulous, as any entrepreneur. Governments have since often thundered out denunciations of the men who manufacture and sell opium and heroin. It was a Government which taught them how.

INDIAN HEMP

HEMP DRUGS; THE LEGENDS

THE LONG STRUGGLE TO END THE OPIUM TRAFFIC FROM INDIA TO China had one curious and revealing by-product. When the Government was compelled by the vote in the House of Commons to concede a Royal Commission into opium, there was an immediate protest: why single out opium when there were other drugs in common use in India? For many years, the opium lobby had contended that hemp was the more dangerous of the two. In 1840 the banker W. B. Baring had told the Commons that if the traffic were suppressed, it might simply lead to the adoption in the Far East of drugs 'infinitely more prejudicial to physical health and energy than opium', citing as an example 'an exhalation of the hemp plant, easily collected at certain seasons, which was in every way more injurious than the use of the poppy'. Reminded of hemp's existence, the Government decided on what appears to have been a diversionary tactic.

On March 2nd, 1893 the Member of Parliament for Bradford East, W. S. Caine—a persistent antidrug campaigner—asked for an enquiry into the use of hemp drugs in India; and the Under Secretary of State for India was able to assure him that the Viceroy was setting it up, and would be glad if the results 'show that further restriction can be placed upon the sale and consumption of these drugs'.

There was a mass of evidence available about their effects, but little of it which could be described as scientific, apart from some experiments conducted in the 1840s by Dr. W. B. O'Shaughnessy, Professor of Chemistry in the Medical College of Calcutta. He had begun with animals, finding that they reacted in much the same way as humans. A middling-sized dog, given ten grains of hemp, 'became stupid and sleepy, dozing at intervals, starting up, wagging his tail, as if extremely contented; he ate some food greedily; on being called to, he staggered to and fro, and his face assumed a look of utter and helpless drunkenness.

These symptoms lasted about two hours, and then gradually passed away.' Finding that no harm came to the animals, O'Shaughnessy next tried the drugs on patients suffering from disorders for which there was no effective remedy—rheumatism, tetanus,

cholera, convulsions—with results which led him to claim in the Transactions of the Medical and Physical Society of Calcutta that ‘in hemp, the profession has gained an anti-convulsive remedy of the greatest value’. With hemp, though, as with coca, it was difficult to make up pills or potions which were of consistent purity and strength; and the essential drug element in the plant eluded researchers. It remained in general use in medicine in India, particularly at the village level; but it did not elsewhere establish the reputation O’Shaughnessy expected.

In Britain, the drug—hashish, as it was loosely described—tended to be thought of as sinister; not on the basis of experience or experiment, but because of the reputation it had derived from legends. One had come down from Marco Polo, who had heard it on his voyage to China in the thirteenth century. The ‘Old Man of the Mountain’, he was told, had desired that his people should believe that a valley which he had enclosed, and made into a garden, was Paradise; ‘so he had fashioned it after the description that Mahomet gave of his Paradise, to wit, that it should be a beautiful garden running with conduits of wine and milk and honey and water, and full of lovely women for the delectation of all its inmates’.

A selected youth would be given a drug to put him to sleep, and carried into the valley, so that when he woke up he would find himself, as he thought, in Paradise, and would enjoy its sybaritic delights. He would then again be put to sleep, and transported back out of the valley, ‘whereat he was not over well pleased’. All he had to do if he wished to return, the Old Man of the Mountain would tell him, was to perform the service required of him: ‘go thou and slay so-and-so; and when thou returnest, my angels shall bear thee into Paradise. And shouldst thou die, nevertheless even so will I send my angels to carry thee back into Paradise.’ So great was the desire to get back that the initiates would face any peril to do so; ‘and in this manner the Old One got his people to murder any one whom he would get rid of’.

In Marco Polo’s account, therefore, the drug featured only as a way to enable the Old Man of the Mountain to transport the youths to and from the valley. But the legend became embroidered in the telling; the drug used to put the youths to sleep was given a very different role. The murderers used it—the story ran—to nerve themselves to carry out the Old Man’s commands. When, early in the nineteenth century, the French etymologist Sylvestre de Sacy identified hashish, the drug, with haschishin—assassin—this was taken to be conclusive evidence that the members of the Order of Assassins had derived their name from the drug they took before committing their atrocious crimes. And the idea that hashish could be taken for this purpose appeared to be confirmed when it was learned that the ‘whirling dervishes’ used it, and when Livingstone reported that the ‘pernicious weed’ was used by African tribes to help them work themselves up into ‘a species of frenzy’.

It was difficult, though, to reconcile the effects of the drug in the legend, with the effects of the drug as actually observed in most of the countries of the Middle and Near East, where it was in common use. The drinks which the Arabs made from the hemp

plant, the French traveller C. S. Sonnini noted on his tour in the late eighteenth century, throw them into a sort of pleasing inebriety, a state of reverie that inspires gaiety and occasions agreeable dreams. This kind of annihilation of the faculty of thinking, this kind of slumber of the soul, bears no resemblance to the intoxication produced by wine or strong liquors, and the French language affords no terms by which it can be expressed. The Arabs give the name of *kid* to this voluptuous vacuity of mind, this sort of fascinating stupor.

Most observers echoed Sonnini; but this did not do much to redeem the reputation of the drug. To the English, as they entered upon the Victorian era, it was no recommendation to say that hashish induced 'voluptuous vacuity', the secondary reputation it now began to acquire—nourished, doubtless, by Dumas's account of its effects on the Baron Franz d'Epinay, in *The Count of Monte Christo*. . . there followed a dream of passion like that promised by the Prophet to the elect. Lips of stone turned to flame, breasts of ice became like heated lava, so that to Franz, yielding for the first time to the sway of the drug, love was a sorrow and voluptuousness a torture, as burning mouths were pressed to his thirsty lips, and he was held in cool serpent-like embraces. The more he strove against this unhallowed passion, the more his senses yielded to the thrall, and at length, weary of the struggle that taxed his very soul, he gave way and sank back breathless and exhausted beneath the enchantment of his marvellous dream.

The translators of *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night* confirmed the reputation of hashish, not simply as a drug by which husbands could be put to sleep so that lovers could enjoy their wives, but also as an aphrodisiac—as illustrated in the translation by Sir Richard Burton in the story of the lover who was about to consummate his design when he woke up to find that it was all a hashish-induced dream, and that he was surrounded by a crowd of people laughing at him, 'for his prickle was at point and the napkin had slipped from his middle'. The versions which circulated in England might omit or bowdlerise such episodes, but the reputation of hashish spread by hearsay, leaving the impression that even if some doubt might remain about what precisely its effects were, they were certainly deplorable.

Perhaps because of this reputation, the British Raj tended to be more suspicious of Indian hemp drugs, as they were described there, than of opium. They had been subjected to an enquiry on more than one occasion in the past, the latest investigation having been conducted as recently as the 1870s. Its report had claimed that hemp drugs were less dangerous than their reputation suggested, and that in any case prohibition was impracticable. The Liberal Government decided to ignore these inconvenient findings, and set up a fresh enquiry.

The members of the Commission were appointed in July 1893, under the Chairmanship of the Hon. W. Mackworth Young, first Financial Commissioner for the Punjab. Their terms of reference indicated what was expected of them. They were to examine the trade in hemp drugs; its effect on the social and moral condition of the people; and 'the desirability of prohibiting the growth of the plant'. The Commission was composed

of three British colonial officials, three 'native non-official gentlemen', and a Secretary, H. J. McIntosh—to whom much of the credit for the eventual report was probably due.

HEMP DRUGS: ENQUIRY

The Commission had been warned that it might have difficulty in finding witnesses willing to come forward and tell what they knew about the use and abuse of hemp drugs. No such difficulty was experienced. Civil servants, army officers, magistrates, doctors, lawyers, and business men filled in the questionnaire which was circulated, and a gratifying number of them agreed to give verbal evidence in amplification. One group only, the Commission was surprised to find, appeared reluctant to offer their services. A significant proportion of the missionaries who were sent the questionnaire returned it without their answers. Their common excuse was that they did not have a sufficient knowledge of the matter.

This was in striking contrast to the attitude of the missionaries to opium, particularly in China, where they had been in the forefront of the agitation to suppress the traffic. Why—the Commissioners wondered—should the Indian missionary show such little concern? Pondering that question, they picked up an early clue. If the missionaries, of all people, disclaimed knowledge of the effect of hemp drugs, the drugs could hardly be a very serious threat to the social and moral condition of the Indian people.

The terms of reference had referred to 'drugs' in the plural; and the Commissioners' first task was to try to sort them out—which was not easy. There was ganja, made from the dried flowering tops of cultivated plants; charas, the resinous matter scraped off them; and bhang, the dried leaves. But as Watt had just pointed out in his study of Indian plants, and as witnesses were to confirm, the distinctions in practice had little meaning. One man's charas was another man's ganja, and the drink made out of either was commonly called bhang. The Commissioners heard witnesses who assured them that smoking bhang was more dangerous than smoking ganja; 'but there are many others whose experience is precisely the reverse'. Some witnesses thought smoking less harmful than drinking; 'but there is a great deal of evidence to a precisely opposite effect'. In the end the Commission cautiously accepted the common opinion that the flowers and resin might produce a more powerful drug than the leaves, but for the purposes of its enquiry it seemed simpler to take them together under the general label, hemp drugs.

How extensively—the Commissioners next had to consider—were hemp drugs consumed? Putting this question to witnesses revealed just how sparse the information was on the subject, even among those whose duties were 'believed to bring them into close and constant contact with the people'. It was possible to make a tentative estimate of the minimum quantity of ganja and charas used, because a duty was payable on the manufactured product; but it could safely be assumed that far more was used illicitly. As for bhang, made from the leaves, much of it came from the wild hemp plant, and there was no way of telling how much of it was smoked, eaten and drunk, except observation—and observation, the Commissioners found, was a highly unreliable guide. Men

who offered themselves as knowledgeable witnesses might turn out to be relying on hearsay; and those who claimed to have observed their use and effects had often derived their information only from visits to shops and shrines where smokers congregated—the equivalent, the Commissioners felt, of a man claiming to be knowledgeable about the use and effects of alcohol in England, who had derived all his knowledge from visits to pubs.

From the evidence, however, one thing was obvious; that hemp drugs were far more extensively used than the average British, or even Indian, official realised. They were taken as medicine, not only for specific disorders, on prescription, but as tonics, and aids to digestion. Drunk with meals, bhang was the equivalent of the English labouring man's glass of beer. They were also generally taken among the Hindus on family party occasions, and in connection with religious observances—particularly those linked with Shiva who, according to legend, had greatly appreciated the effects of hemp. But by far the commonest use was by workers to give them staying power. 'Gymnasts, wrestlers and musicians, palkibearers and porters, divers and postal runners are examples of the classes who use the hemp drugs on occasions of especially severe exertion . . . all classes of labourers, especially such as blacksmiths, miners and coolies, are said more or less generally to use the drugs, as a rule in moderation, to alleviate fatigue.'

A medicine; an aid to endurance; a drink on family or religious occasions: in none of these capacities, the Commissioners felt, could the effects of hemp drugs be regarded as menacing. Even when used as an intoxicant, its consequences generally appeared innocuous—where they could be assessed: the Report quoted an unnamed writer as saying, 'the action of hemp on a man is so various that when we read the several descriptions given, differing so widely, we would scarcely suppose we were considering the same agent'. In so far as they could be summarised, though, the immediate effect of a hemp drug was refreshing and stimulating, and alleviates fatigue, giving rise to pleasurable sensations all over the nervous system, so that the consumer is 'at peace with everybody'—in a grand waking dream. He is able to concentrate his thoughts on one subject; it affords him pleasure, vigour, ready wit, capacity for hard work, and sharpness for business; it has a quieting effect on the nervous system and removes restlessness and induces forgetfulness of mental troubles; all sorts of grotesque ideas rapidly pass through the mind, with a tendency to talk; it brightens the eyes and, like a good cigar, gives content.

In young men, too, it might give rise to sensual thoughts. But considering the drugs were so widely used, there was no evidence to justify their ugly reputation. How had it spread? The reason, the Commissioners decided, was because the drugs had no observable effects when they were taken in moderation. Even those witnesses who most disapproved of them had had no conception just how extensive that consumption was. It was only the rare examples of immoderate use that were seen by doctor or magistrate; 'the ruin wrought in certain cases by excess has alone attracted their notice. They feel towards drugs as a man feels towards alcohol, whose experience has been mainly gained among the social wrecks of the lowest parts of a great city.'

The evidence obtained from replies to the questionnaires revealed that the proportion of men who took hemp drugs immoderately must be very small. It was nevertheless desirable, the Commissioners decided, to investigate the allegations that had been made about their effects on this minority; in particular, that the drugs were responsible for much of the insanity in India, and for much of the crime.

HEMP DRUGS AND INSANITY

There was no shortage of witnesses to testify to the way hemp drugs caused insanity; a few even expressed the view that to reopen this particular line of enquiry was stupid, implying 'wilful blindness to what has been abundantly proved'. And so the evidence at first suggested. Statistics sent in from mental hospitals all over India showed that for years, hemp drugs had been one of the chief causes of mental breakdown. The foremost expert on the subject, Surgeon Lt. Col. Crombie, had already shown in an article in the Indian Medical Gazette that a third of the inmates of the Dacca hospital of which he had been Superintendent had smoked ganja; and in a very large proportion of cases, he believed, it had been 'the actual and immediate cause of their insanity'. The 1871 Commission, which in other respects had tended to play down the danger of the drugs, had accepted that their habitual use did tend to produce insanity; and the Government of Burma had just put a ban on hemp drugs largely for that reason.

There was no reason to doubt the validity of the statistical evidence; nor was it challenged. Nevertheless the Commissioners decided that it ought to be checked. Taking the last year for which full statistics were complete, they ordered a re-examination of the records of every patient admitted to a mental hospital in India, where that admission had been attributed to hemp drugs, in order 'to ascertain how far the statistics were reasonably correct, and, if possible, also to arrive at some conclusion as to whether hemp drugs have any real connection with insanity'.

The first discovery the check provided was that what was entered in the asylum records of admission as the 'cause' of insanity was not derived from a diagnosis made at the asylum. It was simply taken down by a clerk from the description given by the policeman or whoever was responsible for bringing the patient to the asylum, at the time. Examining magistrates, whose duty it was to check the admissions book, insisted that some specific cause should be shown; and it had become standard procedure—Major Willcocks, of the Agra asylum, admitted—to enter 'hemp drugs' as the cause, wherever it was found that the patients took them; 'I cannot say precisely why it has come down as the traditional practice.' He had seen no reason to worry about the attribution, he explained, as he had assumed the drugs were poisonous; 'my ordinary medical practice did not bring me into contact with them at all. I only came into contact with them in the asylum. I had no idea they were used so extensively as I find on enquiry to be the case.'

Of all the asylum superintendents, only three claimed responsibility for the diagnosis entered in the admission books—one of them being the acknowledged authority, Surgeon Crombie. But when they examined the admissions book for the Dacca asylum

in the last full year when he had been superintendent there, the Commissioners found that it did not bear out his claim. In Dacca, as elsewhere, the entries had been based on whatever explanation had been given by the people who brought the man to the asylum. The Commission therefore decided to check each individual patient's record. In nine out of the fourteen cases of insanity attributed to hemp drugs that year, and accepted as such by Crombie, the check showed that hemp drugs could not have been responsible, as Crombie himself, confronted with the results, had to admit. The idea which he had publicised from his original figures—that hemp drugs were responsible for a third of the insanity cases in asylums in India—had therefore to be revised; the proportion was fewer than one in ten. Crombie had apparently formed the view, the Commission observed, that his experience had given his evidence about the danger of hemp drugs a special value. This view had not been borne out by their enquiry. Charitably, however, they ascribed his lapse to 'a mistake of memory'.

When the follow-up was complete, it was found that insanity could be related to hemp drugs in only forty cases from the whole of India, in the year chosen—less than seven per cent of admissions; and even then, there was usually another possible cause. And 'cause', the Report added, was a risky term to apply; 'intemperance of any kind may sometimes be not the cause of insanity, but an early manifestation of mental instability'. In such cases, over-indulgence in hemp drugs could be regarded not as a cause but as a symptom of some underlying predisposition to insanity.

Here, then, was evidence given by expert witnesses, accepted for years, used as the justification for campaigns in other countries to ban hemp drugs—in the case of Burma being accepted as responsible for the success of such a campaign—now shown to be worthless. How had the mistake been made? The explanation, the Commissioners decided, was simple. There was a natural tendency to look for, and blame, a specific physical cause. Hemp drugs had been an obvious choice, because as intoxicants they could sometimes produce symptoms similar to those of insanity.

This popular idea has been greatly strengthened by the attitude taken up by asylum superintendents. They have known nothing of the effects of the drugs at all, though the consumption is so extensive, except that cases of insanity have been brought to them attributed with apparent authority to hemp drugs. They have generalised from this limited and one-sided experience. They have concluded that hemp drugs produce insanity in every case, or in the great majority of cases, of consumption. They have accordingly without sufficient enquiry assisted, by the statistics they have supplied, and by the opinions they have expressed, in stereotyping the popular opinion and giving it authority and permanence.

HEMP DRUGS AND CRIME

There remained the other charge to be considered: that hemp drugs bred crime. They did so, witnesses assured the Commission, in three ways: by driving men to steal so that they could afford to buy the drug; by releasing criminal instincts; or by destroy-

ing a man's self-control, so that he 'ran amok'. Hemp drugs users, some witnesses explained, progressed inexorably from moderation to excess; excess made them too lazy to earn their living; and when addicted, they had to steal to maintain their supply. The Commissioners were unimpressed. The evidence they had collected had established that of the vast number of hemp drug users, only a tiny proportion used them immoderately. How, then, could it be claimed that the slide from moderation to addiction was inexorable? As for releasing criminal instincts, hemp drugs appeared to have precisely the opposite effect; they 'tended to make a man timid, and unlikely to commit a crime'. But the idea that the drugs could cause men to run amok was not so easy to dispose of, based as it was on common knowledge.

Witness after witness confirmed its truth. R. D. Lyall, with over thirty years of varied experience as an official and as a magistrate in India, told the Commission about the cases of such temporary homicidal frenzy, which he had personally had to deal with. So did W. C. Taylor, a veteran of almost half a century's experience of Bengal. Surgeon Crombie treated the Commission to a description of how a Bengali babu, 'as the result of a single debauch, in an attack of ganja mania slew seven of his nearest relatives in bed during the night'. And an Assam tea planter described another such ganja-induced frenzy which he had good reason to remember vividly, as it had happened on his own estate.

Again, the Commissioners decided to check the information, and asked the witnesses to provide the relevant records or references. Some immediately admitted that their information had been at second-hand, and could not be checked. Others promised to send along the details, from newspaper files; and then could not find them. R. D. Lyall was unable to trace a single case of those he had had to deal with; and the only one which W. C. Taylor was able to recall of the 'numerous cases' he had claimed to have been concerned with, turned out when checked to have had no connection with hemp drugs. An investigation of the records about Crombie's babu disclosed that he had indeed been taking ganja, but he had also been taking opium; that he had a history of insanity before drugs were implicated; and that he had not been on a debauch before the murder, which had been committed in a state of 'mere insane despair'.

And when the records of the case which the Assam tea planter had described were re-examined, it was found that his account to the Commission differed materially from the one he had given at the time; not least in that he had made no mention, at the time, of ganja.

In the end, the Commission were able to find only twenty-three cases of homicidal mania which it was possible to check; and in eighteen of them there was nothing to suggest that hemp drugs had been responsible. 'It is astonishing', the Report commented, to find how defective and misleading are the recollections which many witnesses retain even of cases with which they have had special opportunities of being well-acquainted. It is instructive to see how preconceived notions based on rumour and tradition tend to preserve the impression of certain particulars, while the impressions of far more important features of the case are completely forgotten . . . the failure must tend to increase the

distrust with which similar evidence, which there has been no opportunity of testing, has been received.

HEMP DRUGS: VERDICT

The Report concluded with the Commission's verdict on the issue which they had been brought together to consider: should hemp drugs be banned, in India, as they were in Burma? The answer was an emphatic no. The drugs were not a serious hazard—except for a tiny majority of the idle and dissolute whose excessive consumption endangered only themselves. Banning them would be politically dangerous, because it would constitute an unpopular interference with Hindu religious and family observances. In any case, prohibition would be unworkable—for reasons which Watt had just pointed out; it would be impracticable to hold a man responsible for the existence of a wild plant growing near his hut, 'and it would be impossible to prohibit him from gathering, from such a plant, the daily quota used by him and his family'.

And even if prohibition could be enforced, it would lead only to the increased consumption of more dangerous drugs, opium and alcohol. Why—a Madras missionary had asked—should the Government of India be concerned about hemp, rather than about 'the widespread and rapidly increasing and much more injurious habit of alcoholic drink?' Other witnesses had suggested an answer: it was a plot on the part of the liquor manufacturers. Graphs of sales figures, the Commission found, lent confirmation to the view that consumption of the hemp drugs and of alcohol were intermeshed. If hemp drugs ceased to be so readily available, the sales of alcoholic liquor could be expected to rise.

Summing up, the Commissioners in their Report could claim that they had carefully examined the physical, mental and moral effects of hemp drugs used in moderation, and that no observable adverse effects had been discoverable. There was no evidence that hemp drugs were habit-forming, in the way alcohol and opium were. A man who consumed the drugs even in moderation might feel uneasiness, or even a sensation of longing, if deprived of them. But that was not in itself a reason for depriving him of them—any more than it would be in the case of tobacco.

The Report of the Indian Hemp Drugs Commission was later to be rescued from oblivion by the campaigners against the prohibition of cannabis in America and Britain, in the 1960s; but its verdict on that drug of 'not guilty' is of less importance than its analysis of the remarkable irrelevance of accepted opinions about a drug, even when they are supported by men who are supposedly experts on the subject. Surgeon Crombie was a notable example of the kind of man who has so often helped to translate public preconceptions and prejudices on to Statute Books by lending the weight of his authority to them, when in fact he has never bothered to examine the evidence in front of him, in his job; he has simply rationalised it to fit those preconceptions and prejudices.

By painstakingly going behind such opinions, and scrupulously checking the records, the Commission were able to acquit hemp drugs of the charges laid against

them—as they were used in India. It does not follow that a similarly honest committee would have come to the same conclusion in, say, the Cameroons, where German officers in the 1880s reported that they found hemp being taken for its 'stimulating effect on the nervous system, so that it is highly valued on long tiring marches, on lengthy canoe voyages, and on difficult night watches'—where, in other words, it was being used for the same purpose as coca in Peru, or opium in Formosa.

And Livingstone may perhaps have been right when he reported that certain tribes in Africa took it to work themselves up into a suitable state of frenzy before going into battle—though this is more doubtful, because his description of the process suggests that they may have been taking it to calm their nerves. Indian hemp drugs were taken for very different purposes, in different parts of the world; and they appear to have performed whatever service was expected of them.

THE POET'S EYE

DRUGS DID NOT SIMPLY SATISFY EXPECTATION; ON OCCASION, THEY could nourish it. In the 1790s Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who had been prescribed laudanum—opium in an alcohol solution—for the relief of pain, found that it altered his perception; it could give him optical illusions—about distances, say:

The poet's eye in his tipsy hour
Has a magnifying power
Or rather, the soul emancipates the eyes
Of the accidents of size

Laudanum could also start reveries in which his imagination appeared to carry him away, as if in a dream, but leaving him with sufficient consciousness to be able to direct, to some extent, the course they were taking. In one of them, he composed Kubla Khan.

LAUDANUM AND LAUGHING GAS

Why comparable experiences had not been familiar before, remains a mystery. Opium had been used in Europe since medieval times; chiefly as a sedative, but doctors had come to realise that its effects could vary greatly. 'It causes sleeping, and watching'—Dr. John Jones wrote, in a treatise published at the beginning of the eighteenth century—'stupidity and promptitude in business, cloudiness and serenity of mind. It excites the spirits, and yet quiets them; it relaxes, and weakens, yet it enables us to undergo labours, journeys, etc.; it causes a furious madness, yet composes the spirits above all things.'

But its vision-inducing potential was not grasped until Coleridge's experience, and not generally known until the publication in 1822 of Thomas de Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, with his description of what happened when he first took laudanum—tincture of opium in alcohol—for rheumatic pains in the head: in an hour, O heavens! What a revulsion! what a resurrection, from its lowest depths of the inner spirit! What an apocalypse of the world within me! That my pains had vanished was now a trifle in my eyes; this negative effect was swallowed up in the immensity of those positive effects which had opened up before me, in the abyss of divine enjoyment thus suddenly revealed. Here was a panacea . . . here was the secret of happiness, about which philosophers had disputed for so many ages, at once discovered; happiness might now be bought for a penny, and carried in the waistcoat pocket; portable ecstasies might be had corked up in a pint bottle; and peace of mind could be sent down by the mail.

Agony of mind was soon to follow—as Jones had warned; 'great and even intolerable distresses, anxieties and depression of spirits'. So intolerable were the withdrawal symptoms that many respected citizens who had begun to take opium as Coleridge and de Quincey had done, for the relief of pain, were unable to break the habit. Some, laudanum destroyed; others, like William Wilberforce and Wilkie Collins, managed to come to terms with it, taking large but not increasing doses. But laudanum did not provide them with visions. It merely kept the distresses, anxieties and depressions at bay.

Might there not be other drugs, though, which could expand an artist's horizon, without enslaving him? Shortly before the turn of the century Humphry Davy, the discoverer of nitrous oxide, found that 'sniffing' gave him a feeling of ecstasy; 'nothing exists but thought' he told himself as he awoke; 'The universe is composed of impressions, ideas, pleasures and pains!'. Soon, 'the laughing gas' and ether were being dispensed at 'frolics', which became a popular pastime. In parts of Ulster, ether became so popular that its consumption took on the proportions of an epidemic, whose consequences were entertainingly described by K. H. Connell in his *Irish Peasant Society*, from contemporary accounts. The atmosphere of some towns 'was "loaded" with ether. Hundreds of yards outside Draperstown, a visiting surgeon detected the familiar smell; market days smelt "not of pigs, tobacco smoke or of unwashed human beings"; even the bank "stove" of ether, and its reek on the Derry Central Railway was "disgusting and abominable".'

The Ulstermen appear to have been using ether as a cheap alternative to alcohol; a tablespoonful—enough on which to get pleasantly, though briefly, inebriated—cost one penny. But some people used it as a vision-inducer. 'You always heard music, and you'd be cocking your ears at it', as an ether-taker put it; or you would 'see men climbing up the walls and going through the roof, or coming in through the roof and down the walls, nice and easy'. What a man experienced after taking it was limited, apparently, by his capacity for experience. As De Quincey put it, if a man took opium whose talk was of oxen, he would dream about oxen—'if he were not too dull to dream'. For a few individuals, though, ether or laughing gas provided sensations which they would treasure throughout their lives. In his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, William James was to recall how they could 'stimulate the mystical consciousness to an extraordinary degree', and though

the truths might fade, 'the sense of a profound meaning having been there persists'.

THE FORBIDDEN GAME

The gases, however, could be dangerous in inexperienced hands; and many experimenters could get little but hilarity out of them. An alternative possibility as vision-inducer was Indian hemp, introduced into France by the men of Napoleon's army of the Nile, and taken up for experimental purposes in the 1840s by Jacques Moreau, a Parisian doctor who thought it might help in the treatment of patients suffering from mental illness. Trying it out on himself, he found it put him into paroxysms of uncontrollable laughter, and then gave him visions of an entirely pleasurable kind. 'It is really happiness which is produced', he wrote, and by this I mean an enjoyment entirely moral, and by no means sensual, as might be supposed—a very curious circumstance, from which some remarkable inferences might be drawn . . . for the hashish eater is happy, not like the gourmand or the famished man when satisfying his appetite, or the voluptuary in the gratification of his amative desires—but like him who hears tidings which fill him with joy, or like the miser counting his treasures, the gambler who is successful at play, or the ambitious man who is intoxicated with success.

Dr. Moreau shared the delights of his discovery with the members of the Club des Hachichins, founded in 1844, Dumas, Gautier and Baudelaire being among its members. Gautier described his reactions to the drug two years later in the *Revue de deux mondes*: 'frenetic, irresistible, implacable laughter' succeeded by grotesque hallucinations, fantasies of droll dreams confusedly danced about; hybrid creations, formless mixtures of men, beasts and utensils; monks with wheels for feet and cauldrons for bellies: warriors, in armours of dishes, brandishing wooden swords in birds' claws; statesmen moved by turnspit gears; kings plunged to the waist in salt-cellar turrets . . .

Baudelaire's account was more clinical. People trying hashish for the first time, he observed, would complain that it had little effect, which might be attributed to their resistance. But it would suddenly hit them with 'a sort of irrelevant and irresistible hilarity . . . as painful as a tickle'. Occasionally this led on to weakness and stupor, but for some people, 'a new subtlety or acuity manifests itself in all the senses', and this was when hallucinations set in. 'External objects acquire, gradually and one after another, strange new appearances; they become distorted or transformed. Next occur mistakes in the identity of objects, and transposals of ideas. Sounds clothe themselves in colours; and colours contain music.'

Such experiences could be very satisfying; 'the universality of all existence arrays itself before you in a new and hitherto unguessed at glory'. But in the end, for Baudelaire, they were regressive in their effects. The hashish-eater, he decided, 'completely confounds dream with action, his imagination kindling more and more at the spectacle of his own nature corrected and idealised, he substitutes this fascinating image of himself for his real individuality—so poor in strength of will, and so rich in vanity'. And, the morrow! the terrible morrow! All the body's organs lax and weary, nerves un-

strung, itching desires to weep, the impossibility of applying oneself steadily to any task—all these cruelly teach you that you have played a forbidden game . . . The especial victim is the will, that most precious of the faculties. It is said, and it is almost true, that hashish has no evil physical effects; or, at worst, no serious ones. But can it be said that a man incapable of action, good only for dreaming, is truly well, even though all his members may be in their normal condition ?

Other experimenters with hashish were to reach a similar conclusion; among them the American Fitzhugh Ludlow—though he stressed that it was not the drug, but man's reliance on it, that caused the problems: 'the soul withers and shrinks from its growth towards the true end of its being beneath the dominance of any sensual indulgence', so that though the bondage might continue to be golden, there was all the while erosion of strength.

Not all the devotees of hashish experienced Baudelaire's 'terrible morrow'. A few were able to smoke it and examine its effects as dispassionately as they might have examined the effects of tobacco; among them the young Charles Richet, later to be a Professor of Physiology in Paris, and a Nobel prizewinner. Richet observed, as others had done, that for anybody under the influence of hashish, time could appear to stand still—or at least to pass more gradually; and in 1877 he presented a plausible explanation. Man's mind, he pointed out, is full of indetermined and incomplete ideas, intertwined. Disentangling them took time; and 'as time is only measured by the remembrance of ideas, it appears prodigiously long'. What hashish did was speed up the process: in the space of a minute we have fifty different thoughts; since in general it requires several minutes to have fifty different thoughts, it will appear to us that several minutes are passed, and it is only by going to the inflexible clock, which marks for us the regular passage of time, that we perceive our error. With hashish the notion of time is completely overthrown, the moments are years, and the minutes are centuries; but I feel the insufficiency of language to express this illusion, and I believe, that one can only understand it by feeling it for himself.

But such detachment was rare among the members of the Club des Hachichins and their successors; and they had given hashish a reputation as a vision-inducer which experience, for the majority of people who tried it, failed to justify. It had been the atmosphere of the Club des Hachichins, and the personalities of its members, which had lent Indian hemp its potency, rather than any quality in the drug.

SCIENCE

THE INVESTIGATIONS OF MEN SUCH AS MOREAU AND O'SHAUGHNESSY reflected a growing interest in pharmacology during the century, stemming from the results of the research of Davy, Priestley and Lavoisier, towards the end of the century before. Their discoveries had begun to elevate chemistry to the status of an exact science; and pharmacologists had naturally begun to look forward to the day when their branch of the faculty would share in the distinction.

For a while it looked as if their ambition was going to be realised. One by one, plant drugs began to deliver up their secrets—the alkalis which, it was assumed, constituted the essential drug element. Morphine was derived from opium in 1803, and other similar discoveries followed: caffeine, quinine, nicotine. More reliable evidence began to be available, too, about the purposes for which drugs were used throughout the world; and it became possible to investigate the subject not, as before, primarily from the standpoint of the botanist or the chemist, but with a view to assessing the role of drugs in society. And the first serious attempt at a general survey was made by James Johnston in his *Chemistry of Common Life*, which was published in 1854.

JAMES JOHNSTON

Johnston, who was Professor of Chemistry at the University of Durham, had the breadth of outlook of a Benjamin Franklin or a Humphry Davy; he was interested in chemistry not for its own sake, but for what it provided for mankind. He was not thinking in terms simply of the chemical processes by which bread, or wine, were provided, but of what gave bread its flavour, and wine its bouquet. How significant he felt drugs were can be gauged by the fact that he devoted almost half the book to them; a chapter each to tea and coffee; two chapters to alcoholic liquors; and no fewer than eight chapters to ‘the narcotics we indulge in’, ranging from tobacco to deadly nightshade.

Johnston was disturbed by what he felt was the irrational prejudice against the use of narcotics of any kind, reflected in the efforts that had been made in countries all over the world to suppress them. It was absurd, he argued, to think of them as strange and sinister, considering the vast number of people who regularly took them. Precise estimates of the number of drug-takers were impossible to come by; but tobacco, he estimated, was used by 800 million people; opium by 400 million; Indian hemp by 200 300 million; betel by 100 million; and coca by 10 million.

No nation so ancient but had its narcotic soother from the most distant times; none so remote and isolated but has found within its own borders a pain-allayer and care-dispeller of native growth; none so savage which instinct has not led to seek for, and successfully to employ, this form of physiological indulgence. The craving for such indulgence, and the habit of gratifying it, are little less universal than the desire for, and the practice of, consuming the necessary materials of our common food.

Nor was it any more reprehensible; on the contrary, Johnston argued, man’s recognition of the value of narcotics should be considered as forming ‘one of the most wonderful chapters in his entire history’. In the first of the three stages of that history, man had found how to provide for his material needs—‘beef and bread’. In the second, he had sought ways to ‘assuage the cares of his mind and banish uneasy reflections’, which he did with the help of alcoholic beverages. And in the third, his object was to multiply his enjoyments, intellectual and animal, and for the time to exalt them. This he attains by the aid of narcotics. And of these narcotics, again, it is remarkable that almost every country or tribe has its own, either aboriginal or imported; so that the universal instinct

of the race has led, somehow or other, to the universal supply of this want or craving also.

Johnston cited tea and coffee as examples. Tea, in particular, could be a dangerous drug; 'green tea, when taken very strong, acts very powerfully on some constitutions producing nervous tremblings and other distressing symptoms, acting as a narcotic, and in inferior animals even producing paralysis'. But men had learned to use it more discreetly, so that 'it exhilarates without sensibly intoxicating'. Even the poorest took it, preferring the 'luxury' of a cup of tea to an extra potato or a larger loaf—a choice which Johnston wholeheartedly approved; 'he will probably live as long under the one regimen as the other; and while he does live, he will both be less miserable in mind, and will show more blood and spirit in the face of difficulties, than if he had denied himself this trifling indulgence'.

It was not the chemical properties of the plant—Johnston argued—but the uses to which man put it, that mattered; a point which comes across even more forcibly when his book is read today, as many of the plants which he included are no longer considered to be drugs. The English beer drinker esteems hops for imparting flavour; to Johnston, the hop was 'the English narcotic', justly celebrated as a sleep inducer, and 'unquestionably one of the sources of the pleasing excitement, gentle narcotic intoxication, and healthy tonic action which well-hopped beer is known to produce on those whose constitutions enable them to drink it'. Even more surprising is Johnston's description of lettuce.

The juice of these plants, when collected and dried, has considerable resemblance to opium. If the stem of the common lettuce, when it is coming into flower, be wounded with a knife, a milky juice exudes. In the open air, this juice gradually assumes a brown colour, and dries into a friable mass. The smell of this dried juice is strongly narcotic, recalling that of opium. It has a slightly pungent taste but, like opium, leaves a permanent bitterness in the mouth. It acts upon the brain after the manner of opium . . . eaten at night, the lettuce causes sleep; eaten during the day, it soothes and calms and allays the tendency to nervous irritability.

There are other reminders in the *Chemistry of Common Life* that the classification of what is, and what is not, a plant drug may vary from country to country, and from period to period. But even more significant, in the light of what was to happen later, was Johnston's realisation that drugs could not be classified by their observed pharmacological action on man, because that action varied so greatly. Moslems, for example, took tobacco because it soothed the mind to sleep, while leaving the body alert and active. But, that such is not its general action in Europe, the study of almost every German writer can testify. With the constant pipe diffusing its beloved aroma around him, the German philosopher works out the profoundest of his results of thought. He thinks and dreams, and dreams and thinks, alternately; but while his body is soothed and stilled, his mind is ever awake. From what I have heard such men say, I could almost fancy that they had in this practice discovered a way of liberating the mind from the trammels of the body, and thus giving it a freer range and more undisturbed liberty of action. I regret that I have

never found it act so upon myself.

To some extent, Johnston realised, individual reactions to a drug could be accounted for by observing how the individual took it. A glass of whiskey would have a different effect if it were tossed off neat than if it were sipped, with water, for an hour. But this, he felt, was not enough to account for the remarkable differences in the effects of the same drug on different individuals—and even on different communities. Could it be, he wondered, that the use of a particular drug over a long period gradually changed the disposition and temperament of a people—in turn changing their reactions?

There was no way of telling, with any certainty; but ‘the fate of nations has frequently been decided by the slow operation of long-acting causes, unthought of and unestimated by the historian, which, while the name and the local home of the people remain the same, had gradually changed their constitution, their character, and their capabilities’. In view of all this evidence, Johnston argued, to think in terms of trying to prohibit drug-taking by legislation was futile:

A tendency which is so evidently a part of our general human nature, is not to be suppressed or extinguished by any form of mere physical, fiscal, or statutory restraint. It may sometimes be discouraged or repressed by such means, but even this lesser result is not always obtainable ... an empire may be overthrown by inconsiderate statutory intermeddling with the natural instincts, the old habits, or the growing customs of a people, while the instincts and habits themselves are only strengthened and confirmed.

FRANCIS ANSTIE

Johnston’s thesis made an impression on Francis Anstie, a physician at the Westminster Hospital who had been specialising in toxicology, hoping—as he explained in his *Stimulants and Narcotics*, published in 1864—to be able to remove the study of the subject from the metaphysical to the physical level. To this end he had experimented on himself, and on some patients, with a variety of drugs; his original intention being to put them into categories, such as the one suggested by the title of his book. To the patient, as well as to the doctor, the distinction seemed clear; some drugs were ‘stupefying poisons’—narcotics; others, ‘grateful restoratives’—stimulants.

But the result of his researches had upset his expectation that he would be able to clarify the distinction for textbook purposes. ‘To the philosophic student’, he ruefully admitted, ‘who desires to arrange in orderly classification the weapons of his art, and thereby to multiply his resources, the accurate definition of these two classes of remedies offers a problem at once of great interest and of extreme difficulty.’ Chloroform, for example, was regarded as a narcotic. But his experiments had shown him that in certain circumstances, it could be a powerful stimulant. The action of alcohol was even more confusing. At first sight, it appeared to be a stimulant; ‘but on analysing the symptoms we are at no loss to perceive that it is the emotional and appetitive part of the mind which is in action while the intellect, on the contrary, is directly enfeebled’. It was at least

possible, Anstie speculated, that the outbreak of the passions which alcohol could induce was due, 'not to any stimulation of them, but to the removal of the check ordinarily imposed by reason and will'.

To most Europeans, Anstie went on, opium was a narcotic; to Orientals, a stimulant. They were able, 'sometimes without any previous practice, to take large quantities of opium without suffering stupefaction; on the contrary, they appear much exhilarated in spirits, and their minds work with much freedom. In some cases, muscular power and the disposition for exertion seem actually to increase'. The likely explanation, Anstie thought, was that opium prevented other activities from interfering with mental processes, which gave the appearance of an increase of intellectual power. And this could also be an explanation of another mystery. Pain, he suggested, was not relieved by sedatives and depressants—except where they poisoned the system, as when a man took enough alcohol to render himself insensible. What relieved pain was the stimulating effect of opium, or other drugs, in small doses. It was the stimulus, he concluded, that mattered, and that might be given by some substance which was not, in the strict sense, a drug, but which had the appropriate effect; 'I have seen one patient suffering from severe agony with peritonitis who developed rapid relief from the careful and gradual injection of a pint of rich soup into the rectum'.

Like Johnston, Anstie had been compelled to recognise what a minor part the pharmacology of a drug might play in determining man's reactions to it, compared with the part played by man's responses. It was a matter of common observation that the same amount of alcohol which would enliven one man, would depress another; or, according to his circumstances make the same man jolly, one evening, and sad, the next. But to the new generation of scientifically-minded chemists, toxicologists and pharmacologists this was a thoroughly unsatisfactory state of affairs. It left their discipline uneasily suspended, like a hammock slung between one solid tree—chemistry—and some young saplings—biology, neurology, psychology—which bent and swayed in every scientific breeze.

Throughout the century, therefore, pharmacologists continued to engage in a search for certainties; and in this they were naturally encouraged by further discoveries of alkalis. These, it continued to be assumed, represented the essential drug element in a plant. When they were extracted they would obviate the wastage involved in consumption of the rest of the plant; when refined, impurities would be removed. And it would be easier to measure out the prescribed strength of dosage. So it came about that morphine, the derivative, began to replace opium and laudanum as a sedative and a pain-killer.

The outcome was the first of a succession of cruel disillusionments. So long as morphine continued to be taken strictly on prescription, for specific medical purposes, it fulfilled expectations. But some of the people for whom it was prescribed came to rely on it for release from everyday cares, and others took it for a 'lift'. It began to enslave addicts as effectively as laudanum had enslaved de Quincey. The medical profession—

the doctors by this time had formed themselves into a profession, and had begun to exercise a closer supervision of drugs—reacted with alarm, and for a time addicts were treated by enforced deprivation. The withdrawal symptoms, though, could be dangerous, as well as painful; cases were reported of addicts, deprived of morphine, who had had hallucinations and delirium, and some of them died under the treatment. What was needed, clearly, was some drug which would do the work of morphine, but without creating addiction. Any medical scientist who found one would have his fortune made—as the young Sigmund Freud realised, when he first began to experiment with the alkali which pharmacologists had extracted from the leaves of the coca plant: cocaine.

COCAINE

Unlike tobacco, coca had not established itself as a drug in Europe—or even in South America, among the colonists. For a young Spaniard to begin to take it was regarded as a sign that he was rebelling against his class; he would be repudiated, and forced either to leave or to live with the Indians, and adopt their ways. Occasionally travellers would return from voyages in the Andes with stories of the feats of endurance which the Indians performed under its influence; but although they were noted by Abraham Cowley (in whose mind, Dr. Johnson was to recall, ‘botany turns into poetry’)

Endowed with leaves of wondrous nourishment Whose juice succ’d in, and to the stomach ta’en Long hunger and long labour can sustain its possibilities do not appear to have been recognised until the Jesuit Don Antonio Julian lamented in his *Perla de America* that it was not used in Europe alongside tea and coffee (‘it is melancholy to reflect that the poor of Europe cannot obtain this preservative against hunger and thirst; that our working people are not supported by this strengthening plant in their long continued labours’).

The author of a treatise published in 1793 suggested that the sailors in European navies would benefit from a coca ration; and in 1814 a writer in the *Gentleman’s Magazine* elaborated on the proposition. It was not yet clear how the South American Indians achieved their feats of endurance, he admitted; but it is certain they have that secret, and put it into practice. They masticate coca, and undergo the greatest fatigue without any injury to health or bodily vigour. They want neither butcher, nor baker, nor brewer, nor distiller, nor fuel, nor culinary utensils.

Now, if Professor Davy will apply his thoughts to the subject here given for his experiments, there are thousands even in this happy land who will pour their blessings upon him, if he will but discover a temporary anti-famine, or substitute for food, free from all inconvenience of weight, bulk and expense, and by which any person might be enabled, like the Peruvian Indian, to live and labour in health and spirits for a month now and then without eating.

With the coming of the Industrial Revolution, and the employment of men, women and children in the mills twelve hours a day, six days a week, there was an incentive to

examine the claims for coca more seriously; especially after von Tschudi's observations in the 1830s convinced him that coca's reputation was well-founded. When he took an infusion of the leaves of the plant, while he was on a hunting expedition at 14,000 feet up in the Andes, he found it worked for him, too: 'I could then during the whole day climb the heights, and follow the swift-footed wild animals.'

Taken in excess over a protracted period, Tschudi realised, coca could have unwelcome effects; the inveterate chewer could be detected from 'his unsteady gait, his yellow-coloured skin, his dim and sunken eyes encircled by a purple ring, his quivering lips, and his general apathy'. But this was unusual. Ordinarily, the drug appeared to have no adverse effects. Even when it was taken in very large amounts, there was no loss of consciousness; and many of those who took it every working day (and doubled their intake on festival occasions) lived on to a great age, in perfect health. 'Setting aside all extravagant and visionary notions on the subject', he concluded, 'the moderate use of coca is not merely innocuous, but it may even be conducive to health.'

Tschudi's *Travels in Peru* was followed by accounts from other travellers, most of them in agreement with him; and in the 1850s an Italian doctor, Paolo Mantegazza, experimented on himself by chewing dried coca leaves. He experienced an increase in physical and mental energy, and when he tried an infusion of the leaves, he found that not merely did the inclination to take exercise become irresistible; he also had an odd feeling of becoming isolated from the external world, which would enable him to perform feats which ordinarily he would not have attempted. On an impulse he jumped up on his writing table, without smashing the lamp or other objects on it. Nor did he suffer any reaction, comparable with a hangover: following the activity he felt only quiet comfort.

And increasing the dose—to the amount commonly consumed by the natives of Peru—only increased his sense of exhilaration. Joyously he told his colleagues that he preferred 'ten years with coca to a million centuries without'. In a treatise on the subject published in Milan in 1859 he wrote, more sedately, that the principal property of coca, 'not to be found in any other remedy, consists in its exalting effect, calling out the power of the organism without leaving any sign of debility'; and he recommended its use for nervous disorders.

Gradually, coca began to win adherents in other countries.

In the early 1870s Sir Robert Christison tried it out on medical students in Edinburgh, and was impressed by the results; the chewing of coca leaves, he reported, 'not only removes extreme fatigue, but prevents it', and the only effect it had on the mental faculties was to eliminate the dullness ordinarily associated with fatigue. In France racing cyclists began to take it, to increase their powers of endurance; so did the Toronto Lacrosse Club, in Canada, who with its assistance won the title 'Champions of the World'.

From the time of its foundation half a century before, the *Lancet* has enjoyed ex-

posing nostrums as quackery; and the budding reputation of coca gave it yet another opportunity to live up to its reputation. In 1876 it carried a report of an investigation by G. F. Dowdeswell, a member of the staff of the University College Physics Department, into the properties of coca and its action on the human body. Dowdeswell claimed that he had been concerned solely with the measurable effects on a human subject—changes in pulse rate, temperature, and so on; and he had demonstrated they were negative.

But consumption of coca had also failed to produce any of the subjective effects 'so fervently described, and ascribed to it, by others; not the slightest excitement, not even the feeling of buoyancy and exhilaration which is experienced from mountain air, or a draught of spring water'. Although Dowdeswell was not prepared to claim that coca, in this capacity, was pharmacologically inert, his experiments, he argued, demonstrated that its action was so slight 'as to preclude the idea of its having any value either therapeutically or popularly'.

Whatever might be the virtue of the coca leaf in South America, the *Lancet* commented editorially, 'it seems to have lost much of its marvellous virtue when used in this country.' Laboratory trials of that kind had not then acquired the authority they were later to command; and even the *Lancet's* reputation was not sufficient to stem coca's growing popularity as a stimulant. The following year, it was admitted to the U.S. Pharmacopeia; soon afterwards, to its British counterpart; and from the variety of disorders for which it began to be prescribed it looked as if it might be following the same triumphant clinical course that tobacco had taken three centuries earlier.

But it was just too late. Pharmacologists succeeded in identifying what was assumed to be the narcotic element of the coca leaf: cocaine. It seemed self-evident that it would be absurd to ask a patient to chew coca leaves, or drink infusions of them, when it was possible to give him accurately measured doses of its essential ingredient.

But first, it was necessary to demonstrate that cocaine worked; and in 1883 a German army doctor tried the drug out on soldiers to see if it did the same for them as the leaves did for the natives of Peru. It did. Cocaine, Dr. Theodor Aschenbrandt was able to report, greatly increased their energy and endurance. The report attracted Freud's attention. He had just become engaged to Martha Bernays, and was looking for some medical discovery which would make his name, and his fortune, so that they could afford to marry.

'I am procuring some myself', he wrote to tell her, 'and will try it with cases of heart disease and also of nervous exhaustion, particularly in the miserable condition after withdrawal of morphine', a possibility which had been suggested in an American medical journal. Having taken some cocaine—it altered his mood from depression to cheerfulness, he was delighted to find, without impairing his ability to work—he tried it on his friend Dr. Fleischl, a morphine addict, with immediately gratifying results.

'The temperament of an investigator'—Freud had told Martha in the letter describ-

ing his research into cocaine—'needs two fundamental qualities: he must be sanguine in the attempt, but critical in the work'. He failed to heed his own advice. Cocaine, he decided, was 'a magical drug'. He took it himself against depression and indigestion; sent some to Martha; recommended it for a variety of disorders; and wrote an essay on it published in 1884, which was an extended eulogy. Cocaine provided 'exhilaration and lasting euphoria'; 'an increase of self-control'; 'more vitality and capacity for work'. Whether mental or physical, work could be performed without any fatigue; there were none of the unpleasant after-effects associated with alcohol; and 'absolutely no craving for the further use of cocaine appears after the first, or even repeated, taking of the drug; one feels, rather, a curious aversion to it'.

The following year, the first warnings were sounded. To some persons, nothing was more fascinating than indulgence in cocaine—a writer commented in the *Medical Record* for November 28th, 1885—

It relieves the sense of exhaustion, dispels mental depression, and produces a delicious sense of exhilaration and well-being. The after-effects are at first slight, almost imperceptible; but continuous indulgence finally creates a craving which must be satisfied; the individual then becomes nervous, tremulous sleepless, without appetite, and he is at last reduced to a condition of pitiable neurasthenia.

By the spring of 1887 a Brooklyn doctor, J. B. Mattison, had compiled a formidable dossier to show that cocaine was highly addictive—as Freud himself, who had passionately defended cocaine, now realised. He had to watch Fleischl suffering from the agonies of chronic intoxication, delirium tremens, and 'white snakes creeping over his skin'.

There was no reason, in theory, why the unmasking of cocaine should have had an adverse effect on the reputation of coca—any more than the discovery that tobacco's alkali, nicotine, was highly poisonous had deterred people from smoking. But because the early experimenters with cocaine had argued that, as Freud put it, cocaine was 'the essential constituent of coca leaves', there was an understandable tendency for coca to be found guilty by association; and it had not been on the market for long enough to become established in the way that tobacco had been before nicotine was found.

Coca had its defenders: chief among them W. G. Mortimer, a Fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine. In 1901 he published his history of the 'divine plant of the Incas', a rambling, repetitive, but exhaustively researched defence of the use of the plant, as distinct from its alkali. The pharmacologists, he asserted, had deceived the public; cocaine no more represented coca than prussic acid, found in minute quantities in peach stones, 'represents that luscious fruit'.

The analogy might not be precise, but the proposition he derived from it was of fundamental importance: that the action of cocaine on the human system, though in some respects similar to that of coca, must not be considered as identical: 'each gives a peculiar sense of well being; but cocaine affects the central nervous system more

pronouncedly than does coca; not—as commonly presumed—because it is coca in a more concentrated form, but because the associated substances present in coca, which are important in modifying its action, are not present in cocaine’.

As proof he was able to cite the discovery of Dr. Henry Rusby that the Andean natives, making their careful selection of leaves for chewing, did not, in fact, choose the leaves with the highest cocaine content. And in the entire literature on the subject, Mortimer claimed, before the attacks on cocaine, there had been no serious criticism of coca. Nor was there any known case of coca addiction or coca poisoning (‘What it does for the Indian at fifteen’, one authority had asserted, ‘it does for him at sixty; a greatly increasing dose is not resorted to.’) Not merely was it as innocent as tea or coffee, ‘which are commonly accepted popular necessities—but it is vastly superior to those substances’.

But how was it—if the authorities Mortimer cited were correct—that the findings of scientific experimenters like Dowdeswell had been negative? Perhaps, Mortimer surmised, they had used the wrong kind of leaves. Or the explanation might be along the lines put forward in 1881 by a New York physician, W. S. Searle: that not only was coca’s action so gentle that it could escape detection: it might not take place at all in experiments, because the appropriate mechanism would not be brought into action.

While no other known substance can rival coca in its sustaining power, no other has so little apparent effect. To one pursuing the even tenor of his usual routine, the chewing of coca gives no special sensation. In fact the only result seems to be a negative one, viz.: an absence of the customary desire for food and sleep. It is only when some unusual demand is made upon mind or body that its influence is felt. And to this fact is to be attributed much of the incredulity of those who have carelessly experimented with it and who, expecting some internal commotion or sensation, are disappointed.

Mortimer himself felt that the explanation probably also lay in the different circumstances in which coca was consumed in South America, where it affected the body’s capacity for work by more efficient conversion of food into energy. Coca helped the Andean Indians to avoid fatigue by acting upon the stored-up carbohydrates to which they were accustomed. It might have no affect—the implication was—on a Westerner accustomed to a different diet.

Whatever the explanation—Mortimer concluded—the evidence from clinical experience was irrefutable. He had himself circularised doctors all over America about their experiences with coca; over 350 had replied and a large majority of those expressing opinions were agreed that coca improved the digestion, strengthened the heart, stimulated the mind, and improved sexual performance. All doctors who agreed with him, he urged, should accept the need for a long and persistent campaign to explain coca’s value, ‘and so reflect credit upon themselves through the advocacy and use of a really marvellous drug’.

It was to no purpose. Coca might be all that Mortimer claimed, but it lost caste; the

medical profession gradually losing interest. Cocaine, like morphine, continued to have a limited range of clinical uses; but they would soon, it was hoped, be replaced for most purposes by a new drug. Heroin had been derived from opium in 1898; soon it was being enthusiastically promoted by manufacturers, and enthusiastically welcomed by doctors, as more effective than its predecessors, and carrying—the assurance was—no risk whatsoever of promoting addiction.

MESCALINE

After the disappointments with laudanum and Indian hemp, the search for a safe and effective vision-inducing drug had languished for a time; but towards the end of the century it was revived, largely through the efforts of a young Berlin pharmacologist, Louis Lewin. Lewin first made his reputation by some research into morphine; then, he went on to make the first scientific study of kava. Missionaries, Lewin had read, were inclined to regard kava as a powerful intoxicant which ought to be banned; yet Europeans who took it generally found that it had little or no effect on them. Why? Lewin decided to find the active chemical principle, test it, and settle the issue one way or the other. The tests convinced him that kava was a mild stimulant, improving muscular efficiency and endurance; and though it could be taken as an intoxicant, its effects were relatively gentle, compared with alcohol. At least people under its influence did not become noisy and aggressive.

Up to this point, Lewin was following Anstie's course; but whereas Anstie's findings compelled him to give up the attempt to distinguish drugs by their effects on man, Lewin remained sublimely confident that it was only a matter of time before he could unravel the strands sufficiently to allow him to categorise drugs according to their effects. And he was greatly encouraged in this view by peyote which came into his possession on a visit to America.

The botanical Museum in Berlin decided the cacti were a new species; four alkaloids were extracted from them, including mescal—mescaline; and Lewin had his monument—the sub-species was named after him, *anhalonium lewinii*.

In Lewin, however, peyotl induced no vision. He found it only toxic (as did William James. It made him vomit; 'I will take the visions on trust', he told his brother Henry). But another American, the pioneer psychiatrist Weir Mitchell, was delighted with the results, when he tried peyotl in the 1890s, finding it a powerful physical and emotional stimulus. He could climb to the fourth floor of his hotel two steps at a time without puffing; and later—'deliciously at languid ease, I was clearly in the land where it is always afternoon'—he had a sense of heightened intellectual power. In retrospect he had to admit that a reading of what he wrote under the influence failed to justify it; but he could not find words to express the 'beauty and splendour of what I saw'.

After reading Mitchell's account in the *British Medical Journal*, Havelock Ellis took mescaline, with very similar results. His first symptom was an access of energy, and of

intellectual power; then visions, the colours indescribably vivid and delightful, so reminiscent of Monet's paintings that Ellis decided to offer some mescal to an artist he knew, to observe the effect. The artist duly had fantastic visions—but they were accompanied by paroxysms, pain, and the fear he was dying. 'It may at least be claimed,' Ellis wrote, 'that for a healthy person to be once or twice admitted to the rites of mescal is not only an unforgettable delight but an educational influence of no mean value.' But he realised that more research was needed; and the fact that Weir Mitchell had also had unfortunate results when he tried it out on a colleague did not encourage more orthodox medical scientists to carry it on.

Mescaline had been discovered at the wrong time. Pharmacologists were looking for drugs which had measurable effects; not drugs which induced unquantifiable delight. And Lewin, though he had no doubt that divine inspiration could account for such visions as that of the prophet Ezekiel—'a great cloud, and a fire unfolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber'—felt that visionary experiences were ordinarily 'transitory states caused by substances produced in the organism'. This was a view that was becoming increasingly popular among scientists: that the visions of the alcoholic, the schizophrenic and the mystic reflected biochemical changes in the body. The chemical processes interested them. The visions, they felt, were of no significance.

PROHIBITION

THE EXPLOITATION OF DRUGS FOR PROFIT AND FOR REVENUE; the re-discovery of their vision-inducing qualities; and the impact of scientific advances provided three separate, though sometimes inter-locking, strands during the nineteenth century. There was also a fourth, of a rather different nature; the mounting campaign to have alcohol categorised as a dangerous drug, and banned from general consumption.

The gin plague had compelled recognition of the dangers of 'ardent spirits' as they were commonly described, and though it had been realised that prohibition did not work, and licensing did, a widespread belief remained—particularly among the followers of Wesley, and in the Evangelical movement—that ways should be found to reduce consumption still further. As spirits were obviously an acquired taste, the simplest way to deal with them would be to check the process by which the taste was acquired; and it was with this in mind that a campaign began against tobacco.

THE WEED

The arguments used were similar to those which had been employed against hashish in Moslem countries—and to those which were to be employed against beer, and later against cannabis. Tobacco was condemned on various grounds, as unhealthy and as anti-social; but the main ground of criticism was that, though smoking might be relatively harmless when indulged in moderation, it led on inexorably not merely to excess, and addiction, but also to the consumption of 'hard' liquor. This was the theme of a trea-

tise published in America in 1798: *Observations upon the influence of the habitual use of tobacco upon health, morals and property*, by the formidable Dr. Benjamin Rush—one of the signatories to the Declaration of Independence. Tobacco's influence on all three, Rush felt, was pernicious; and its most sinister feature was that the usual consequence of smoking or chewing was thirst.

This thirst cannot be allayed by water, for no sedative or even insipid liquor will be relished after the mouth and throat have been exposed to the stimulus of the smoke, or juice, of tobacco. A desire of course is excited for strong drinks, which when taken between meals soon lead to intemperance and drunkenness. One of the greatest sots I ever knew acquired a love for ardent spirits by swallowing cuds of tobacco, contrary to the commands of his father. He died of dropsy under my care.

Rush's denunciation helped to promote an alliance between the anti-tobacco campaigners and the temperance movement, when it got under way a quarter of a century later. 'Rum drinking will not cease', the Rev. Orin Fowler prophesied in 1833, 'till tobacco-chewing, and tobacco-smoking, and snuff-taking shall cease'; and he went on to estimate that at least a tenth of the drunkards in the United States and throughout the world were made so by the use of tobacco—a piece of guesswork which was picked up and repeated again and again until, as Joseph Robert complained in his history of tobacco in America, it became a 'sort of sanctified census'. Other campaigners traced the route by which an innocent youth would be lured to perdition: having smoked, he would naturally resort to a soda fountain, from which it was an easy step 'to beer, and then brandy, and finally whiskey'.

Tobacco was also attacked in the mid-nineteenth century as a dangerous drug in its own right, causing—Dr. Joel Shew alleged—a wide variety of disorders, including insanity, delirium tremens, and epilepsy. He accused it of causing impotence, too; but this was a minority view.

The more general opinion among its detractors was that it represented a threat to American womanhood. 'No man can be virtuous as a companion', the eugenicist Orson S. Fowler claimed, who eats tobacco; for, although he may not violate the seventh commandment, yet the feverish state of the system which it produces necessarily causes a craving and lustful exercise of amateness. Just as alcoholic liquors cause such amatory cravings, and for the same reason. As alcoholic liquors and the grosser forms of sensuality are twin sisters, so tobacco-eating and devilry are both one; because the fierce passions of many tobacco chewers, as regards the other sex, are immensely increased by the fires kindled in their systems, and of course in their cerebellums, by tobacco excitement. Ye who would be pure in your love instinct, cast this sensualising fire from you.

Such denunciations of tobacco continued to appear until the Civil War. Then, the armies in the field demanded to be kept supplied with it; on the Confederate side, the soldiers had eventually to be provided with a ration. Hope of having tobacco banned on the ground of its moral and physical effects dwindled. Restrictions continued to be called

for, but mainly to protect the public from the anti-social side-effects, rather than to protect the smoker from the consequences of his vice.

In Britain tobacco was assailed on a more serious clinical level, in the pages of the *Lancet*. After a few weeks of vigorous controversy, an editorial in April, 1847 had to admit that though tobacco was certainly a powerful and addictive drug, it was not quite clear what kind of drug. Whether or not moderate smoking was healthy also remained debatable. There were no two opinions—the *Lancet* insisted—about the evils of excessive smoking. The only problem here was: what constituted excess?

The test, the editorial suggested, was ‘smoking early in the day’—when ‘unless a man be the victim of pernicious habits, he certainly requires neither a sedative nor stimulant’. Anything over one or two pipes or cigars a day must also be regarded as excessive. For youths, any indulgence in the drug was dangerous. Their minds would be emasculated if they were unable to face their comparatively small anxieties without having recourse to the daily use of such a narcotic. ‘Listless minds and languid bodies, slakeless thirst and shaking hands, delirium tremens, madness—and death. We have distinctly and surely followed this unhallowed indulgence in youths who began their studies with bright promise of success, with fair characters, and honest purposes.’

But by this time it had become futile for the *Lancet* to pronounce such warnings. Tobacco, along with tea, had established itself as one of the drugs of the working classes. It was also in high favour with men of letters, as endless tributes had begun to show; in verse—Thomas Hood’s

How oft the fragrant smoke upcurled Hath borne me from this little world
And all that in it lies . . . and in prose—Lord Lytton’s

He who doth not smoke hath either known no great griefs, or refuseth himself the softest consolation next to that which comes from heaven. ‘What, softer than woman?’ whispers the young reader. Young reader, woman teases as well as consoles. Woman makes half the sorrows which she boasts the privilege to soothe. Woman consoles us, it is true, while we are young and handsome; when we are old and ugly, woman snubs and scolds us. On the whole, then, woman in this scale, the weed in that: Jupiter, hang out thy balance, and weigh them both; and if thou givest the preference to woman, all I can say is, the next time Juno ruffles thee—O Jupiter, try the weed!’

By this time, too, the defenders of tobacco had found a fresh argument. Even if it were addictive, they claimed, at least the consequences were less hideous than from other addictive drugs, opium, or alcohol; and they were able to cite E. W. Lane’s popular *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, published in 1844. Tobacco, Lane had argued, as well as affording cheap and sober refreshment, calmed the nervous system, thereby probably restraining the peasant ‘from less innocent indulgences’. In his *Letters from Turkey* in the 1870s von Moltke went further; it had been tobacco, he suggested, which had changed the wild nomadic Scythians, the scourge of their

neighbours, into the quiet and all too sedentary Turk.

THE MAINE LAW

A parallel controversy was also in progress about drink. Ought beer, wine and cider to be considered as a safer alternative to hard liquors? Or should they be prohibited in case youths, lured into taking them because they were relatively mild, would be tempted to move on impetuously to gin, or whiskey, or rum? For a time, supporters of wine and beer were dominant. In *An Inquiry into the effects of ardent spirits upon the human body and mind*, published in 1784, Benjamin Rush had argued that the consumption of beer and wine should be encouraged, in order to discourage dram-drinking.

In Britain, even John Wesley had praised wine, 'one of the noblest cordials'; and in 1826 Sydney Smith, recommending ale and tobacco to the readers of the *Edinburgh Review* as 'the joys and holidays of millions, the greatest pleasure which it is in the power of fortune to bestow', warned that these were amusements 'which a wise and parental legislature should not despise, or hastily extinguish'. To his mortification the legislature was soon to go to the other extreme.

In 1830 the Wellington Government, in its death throes, tried to court popularity with brewers and workers by reducing the cost of the licence to sell beer to £2 a year—a sum which was small enough to make it possible for any householder to take out a licence, as the brewers were delighted to advance the money. There was an immediate massive increase in the number of public houses—50,000 in six years—and of facilities for cheap beer drinking.

As a result, there was a repetition of what had happened a century earlier when similar encouragement had been given to gin—though on a less lethal scale. Again, the prevailing social conditions—with the lives of workers on the land being disrupted by enclosures, and of urban workers by the introduction of the factory system—encouraged the consumption of alcohol as a narcotic rather than a stimulant. 'Everybody is drunk,' Sydney Smith sadly observed, 'those who are not singing are sprawling. The sovereign people are in a beastly state.'

In 1832 James Teare stood up at a temperance meeting in Manchester and claimed that all intoxicating liquor was an enemy to God and man; 'the sooner it is put out of this world, the better'. Ten weeks later, seven men signed the first teetotal pledge, in Preston; and in 1835 a national society of teetotallers was formed. The movement grew rapidly in Britain—and still more rapidly in Ireland, where Father Mathew's preaching persuaded tens of thousands to take the pledge. In this period the campaign was for voluntary abstinence; and although it became known that the sister movement in the United States was for legislative intervention, it came as a complete surprise when a prohibition Bill was debated in the Maine Legislature in 1850, and as a still greater surprise when, the following year, it was passed. No attempt was made to stop people bringing liquor into the State for their own consumption, and the fruit-growers' lobby was influential enough to

prevent apple cider being included in the ban.

But 'the Maine Law' was generally regarded, and described, as prohibition; the first enactment based on the premise that all alcoholic liquors as such were dangerous drugs which ought to be taken, if at all, only on a medical prescription.

What happened in America had the effect of disrupting the movement in Britain. At first, the news of the Maine Law was enthusiastically received by all concerned. But it led some reformers to argue that what had been done in America could be done in Britain; and a split developed between those who continued to advocate voluntary abstinence, and those who wanted legal prohibition—the 'suasionists' and the 'suppressionists', as the two sides came to be described. In 1853 the United Kingdom Alliance was established 'to procure the total and immediate legislative suppression of the traffic in all intoxicating liquors'; and it was soon engaged in vigorous and sometimes embittered controversy with the suasionists, who objected to legal compulsion on principle and argued that there was no chance of such a measure passing in Britain.

The controversy started a public debate on the rights and duties of the State, in this context, and the arguments were considered by John Stuart Mill in his *Essay on Liberty*. Mill took as his text a letter which Lord Stanley had sent to *The Times*, replying to the views propounded by the Secretary of the U.K. Alliance. 'All matters relating to thought, opinion, conscience appear to me without the sphere of legislation,' Stanley had argued; 'all pertaining to social act, habit, relations, subject only to discretionary power vested in the State itself.' But there was another category, Mill pointed out. Individual acts might have social consequences. In that case, the Secretary of the Alliance in effect was arguing,

If anything invades my social rights, certainly the traffic in strong drink does. It destroys my primary right of security, by constantly creating and stimulating social disorder. It invades my right of equality, by deriving a profit from the creation of a misery I am taxed to support. It impedes my right to free moral and intellectual development, by surrounding my path with dangers, and by weakening and demoralising society, from which I have a right to claim mutual aid and intercourse.

What this amounted to, Mill thought, was a new theory of social rights; 'that it is the absolute right of every individual that every other individual shall act in every respect exactly as he ought'. So monstrous a principle, Mill felt, is far more dangerous than any single interference with liberty; there is no violation of liberty that it would not justify; it acknowledges no right to any freedom whatever except, perhaps, that of holding opinions in secret, without ever disclosing them; for the moment an opinion I consider noxious passes anyone's lips, it invades all the 'social rights' attributed to me by the Alliance.

Mill was being unfair. The Alliance were not claiming that because they disapproved of the consumption of alcohol, they had a right to stop other people drinking.

They were simply arguing that if an individual's drinking had social consequences of a kind which affected other people's rights—by, say, making the streets unsafe—they could then claim that right. As it happened, the Alliance stated that they did not even want to stop individuals brewing their own beer; it was the consequences of the liquor traffic, rather than of liquor, to which they objected. But here, they had put themselves on weaker ground, as the suasionist Joseph Livesey pointed out. If the Alliance were going to tell a man, 'you can brew your own beer', he argued—he failed to see 'how it can be wrong for your neighbour of the Royal Hotel to brew it for you, and take pay for it'.

Stanley had also uncovered a weakness in the Alliance's case. Their aim was to suppress the traffic in intoxicants; how were intoxicants to be defined? 'Is tobacco to be included? Is opium?' The Secretary of the Alliance, who was presumably well aware that any attempt to link tobacco with alcohol as a national menace would weaken his organisation's prospects, was forced to hedge. The tobacco traffic, he claimed, rested on the drink traffic 'and would fall with it, without any special enactment'—as also, he added, would the opium traffic. But he offered no evidence for this assertion.

FANSHAWE'S TRAVELS

In Britain, though, the decisive factor—as Livesey realised—was not going to be philosophical disputation, but the composition of the House of Commons. 'Out of the 658 members,' he wrote, 'there are probably not a dozen who would claim to be abstainers. These gentlemen have their cellars stored with liquor, have it daily on their tables, and have it introduced on every social occasion as a mark of friendship—and is it likely that they would pass a Bill to prevent others enjoying the same, according to their means?' It was most unlikely; but the hopes of suppressionists were kept alive partly by the extension of the franchise in Britain, which brought in working class voters, and partly by the achievements of the movement in America. Twelve other States had followed Maine's example; and though there had been backsliding as a result of the Civil War, the movement had soon picked up again. A National Prohibition Party was formed in 1869; its candidates began to win seats in State legislatures; and in 1890, it won its first seat in the House of Representatives at Washington.

Was it possible that prohibition might be introduced, on a national scale? Could it work? Did it, in fact, work in the States which had introduced it? In 1892 an English lawyer, E. L. Fanshawe, was despatched on a tour of America and Canada to try to find out. In his report, he was to claim that his sponsors—he did not say who they were—had given him strict injunctions to preserve impartiality; and whatever his personal opinions may have been (he was no teetotaler, himself) he did not allow them to obtrude.

Fanshawe was intrigued, on his arrival in America, to observe the differences in drinking habits. They helped, he felt, to account for the different courses which the temperance movement had been taking. In public, American men drank only water—iced. Except in a few cities, he usually found himself the only person taking wine or beer with his dinner. The clergy were virtually compelled to be abstainers; and at public func-

tions, drink was the exception. At gatherings at the White House, disrespectful persons said, 'water flowed like champagne'.

Fanshawe found, though, that if he went into a bar, at any hour of the day, he might meet friends who had been drinking water at dinner the night before, and they would be having a glass of whiskey, or a 'cocktail'. Worse (for once, Fanshawe could not repress his disapproval) they would be 'treating' each other; a practice so un-English, at that time, that he had to explain it in a footnote; 'two Americans go together to a bar; one treats the other who, feeling himself under an obligation, must have his revenge' (in Nebraska treating had been made illegal, 'but not prevented').

Even in States where there was no prohibition, Fanshawe found, drinking was regarded as a vice. Those who indulged themselves took care to do so in secret—or at least in privacy. And they did precisely the same in States where there was prohibition. He had arrived expecting to hear complaints about the way prohibition infringed the rights of the individual. Instead, all he heard was complaints about the difficulties of enforcing it.

This was due partly, he decided, to the fact that the prohibitionists, not being numerous enough to win on their own ticket, had concentrated on acquiring sufficient strength to hold the balance of power between Democrats and Republicans; which put them in a position to compel one or other party to pass 'dry' legislation, but did not necessarily compel them, when in office, to enforce it. Enforcement would depend on who was the successful party's nominee to run the police; and he might be in the pay of the brewers and distillers.

In any case, the problems confronting even those communities which were determined to enforce prohibition were formidable. It had been found relatively easy to enforce 'local option', where that was the law, because small communities were better able to winkle out illicit traffickers in their midst. When Fanshawe went to Cambridge, Mass., he could see just how efficiently it worked. But it worked efficiently only because Boston was nearby, with its 'high return of arrests for drunkenness, and its high percentage of non-residents among those arrested'. As for prohibition at the State level, Fanshawe's enquiries showed it to be almost farcical. In Maine, for example, there was nothing to stop citizens bringing in as much liquor as they could carry.

They could even purchase it in hotels to drink in private rooms; and in Bangor it was openly sold in bars, and by chemists. In Kansas, the State usually cited as having done most to make a success of prohibition, he was told that it was legal for members of clubs to keep liquor; they could obtain it through 'bootleggers' or—again perfectly legally—by ordering deliveries from a nearby 'wet' State.

Fanshawe was not called upon by his English sponsors to pronounce a verdict: but the report spoke it for him. Prohibition could not hope to work. How could whiskey be kept out of 'dry' Kansas City (Kan.) when the 'frontier' was an imaginary line running

down the middle of the street dividing it from 'wet' Kansas City (Mo.)?

Why, then, had the futility of prohibition not been recognised? One reason, Fanshawe showed, was that men who had the responsibility for enforcing the law naturally also had an interest in pretending that it worked, if necessary by deliberate falsehoods. In Kansas, for example, the attorney general had boasted that prohibition was 'depopulating the penitentiaries' by reducing violence and crime, a statement which had been gratefully repeated by the temperance reformers in England in a pamphlet, *Does Prohibition Prohibit?* When Fanshawe investigated the figures, however, he discovered that in proportion to the population, there were more prisoners in Kansas jails than there had been in 1860, the year prohibition had been introduced—a higher proportion, in fact, than in the adjoining 'wet' States.

The fundamental difficulty about enforcement was that the man in the street, whatever he might do in the polling booth, was on the side of the law-breakers, rather than of the law—as an enforcement officer he had met in Bangor had freely admitted. And this was having the unfortunate effect of bringing the law itself into discredit, by engendering 'a spirit of disregard for its observance'. It was also corrupting American political life. In Rhode Island, Fanshawe was told, a Republican attorney general had tried to implement campaign promises by bringing over a hundred offenders to justice.

Their lawyers cleverly delayed proceedings until after the next elections, to give time for 'wet' influence in both parties to get to work. He was not re-elected—the only Republican on the slate who failed to secure re-election; and the proceedings were quietly dropped.

THE ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE

Fanshawe's report, published in England, was hardly likely to make any impact in the United States. Even if it had been, a different verdict could have been wrung from it; that prohibition could never succeed unless it was extended to all States of the Union, and backed by federal law and federal enforcement. And while he was there, the movement which was eventually to succeed in persuading the necessary proportion of the electorate to accept that solution was getting under way: the Anti-Saloon League, founded in 1893. For a time, however, there appeared to be a possibility of a compromise plan, satisfying both suasionists and suppressionists, derived from the Gothenburg experiment, begun in Sweden in the 1860s.

It was not prohibition, but it went some way to satisfy the suppressionist aim of concentrating on the traffic, rather than on drink, by taking control away from private enterprise and putting it in the hands of 'disinterested management'. The manufacture, distribution and sale of drink were looked after by a board, none of whose members was allowed to have any pecuniary interest; the aim being not to stop consumption, but to ensure that it did the least possible harm.

To this end, alcoholic drinks became obtainable only through a form of lay prescription. The hours at which they could be purchased, and the type of premises in which they could be consumed, were designed to discourage social drinking. The idea was to favour beer at the expense of spirits, and the consumption of beer rose rapidly; but as it had been very low before, and as the consumption of spirits fell, the experiment was regarded as successful, and the system became general through Sweden and Norway.

For a while, the United Kingdom Alliance was attracted to the Gothenburg idea, thinking it might prove a handy stepping-stone on the way to ultimate prohibition. It also attracted Joseph Chamberlain, fitting in as it did with his view that all monopolies granted by the State should be managed by local authorities for the community, rather than for private profit. When he was elected to the Commons in 1876, he moved a resolution in favour of a scheme along Gothenburg lines, and it attracted fifty supporters.

In the United States, too, some interest was shown in the experiment; the Massachusetts legislature and the Federal Department of Labor in Washington sent investigators to Sweden, both of them making favourable reports on how the scheme was working. But by this time the movement for outright prohibition was gaining too much momentum to be thus sidetracked. The Anti-Saloon League established itself on a national basis, and it was to provide the organisation by which, over the next twenty years, prohibition became so powerful a cause that politicians were no longer able to exploit it for their own ends; instead, they found, the prohibitionists were able to exploit them.

By the 1906 elections, the League was able to show that it could wreck the chances of a politician who opposed it; his name was sent for suitable treatment to the League's accredited speakers, and also circulated on a black list to all electors. The party bosses began to require their candidates to agree to pledge themselves not to oppose prohibition; better still, to endorse it.

There were some setbacks; but by 1913 the League showed its power when the Webb-Kenyon Bill, designed to assist States to enforce prohibition more effectively, was passed in spite of a Presidential veto. And to the frustration of the liquor interests, the war, when it came, did nothing to hinder the prohibitionists; it actually helped them, as economists demanded cuts in drink consumption to save cereals for the G.I.'s rations; and Congress agreed to sponsor an amendment to the Constitution to enable prohibition to be introduced.

THE D'ABERNON COMMITTEE

In Britain, too, the war helped the suppressionist cause. If Lloyd George had been able to get his way, prohibition might have been introduced there, too, to assist the war effort. But opinion in Parliament and in the Cabinet was still hostile; and the cost of some variant of the Gothenburg system, which he also contemplated, would have involved astronomical sums to compensate the liquor interests. His colleagues were able to argue, too, that the consumption of alcoholic liquor was falling rapidly, helped by a volun-

tary abstinence campaign (King George V abjured drink for himself and the Court for the duration of the war) and by various restrictions imposed by 'DORA'—the Defence of the Realm Act, which among other things regulated the hours at which public houses could remain open.

Although Lloyd George remained convinced that—as he claimed in 1916—Britain was fighting Germany, Austria and drink, 'and the greatest of these three deadly foes is drink', he allowed himself to be persuaded that not enough was known about the enforced deprivation of drink on workers; and it was agreed that before any decision was taken, a Committee under Lord d'Abernon should investigate the whole subject of the effects of alcohol, and 'more particularly the effects on health and industrial efficiency produced by the consumption of beverages of various alcoholic strengths'.

The Committee's report, published in 1917, differed from those of earlier parliamentary investigations in one significant respect; it considered the action of alcohol as a drug. It was also, the Committee conceded, a common article of diet; and the habit of drinking was encouraged by the agreeable taste of fermented liquors. They insisted, nevertheless, that it was basically as a drug that alcoholic liquor was consumed.

The need to consider alcohol in this way had been stressed by Sydney Hillier in his *Popular Drugs*, published in 1910. He had devoted half the book to it, explaining that while statistics showed there had been a general decline in the consumption of alcoholic drinks in England, the news should not be welcomed unreservedly, because it did not necessarily mean any reduction in drug consumption; 'no statistics are available relating to morphinism or other drug habits, but there is a very general consensus of opinion, among those who are best able to judge, that there is an increase in the number of persons addicted'. Drink must never—Hillier insisted—be considered as a problem in its own right. The possibility must always be kept in mind that it might be the lesser of two evils.

Lord d'Abernon and his colleagues, however, were asked to consider only drink, and its effects on the war effort. The figures they collected were sufficient to warn the Government of the magnitude of the confrontation Lloyd George was contemplating. The amount spent annually on alcoholic liquor in the United Kingdom was half as much again as the entire receipts from the railway system, and more than double the expenditure on bread. Until the war, the amount spent had been almost equal to the entire revenue of the State; and in some countries it had actually been more. What was likely to happen if prohibition were introduced was not within the Committee's terms of reference; but the statistics were disturbing enough in themselves.

Lloyd George decided it would be wise to rely on 'DORA'—reinforced by such occasional additions such as a 'No Treating' order, and reductions in the strength of beer. The expedients worked well enough. By the end of the war, consumption of beer had fallen by nearly a third, and of spirits by more than a half. The rate of 'drunk and disorderly' convictions, too, dropped from nearly 200,000 in the first year of the war to below

30,000 in the last.

THE VOLSTEAD ACT

No similar inquiry was conducted in the United States. The required quota of States having announced their ratification, Prohibition was introduced in 1920. Three years later Roy Haynes, the Commissioner in charge of the enforcement of Prohibition (as it came to be called, with a capital 'P') gave an account in *Prohibition Inside Out*. It was designed to show that, appearances notwithstanding, 'the illegal liquor traffic is under control'. But Haynes was also anxious to defend himself and his subordinates from criticism, already mounting. To do so, he had to describe the difficulties that had confronted them; and the book turned into a treatise on why the illegal liquor traffic had not been, and could not be, brought under control.

To begin with, there had been the unwelcome discovery that the demand for hard liquor was—in the economists' new jargon—inelastic. A high proportion of the spirit drinkers of the pre-Prohibition era were prepared to continue to buy their supplies, even if the price doubled or trebled. As expected, some were men and women from all classes who had become so dependent on drink that they could not bear to do without it. But much more serious was the number of respectable citizens who were drinkers in moderation, and who had no intention of drinking any less, whatever the law might say.

'One finds upon the Roll of Dishonour proud old names long worn without stain or blemish, now close-linked with names that have been a by-word with the demi-monde of half a hundred cities', Haynes lamented. 'One finds names that once epitomised honour and power and community esteem, steeped in the same befouling brew with the names of thieves, thugs and murderers.' Nor was it only the rich man who must have his drink. It was also the industrial worker, especially the immigrant; the German steel worker in Milwaukee, who had always regarded his beer as part of his life; the New York Italian who had never been drunk, yet could not conceive of a meal without wine.

To cater for this demand there were six main sources of supply; genuine liquor, in stock; genuine liquor diluted or mixed with synthetic varieties; synthetic liquor made from grain alcohol, with colour and flavour added; 'moonshine'—liquor distilled from vegetable substances; 'denatured' alcohol, redistilled; and wood alcohol. This variety of sources would have made Haynes' task difficult enough; what made it impossible was the variety of uses for which alcohol could still legally be manufactured. In the event of any attempt to stop the use of communion wine, the Rev. E. A. Wasson had announced in 1914, 'we would do as our Lord told us to do—"all of you, drink of this"—if we had to go to jail for it'.

The threat had sufficed: Communion wine was exempted from the law, and many a consignment so labelled found its way to the dinner, rather than the altar table. An even more abundant source was medical prescription. Whiskey and brandy had been dropped from the *Pharmacopeia* in 1916, but alcohol remained an essential ingredient

in prescriptions for a wide range of diseases; and although prescribing habits were subjected to scrutiny, any doctor who was prepared to break the law, either for cash reward or for the benefit of himself and his friends, ran little risk. Chemists, too, licensed as they were to sell alcohol in certain forms, found the law easy to evade.

The most prolific source of alcohol, though, was industry, which had so great a need for it that considerable quantities could be siphoned off without exciting suspicion. Industrial alcohol was 'denatured'—rendered unfit for human consumption; but it could easily be re-distilled. Firms were set up ostensibly to produce commodities which required an alcohol base, but in reality to divert the alcohol into illicit channels. A State Governor, Giffard Pinchot, estimated in 1924 that the 150 firms which had been authorised in his State to purchase de-natured alcohol to manufacture perfumes and hair tonics had ordered enough of it to fulfill the needs of the population of the entire world.

What with 'moonshine'—easy enough to make and, in a country the size of the United States, extremely difficult to check—Haynes had been unable to stem the flow of illicit spirits manufactured in the United States. But he had also to deal with smuggling; and the difficulties that presented, as set out in his book, and as expressed by other law enforcement officers at the time, read like a weird parody of what had happened in China with opium, a century before. Vast quantities of liquor—James Beck, a Washington law officer, complained in an article in the London Sunday Times on July 15th, 1923—were being taken out from British possessions with a full knowledge that they were to be used to violate the laws of the United States and break down this policy of prohibition. Our requests that clearance papers should be refused to notorious rum-runners were denied. They persisted, and wholesale lawlessness virtually challenged the right of the U.S. to be master within its own household, for it has never been challenged by any competent authority on international law that each sovereign nation, notwithstanding the comity of nations, has entire right to assert full police power over any foreign merchant vessel within the territorial limits of the sovereign.

William Jennings Bryan made the same complaint. "There is no more excuse for the use of adjacent territory for conspiracies against the Prohibition Law . . . than for the use of such territory for conspiracies against any other law of the land. Piracy would not be given protection under the British flag. Why should smuggling?" British merchants were as little disposed to listen to such arguments as they had been to listen to Commissioner Lin. The Scottish distillers even found a way of expanding their market. Distillers in the United States had been permitted to continue to export their spirits, provided they were sold for 'nonbeverage purposes'. The Scotch distillers, buying them in bulk, could truthfully claim they had no intention of drinking them; the whiskey they made out of them was sent back across the Atlantic, for the Americans to drink.

The Canadian distillers were soon on to the same ruse. As Haynes sarcastically commented, the residents of British Columbia, who had previously shown no enthusiasm for American whiskey, suddenly become so enamoured of it that they required 200,000 gallons. They, too, had been careful to honour the pledge that they were not

going to drink it; they had promptly re-exported it to California.

The French, too, had not been disposed to let their wine and brandy trade to the United States be terminated. The islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon became the equivalent of Lintin. There were only about 4,000 inhabitants and they were soon buying 1,000 gallons per head, annually, of various liquors. Their harbours were thronged with depot ships, supplying schooners designed to carry 50,000 gallons, which could cruise in safety outside the three-mile limit for weeks at a time, waiting for smuggling craft which came out from the shore, or taking with them their own equivalent of the 'fast crabs'—speed boats which were faster than anything the American customs possessed, and which could run a consignment ashore, land it, and return to the parent ship in the course of a night.

If it were too risky to put it ashore, they would dump it on the seabed, with a buoy to mark its position, and leave the vendor to collect it when he judged it safe to do so (a standard wine drinkers' joke was that the test whether a bottle of wine was a genuine import was the mud on the bottle).

There was also piracy. Prohibition had not been many months in force before Haynes received a report that pirate ships were beginning to operate along the Atlantic coast. 'Their method of operation is to learn of the destination and route of a boat regularly engaged in smuggling from the Bahamas and then overtake it, overpower the crew, and remove the cargo of liquor to the pirate boats.' Piracy even came to the Great Lakes, where men in 'swift little motor boats' waited just out of sight of land to intercept the smugglers, knowing the smugglers could not call on the law to protect them.

In one respect, Haynes was worse off than Lin had been. He had the land frontier with Canada to protect—as long as the distance from England to India, he ruefully noted. For much of its length it was marked only on the map; and, as somebody had put it, 'you cannot keep liquor from dripping through a dotted line'. The American enforcement officials could actually watch the liquor arriving, and being put into warehouses across the border; but they were themselves being watched, and no move would be made until at a signal from the American side, small boats or lorries would run the consignments across. It was more difficult—one of Haynes' men who had been a G.I. complained—than trench warfare in France; 'over there we could shoot them or grab them where we saw them, or go right in and get them; but over here we've got to wait till they come over to our side of no man's land.'

So, bootlegging had already become a major industry; and the consequences, Haynes did not attempt to hide, had been catastrophic. As there could be no legal redress if inferior, or even poisonous, liquor was passed off as gin or whiskey, the consumer had no protection. In Chicago, coroners' verdicts revealed that a hundred people had died in the first five months in 1923 from drinking 'bootleg hooch'; and the real figure, he felt, must certainly have been far higher.

Equally serious was the way in which Prohibition was breeding corruption. Forty-

three of Haynes' agents had been found guilty of illegalities in Philadelphia alone; and although he claimed that this represented only a small proportion of the total force, he was careless enough in another part of his book to stress that the number of such offenders caught was 'doubtless but a fraction of those who are guilty'. Nor was it only his men who became involved. Reports of a trial in an Indiana town disclosed that liquor had been freely on sale there in saloons—and even in soft drink establishments; the proprietor of one of them complained that he had had to mortgage his premises, in order to pay the protection money demanded of him. This was the result of a conspiracy which included the mayor, the sheriff, a judge of the city court, the prosecuting attorney of the county, a former sheriff, a former prosecuting attorney, a detective sergeant, a justice of the peace, an influential lawyer, and former deputy sheriffs, detectives, policemen, petty lawyers, bartenders, cabaret singers and notorious women.

Haynes naively believed that the publicity given to the Indiana trial would lead to increasing respect for the law. But the sentences passed on the conspirators, considering the enormity of their offense, had been derisory; and he had to admit that the light fines often imposed in such cases had 'contributed in no small way to the spirit of defiance in which bootleggers hold the law'. Although there had been a fair haul of little fish, the big-time violators had found little difficulty in avoiding prosecution—or, if they were prosecuted, in escaping conviction.

REPEAL

The story of Prohibition has been told too often to need repeating. It was to last for another ten years, with the forces of the law becoming annually more disillusioned, more ineffectual, and more corrupt, while the bootleggers became richer, more powerful and—as Sidney Whipple was to show in his Noble Experiment—more ingenious; especially the smugglers. They would arrange for consignments to be periodically intercepted by a customs man who was in their pay, so that he could lull suspicions; perhaps even get himself written up as a hero in the local newspapers. So much a matter of course did the traffic from Canada become that the prices obtainable for consignments in the nearest United States city would be available in bars—as the price of opium had been listed in Jardine's Canton newspaper.

The initial reaction to Prohibition's failure was a demand for higher penalties, as a deterrent; and these were duly imposed in many States. In Michigan, a mandatory scale of penalties was laid down, culminating at the fourth offense with imprisonment for life. When the first life sentence was imposed, the culprit turned out to be not the local Al Capone but Mrs. Etta May Miller, mother of ten, whose fourth offense was being found in illicit possession of a bottle of gin. That was an extreme example: but because it was so rare for any of the men who ran the bootlegging industry to be convicted, the policy of high penalties fell into disrepute; as did Prohibition.

Even in 1923, Haynes had lamented, there had been those who undermined the law by criticising it; particularly the smartly dressed men and women, in fashionable

drawing rooms or restaurants,

The colour deepens on milady's cheek; the voice of her escort grows thick. What are they saying as the pocket flasks run low? 'Prohibition is a joke . . . it can never be enforced . . . it's dead easy to get all you want . . . they can never make this city dry . . . popular opinion's against the law.

As the 1920s went by, such opinions came to be more often heard, until even President Hoover was forced to realise that Prohibition's effects were destructive—and embarrassing, in terms of the international reputation of the United States (with the possible exception of the Prince of Wales, Capone was the world's best known public figure). As Hoover had described Prohibition as 'this noble experiment', and had won election with the help of 'dry' votes, he could not very well demand that it should be repealed; instead, he resorted to the traditional expedient of a Commission of Enquiry—ten men and the President of Radcliffe, Ada Comstock.

They studied the subject for eighteen months, and in spite of the fact that they had a built-in conservative Republican bias, they had to concede in their report, published early in 1931, that Prohibition had failed. There was a mass of evidence, they had found, of drinking 'in homes, in clubs, and in hotels; of drinking parties given and attended by persons of high standing and respectability; of drinking by tourists at winter and summer resorts; and of drinking in connection with public dinners and at conventions'.

There was similar evidence of drinking by women, and by the country's youth: 'votes in colleges show an attitude of hostility to or contempt for the law on the part of those who are not unlikely to be leaders in the next generation'. The same attitude was also to be found in the views and the conduct of well-off citizens in the average community, and 'in the tolerance of conduct at social gatherings which would not have been possible a generation ago'. Taking the country as a whole, people of wealth, business men and professional men and their families, and, perhaps, the higher paid working men and their families, are drinking in large numbers in quite frank disregard of the declared policy of the National Prohibition Act.

One reason, the Report continued, was people's irritation with State interference in a matter where they felt the State had no business interfering.

In consequence, many of the best citizens of every community, on whom we rely habitually for the upholding of law and order, are at most lukewarm as to the national Prohibition Act. Many who are normally law-abiding are led to an attitude hostile to the statute by a feeling that repression and interference with private conduct are carried too far. This is aggravated in many of the larger cities by a feeling that other parts of the land are seeking to impose on them.

As a result, crime had become rampant, the huge profits enabling bootleggers to defy attempts to enforce the law; and there were 'revelations of police corruption in ev-

ery type of municipality, small and large, throughout the decade'.

The report alarmed Hoover, less for its depressing verdict than because of the implications for his forthcoming Presidential campaign, when he would need the 'dry' vote. He held meetings with the Commission, and managed to persuade them that however disastrous the consequences of Prohibition might be, this was not the time to end it; which enabled him to claim that 'by a large majority' the Committee 'does not favour the repeal of the 18th Amendment as a method of cure for the inherent abuses of the liquor traffic. I am in accord with this view.' Collectively, as a Committee, this was what they had agreed. But only three of them, as individuals, had supported the continuance of the Act. The rest, for their own reasons, had recommended either that it should be repealed, or substantially revised.

As it happened, there was by this time a further argument against Prohibition, which may have been decisive; the need to provide more employment, and more revenue, following the great crash. The prices of illicit liquor in general had held so steady during the whole Prohibition period that it was actually possible to assess, with a reasonable expectation of accuracy, what the Government could expect to get from duties if the trade was again legalised; roughly the same, it was found, as it got from income tax. 'Dry' influence was still sufficiently feared for Franklin D. Roosevelt to refrain from actively denouncing Prohibition in the 1931 Presidential campaign; but he pledged himself, if elected, to put the Prohibition issue to the individual States. By the end of the year following his election, enough of them had ratified repeal to bring the noble experiment to an end.

THE INTERNATIONAL ANTI-DRUG CAMPAIGN

IT HAD NOT NEEDED THE FAILURE OF PROHIBITION TO TEACH THE Americans that if drugs were to be controlled in domestic use, the need would arise for international regulation, too. Half a century before, there had been alarm at the spread of opium smoking introduced by the Chinese who came to work in California; and also at the more insidious form of opium consumption indulged in by the growing numbers of Americans who were persuaded to take tonics or cordials which had the drug as a prime constituent. After the Americans took over the Philippines, too, they became concerned about opium consumption there. Measures to check the traffic proving unsuccessful, the idea of imposing international control was mooted; and by a fortunate chance, the opportunity suddenly presented itself to secure international agreement.

THE SHANGHAI CONFERENCE

For some years, the improvement in the quality of the opium produced in China had been reminding the British in India that their hold on the Chinese market could not last much longer. Indian opium—the Hong Kong Daily News had warned in the 1880s—was becoming a drug on the market 'in more senses than one'; the day would soon come when the native Chinese article would be exported. Exports from India to China, which

had risen decade by decade for so long, began to fall, the quantity of home produced opium in China surging rapidly past the quantity imported.

In December 1905 the Conservative Government in Britain, which had held power for a decade, resigned; and the following spring, the House of Commons unanimously adopted a resolution 'that this House reaffirms its conviction that the Indo-Chinese opium traffic is morally indefensible, and requests His Majesty's Government to take such steps as may be necessary for bringing it to a speedy close'.

The new Liberal Government, urged on by its back-benchers' humanitarian zeal, opened negotiations with the Chinese by offering to reduce opium exports annually, provided they reduced home production, step by step, and did not import from other countries. If all went smoothly, in ten years' time the traffic could cease. The Chinese unhesitatingly accepted.

'It is hereby commanded,' the imperial edict ran, 'that within a period of ten years the evils arising from foreign and native opium be equally and completely eradicated.'

The American Government, alerted by the authorities in the Philippines, realised that if India and China really did reduce production there was a chance that the United States' problems could be solved, too, provided that other countries did not expand production. Through the prompting of the State Department, an International Conference was convened in Shanghai in 1909 to study the whole opium problem. All the major countries with an interest in the traffic were invited and only one, Turkey, did not send a representative, owing to her domestic upheavals—a valid enough excuse, as they were to lead to the victory of the Young Turks, and the deposition of Abdul the Damned. The representatives of the remaining thirteen states met, conferred, and agreed in principle that there was a need for greater effort on the part of their Governments to control the traffic in opium and its derivatives, particularly morphine.

The Shanghai Conference had been arranged only for an exchange of views; but its success prompted President Taft to call for a Conference of Delegates with plenipotentiary powers. It met at The Hague in 1911, attended by the representatives of China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Persia, Portugal, Russia, Siam and the U.S.A. And again, a heartening measure of agreement was reached. In future, it was agreed, the production and distribution of raw opium should be carefully regulated, and its export to other countries permitted only to duly authorised persons, through duly authorised channels.

The production, distribution and consumption of prepared opium—the kind normally used for smoking—was gradually to be suppressed altogether, so that trade in it would cease. The production and distribution of opium derivatives was to be restricted to the amounts required for medical and scientific purposes. The necessary licensing arrangements, the delegates agreed, would be introduced by their respective States, when they ratified the agreement.

Crucial to the success of the whole enterprise, clearly, was the satisfactory working of the Anglo-Chinese agreement. And it had far surpassed expectations—as even the sceptical British Consul-General in China, Sir Alexander Hosie, was compelled to admit. As he had toured the poppy growing areas of China in the 1880s, he could make the necessary comparisons; and touring them again in 1910, he found that poppy cultivation in some provinces had virtually ceased, and in most others had been greatly reduced. Public opinion, it appeared, had been roused against opium, in much the same way as it had been aroused against spirits in Ireland by Father Mathew, but with the added element of patriotic fervour, opium still being identified with foreign oppression. And in a country as heavily populated as China, it was easy to detect and prevent poppy cultivation, when the will was there. Although the revolution in the central provinces in 1911, and the subsequent breakdown of the central Government's authority, meant that the drive finally to eliminate opium production lost momentum, enough had been accomplished to show that it might be possible to achieve that purpose, when order was restored.

In India, too, opium production was being steadily reduced—or so the authorities claimed. But on a visit to Japan in 1916 the young American writer Ellen La Motte met a Hindu, who assured her that the authorities were lying. They had reduced production only so long as there was no alternative, because the Chinese market was slipping from their grasp; but they were still deeply involved in the traffic. At the time, La Motte assumed his allegations were the product of his nationalist fervour; but in the year which she spent touring Eastern countries, she came to realise that they were wholly justified.

As soon as the agreement to reduce exports of Indian opium to China had been entered into, she discovered, every effort had been made to evade it. The simplest way had been to send opium to the International Settlements in the Treaty Ports, which were not 'China' for export purposes. As a result—a Shanghai missionary had shown—the number of licensed opium dealers in the International Settlement there had risen from 87 before the agreement, to 663 in 1914; and the value of opium imports into the Settlements had nearly trebled. The figures published showing the reduction in exports of opium to China also concealed the fact that much of it was finding its way there in a different, derivative, form.

Board of Trade returns disclosed that exports of British morphine to the Eastern countries had been rising rapidly; from five and a half tons in 1911 to fourteen tons in 1914.

Although the acreage under poppy cultivation in India had fallen following the agreement with China, Ellen La Motte was able to show that the fall had stopped by the time war broke out, and output had begun to rise again. Such confidence did the British Government have that the market, so far from continuing to contract—as the Hague Convention envisaged—would remain buoyant, that a loan made to Persia was guaranteed from the Persian opium revenue. Although the Persian delegate had signed the Hague Convention, La Motte recalled, his Government did not ratify it: 'no wonder!'

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

By the time the first of La Motte's exposures of the duplicity of the British Government's opium policy appeared, however—in 1920—the League of Nations had been established; and one of its functions was to take over the supervision of international agreements such as the Hague Convention. At the League's first meeting, an advisory committee on opium and other drugs was set up, with two functions; to collect and analyse information on the drug traffic, and to try to persuade member States to keep the regulations laid down to control it. The information collected, when analysed, revealed that La Motte's strictures had been justified. The Hague Convention was revealed as no more than a string of aspirations.

The contracting nations, for example, had pledged themselves to control the output of raw and prepared opium; but they had been careful not to say how, or when. They had promised to manufacture no more opium derivatives than were required for scientific and medical purposes; but they had not settled how much was required. And even when specific pledges had been made—for example, to end the trade in prepared opium—there had been nothing to stop merchants in the countries which had previously imported it ordering, instead, the equivalent amount of raw opium, and processing it themselves.

Britain, as the chief opium producer, was the chief beneficiary; but firms in many countries shared in the profits, particularly in Switzerland, already providing a haven for those who were evading their own country's fiscal laws. The Dutch merchants were also well placed. Although their Government had been host to the Hague Conference, and had been nominally in charge of securing adherence to the Convention until the League took over, it had neglected to make any regulation requiring returns from Dutch companies of their output of morphine or cocaine. There was consequently no legal means of telling whether they were conforming to the Hague code. Nor would the figures, had they been supplied, necessarily have been reliable. The Hague Convention, in requesting that relevant statistics should be furnished, had neglected to make any provision to ensure that the statistics would be accurate.

At their fifth session, the members of the Opium Committee of the League were presented with, among other documents, two sets of figures; one from the British, purporting to be the amounts of morphine exported from Britain to Japan between 1916 and 1920; the other from the Japanese, purporting to be the amounts of morphine imported from Britain in the same period.

No satisfactory explanation could be found for the discrepancies—or for the one pound of morphine exported in 1920; but at least they alerted the League to the futility of relying on information provided by interested parties.

The British blandly used such evidence to justify their policy of keeping opium a government monopoly. British governments, the implication was, could not lie, nor could

they cheat. In reply to La Motte and others who accused them of exploiting the drug for revenue, they reverted to the old excuse that, on the contrary, they were keeping the duty high to discourage consumption. She had shown that in the Straits Settlements, in the first decade of the century, opium duties had sometimes provided the bulk of the revenue—a fact which, as it had been reported to Parliament by a commission of enquiry, the Government could not easily dispute. But—the League's Opium Committee was told—this was precisely why the Colonial Government had acquired monopoly powers in 1910—for the purpose of 'gradual and effective suppression'.

The Government had implemented that policy by drastically reducing the number of licensed opium dens, which had fallen from 500 in 1909 to 200 in 1922, and by putting up the price. It was only later that the statistics, when they were published, revealed that so far from the suppression policy being effective, the State monopoly had actually contrived to sell more opium, in spite of the reduction in the number of licensed dens. Coupled with the higher price, this had meant a most gratifying increase of revenue; in 1918 opium still accounted for sixty per cent of the Straits Settlements' entire income.

In India, too, the Government was doing its best to recoup some of the losses following the agreement with China by encouraging the sale of opium under licence; when in 1921 the young Gandhi called for a campaign against 'that other oppressor'—as he described the drug—his followers were arrested on charges of 'undermining the revenue'. So little concerned were the British about the views of the League of Nations that after a Commission under Lord Inchcape had investigated India's finances in 1923, its report, while recognising that it might be necessary to reduce opium production again if prices fell, went on to warn against diminishing the area cultivated, because of the need to safeguard 'this most important source of income'.

THE 1925 CONVENTION

By this time, public opinion in the United States had been roused; and in February 1923 a Resolution was put before the House of Representatives in Washington by Stephen Porter, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, arguing that the crucial factor was overproduction of opium. At the very most, the world needed 125 tons of opium for medical and scientific purposes—less than one-tenth of what was currently being produced. All the evidence, he said, went to show that in such circumstances, 'habit-forming narcotic drugs, by reason of their extraordinary nature, will overcome all barriers, even the bars of prisons'—and he quoted Sir John Jordan, by this time a member of the League of Nations Opium Committee, 'Whatever and wherever opium is produced it will reach the consumer.'

To try to control the traffic by even the most drastic of laws was futile; the only hope for effective control was to get the producing nations to cut production. Both Houses of Congress unanimously agreed to ask the President to request the producer nations to accept the necessary regulations. In the autumn, the Assembly of the League called a

fresh conference, with delegates from interested member countries (and from the United States, though she was not a member) with plenipotentiary powers, to see what could be done to improve upon the Hague Convention.

To Ellen La Motte, who came to Geneva from America to report on its deliberations, it was a heartening experience. Here were delegates from most of the great nations of the world coming together to grapple with one of the greatest of man-made evils; and the most impressive feature of all, she felt, was the integrity and dedication of the representatives of the countries which had suffered most. 'One fact emerged clearly', she wrote in her first report to the Nation magazine. 'The whole Orient is anxious to put down opium.' But some of the European nations were equally anxious to keep it up. Britain, as the European country which controlled the major source of opium, would be the key; 'if Britain yields, the rest will collapse'.

At the first meeting, the British delegates showed themselves apparently ready and anxious to yield. They raised no objection to the proposal, backed by the Americans and the Chinese, that opium production and distribution should in future be limited by international agreement. The only question—the British delegates suggested—was how? The answer, the Americans replied, was simple. An estimate should be made of the quantity of opium and its derivatives required for medical and scientific purposes, and production limited to that amount by international agreement. Again, the British agreed, merely stipulating that the term 'legitimate' should be added to 'medical and scientific.'

It seemed reasonable; but as the Americans soon realised; it effectively sabotaged their proposal. One by one the delegates of the colonial powers rose to explain what uses for opium, in their own colonies, they would consider 'legitimate'. The Dutch pointed out that allowance must be made for custom; smoking opium might be evil, but it had been eaten from time immemorial in the Dutch East Indies. The French found it difficult to understand why it should be considered any better to eat opium than to smoke it; if consumption was going to be permitted at all, there was no reason to suppress it simply because of the way it was taken (in French Indo-China, opium was usually smoked).

The British agreed. What mattered was not how the drug was taken, but for what purpose; they could not regard the use of opium as a 'family drug' as illegitimate (in India, opium was licensed for sale as a family drug). Each delegate assured the Americans of his country's willingness to accept their proposal, so long as it was understood that each country had the right to decide what form of consumption was legitimate in its own colonies, and how much could be produced to cater for it. The Americans, disillusioned, quit the Conference, the British explaining that it was all the Washington Government's fault, for giving them firm instructions which left no room for compromise. But La Motte was sure that the instructions which the British delegates had received had been just as firm—'make it as difficult as you like for a person to buy a grain of heroin, but don't hamper an "authorised person" from buying a ton, from time to time, as he pleases'. The British, though, had been careful not to reveal their policy.

The British had certainly behaved as if 'don't touch production' had been their brief. When the Chinese urged them to introduce restrictions in their own colonial territories, they fell back on the argument they had adopted a century before: what would be the use? Some other country would simply move in on the market, and keep the colonies supplied by smuggling. The British delegates scarcely bothered to conceal which 'other country' they assumed would do the smuggling: China. For a hundred years they had argued that they could do nothing to prevent opium from British colonies being smuggled into China. Now, with exasperating logic, they were claiming they would be able to do nothing to prevent Chinese opium from being smuggled into British colonies. Following the American example, the Chinese delegation departed.

The colonial powers, however, were careful to avoid giving the impression that they were blocking reform. An impressive-looking list of proposals for control of the opium traffic was adopted before the Conference adjourned.

Coca and Indian hemp were added to the list of substances which were to be restricted. The contracting countries were to 'undertake' to enforce the regulations—rather than, as the Hague agreement had put it, to 'use their best endeavours' to enforce them. A permanent Central Narcotics Board was to be established, to which the contracting countries would be required to make returns of all imports and exports of the listed drugs, and also to show, separately, the estimated amounts required for medical and scientific purposes. When there was evidence of excessive production or importation, the country concerned could be asked to give an explanation. An international accounting agency, with powers to investigate, was also to be set up; and the contracting parties agreed to accept compulsory arbitration in any dispute arising out of the new Convention which could not be settled by other means. Considering the difficulties which the Conference had faced, not least through the withdrawal of the Americans and Chinese, its achievements appeared very creditable, on paper.

American observers were not deceived. A former Editor of the New York Evening Post and Chief of the Washington Bureau of the Associated Press, John P. Gavit, had been covering the meetings; and he asked himself, when they were over, what steps the Conference had taken 'reasonably calculated to limit the manufacture of these substances or the production of the raw material from which they are made'. The answer, he felt bound to emphasise, was 'none whatsoever'. Only two of the decisions, he felt, had held out any promise: that relevant information would be more carefully scrutinised and correlated; and that the permanent Central Narcotics Board was to be composed of men who 'by their technical competence, impartiality, and disinterestedness will command general confidence'—they were to be given five-year contracts, further to reduce their dependence on their own governments. But Gavit was obviously not the only person to have realised that a strong independent central board, by publicising the relevant information, would be able to expose which States were failing in their duty. Switzerland, whose pharmaceutical industry handled much of the European narcotics traffic, promptly served notice that if the information she forwarded to the Board was disclosed to her disadvantage, 'she would forthwith cease to furnish any'.

The Swiss need not have worried; the central board was never set up, its place being taken by an advisory committee. Only one of its members, La Motte reported, was dedicated to controlling the opium traffic; the representative of China. The rest were dedicated to preventing control from becoming effective, with the help of ingenious procedural techniques. One British delegate would insist upon open sessions, on principle. Another would agree, but put the reasons why, in practice, this or that particular issue ought more properly to be discussed in private; a proposition which would be gratefully accepted by the other colonial powers. At public sessions of the Opium Advisory Committee, the Chairman would proceed with remarks like

‘Gentlemen, you have read Document 418? I take it there is no discussion? Good. We will now pass on to Document 419.’

Sometimes, too, the reference would be to a numbered paragraph in a document which had not been made available to the press. As a result the ‘open’ sessions were productive mainly of gibberish.

La Motte was, however, able to unearth one news story of interest: that the British Government was proposing to extend its opium operations in India. When criticised for over-production there, the British had long replied that at least the opium was going up in smoke; it was highly esteemed for that purpose, but no good for extracting derivatives like morphine. Now, the League heard that this was incorrect. Indian opium could produce admirable morphine—and the British had decided to go into morphine production in India for themselves.

ALEXANDER’S TRAVELS

La Motte’s conviction that the British were pretending to support the League only to mask their own design—the extraction of the maximum revenue possible from opium—was soon to be given confirmation. In 1927 H. G. Alexander was offered a travelling fellowship to investigate the drug problem in the Far East; and after his return to England he published an account of what he had found. He made no secret of his own view, derived from the time when his father had been Secretary of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Traffic; this, he claimed, had simply made him more careful to rely only on sources which could not be regarded as prejudiced against the traffic, such as the reports of the Indian Revenue, Customs and Excise Departments.

And they revealed that it was still Government policy to encourage the production not merely of opium, but also of Indian hemp—even when there were complaints about the effects. Thus, in the report of the Excise Department of the United Provinces for the financial year 1926-7, the inhabitants of the Benares region were criticised as ‘most depraved in respect of the use of intoxicants, although it is the very centre of the sacred soil of the Hindus’; yet the same report boasted that ‘the downward tendency in the sales of charas has now been arrested’, and disclosed that consideration was being given to a proposal for the cultivation of more hemp to produce more ganja and, therefore, more

revenue.

The sales of hard liquor were also growing. When any suggestion was made that they ought to be reduced, the reply would be along the lines given in the Excise Report for the Bombay Presidency for 1925-6; attempts to curb legal sales merely increased illicit traffic, so that there was 'no improvement in temperance, increasing contempt for law and authority, and demoralisation of the inadequate excise staff'—as well as, of course, 'loss of revenue'.

So while the British Government was professing to be taking measures to reduce consumption of opium and hemp drugs, its agents in India were in fact busy pushing sales in order to increase the colony's revenue. Alexander did not know what should be done—or could be done. Control, he admitted, would not be easy, and might require a different approach in different circumstances; as between town and country, say. But of one thing he was certain: whatever policies were adopted, they should not be left to Britain or to any other colonial power to decide or enforce, or the situation would get worse: with, in all probability, destructive consequences—for the colonial powers, as well as for their colonies.

Even in the limited sphere of drug and drink habits, the main guilt of the West, for which sooner or later, the East will call us to account, arises from the export of manufactured habitforming drugs, such as morphine and cocaine, and from the export of spirits. So long as we go to the East with these things in our hand, Chinese and Indians and Malays are not likely to have much use for the programmes of social reform that we carry in the other.

'THE SMUGGLERS' REUNION'

In the meantime, Ellen La Motte had been trying to keep the American public informed about what was going on at 'The Smugglers' Reunion', as the disillusioned newspaper correspondents in Geneva dubbed the League's Opium Committee. She had found an ally: the Italian delegate, Signor Cavazzoni. He was probably simply there to make mischief for Mussolini's amusement; but he made it entertainingly. The Opium Committee's only response was to find a new way to make things more difficult for correspondents; it was agreed to cut down on the number of their proceedings printed—'to save paper', they claimed. La Motte was sure it was to enable them to doctor the records. Events were to show she was right.

At this point the British delegates created a surprise, by proposing that the League should send a fact-finding mission to the Far East to investigate the opium situation there. This proposal, they could claim, showed they had nothing to hide. But as Gavit had already warned in his *Opium*, published in 1925, it was part of the colonial powers' game to keep the general public under the impression that drug taking was an exotic Oriental vice, slipping into Western countries through the docks and slums; whereas in fact the real danger lay not in opium or hashish from the 'depraved' East, but in the drugs which

were coming from the expensively equipped, skillfully and scientifically conducted pharmaceutical laboratories of the 'civilised' West—Britain, the United States, France, Holland, but chiefly from Switzerland and Germany. The fact-finding mission was being deliberately sent to the wrong place.

And the British had another motive, as one of their delegates admitted to La Motte: 'what we really want is independent proof of our inability to carry out our obligations under the Hague Convention'. The British memorandum on the project emphasised that in spite of the vigilance of their customs officials in colonies like Malaya and Hong Kong, smuggling had greatly increased, and now 'seriously embarrassed the Governments of those territories'. Smuggled opium or morphine were indeed embarrassing: they reduced the colonial revenue.

Having proposed the Commission, the British were in a good position to limit its terms of reference, which they did by insisting that only the distribution and consumption of opium—not production—should be studied. Three Commissioners were chosen: a Belgian economist and two members of the diplomatic corps, from Czechoslovakia and Sweden. Their qualifications for selection remain obscure. They held sittings in more than thirty different centres within the space of seven months, which precluded any possibility of investigation in depth—though as they were careful to explain, staying longer would not have helped, as the kind of information they were looking for was not available.

They had hoped to be shown the results of research; but in this field little has been done. Even the question of how much morphine a smoker or an eater of opium absorbs is unsolved. Practically every question connected with the opium smoking problem needs scientific study. A few examples of problems requiring investigation are the actual effects of opium smoking on the individual, the effect of dross upon the consumer, the relative harmfulness of smoking and eating, the question of heredity . . . and the possibility of finding harmless substitutes.

The Commissioners, however, found no difficulty in collecting evidence in the form of personal views about opium; and what they heard surprised them. They had all three come out—they explained in their report—with the prevailing Western notion of the deleterious effects of opium on health, expecting to have it confirmed. But among the witnesses they examined, members of the indigenous races as well as the Chinese, they had found a widespread opinion that opium smoking was not harmful, the arguments in its favour 'reaching sometimes to a superstitious belief in the medicinal value thereof'. They also repeatedly came in contact with the opinion, based on personal experience, that opium used in moderation acted as a useful mental and physical stimulant, the physical stimulus being particularly valuable where people had to work hard under difficult climatic conditions. Even those notorious establishments, the 'opium dens'—or 'opium divans', as they were sometimes known—were far from being the haunts of depravity that Western fancy had depicted. They were 'often the only available resting places for the poor, and though they are not attractive, they are scarcely, even at their worst, more

repulsive than the localities where the corresponding classes of the Western people consume beer or stronger alcoholic beverages’.

In general, the Commission’s report did just what the British had hoped it would do. It fed doubt into the minds of members of the League whether opium should be regarded as a social menace; and it actually conceded that the system of government monopolies which had been established in British possessions was the best solution, because it presented the only means by which price and consumption could be controlled. Their policies, the British could boast, had been vindicated. But their scheme, as things turned out, had worked rather too well. It was not opium—the report went on to argue—that was the real trouble. It was opium’s derivatives, morphine and heroin, ‘a far more serious menace to the world’.

It had not taken long before heroin’s pretensions to be a non-addictive drug had been exposed; and experience had shown that it was far more addictive than cocaine. The timing of the recommendation, too, was unfortunate for the manufacturing countries, as there had just been a succession of embarrassing scandals in connection with the statistics which each member nation was required to send to the League. Between 1925 and 1926, the returns had revealed, at least a hundred tons of morphine had disappeared—in other words, had been diverted from legal into illicit channels.

The countries concerned had manufactured the morphine, and declared it, as bound by the 1925 Convention to do; the morphine had then simply vanished. Some idea of what this disappearance involved could be gauged from the fact that the world requirements of morphine for medical and scientific purposes were put at less than forty tons a year.

A search promptly began for a scapegoat, and it was conveniently provided by Turkey, which had refused to ratify the Convention. If the Turks were to disclose their figures—the rumour ran—they might prove revealing. The Turks thereupon disclosed them, and they were indeed embarrassing; but not to the Turks. They showed that Turkey had exported more than two tons of morphine and four tons of heroin to European countries which had ratified the Convention. Under the Convention, they were required to declare all such imports. Assuming that Turkey would not disclose the deals, none of the countries involved had made the required declarations. Those consignments, too, had slipped into the illicit market.

For still better measure, the Turks threw in the information that in 1928 a single Alaska factory had manufactured nearly 9,000 lb. of heroin—rather more than two and a half times the world’s estimated medical and scientific needs, that year, and 8,920 lb. more than the amount which the French had declared, in the production figures they provided to the League, for the three years 1926-8. The French Government, protesting its innocence, closed down the factory. The Turks were apparently expecting this move, as the chemists who lost their jobs were offered work in new heroin factories in Turkey.

How had the morphine and heroin been diverted? The 'Naarden Case' helped to clear up part of the mystery. Naarden, a Dutch firm, had been ordering huge consignments from other countries, including over 1,500 kg of heroin from a Swiss firm, and re-exporting them—but describing them as 'in transit', so that the Dutch Government would not need to declare them in its returns to the League. But there were no statistics to reveal the drug's ultimate destination.

THE BLANCO FORMULA

These scandals attracted hostile publicity. It could no longer be pretended that the Hague Convention, even as 'strengthened' by the 1925 reforms, was working satisfactorily. But how could it be improved? The obvious solution was the one the Americans and Chinese had urged on the other States at the Geneva Conference; limitation of production of opium to the amount needed for medical and scientific purposes. The delegates of the manufacturing countries now announced that they were prepared to accept limitation, provided agreement could be reached on how it was introduced.

They were very careful to ensure that agreement would not be reached. It was accepted that each of the manufacturing nations should have a production quota; but none of them was prepared to accept a smaller share of the market than it already enjoyed; and the idea of simply freezing the share of each, at the level at which it had been on some agreed date, satisfied nobody, because, it was claimed, it would destroy freedom of choice for the purchaser in the future, and infringe national sovereignty.

The apparent deadlock had been broken by a member of the League Secretariat. A. E. Blanco, son of a Spanish father and a British mother, had been in the British-run Chinese Customs Service; he had given much thought to the matter. In future, he proposed, any country which wished to use a dangerous drug for medical or scientific purposes should declare in advance what supplies would be needed, and where it proposed to obtain them. In this way it would be possible to allocate quotas in advance the world over, but without freezing the levels or restricting choice; so that if some manufacturer made a particularly good brand of medical heroin or morphine, he would be able to benefit the following year from increased demand.

The Blanco formula was the simple answer to the objections raised by the manufacturing countries: altogether too simple for their comfort. The Opium Advisory Committee—the 'Smugglers Reunion'—unable to think of any objection to the proposal, decided simply to ignore it. Blanco resigned in disgust, and there the matter would have ended, had his scheme not been brought to the notice of the influential American philanthropist, C. K. Crane.

Crane, struck by what he felt was the scheme's beautiful simplicity, recommended it in a letter to the State Department. It would automatically disclose the volume of the legitimate drug market in every country, he pointed out; yet it would leave producers free to compete for a larger share of the market, thereby minimising the need for gov-

ernment intervention to apportion quotas. At the same time, States' rights would not be infringed, as States could each decide what supply of a drug they needed. Prompted by Crane, the State Department drew the scheme to the attention of the Advisory Committee. The committee reacted as before. As the delegates could think of no valid objection, 'the only thing to do with the Scheme', the British representative suggested, 'is to bury it'; and on the motion of the Indian delegate, that 'the matter should simply be dropped', it was.

RUSSELL PASHA

But it was soon revived, and from an unexpected quarter: Egypt, then a British Protectorate, suffering from an uneasy sense of thwarted nationality. Towards the end of the nineteenth century the authorities there had become increasingly worried by the number of young men who took to smoking opium or hashish, deserting families, jobs and society. Various measures had been adopted to control drug-taking. Hashish had sometimes been subjected to a heavy duty; sometimes prohibited, with heavy penalties, even death, for anybody caught with it. The frequent alterations of policy, though, were an indication of how ineffective the laws were; largely because they rarely applied to foreigners. The better the law was enforced in Egypt, the higher rose the price of opium or hashish; and the greater the profit would be to foreigners who could import the drugs with impunity and sell them through illicit channels, until the price came down again.

Malcolm Muggeridge was to describe in his autobiography how, when he went to teach at a school in Egypt in the 1920s, he observed that the students at Cairo University often seemed to be 'faraway, lost in some dream of erotic bliss; a consequence no doubt, in the case of many of them, of their addiction to hashish, widespread among the effendi class, and prevalent among the fellahin, particularly the ones who had moved into the towns.'

The deleterious effects of this addiction, Muggeridge recalled; were then universally taken for granted, and the Egyptian authorities, following a plan of modernisation and national revival on the general lines of Kemal Ataturk's in Turkey, spent a lot of money and effort in an attempt to stamp it out. Russell Pasha, the head policeman and the last Englishman to hold the post, was particularly active in trying to prevent hashish getting into the country, and in reducing indulgence in it . . . if anyone had suggested that all this endeavour was misplaced because hashish did little harm, and was anyway non-addictive, the suggestion would have been received with incredulity and derision.

And Muggeridge went on to use the recollection as the text for a sermon denouncing the apologists for cannabis half a century later; 'I know of no better exemplification of the death wish in the heart of our way of life than this determination to bring about the legalisation of hashish, so that it may ravage the West as it has the Middle and Far East.'

The passage in his autobiography happens also to be an interesting exemplifica-

tion of the way in which moral attitudes can colour memories. 'Russell Pasha'—Thomas Wentworth Russell—did indeed devote a great deal of time and energy to trying to keep hashish out of Egypt. Those were his orders, and he carried them out with intelligence and integrity. But he did not think hashish was a menace. He divided drugs into two categories 'white', and 'black'.

Hashish—'the vice of the city slums'—was in the white category; it did 'comparatively little harm', he felt, and could not be held responsible for the country's addiction problem. It would be more sensible, he believed, to legalise the white drugs. According to his friend and biographer Baron d'Erlanger, he announced that 'he was seriously considering some form of government monopoly whereby hashish would be grown domestically, and its smoking would be licensed and made to produce revenue for the Egyptian Government, instead of costing enormous sums for the prohibition and, in addition, draining the country of the money which was sent abroad to pay for the foreign grown raw material'.

The idea proved unacceptable to his superiors; Russell had to continue to try to prevent hashish smuggling into Egypt. But his main preoccupation was with the black drugs, heroin (which a missionary, Herbert Hayes, identified as the main threat as early as 1922) and cocaine (according to a report from the American consul in Cairo in 1923, fashionable men and women could be seen stopping their automobiles so that they 'could buy their stuff, and sniff it on the sidewalk'). It was heroin, though, Russell recalled in his autobiography, 'which nearly killed Egypt'. D'Erlanger agreed; by 1929, when Russell was appointed Director of the Egyptian Central Narcotics Bureau, it had pushed opium, hashish and cocaine into the background. Heroin not merely provided 'a sensation of pleasant stupefaction, of happy contented drunkenness, of deadening comfortable drowsiness', which was what people had originally taken it for, but also 'a buoyancy of spirits, increased imagination, temporarily enlarged brain power, and a capacity to think of things which they would not otherwise have imagined'. But the price was a disturbing addiction rate. One in four of Egypt's adult male population, Russell estimated, became a black drug addict.

His first task had been to find how the heroin was coming into the country; something that had baffled the customs officials. From the start, according to d'Erlanger, 'a certain unromantic and sordid aspect was recognised and faced squarely; namely that the obtaining of reliable information is overwhelmingly a matter of money'. It was decided to pay informers so liberally that giving the required information would be more profitable than smuggling. There was an immediate and gratifying response, revealing where the heroin was to be found; 'in cases of olives; in tins of powdered glue, of butter; in barrels of tomato sauce, of oil, and of wine; in sacks of prunes; in millstones; in stoves with false bottoms: in carpenters' lasts; in the soles and heels of shoes; and even by means of tubes concealed in what Mrs. Grundy might have called 'the most intimate recesses of the person' (a method which, d'Erlanger observed, 'starts quite an amusing line of thought when one remembers which was the most usual way of taking heroin for its pleasurable effects').

But as Russell soon realised, the men who were running the traffic were never caught, because they took good care that the actual smuggler, who might be caught, did not know who they were. As soon as they found their consignments were being intercepted, they switched them into different channels; and any temporary reduction in the supply of heroin available in Egypt actually helped them, by raising its price, to afford the increased outlay in payments to couriers, and in bribes to customs officials. And Russell found, as Commissioner Lin had done, that informers would realise they could again make more money by assisting the smugglers than by assisting the police; or, they could have it both ways by tipping the police off to the occasional consignment, while helping the bulk of the heroin to go through.

Russell was right; it was 'overwhelmingly a matter of money'. There was more than enough money in a single small tin labelled beans, but containing heroin, to persuade many officials to do no more than wink, as the crate full of tins of beans went through; and the financial resources of the traffickers stretched much further than those of the police. For Egypt to try to suppress heroin on her own, Russell realised, was a futile exercise. It could only be got rid of through an international agreement. It was with that objective that he went to Geneva to put Egypt's case to the League. Largely by the force of his personality, he finally goaded the delegates into activity.

For all his achievement, though, in alerting public opinion to the limitations of international control over the drug traffic Russell did not disguise from himself the limitations of the general policy which he had been called on to carry out in Egypt. Whenever by energetic measures he succeeded in limiting for a while the supply of 'black' drugs, thereby pushing up the price beyond the means of many Egyptians who ordinarily took them, the enforced abstinence, he found, did them little good. They turned, instead, to a mixture of tobacco and henbane—impossible to deal with effectively by police measures, as tobacco was too well established to ban, and henbane grew wild. They even started to drink 'stewed' tea, in the quantities required to intoxicate them, with lamentable consequences 'to both their pockets and health'. So worried did the Egyptian authorities become that in the 1930s they closed the teashops, and smashed the utensils used to make and serve the tea. The addicts found other ways to get it. 'They are always searching for a stimulant', an Egyptian landlord told a committee of enquiry in 1933; and as they could no longer afford the harder drugs, or hashish, 'they are now finding it in this vile brew, to the damage of their health'.

The reason people became addicted in this way, the landlord suggested, would make an interesting subject for social and medical research. Russell would have agreed. He was a shrewd enough observer to realise that it was not the drugs, but the disposition to take them, that mattered. Why, he wondered, were the Egyptians so susceptible? Might the responsibility lie with the spread of parasite-carried diseases like bilharzia, following the changes in the level of the Nile as a result of the construction of the Aswan Dam? Whatever the cause, a drug or drugs was invariably found to assuage the craving. Coffee, hashish, opium, heroin . . . and now, stewed tea; 'and so it goes on'.

THE 1931 CONVENTION

And so it went on; at Geneva, too, though not quite so smoothly as before for the members of the Opium Advisory Committee. When Russell arrived in Geneva in 1930 as Egypt's delegate to the Committee, the scene there was quickly transformed: internally, by his energetic efforts to find ways round the obstacles they had put up, and externally by the world-wide publicity his ideas and speeches attracted. When a meeting of delegates from the manufacturing countries that autumn failed to reach agreement, because of their unwillingness to accept quotas, the Blanco formula was revived, and in the summer of 1931, a modified version of it was at last accepted. In future, estimates of production and importation were to be made by each member country, based on medical and scientific needs and submitted, with explanatory memoranda, five months in advance.

All exports of heroin were to cease; all illicit heroin seized was to be destroyed or rendered harmless; and all important cases of illicit trafficking were to be reported to the League.

From the legal point of view, the 1931 Convention was unique; the first not merely to apply the principles of a controlled economy to a group of commodities by international agreement, but also to regulate all phases of the production of dangerous drugs from the time the raw material entered the factory to the final acceptance of the finished product by hospital, laboratory, or chemist's shop. Its impact appeared to be instantaneous; by 1932 the price of raw opium was down to a quarter of what it had been in 1929. The Advisory Committee, which for so long had resisted the introduction of any such controls, now proudly boasted how well they were working. The figures presented by the manufacturing countries showed that they had begun to put the scheme into effect even before it had been formally ratified; the amounts being manufactured had 'closely approximated to, or even fallen below, the amounts which appear to be required for legitimate consumption'.

Gradually it became clear, though, that the fall in the price of opium had little to do with the new Convention. It was the great slump that had drastically reduced demand; the resulting surplus of opium and its derivatives had pushed down the price; and some governments were restricting the production of narcotics mainly in the hope of keeping the prices from falling further. When the international drug traffic began to recover, it was seen that the Convention was of little help in controlling it. The few countries which had refused to ratify were able to cater for illicit demand, wherever it was to be found; and modifications to the Blanco formula reduced its effectiveness. The advance estimates which countries presented to the League of their drug requirements, it was agreed, did not have to be precise. Illicit narcotics, if seized, need not, after all, be destroyed. And there were no sanctions to employ against governments which failed to fulfill their pledges.

The collapse of the Convention was described by Ferdinand Tuohy in his *Inside Dope*, published in 1934, illustrated by the 'news flashes' which he had collected while

writing it; ranging from the discovery that 251 carrier pigeons were being employed by the inmates of a U.S. prison to keep them supplied with narcotics, to the report of the discovery by the French authorities of a smuggling trick of the kind recorded a century earlier by Commissioner Lin; a zinc-lined coffin from the Levant had been found to contain heroin, as well as the corpse, the plan being to allow the committal service and the burial to proceed, and 'for those in the deal on this side to act the ghoul later'. In spite of the optimism generated by Russell Pasha's impact at Geneva, Tuohy claimed, 'the dope stream is experiencing small difficulty in finding new channels'.

And worse would follow. Earlier drugs—he cited hashish—had at least been 'natural'; it was the alkaloids, the derivatives, which were disastrous. And now, they were being duplicated by chemists; one of his 'news flashes' concerned the invention of a new synthetic drug, far stronger than morphine.

Tuohy's fears were confirmed by S. H. Bailey's more academic survey of the international campaign against drugs, published in 1936. The third phase of the campaign, as Bailey described it—the first had been initiated at The Hague, and the second by the revised Geneva Convention in 1925—had not, he felt, been operational long enough to be fairly judged; but already administrative difficulties were making themselves felt. Any scheme for the limitation of drugs had to be grafted on to the diverse legal and administrative roots of more than sixty independent States with their numerous and widely scattered protectorates, colonies, and leased or mandated territories. Desirable international measures may be obstructed by constitutional barriers in one country, or public sentiment in another. Handsome allowance has to be made for the variations in the efficiency, experience and reliability of administrative agencies in different territories.

And by 1936, the chances that these administrative problems would be solved was small. The League's authority was everywhere crumbling. The Japanese had defied it by occupying China north of the Great Wall; and although they could claim that by setting up their Manchukuo opium monopoly they were only following the British colonial pattern, as accepted by the League's own fact-finding mission, it seemed improbable in view of their record that they would use their powers to reduce production. Visiting Manchukuo for *The Times* in 1935 Peter Fleming asked himself the question, 'is the monopoly a crusade or a racket?'. On the evidence, he decided, it was clearly a racket. Opium dens had been opened to all, even teenagers; consumption was increasing; and the monopoly was already making huge profits—as the Japanese authorities cynically acknowledged, by imprinting a flowering poppy on their Manchukuo coins.

But even if the Japanese and all other producing countries had been willing to cooperate, Bailey warned, the effort might be futile, because of the development of synthetic drugs; 'the infinitely varied and variable series of narcotic substances which competitive research continues to discover and the medical profession of the world to demand'. And it would never be easy to control such enterprises because they were highly mobile; 'operations can be begun with little preparation in one centre and, when economic, legal or administrative conditions become less favourable, transferred to another'.

It was a prophetic statement; but for the time, the drug manufacturers of illicit drugs hardly needed such assistance. With Mussolini leaving the League, and Hitler ignoring it, its authority was further eroded, and even the semblance of international control of the drug traffic disappeared.

HEROIN AND CANNABIS

WHILE THE LEAGUE HAD BEEN WRESTLING WITH THE PROBLEM OF controlling the international drug traffic, its member States had been going their individual ways, some paying little attention to the League's requests. The nation which came closest to carrying out the League's recommendations was, ironically, not a member: the United States; and the consequences of the methods it chose to adopt to stamp out drug-taking were to prove even more disastrous, though on a smaller scale, than Prohibition.

THE HARRISON ACT

The Harrison Narcotics Act, passed in 1914, was chiefly designed to restrict the use of opium and its derivatives to medical purposes, the doctor being permitted to prescribe them 'in the course of his professional practice only'. But the limits of what would constitute professional practice were left undefined. Was the doctor allowed to prescribe heroin to addicts—the maintenance dose, as it came to be known? Or did this fall outside his professional competence?

The law enforcement officers took the view that it was no part of the profession's duty to indulge the addict with his drugs. Doctors who continued to provide patients with the maintenance dose found themselves liable to be arrested—which, even if they were not jailed, meant that they would face professional ruin. So the addict—as American Medicine commented soon after the Act came into effect—is 'deprived of the medical care he urgently needs; open, above-board sources from which he formerly obtained his drug supply are closed to him, and he is driven to the underworld where he can get his drug'.

The underworld had no difficulty in supplying him. By the end of the First World War, an investigating committee found, the problem of addiction was more serious than ever in American cities. The illicit traffic in opiates had increased until it just about equalled the legal traffic, and the number of addicts had risen to around a million.

Predictably, the committee recommended tougher laws, and tougher enforcement: and in 1924 an Act was passed prohibiting the importation of heroin—this being the policy the United States delegates were trying to persuade the League of Nations Opium Conference to accept. The effect was rapid, and striking. Hitherto the profession had made little distinction between morphine and heroin addicts, the general assumption being that though heroin was the more addictive, the two drugs were not significantly different in their effects.

But—according to Edward Brecher in his survey of the period in Licit and Illicit Drugs—hardly had the law been changed than morphine, though easier and cheaper to get, almost disappeared from the black market. So far from stopping the traffic, the Illinois Medical Journal complained in June 1926, the ‘well-meaning blunderers’ who had passed the Act had ensured that those who dealt in heroin could now ‘make double the money from the poor unfortunates upon whom they prey’. All that the United States Government was doing was ensuring the prosperity of the bootleggers of narcotics, in the same way as they had ensured the prosperity of the bootleggers of alcohol, at enormous cost to the nation.

THE ROLLESTON COMMITTEE

What would have happened—it was often asked—if the American Government, instead of denying addicts their maintenance dose, had allowed them to have it on prescription? The easiest comparison was with Britain, which had had a similar problem with addiction to opiates in the early part of the century, arising out of ill-advised prescribing habits and the boom in patent medicines; and which had also passed a law, the 1920 Dangerous Drugs Act, designed to bring them under control.

When the issue came up whether the maintenance dose should be allowed, however, the decision lay not with the law officers, as in America, but with the Ministry of Health. The Ministry decided to appoint a committee, under Sir Humphrey Rolleston, to advise on it; and the committee sent one of its members, Dr. Harry Campbell, to the United States to observe how the Harrison law was working.

As a consequence of the law, Dr. Campbell reported, a vast clandestine commerce has grown up in that country. The small bulk of these drugs renders the evasion of the law comparatively easy, and the country is overrun by an army of peddlers who extort exorbitant prices from their helpless victims. It appears that not only has the Harrison law failed to diminish the number of drug-takers—some contend, indeed, that it has actually worsened it; for without curtailing the supply of the drug it has sent the price up tenfold, and this has had the effect of impoverishing the poorer class of addicts and reducing them to a condition of such abject misery as to render them incapable of gaining an honest livelihood.

The Rolleston Committee was exclusively medical in its composition. One of the most cherished tenets of the medical profession was that the doctor had a right to prescribe whatever he thought suitable for his patients, with or without the State’s sanction. Dr. Campbell had given the Committee just the kind of evidence they needed to justify the continuance of this policy. They recommended that doctors should be allowed to prescribe heroin not simply in the course of treatment, but also to the patient who, ‘while capable of leading a useful and fairly normal life as long as he takes a certain non-progressive quantity, usually small, of the drug of addiction, ceases to be able to do so when the regular allowance is withdrawn’. The medical profession in Britain having more prestige and more influence than the American, the recommendation was accepted. As a

result, though there was always a black market in the opiates between the wars, it remained very small. The addict who could get his heroin for a few pence on prescription was not going to pay ten times as much to a peddler.

In the United States, heroin addiction grew progressively more serious; for reasons given in 1936 by August Vollmer, who had been Chief of Police in Berkeley, California, and subsequently a Professor of Police Administration in Chicago:

Stringent laws, spectacular police drives, vigorous prosecution and imprisonment of addicts and peddlers have proved not only useless and enormously expensive as means of correcting this evil, but they are also unjustifiably and unbelievably cruel in their application to the unfortunate drug victims. Repression has driven this vice underground and produced the narcotic smugglers and supply agents, who have grown wealthy out of this evil practice and who, by devious methods, have stimulated traffic in drugs. Finally, and not the least of the evils associated with repression, the helpless addict has been forced to resort to crime in order to get money for the drug.

Drug addiction, Vollmer went on to argue, was not a police problem—'it never has been and never can be solved by policemen'; it was a medical problem. Instead of penal sanctions, 'there should be intelligent treatment of the incurables in outpatient clinics, hospitalization of those not too far gone to respond to therapeutic measures, and application of the prophylactic principles which medicine applies to all scourges of mankind'.

MARIJUANA: HARRY ANSLINGER

Vollmer was a respected figure—he was a former President of the International Association of Chiefs of Police. But how little attention was paid to his opinions could be gauged from the fact that the following year, Congress passed a law bringing yet another drug under federal prohibition: Indian hemp. Before 1900, hemp had hardly rated as a drug in the United States. This was not because of any lack of availability; in the South, it had long been one of the main cash crops—grown by, among others, George Washington, and encouraged by later administrators, chiefly to provide fibres.

It was no more regarded as a plant drug than the morning glory—at least by the whites; they preferred their tobacco and alcohol. Only the Southern black slaves took it; as Richard Burton, who liked to compare different types of hemp as other men like to compare different wines, observed when he visited the region. He was interested to discover that 'few of their owners had ever heard of it'. So little were its narcotic properties known, let alone worried about, that S. S. Boyce's treatise on hemp, published in New York in 1900, contained no reference to them; and that same year the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced that it had decided to import experimental quantities of 'superior varieties of hemp seed' from the East, for experiments to see how they would grow in America.

Drugs made from hemp were used to a small extent in medicines; and the Department, worried by the growing cost of imported drugs, and with a view to making the United States self-sufficient in her requirements, also embarked on a systematic survey over the next few years to find how much was needed of hemp and other plant drugs, and how and where they could best be grown. Experimental farms were established, at which tests could be made; and hemp was found to do very well in the Eastern and upper Southern States. Farms to produce it commercially were accordingly started in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and South Carolina. During the war, farmers were encouraged to produce still more, until they almost fulfilled the country's entire requirements; a feat which was held to be greatly to their credit by Henry Fuller in his survey of American drugs, published in 1922.

During the 1920s, however, marihuana—as it came to be described when taken for non-medical purposes—began to acquire a sinister reputation; partly owing to the stories coming out of Egypt, where hashish was still getting blamed for the addiction rate; partly because it began to spread north into States of the Union where it had not been known before. Some of them banned it; and at the time the Federal Bureau of Narcotics was set up under the wing of the Treasury Department in Washington in 1930, there was a move to get marihuana banned throughout the country.

The Treasury was unimpressed. 'A great deal of public interest has been aroused by newspaper articles,' its report claimed in 1931, 'appearing from time to time on the evils of the abuse of marihuana, or Indian hemp. This publicity tends to magnify the extent of the evil and lends color to the inference that there is an alarming spread of the improper use of the drug, whereas the actual increase in such use may not have been inordinately large.'

The Chief of the new Narcotics Bureau, however, did not share the Treasury's view. Harry Anslinger had been Assistant Commissioner of Prohibition, and was understandably anxious to wipe out the memory of his failure to make it work. He was young—still in his thirties—ambitious; and filled with a deep repugnance for drugs dating back, by his own account, to an episode in his childhood. He had been born in Pennsylvania, near a township in which one adult out of ten was reputed to be an opium addict; and as a twelve-year-old, he heard a woman screaming in agony for the drug, a sound he never forgot. He had come to feel the same horror of marihuana.

The Federal Bureau of Narcotics, however, was originally drawn into the campaign against marihuana less by Anslinger's antipathy to the drug than for administrative simplicity. It had become obvious that narcotics could not be adequately controlled so long as each State had a different set of regulations, and a national Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws had been considering how best to unify them. In 1932 they put forward a draft narcotics law which, it was hoped, all States would introduce, imposing prohibition except for medical purposes.

At this stage, the decision whether or not to classify hemp as a narcotic within the

meaning of the Act was left optional. Anslinger, regarding this as unsatisfactory, determined to arouse public opinion to the marihuana menace. His Bureau therefore prepared a brochure in which it was claimed that, 'those who are accustomed to habitual use of the drug are said eventually to develop a delirious rage after its administration during which they are temporarily, at least, irresponsible, and prone to commit violent crimes'; and that prolonged use was 'said to produce mental deterioration'.

'Said to' was a favourite Bureau phrase when there was no evidence who had done the saying. Anslinger had other devices, too, to rouse fear of marihuana. It had dropped out of general medical usage, he claimed, because its effects were too unpredictable. This was true; doctors did not find it easy to prescribe the appropriate dosage, because individual reactions were so varied. But Anslinger's interpretation of 'unpredictability' was his own. A patient, he explained, might not react at all; but he might 'go berserk'. And the young were particularly at risk; much of the prevailing crime, vice and gang warfare were due to the drug.

The Bureau's report for 1933 promised a propaganda campaign against marihuana. For a while, it did not 'take'; The Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Brecher was later to find, listed no article on the subject in the ten years 1925-35—itsself an indication of how little alarm the drug had been causing. Then, the flow began; and most of the articles either acknowledged the help of the Bureau, or showed internal evidence of having accepted it. Anslinger himself gave network radio broadcasts to arouse, as he put it, 'an intelligent and sympathetic public interest, helpful to the administration of the narcotic laws'. They emphasised marihuana's close relationship with hashish, and attributed to it 'a growing list of crimes, including murder'.

Anslinger's main aim was to shake Congress into action; and in this he succeeded. When in 1937 the Treasury introduced a Federal Marihuana Bill, putting the drug into the same category as the narcotics controlled by the Harrison Act, Congressmen were so little concerned to dispute the Bureau brief that the only serious opposition came from representatives of the bird seed industry. They managed, just in time, to put over their case that hemp seed, whatever it might do to humans, did only good to birds, upon whom it had no observable narcotic effects, and whose health—and plumage—suffered without it.

Having committed himself to prohibition of marihuana, Anslinger was aware he would need to justify himself by making a better job of enforcement than he had been able to do with either alcohol or heroin. The Bureau's campaign through the press intensified. In the same month—July—that the Act went through, an article by Anslinger appeared in the American Magazine purporting to recount some of the crimes committed under the influence of marihuana, which bore an interesting resemblance to those which had been described to an Indian Hemp Drugs Commission, including a murder in Florida:

When officers arrived at the home they found the youth staggering about in a human slaughterhouse. With an axe he had killed his father, mother, two brothers and a

sister. He seemed to be in a daze.... He had no recollection of having committed the multiple crime. The officers knew him ordinarily as a sane, rather quiet young man; now he was pitifully crazed. They sought the reason. The boy said he had been in the habit of smoking something which youthful friends called 'muggle' a childish name for marihuana.

Anslinger omitted to provide any evidence that the smoking of muggle had been in any way responsible for the crime; but with his authority for it, the incident was to be used again and again, in later articles, by journalists who had found it among the files.

In one respect, the campaign was a little too successful for Anslinger's peace of mind. He had secured a fervent supporter in Earle Albert Rowell, a hot-gospeller, who had been touring America lecturing audiences on marihuana's effects. The drug, according to Rowell's thesis:

1. Destroys willpower, making a jellyfish of the user. He cannot say no.
2. Eliminates the line between right and wrong . . .
3. Above all, causes crime, fills the victim with an irrepressible urge to violence.
4. Incites to revolting immoralities, including rape and murder.
5. Causes many accidents, both industrial and automobile.
6. Ruins careers for ever.
7. Causes insanity as its speciality.
8. Either in self-defence or as a means of revenue, users make smokers of others, thus perpetuating evil.

The italicised part of Rowell's creed was an embarrassment to the Narcotics Bureau, because it related to another of Rowell's beliefs; that in order to stamp out marihuana, it would be necessary also to ban tobacco, because smoking cigarettes led young people on to smoking marihuana. 'Slowly, insidiously', Rowell claimed, for over three hundred years, Lady Nicotine was setting the stage for a grand climax. The long years of tobacco-using were but an introduction and training for marihuana use. Tobacco which was first smoked in a pipe, then as a cigar, and at last as a cigarette, demanded more and more of itself until its supposed pleasures palled, and some of the tobacco victims looked about for something stronger. Tobacco was no longer potent enough.

It was no part of Anslinger's strategy to add to his difficulties with a campaign against tobacco: Rowell was repudiated. Marihuana was now officially a 'black' or 'hard' drug. What this was going to mean was forecast by Dr. Henry Smith Williams in 1938.

With the aid of newspaper propaganda already started, an interest will be created in the alleged allurements of marihuana smoking; and the army of inspectors sent out to explore the millions of fields in which the weed may be grown need only apply, with slight modifications, the methods learned in the conduct of the narcotics racket, in order to develop a marihuana industry that could eclipse the billion dollar illicit narcotics racket of today. Racketeers . . . should have no difficulty at all in developing a five billion dollar racket with marihuana— provided only that the press can be induced to stimulate curiosity by giving the drug publicity.

And the press, fed with more horror stories by Anslinger, duly did its worst.

THE LA GUARDIA REPORT

Up to this point, there had been no attempt seriously to investigate the effects of marihuana in the United States. But when the Mayor of New York, Fiorello La Guardia, was urged to initiate a campaign against the drug, he recalled that many years before he had been impressed by a report on the subject by an army board in Panama, 'which had emphasised the relative harmlessness of the drug and the fact that it played a very little role, if any, in problems of delinquency and crime in the Canal Zone'. In 1939, with the help of the New York Academy of Medicine, La Guardia set up a committee consisting of twenty-eight doctors, pharmacologists, psychiatrists and sociologists, who were allowed the time and the facilities to do what half a century earlier the Indian Hemp Drugs Commission, for all its thoroughness, had not attempted: scientific tests of the drug, in controlled conditions.

The outcome of the enquiry was remarkably similar to that of its predecessors. The behaviour of marihuana smokers—the Chairman of the Committee, Dr. George B. Wallace, wrote in his summary of its conclusions—was ordinarily 'of a friendly, sociable character. Aggressiveness and belligerency are not commonly seen.' No direct relation had been found between marihuana and crimes of violence. There was no evidence that it was an aphrodisiac. Smoking could be stopped without any resulting mental or physical distress comparable with withdrawal symptoms after opiates; and there was no sign that smokers acquired tolerance of its effects, compelling them to take more.

On the contrary, an excessive dose reversed the usually pleasant effects. 'Marihuana does not change the basic personality structure of the individual. It lessens inhibitions and this brings out what is latent in his thoughts and emotions, but it does not evoke responses which would otherwise be totally alien to him.' No mental or physical deterioration of a kind which could be attributed to it had been diagnosed even among those who had taken the drug for years.

So far from its being a menace, 'the lessening of inhibitions and repression, the euphoric state, the feeling of adequacy, the freer expression of thoughts and ideas, and the increase in appetite for food brought about by marihuana, suggest therapeutic possibilities'.

The American Medical Association reacted angrily to the implication that it had failed to recognise cannabis's potential. 'Public officials will do well to disregard this unscientific, uncritical study', the AMA Journal urged on April 28th, 1948, 'and continue to regard marihuana as a menace wherever it is purveyed'. The damage, it feared, had already been done—to judge by the account of some 'tearful parents' who had noticed a mental deterioration in their son, 'evident even to their lay minds' and found he had been smoking 'tea' (the then current slang); when taxed with it, he had cited the committee's report—which he had read about in a pop music magazine under the heading 'Light up! Report finds "tea" a Good Kick!'—as his justification. Anslinger was of the same mind. The report's 'giddy sociology and medical mumbo-jumbo', he was later to complain in one of his autobiographies, 'put extra millions in the pockets of the hoods'.

MARIJUANA: THE SECOND PHASE

Following the report of the La Guardia Committee, voices were heard periodically in the United States suggesting that even if its research had not been perfect, the results at least confirmed that there were no known serious hazards from marihuana to the individual or to society. Would it not be as well, then, to give up the apparently futile attempt to ban it, and to concentrate instead on the campaign against heroin and the other hard drugs?

Anslinger found the proposal intolerable. To block it, he began to advance a new argument, contradicting views he had himself held earlier. In 1937 he had assured Congress that marihuana did not lead on to hard drug addiction, because he wanted to prove that marihuana addicts were, as he put it to Congress, 'an entirely different class', who were made violent by the drug, rather than by the need to find money to pay for it. They knew nothing of heroin, he asserted, and 'did not go in that direction'. But by 1956, when new forms of drug control were being debated, Anslinger realised that he could no longer rely on Congressmen accepting his link between marihuana and violence, exploded by the La Guardia findings. He would have to find some fresh reason for maintaining prohibition of the drug. Marihuana, he now admitted, was not a 'controlling factor' in crime; the real danger was 'that marihuana, if used over a long period, does lead to heroin addiction'. His expert advice was accepted.

When it began to become obvious, later in the 1960s, that the campaign to stamp out marihuana was not succeeding, and that the habit was spreading rapidly throughout the country, particularly among the youth, State legislatures displayed the by now reflex action. They passed laws to intensify enforcement, and to increase penalties. Edward Brecher has since listed them in his *Licit and Illicit Drugs*, including:

Alabama: mandatory sentence for the possession of a marihuana cigarette: five years. Second offence, up to forty years. No suspended sentences or probation permitted.

Illinois: for first offence of selling marihuana, ten years to life.

Louisiana: mandatory sentence for possession, first offence, five to fifteen years hard labour.

Missouri: life sentence for first offence of sale, second of possession.

Rhode Island: mandatory ten years for possession with intent to sell.

And in Massachusetts anybody found in a place where marihuana was kept, or in the company of anybody possessing it, could receive a five-year sentence.

At the same time, the campaign was intensified on the federal level. In 1960 there had been 169 arrests in connection with marihuana; in 1965 there were 7,000, and the following year, 15,000.

The campaign was a humiliating failure, for two main reasons. One was that it proved impossible to stop smuggling. The long border with Mexico, in particular, was easily breached—often by the owners of the 80,000 cars which, by the late 1960s, were passing into Mexico and back into California every weekend (at one checkpoint there were eighteen lanes, which did not make for secure customs enforcement). But the main reason was the same as under Prohibition forty years earlier: that enforcement lacked solid support from public opinion.

The young were often on marihuana's side; and parents were gradually learning to live with the knowledge that their children were not going to be stopped from breaking the law.

It was also becoming apparent that none of the terrible consequences Anslinger had forecast were manifesting themselves. Marihuana caused no deaths, and no addiction of the kind which afflicted takers of the opiates or of alcohol; nor were its takers more prone to mania, to violence, or to crime than the rest of the community. By the time President Nixon, whose views reflected Anslinger's, set up his own enquiry—which he took care to 'load', appointing nine of the thirteen members himself, and leaving them and the public in no doubt as to what he expected of them—the campaign against marihuana was disintegrating. 'There is increasing evidence,'

Dr. James Carey of the University of California told them, 'that we are approaching a situation similar to that at the time when the Volstead Act was repealed.' On the one hand, there were the savage penalties; on the other, a breakdown of enforcement. The police, though willing enough to make raids on hippy camps, did not relish the idea of making sweeps through the massed ranks of fans at pop festivals; still less, of raiding the homes of the G.I.s—sometimes officers—who had brought the habit back with them from Vietnam.

Politicians, too, could no longer be so sure that a hard line on drugs would win them electoral support. In some States, tacit agreements were reached to leave Univer-

sity campuses to discipline themselves over marihuana; fines for possession become nominal. In the winter of 1972 the Consumers' Union pronounced 'marihuana is here to stay. No conceivable law enforcement programme can curb its availability', and called for a new Act to introduce orderly controls on cultivation, production and distribution. In 1973 Oregon took a tentative step towards legislation, by converting possession of small quantities of marihuana into a 'violation'—comparable to a parking offence—rather than a crime. And when the Shafer Committee reported, to Nixon's disgust it recommended that possession of small quantities of cannabis should cease to be a criminal offence..

BRITAIN AND CANNABIS

It might have been expected that the British, aware of the good fortune in escaping the consequences of the United States' heroin policy, would have taken care not to ban cannabis themselves. But the drug was rarely used socially in Britain, and as the plant had continued to resist conversion into a standardised potion, or pill, it had been falling out of medical use. When it was introduced by the West Indian immigrants after the Second World War, it was known only through the lingering legends of the Arabian nights, and the Assassins. And for a time, it was allowed to circulate in what became semi-ghettoes where the immigrants lived. Around 1950, it began to spread out through much the same channels as it had in the United States, chiefly through musicians and their fans; and stories about the way the drug was corrupting the nation's youth began to appear in the newspapers.

They were loaded with menace: readers were reminded that cannabis was really hashish, the drug of the Assassins, and told that it was being pushed by coloured dope peddlers. Britain had no Narcotics Squad, and no Harry Anslinger; but it had Dr. Donald McIntosh Johnson, later to be Conservative M.P. for Carlisle, whose *Indian Hemp: a Social Menace* sounded the alarm in 1952. In it he described how the respectable 'Mr. A' had been slipped a 'Mickey Finn', which had driven him into so manic a mental condition that he had had to be certified, and incarcerated for a few days in a mental hospital. The drug used, Dr. Johnson claimed, was cannabis; and he went on to explain that it had also been responsible for the outbreak of hysteria which had afflicted the citizens of the Provençal town of Pont St. Esprit, not long before.

The Pont St. Esprit outbreak was soon traced to ergot poisoning; but the explanation of 'Mr. A's' disorder did not come until several years later, when Dr. Johnson revealed in an autobiography that he was 'Mr. A' himself (thus qualifying, perhaps, as the only man to have been elected an M.P. after having been certified). He was unable to show that cannabis had been responsible. By then, however, the combination of the press campaign and the propaganda of the Society for the Study of Addiction (whose Hon. Secretary's views were given in the introduction to Johnson's book; distinguishing between drunkards and cannabis users, he claimed that 'alcoholism, for all its attendant degradation, does not usually poison one's nature; drug addiction does') had led the Government to determine to ban sales of the drug. As the medical profession disclaimed any desire to use it, it ceased to be available even on prescription.

What followed was a repetition of what had been happening in the United States, though with the additional complication that the police activity was initially directed against the West Indians. A number of respectable citizens, who had taken cannabis all their adult lives in much the same way as their white neighbours took beer, found themselves given long prison sentences, coupled with judicial homilies on their wickedness in corrupting British youth. The effect the campaign had was greatly to increase the demand. By driving it underground, the authorities succeeded in making 'pot' a secular cult, combining the attractions of a rebel conspiracy against parental and civil authority, and a secret society. White teenagers took to the drug in rapidly growing numbers, so that by 1964 more whites than coloureds were being convicted of cannabis offences.. Inevitably, the demand grew for tougher enforcement, and higher penalties.

But cabinet ministers or stockbrokers who applauded the searches of a pop singer's suitcases by the Customs, or his flat by the police, became less enthusiastic when they found that most of the white malefactors were from the aristocracy and the professional classes—including their own sons and daughters. This was an embarrassment, because by the Dangerous Drug Act of 1965, designed to implement United Nations' policy, penalties had been raised. In theory, anybody found in possession of cannabis could receive as long a sentence as a convicted murderer. In 1967 the Labour Home Secretary, Roy Jenkins, sought a way out of the difficulty by appointing a committee of enquiry into the whole subject under Lady Wootton, the leading British authority in the area where sociology, criminology and psychiatry overlap. Its report, published in 1969, followed those of earlier enquiries.

There was nothing to suggest that cannabis was responsible for aggressive social behaviour, or crime, or ill-health. Physically-speaking it was 'very much less dangerous than the opiates, amphetamines, and barbiturates, and also less dangerous than alcohol'. Nor was there any evidence that cannabis-takers were led on to take heroin; 'it is the personality of the user, rather than the properties of the drug, that is likely to cause progression to other drugs'.

James Callaghan, Jenkins' successor as Home Secretary, was no more disposed than Nixon to accept the committee's verdict. He excused himself from taking action by claiming—as Nixon was to do—that the committee had allowed itself to be bamboozled by the cannabis lobby. But whatever the disagreements on the committee's findings there was no disputing one of its assertions; that in spite of campaigns to stamp it out, cannabis use was on the increase.

Doubtless encouraged by the report, the users continued to multiply, as an investigation undertaken by the Sunday Telegraph, revealed in 1972. Previously, the cannabis had entered the country chiefly in small consignments, often amateurishly brought in. But the demand had now put up the price to the point where it attracted a smuggling network of the sophisticated kind hitherto associated with the heroin traffic:

Ingenuity shown in disguising cannabis in freight is endless. It has been found

concealed in crates of foodstuff, the handles of badminton racquets, padded ice-hockey gloves, sub-aqua air bottles, surf boards, hippie beads, sculptured busts, contraceptives, antiques, Moroccan pouffes and ornamental bricks.

Other expedients employed by the traffickers included the use of radio-controlled model aircraft, launched from motor-boats in the English Channel, and—most serious of all—of the diplomatic bags addressed to members of the Embassies of the poorer countries, who had learned how they could enjoy high living in London with no trouble, and rarely any risk. A senior member of the staff of the Indian High Commission had been detected, the Sunday Telegraph report claimed, smuggling 50,000 grains of cannabis into Britain in a consignment of chutney.

Faced with such evidence, the reaction of the Customs was to boast that larger quantities of cannabis were being intercepted. But this, as Timothy Green explained in his book about international smuggling, must be regarded as the measure of prohibition's failure. No large scale smuggling operation could afford to lose more than a small proportion of its consignments—around five per cent, Green estimated. It followed that if more cannabis was being intercepted, this could only mean that more was finding its way in. Only if interceptions began to fall, should the Customs claim they were succeeding.

In much the same way, the rise in the number of convictions, which the police used to justify themselves—from around fifty in 1957 to over 10,000 in 1972—could more sensibly be regarded as a reflection of a great increase in drug taking. The estimates of the number of cannabis users supplied to the Wootton Committee in 1968 had ranged between 30,000 and 300,000. The Sunday Telegraph's investigators came to the conclusion that in 1972 'although the United Kingdom is in general a law-abiding country, anything up to two millions of its citizens use the drug'.

HEROIN: U.S.A.

If the authorities in Britain and the United States could not suppress the use of cannabis by banning it, the chances of the traffic in heroin, easier and vastly more profitable to smuggle, being effectively stopped by prohibition were remote. The British, realising this, held on to their policy of allowing doctors to prescribe a maintenance dose; and it worked—though they had some uneasy moments in the 1960s, when it was found that the number of new cases of addiction, though negligible by American standards, was rising with disconcerting rapidity.

An investigation revealed the reason; a handful of doctors were prescribing heroin so lavishly that they were feeding the small black market in the drug. There had always been the risk that leaving it up to the individual doctor to decide who needed heroin might lead to trouble. The biggest category of morphinists in the world, Lewin claimed, were doctors; and there were ninety doctors among Britain's 300 known heroin addicts in the early 1950s.

There were also a few who were concerned only to increase their incomes. Reluctantly, the medical profession had to agree to abrogate its members traditional right, and confine the prescribing of heroin to designated clinics. The expedient worked; the rise in the addiction rate was halted.

Why, then, was the British system not introduced in the United States ? Partly because it would have meant passing control to the Department of Health and Welfare. It was Anslinger's boast that he blocked this proposal, because he preferred to work in liaison with the Coast Guard, the Customs, the Secret Service and the Department of Justice. When it was pointed out to him that control by the Department of Health in Britain had largely made it unnecessary for the Coast Guard, the Customs, the Secret Service and the Department of Justice to concern themselves with the heroin traffic, he insinuated that the British must be hiding the real addiction figures. Anyway, he added, Britain was a small island, which made it easier to prevent smuggling.

This was an unfortunate choice of argument, because it revealed why his policies had been foredoomed to failure—the smuggling of heroin into the United States could not be prevented. Neither stricter enforcement nor severer penalties were reducing it. Any standard textbook on drugs showed why. Many heroin takers acquired 'tolerance', needing larger amounts to enjoy the same effects. The more they took, the more difficult it was to stop taking the drug, because of the agonising nature of the withdrawal symptoms—even worse with heroin than with the other opiates: yawning, restlessness, irritability, tremor, insomnia, depression, nausea, vomiting, intestinal spasm, diarrhea, chilliness alternating with sweatiness, gooseflesh, cramps, pains in the bones, muscle spasms.

While undergoing these tortures, the addict knew—as a textbook listing them put it—that 'at any point in the course of withdrawal, the administration of a suitable narcotic will completely and dramatically suppress the symptoms'. To purchase this relief, he would pay any price, and risk any penalty. As a result, heroin became a profitable enough commodity for the traffickers to be able to afford to conduct their smuggling operations on a highly organised and efficient level.

THE BLACKEST IRONY

So, by a savage paradox, the more determined the campaign by the United States Government to stamp out the drug traffic, the better it suited the traffickers. By the late 1960s, it was possible for a syndicate to offer \$35 a kilo for raw opium—enough to ensure an abundant supply from impoverished peasants in Eastern and Middle Eastern countries, and to encourage them to cultivate land which had not been tilled before. The heroin manufactured from that kilo could be sold for \$20,000; sometimes considerably more. Out of so spectacular a profit rate, the syndicate were able to afford to perfect their chain of operations so that at each stage, the carriers of the heroin could not betray the man who had consigned it to them, because they would not know who he was: nor could they be betrayed by the man they handed it over to, except through carelessness or bad management (a technique which Timothy Green likened in his study of smug-

gling to a system of electrical fuses so arranged that if one blew it could be replaced, and the rest could continue to function normally).

The larger the difference between cost price and selling price, too, the better the syndicates were able to afford to bribe Customs Officers and policemen, and the greater the incentive for the 'pusher' to extend his market by attracting new customers. And they were thrown into his path by the Vietnam war, which introduced tens of thousands of G.I.s to heroin. In Vietnam they could buy the pure product at one-twentieth of its cost back home, where it was often heavily adulterated. What happened—as described by Frances Fitzgerald in her *Fire in the Lake*—reads like mimicry of what had happened to so many earlier efforts at prohibition.

The traffic in heroin was the final and perhaps the blackest irony of the war. The heroin came largely from Burma and Laos. Much of it was processed in or near Vientiane by those people for whose sake (it was to be supposed) the U.S. Government was demolishing the rest of Laos. It came to Vietnam either by air drop from Vietnamese or Lao military planes, paid for by the U.S. Government, or through the Customs at Tan Son Hut airfield. The Vietnamese Customs Inspectors earned several dozen times as much for not inspecting the bags and bundles as for inspecting them.

When the American Customs advisers attempted to crack down on their 'counterparts', they discovered that the two key customs posts were held by the brothers of Thieu's Premier ... As this 'freely elected Government' would not prosecute the Customs Officials (heroin, the Vietnamese said, was 'an American problem'), the heroin continued to enter the country unimpeded. Once in Vietnam it was sold openly in the streets and around the American bases by young war widows and children orphaned by the American War.

The United States might leave Vietnam—Frances Fitzgerald remarked—but the Vietnam war would never leave the United States; 'the soldiers would bring it back with them like an addiction'. They did. The demand for heroin continued to rise until, as Frederick Forsyth unkindly noted in a survey of the heroin traffic in 1973, it became 'America's largest single consumer import', worth \$4,000,000,000 a year.

The fact that the prohibition policy led to an increase in drug-taking, though, was less demoralising than its social side-effects; particularly crimes of violence. This was not because drugs unleashed criminal tendencies, as Anslinger had claimed; the criminal activity was largely the result not of the drugs, but of the prohibition policy. As the Le Dain Committee of enquiry into drug use in Canada put it, in their interim report,

Because of the illegal nature of the drug the cost of a heavy heroin habit may run anywhere from \$ 15.00 to \$50.00 a day and higher, in spite of the fact that the medical cost of the drugs involved would be just a few cents. There are very few legitimate ways in which most individuals can afford to meet that kind of expense. Consequently, when tolerance pushes the cost of drug use above what the user can afford legitimately, he is

forced into a decision—either to quit the drug and go through withdrawal, or turn to easier, criminal, methods of acquiring the necessary money.

In 1972 the New York Health Department estimated that there were around 400,000 heroin addicts in the city; 15,000 of them in jails, 25,000 under treatment, the rest on the streets—where, according to the police commissioner Patrick Murphy, they were connected with seventy per cent of the city's crimes. In Washington that year, the city's Narcotics Treatment Organisation put the count of heroin addicts at 15,000; its head, Dr. Robert du Pont, estimated that 'the annual value of property and services transferred because of addiction, through robbery, theft, prostitution, drug sales and so on, was \$328,000,000.' And at the same time, prohibition was creating new criminals out of men and women who would not ordinarily have become law breakers—as the Le Dain Committee noted in its final report in 1973. The fact of a drug being unobtainable legally 'will often drive a person to seek support and reinforcement in a deviant or criminal sub-culture'; and a prison sentence tended to reinforce this bond, because there was 'a considerable circulation of drugs within penal institutions'.

With heroin, as with marihuana, enforcement officials were ready with what appeared to be evidence that they were doing their job—figures showing that they were improving the interception rate. The U.N. narcotics committee were told that seizures of heroin in the United States were up from 160 kg in 1969, to 221 kg in 1970. But in the same period, the United States narcotic authorities' own estimates for the illicit import of heroin, assuming they were correct, showed that the proportion which was being seized had actually fallen.

And there was sufficient evidence of the involvement of Customs and police by 1966 to lead John M. Murtagh, a judge of the New York Criminal Court, to comment that the narcotics law 'corrupts more than it corrects'; a warning borne out three years later when, within twelve months, no fewer than thirty-nine New York narcotics agents who were under investigation for drug offences resigned,

CONTROL AT SOURCE

Although the attempt to stop drugs coming into the United States was not succeeding, there were hopes for a time that it might be possible to introduce an alternative method of control. In 1959 an American fact-finding mission was despatched to visit the countries of the Near East to investigate the drug traffic. It reported that the chief source of illicit heroin were the Turkish poppy fields. The opium was being smuggled through the Lebanon to Italy and France, where it was converted into heroin and exported to the United States. There was little prospect of interception, as the people involved were un-touchables; the Mafia, in Italy, and unknown but evidently influential figures in France. But why wait until the opium was on its way? Why not cut off the supply at its sources?

The idea had the attraction of simplicity. The United States Government was paying huge sums annually in a futile effort to beat the smugglers; part of the expenditure

could be diverted, in the form of aid, to induce the Governments of the countries where the poppy—or any other drug-producing plant—was cultivated, to prevent cultivators from growing crops to supply the illicit market. The problem would then solve itself, for there would be no raw material for the traffickers to work on. All that was needed was some new international agreement, of the kind that had been mooted in the old League days, but which the U.N. should be better able to enforce. Anslinger had himself appointed as the United States delegate to the U.N. Commission to promote the policy, and in 1961 agreement was reached on what became known as the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs.

It proved to be as unworkable as the Hague and Geneva conventions, and for the same reasons; chief among them, the fact that some of the nations involved had promised more than they could perform, and others had never any intention of implementing their pledges. Typical of the unreality was the Convention's decision that 'the use of cannabis (hemp) for other than medical and scientific purposes must be discontinued as soon as possible, but in any case within twenty-five years'; a 'rather optimistic time-table', as Dr. Norman Taylor—Curator of the New York Botanical Gardens, and author of a couple of refreshingly sane books on drugs—remarked, when 'matched against three thousand years of use by untold millions'. Taylor's scepticism was justified.

Visiting Morocco eleven years later, a Guardian correspondent found that though the Government had pledged its support to the campaign to phase out kif, it had carefully refrained from interfering with the cultivation of hemp. The farmers were earning twice as much from it as they had earned from growing corn; so, as a tribesman explained, 'now we've all switched'.

The attempt to deprive the heroin traffickers of their main source, the poppy fields of Turkey, also failed. Tempted by the promise of American aid, the Turkish Government agreed to try to stop poppy cultivation for the black market; and for a while the production of opium was restricted. But as the illicit marketeers were able to offer higher prices, this only meant that it was the supply of legitimate—medical—opium which dwindled. By 1972 some nations were running short; the Japanese representative complained at the U.N. that his country could only get half its legitimate requirements. At the same time the Turkish peasants, who had been instructed to stop growing poppies, were becoming restive. The payments they had received out of the American funds, they felt, were insufficient to compensate them for the loss of so lucrative a crop. As their votes were at stake, the Turkish Minister for Agriculture in the Ecevit Government began, in 1974, to dismantle the controls his predecessors had introduced.

THE COLLAPSE OF CONTROL

EVEN IF HEROIN AND CANNABIS COULD HAVE BEEN BANISHED, it had become clear by the 1970s that they would immediately have been replaced by other drugs. Some had already established themselves—occasionally with the active help of governments, or of the medical profession, or both.

When the amphetamines—'pep pills'—were first marketed in the 1930s, doctors had begun to prescribe them for patients who felt tired or lethargic; and later as a slimming aid. During the war they proved a help to men in the forces who were required to stay alert on duty; and when it ended, vast quantities of them, surplus to requirements, were dumped on the open market. Sometimes they were employed as an adjunct to alcohol; when in 1947 'Chips' Channon held the dinner party which one of his guests, Somerset Maugham, told him was the apogee of his career (the guests included two queens), he described in his diary how he had 'laced' the cocktails with benzedrine, 'which I find always makes a party go'.

But then it was realised that, injected intravenously, the amphetamines could produce an explosive bout of euphoria; and as they were cheap and easily available, they were soon being extensively used for that purpose, with destructive effects on the health of some of the addicts, ranging from brittle finger-nails to ulcers, chest infections, liver disorders, and cerebral haemorrhages. Governments banned sales, except on prescription; but so many people had acquired the habit of taking the drug, and so many doctors were willing to indulge them, that the black market was rarely short of supplies. Taking amphetamines, in Brecher's estimation, ranked 'among the most disastrous forms of drug use yet devised'—particularly in Sweden, where the attempt to impose total prohibition led only to a rise in the price, encouraging illicit manufacture and smuggling, and leading to a spectacular growth in the number of addicts.

Barbiturates took a similar course. In 1949 *Colliers* ran an article under the title 'Thrill pills can ruin you', alerting its readers to the fact that sleeping pills, if injected, were euphoric. The health authorities added their warnings which, as Brecher commented, ensured that 'throughout the 1950s and the 1960s, the relatively harmless sleeping tablets of the 1930s played their new role as one of the major illicit American drugs'.

As with the amphetamines, the barbiturates were so widely prescribed that control was impossible; the black market could be fed from tens of thousands of family medicine cupboards. But when a committee of enquiry set up by the British Government recommended in 1972 that the barbiturates should be re-categorised, to bring them under the same type of control as heroin, the British Medical Association's scientific committee successfully blocked the proposal, ostensibly because of the 'practical difficulties in implementing regulations', but really because it would further have eroded the doctor's right to prescribe.

Cocaine also made a come-back 'Sniffing' had enjoyed a vogue in the United States in the 1920s; in his *Drugs and the Mind*, Robert S. de Ropp surmised that the original 'dope fiend' peddled cocaine, rather than heroin. But it was expensive; the amphetamines, far cheaper and more easily obtainable, for a while replaced it. When the amphetamines proved an unsatisfactory substitute, cocaine began to return to favour in American cities. Its high price was less of an impediment to sales than it had been in the depressed 1930s, and provided an incentive to smugglers; Timothy Green estimated in 1969 that a yachtsman carrying 10 lb. of cocaine to the United States could make £10,000 on a single

trip; and by 1973, according to Thomas Plate in the New York magazine, 10 lb. was fetching anything up to \$160,000 on the market. With the raw materials, coca leaves, abundant and cheap, this left an ample margin to perfect smuggling techniques, and to bribe Customs or police.

Once the cocaine had been brought in, there was no difficulty in selling it. What Plate called the iron law of drug marketing, 'supply determines demand', came into operation; whenever it was available, cocaine became ... the drug of choice, not only among whites but ever increasingly among affluent black drug users as well . . . Among Latin Americans in New York, cocaine is often the preferred drug of entertainers, expensive prostitutes, very successful businessmen, and certain religious sects for whom cocaine use is literally an act of faith. And among white drug users, cocaine is especially popular with rock stars, writers, younger actors and actresses, and stockbrokers and other Wall Street types ...

And even if all these drugs could have been brought under some control—by, say, the discovery of some instrument on the lines of a Geiger counter, capable of infallibly detecting them—it would not have solved the problem. Apart from synthetic variants, there were numerous substances which though not sold as drugs, could be used for that purpose—and frequently were. Benzine and glue had long been sniffed 'for kicks', and with the advent of the aerosol can, it was found that there were endless alternatives; 'literally hundreds of easily accessible sources', the Le Dain Committee found, including paints, paint removers, lighter fuel, and dry-cleaning fluids: 'it was recently observed that thirty-eight different products containing such substances were available from the shelves of a service station's highway store in Ottawa'.

In the circumstances, the Committee pointed out, effective restriction was hardly practicable, 'except at considerable inconvenience to a large segment of the population'; and, as the large segment of the population was unlikely to accept that inconvenience, the existence of these 'substances' created a problem 'which clearly calls into question the potential of the crimino-legal system in controlling drug use'.

THE DOORS OF PERCEPTION REVISTA

The crimino-legal system of control, whatever its defects, was at least theoretically relevant so long as there was agreement that drug-taking was a social evil, which ought to be suppressed. But by this time a different category of drug had come into widespread use, supported by testimonials from men whose opinions commanded respect, who claimed that it could bring great benefit to society.

During the war a Basle chemist, Dr. Albert Hofmann, took a minute quantity of an ergot derivative—four-millionths of a gramme—in his laboratory, and after cycling home with some difficulty ('my field of vision swayed before me and was distorted like the reflections in an amusement park mirror, I had the impression of being unable to move from the spot, although my assistants later told me that we had cycled at a good pace') he

experienced startling symptoms, which he noted down when he recovered; vertigo, visual disturbances—the faces of those around me appeared as grotesque, coloured masks; marked motor unrest, alternating with paralysis; an intermittent feeling in the head, limbs, and the entire body, as if they were filled with lead: dry, constricted sensation in the throat; feeling of choking; clear recognition of my condition, in which I sometimes observed, in the manner of an independent, neutral observer, that I shouted half insanelly or babbled incoherent words. Occasionally I felt as if I were out of my body . . .

By that time—1943—there was more of a disposition to investigate any drug capable of inducing such a reaction—not out of any feeling that the visions might be of value to the beholder, but because the Pentagon was looking for a drug which might be used to facilitate brainwashing, or for disorienting enemy forces in the field. And as the visions which Hofmann's LSD induced sometimes bore a resemblance to those seen in psychotic states, a few psychiatrists began experimenting with it in the hope it might help in the treatment of schizophrenia. Although the military soon lost interest, and the psychiatrists' hopes were not realised, LSD was remembered when there was a sudden resurgence of interest in vision-inducing drugs, following the publication of Aldous Huxley's *The Doors of Perception* in 1954.

There was nothing strikingly new in Huxley's experience after taking mescaline. His description of looking at his bookshelves—

Red books, like rubies; emerald books; books bound in white jade; books of agate, or aquamarine, of yellow topaz; lapis lazuli books whose colours were so intense, so intrinsically meaningful, that they seemed to be on the point of leaving the shelves to thrust themselves more insistently on my attention—might have come from Havelock Ellis, or from the case histories provided earlier by Louis Lewin.

But the general public, disillusioned with civilisation's materialist progress, was more willing by the 1950s to listen to Huxley's argument that the heightened or altered perception obtainable from mescaline was worth enjoying, not just in its own right, but for the new insights, the new meanings, it could provide. 'I am not so foolish', he wrote as to equate what happens under the influence of mescaline or of any other drug, prepared or in the future preparable, with the realisation of the end and ultimate purpose of human life; Enlightenment, the Beatific Vision. All I am suggesting is that the mescaline experience is what Catholic theologians call 'a gratuitous grace', not necessary to salvation but potentially helpful and to be accepted thankfully, if made available. To be shaken out of the ruts of ordinary perception, to be shown for a few timeless hours the outer and the inner world, not as they appear to an animal obsessed with survival or to a human being obsessed with words and notions, but as they are apprehended, directly and unconditionally, by Mind at Large—this is an experience of inestimable value to everyone and especially to the intellectual.

People who wanted to shake themselves out of the ruts of ordinary perception did not find it easy to obtain mescaline, for which the raw material peyote was scarce; but

LSD could be manufactured in a laboratory, and it quickly became the standard drug for that purpose. And scientific trials began to confirm—in so far as such trials could—that it worked. In LSD—Dr. Richard Blum and his associates at Stanford University claimed in 1964—a means had been found ‘for enhancing values or expanding the self, a road to love and better relationships, a device for art appreciation or a spur to creative endeavors, a means of insight, and a door to religious experience’.

For a few individuals, though, researchers admitted, the consequence of taking LSD was a ‘bad trip’, involving experiences which were disturbing and sometimes terrifying. Stories began to circulate about the destructive effect of these bad trips on promising youths, like those which had been heard about marihuana (or tobacco), but with some characteristic twists—in particular, the much-repeated tale of the girl who told her friends ‘look, I can fly!’ and stepped to her death from a fourth-floor window.

Inevitably, down came the ban—even, in the United States, on research into LSD. The outcome was the growth of a cult, catered for through a profitable black market. The formula was generally known; the materials available; the manufacturing process not difficult; and distribution ridiculously simple, as LSD, in addition to being tasteless, odourless and colourless, occupied negligible space in relation to its potency. Prohibition was immediately followed, Brecher wrote,

(a) by an increase in the availability of LSD, and (b) by an increase in the demand. The increased availability can be explained in part by the higher prices which law enforcement engendered, and which attracted more distributors. The increased demand can similarly be explained in part by the LSD publicity that legislative action engendered. As in the case of the opiates, the barbiturates, the amphetamines, glue and other drugs, the warnings functioned as lures.

THE PEYOTE CULT

It is possible from the available evidence to show how the attempt to suppress the vision-inducing drugs has failed, and why: because it has repeated the self-defeating pattern so often seen before. What is not yet possible is to assess the impact of the mescaline/LSD movement (or even, for that matter, of the influence of the cannabis cult) on those who came to take it, let alone on society as a whole.

Early on, the psychedelic movement split into two main groupings, though they were never clearly differentiated. Both derived from the views of Humphrey Osmond—who had introduced Huxley to mescaline: that these drugs ‘provide a chance, perhaps only a slender one, for homo faber, the cunning, ruthless, foolhardy pleasure-greedy toolmaker, to merge into that other creature whose presence we have so rashly presumed, homo sapiens the wise, the understanding, the compassionate’.

By some of Osmond’s followers, this was taken to mean that the function of the drugs was simply to reveal, to anybody who took them, the limitations he had been im-

posing on himself; so that he would seek ways, not necessarily through drugs, to explore the potential within himself which he had not known existed. But there were others who, like Dr. Timothy Leary, tended to invest the drugs themselves with almost magical powers, and to propagandise for them on a national—and eventually, on an international—scale.

By the 1970s the Leary version was beginning to go out of fashion; LSD was being used, if not with more discrimination—its illegality made this difficult—at least with greater care, in recognition of the unpredictability of its effects. But the story of the movement which Huxley and Osmond sparked off, and which in their different ways William Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg and Carlos Casteneda, among others, pushed along, cannot yet adequately be told—not, at least, as history.

What can be told is the parallel story of how differently peyotl was handled in the Indian reservations; and how different the results. A century ago it was found that the peyotl cult had not, as had for many years been believed, been successfully put down by the Spaniards. After they were driven from Mexico, it began to re-emerge. The peyotl cactus, anthropologists found, was still worshipped, though the ceremonial had picked up Christian accretions, originally designed to deceive the Spaniards, but eventually establishing themselves in their own right, so that the ceremony took the general form of the Mass, and Jesus's name was involved. Peyotl was still taken, though, for the traditional vision-inducing purposes, as were the morning glory, and the psilocybe mushroom; the Mazatecs believed that Jesus had given the mushroom to them, and included him and his saints' names in their chants.

In the 1880s the peyotl cult began to spread north into the United States, alarming members of the Commission on Indian Affairs. The Commission's agent in charge of the Comanche reported in 1886 that they were getting a kind of cactus from Mexico 'which they eat, and it produces the same effect as opium, frequently putting them to sleep for twenty-four hours at a time'; he forwarded some specimens for analysis, adding that 'as the habit of using them seems to be growing among them, and is evidently injurious, I would respectfully suggest that the same be made contraband'.

The Federal Government did not take his advice; but from time to time individual State legislatures, disturbed by reports that Indians in their reservations were going over to peyotism, would debate how to stop them getting supplies of the drug. The difficulty ordinarily was that peyotism was a religion and that it had wrapped itself up in enough Christian doctrine to be able to liken peyotl to communion wine. How far this was originally deliberate policy is hard to tell; but it became so with the foundation of the Native American Church, whose expressed aims were to foster and promote religious beliefs in Almighty God and the customs of the several tribes of Indians throughout the united States in the worship of a heavenly Father, and to promote morality, sobriety, industry, charity and right living and cultivate a spirit of self-respect, brotherly love and union among the members of the several tribes of Indians throughout the united States and through the sacramental use of peyote

But to many Christians, the use of peyotl was not so much sacramental as sacrilegious; and to many respectable citizens, it was scandalous that the American Indians should be permitted to enjoy a notorious drug. A campaign after the Second World War to have it banned was only warded off with difficulty, largely through the efforts of two anthropologists who had studied the subject, Weston La Barre and J. S. Slotkin. It was amazing, Slotkin observed, to find that the expert evidence on which the campaigners relied—fantastic stories about the effects of the drug, and the nature of the ritual—was derived from white and Catholic officials in the reservations; ‘none of them have had the slightest first-hand experience with the plant or with the religion, yet some fancy themselves to be authorities and write Official reports on the subject.’ From his own extensive experience, members of the cult were both more industrious and more temperate in their drinking habits than other Indians in the reservation.

With the renewal of interest in vision-inducing drugs in the 1950s, the campaign against peyotl started up again, this time for fear of what it might do to the white youth of America. In 1964 a California court ruled that it was a sufficient public danger to justify a ban on it, in violation of religious freedom, because it was gaining adherents among the hippies; and the rumour circulated that it was frequently the cause of insanity. Newspapers began printing some of the same kind of stories that had circulated about hemp drugs in India. An investigation was set up by Dr. Robert L. Bergman, of the Public Health Services, to follow up the fifty-odd reports of peyotl-induced psychosis.

The vast majority of the reports, it was found, were simply hearsay, and could not be traced to any source. Only one single instance was found which could be described as ‘a relatively clear-cut case of acute psychosis’, and that was of a Navajo who, in defiance of the cult’s own injunction, had also consumed a quantity of alcohol. Although the cult did not always ‘take’—the Apaches on their Reservations adopted it for a while, but went back to alcohol, their preferred drug—in general its effects appeared beneficial. ‘We have seen many people come through difficult crises with the help of this religion’, Dr. Bergman commented, and it appears to me that for many Indian people threatened with identity-diffusion it provides real help in seeing themselves not as people whose place and way in the world is gone but as people whose way can be strong enough to change and meet new challenges.

The success of the cult, admittedly, does not prove that it would have been possible to establish anything similar among the white population of America, or of other Western countries. Nor would the obvious alternative—making LSD a prescription drug, to be dealt with by doctors—have worked; few doctors have the required interest or understanding. What the peyotl experience does suggest is that alternatives could have been found to the drug policies of Western governments, had there been a better appreciation of what was involved.

MAO’S WAY

In retrospect, then, the lesson which emerges from the confused history of drugs

is that though we have been unable to learn the right way to handle them, we have at least been shown what is the wrong way: prohibition. But there has been one striking exception to this rule: Communist China. It seems to be agreed, even by observers who have little sympathy with the rule of Chairman Mao, that opium has effectively been banished.

Three forces were at work to make this possible. Public opinion in China remained hostile to opium, as a foreign imposition. In so highly communalised a country, it was difficult for those who smoked opium to do so for long without being detected, and denounced; and even harder for farmers to cultivate poppies. Most important of all, smuggling became unprofitable because the ordinary commercial channels through which opium could be illicitly distributed ceased to exist.

In Western countries, though public opinion might be hostile to drugs, there was always sufficient privacy available to enable those who were able to obtain them to take them with relatively little risk; the commercial channels were geared to assist the smuggler, as was the freedom of movement between country and country; and there was far more purchasing power available to be spent on drugs. China's example, consequently, was irrelevant, and would remain so as long as the Western countries retained their traditional economic and social fabric.

POSTSCRIPT

ENDLESSLY, OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS, THE ISSUE HAS BEEN DEBATED; should cannabis, or mescaline, or LSD, be legalised? The record of history suggests that the question should be put the other way round: should such drugs be banned? For then, the answer can be given unequivocally: no. Prohibition has always failed in free enterprise societies—free, that is, to the extent that consumers who have the means can exercise freedom of choice. If they choose drugs, no law can stop them. Prohibition may restrict supplies, for a time, but that will only drive up prices, bringing in fresh supplies—or different drugs. And this flouting of the law breeds disrespect for it, alienates otherwise law-abiding citizens, and corrupts the law enforcers.

The question needs to be re-phrased: not, shall we legalise? but, how shall we legalise? And to this, unfortunately, history gives no satisfactory answer. It is easy to say, as drugs cannot be suppressed, they should be regulated; but at this point the same difficulty arises as with prostitution.

The kind of man to whom drugs, or prostitutes, are anathema, whether he be an Anslinger or a Muggerridge, finds the prospect of regulating them distasteful. It implies recognition, and they do not want what they regard as a vice to be recognised. They consequently cling to the illusion that drugs can be suppressed, if only the law is enforced.

This leads to a further error of policy. Unwilling to accept the existence of a dis-

inction between, say, cannabis and heroin, they justify banning both, by claiming 'soft drugs lead on to hard'. They sometimes do; but not nearly so inexorably as the prohibition of soft drugs leads on to hard. The reason is obvious; hard drugs are both easier and far more profitable to smuggle. The most striking example is what happened in Hong Kong when opium smoking, which had been tolerated for a century, and had never given the authorities any worry (the rate of addiction to opium among the Chinese, reports often pointed out, was far less serious than the rate of alcoholism among the Europeans on the island) was banned.

After the ban, opium was squeezed out of the market by heroin; and by the 1970s, according to the Commissioner of Police, four-fifths of the men in the island's penal institutions had been involved in drug offenses.. Much the same happened in Vietnam, according to the investigator sent by the Pentagon to examine the drug situation there. The only beneficiaries from a campaign against marihuana, he reported, had been the heroin pushers.

But governments have ignored the evidence that prohibition cannot work. And this is not surprising, as they have a powerful financial interest in maintaining a situation in which certain suppliers are allowed to keep their hold over the legal drug market, in return for their massive contribution to the revenue. Legalising cannabis, admittedly, might have augmented the revenue; but there was always the risk that it would provide a diversion, reducing the quantity of liquor and tobacco sold. It is never wise to attribute calculation, in such matters, to ministers. Individually, perhaps, none of them may realise how the policies they have followed have come to be formulated. But revenue has tended to be the overriding consideration; and anything which has threatened it has been discouraged.

This has been illustrated recently in the elaborate efforts which governments have made to appear to be campaigning against cigarettes, as a danger to health, while in fact making very certain that their campaign will not, and cannot, succeed. Governments, in fact, are the real drug-pushers of our time. They seem to know—by the instinct of financial self-preservation—that the 'safe' drugs from their point of view are those on which users come to depend, socially as well as psychologically—drink and cigarettes; and they cling to the two of them, in spite of the ugly evidence that has been building up against them. Cannabis and LSD, which do not exert the same hold, would not serve the exchequer nearly as well.

State licensing, therefore, though less disastrous in its consequences than prohibition, is an unsatisfactory method. It controls drugs, but to ensure their profitability rather than their safety. And even where a measure of safety is sought by handing over responsibility to the medical profession, the results (though again, better than prohibition) have been discouraging. There is little in a medical student's training to qualify him to dispense drugs wisely, and, as the medical journals frequently complain, the lavish prescribing of drugs in recent years suggests that doctors are often more concerned to save themselves time and trouble, than to find the cause of the patient's disorder. Just as gov-

ernments are the pimps of the tobacco and liquor interests, so the medical profession has allowed itself to become a licensed drug-peddler for the pharmaceutical industry.

There is little to be hoped from State intervention, therefore, until the electorate begins to grasp the lessons of the past. But as Hegel once complained, what experience and history teach is that 'peoples and governments never have learnt anything from history, or acted on principles derived from it'. And in the case of drugs, there is an additional reason why the lessons have not been learned; the existence of a deep irrational fear of them, which leaves otherwise sensible and intelligent members of the community unwilling to accept that there can be a case for legalisation, let alone to listen to it—even when the objective is the reduction of drug taking.

Such people will not accept the realities of the situation—for example, that alcohol is a drug, and a much more dangerous one than most of those which are banned. On the other hand, they will swallow the corniest fantasies about other drugs. They believe that heroin, say, has a built-in addictive attraction, so that anybody taking it once can be enslaved for life. Yet this was exploded years ago by Louis Lasagna, researching into addiction in America: most people given heroin for the first time, he found (other than for the relief of pain), were either not interested, or actually disliked the experience. As the Le Dain Committee put it, 'the once popular notion that opiate narcotic experience is intrinsically pleasurable, or that physiological dependence develops so rapidly that most who are subjected to it are promptly addicted, is without support'.

Then, there is the persistent myth that drugs can turn the ordinary citizen into a maniac. It is as old as Marco Polo's tale of the Old Man of the Mountain; it has been told of almost every drug; and it still crops up. In 1940 the rumour spread—Evelyn Waugh recalled it in *Put Out More Flags*—that the German infantry then sweeping across France was composed of teenagers, drugged before battle to make them oblivious of danger, so that they advanced unhesitatingly even when being mown down by allied machine-gun fire. It later transpired that these drugs were amphetamines, issued in case the soldiers needed to stay awake. A quarter of a century later American troops in Vietnam brought back pills found on allegedly drug-crazed Vietcong, who had been wiped out in an insanely reckless attack. On analysis the pills turned out to be antibiotics, sent to Saigon at the expense of the American taxpayer, and then discreetly diverted by the minister who received them to the enemy, for the usual consideration.

This is not to dispute that a drug—any drug—may precipitate a character change; the gentle, quiet man who gets aggressive when drunk is all too familiar a figure to publicans. But the disorder lies in the individual, or in his life pattern; not in the drug. Most of the troubles which have arisen are due to society's failure to make this distinction. Yet a last line of argument in favour of the status quo remains. Drugs may not be the cause—any more than cars are the cause of road accidents; but in irresponsible hands drugs, like cars, can be lethal. Does this not require intervention, by the State or some duly authorised body, for society's protection?

Looked at from this point of view, drugs have three main dangers. Unquestionably the most serious is intoxication. In the long term, though man has an astonishing capacity to survive his chosen poisons, certain drugs can be shown to have deleterious consequences, on the evidence of mortality statistics; and in the short term, people under their influence—whether at the wheel of a car, or at the heel of a drunken argument—can be very destructive. But as the intoxicant which has the worst long-term health record is tobacco, and the one with the worst short-term accident record is alcohol, this represents an argument for stricter control of established drugs, rather than of those which are illegal.

The risk of addiction—the second reason commonly given when a repressive drug policy is being defended—has now been shown to be less a drug problem, in the strict sense, than a psychological disorder. Unless drugs of all kinds, including nutmeg and paint remover, could be removed from the market, there is little point in hoping that it can be dealt with by legislation.

It is the third common consequence of drug-taking which presents the real challenge; the personality change which some people undergo as a result of introduction to cannabis or LSD. Their record in other respects is much better than alcohol and tobacco. They do not intoxicate, unless taken in improbably large doses; they are not addictive; and their adverse effects on health, so far as can be judged on the evidence available, are relatively insignificant. But they confront society with an issue that it has been unwilling to face. People may need these drugs; not in their own right, but as a preliminary to restoration of the link, largely lost, between man's consciousness, and all that lies beyond it. The personality change may be for their benefit.

The positive values people find in the drug experience—as the Le Dain Committee put it—'bear a striking similarity to traditional religious values, including the concern with the soul, or inner self. The spirit of renunciation, the emphasis on openness and the closely-knit community, are part of it, but there is definitely a sense of identification with something larger, something to which one belongs as part of the human race.' This theme was taken up by Andrew Weil in his *The Natural Mind*. Weil argued that to think of drug-taking, or even of drug-addiction, as something to be prevented or cured is a mistake. The sensation, and the craving, are symptoms of a psychic need. He produced evidence which indicates that there is no great difficulty in getting people off even heroin, provided they have, as it were, something to look forward to—which suggests that withdrawal symptoms may represent not simply the body's resistance to being deprived of a drug, but the mind's resistance to being deprived of its effects.

To Weil, however, this does not entail believing that cannabis, say, should be legalised. On the contrary, in his testimony to the Shafer Commission he opposed it, on the ground that it would be used in ways as unintelligent as tobacco and alcohol ordinarily are. The drug scene cannot be changed by tinkering with the law, he argued, because it is 'a manifestation of useless ways of thinking at all levels of society—among users of drugs as well as of non-users'.

Drug use, and drug abuse, are a reflection of society, its tensions, its values, and its needs. To punish drug-takers is like a drunk striking the bleary face which he sees in the mirror. Drugs will not be brought under control until society itself changes, enabling men to use them with discrimination, and perhaps in time to dispense with them.

THE EVER-TURNING GYRE

PART ONE

In the beginning, more exactly... in 1943, Albert Hofmann, a Swiss bio-chemist working at the Sandoz Pharmaceutical Laboratories in Basel, discovered — by accident, of course; one does not deliberately create such a situation — a new drug which had some very remarkable effects on the human consciousness. The name of this drug was d-Lysergic Acid Diethylamide Tartrate-25, a semi-synthetic compound, the lysergic acid portion of which is a natural product of the ergot fungus *Claviceps purpurea*, which grows on rye and other grains. Its most striking pharmacological characteristic is its extreme potency — it is effective at doses of as little as ten-millionths of a gram, which makes it 5000 times more potent than mescaline.

It was during the synthesis of d-LSD-25 that chance intervened when Dr. Hofmann inhaled some of the whitish-brown powder and discovered that it produced some strange effects on his mind... 'Objects, as well as the shape of my associates in the laboratory, appeared to undergo optical change... fantastic pictures of extraordinary plasticity and intensive colour seemed to surge towards me.' 1960

New York City, seventeen years later . . . a small package from Switzerland arrived in my mail one morning containing one gram of Dr. Hofmann's acid, which I had arranged to be sent to me. There was also a bill for \$285. I had first heard of LSD from Aldous Huxley, when I had telephoned him at his home in Los Angeles to inquire about obtaining some mescaline, which he had recently been using. His information also included the name of Dr. Albert Hofmann and a caution, subsequently unheeded, to take great care if ever I should take any of the stuff: 'It is much more potent than mescaline, though Gerald (Heard) and I have used it with some quite astonishing results really.'

There had been no difficulty obtaining even one gram of LSD — I simply asked an English doctor friend of mine to write the order on a sheet of New York hospital letter-head saying that I needed this ergot-derivative as a 'control' drug for a series of bone-marrow experiments.

Eagerly I unwrapped the package. The acid was in a small dark jar marked 'Lot Number H-00047', and in appearance looked a bit like malted milk powder. My problem was how to convert the loose powder into a more manageable form. One gram would make 5000 individual doses and I was obviously going to need to measure it out in some way. I decided to randomise it by mixing it into a stiff paste made from icing sugar.

I cleared the kitchen table and set to work. First I poured some distilled water into a bowl, and then mixed in the LSD. When all the acid had dissolved I added confectioner's sugar until the mixture was a thick paste. I then transferred my 'divine confection', spoon by laborious spoon, into a sixteen-ounce mayonnaise jar, and, by what magical alchemic process, the stuff measured exactly 5000 spoonfuls! In other words, one teaspoon of the stuff ought to contain 200 gamma (millionths of a gram), which would be sufficient for an eight- to ten-hour session, and a pretty intense one at that.

I should add at this point that I had, like all good chefs, been tasting the preparation during its making with my finger, and must have absorbed about the equivalent of five heavy doses before I finally screwed the lid on the mayonnaise jar, which left me somewhat unprepared for what was to follow.

I rented at that time the floor-through apartment above Jim Paul Eiler's 'Show-place' on West Fourth Street near the corner of Macdougall and Washington Square. It was a large rambling place -with a roof garden over the back from which to observe the life of the Village and the concrete towers of Manhattan.

I moved on to the roof and sat up there and began to observe . . . I beheld a city of 10,000 angry streets, and giant buildings fingered the sky; from a thousand throats the giant screams. A hundred trash-cans tumble lids and litters across the sidewalks, a siren goes hooting past, and all is CHAOS.

My mind was in a state of confusion, of whirling distractions and distortions and intensely vivid non sequiturs. 'I have broken the shell!' I laughed. 'Now I step forth easily from my body's prison-cell and live in the realm of the primordial. I shall sing of heroes, wild men of the mountains, guardians of the door, and ancient legends.... I shall transform myself into a god who could walk across the tops of mountains . . . thousand-headed was Purusa, thousand-eyed, thousand-footed he reached beyond the earth! . . . Cuhulain rides his five fiery chariots across the firmament! Arthur and Lancelot in battle!

The ground shakes! In the beginning was blood and fire.... I shall sing that you might listen and would know the glory that mall is, now, in his first dawning.... In the beginning, then ... proudly the purple cock-man proclaims the arrival of the Dawn. The Warden of Robes enters to attend our abracadabra about Acid and All accompanied by large assembly of Acid Age Adams, Artists, Anarchists, Actors, Angels, Alchemists, Athletes, Aristocrats and assorted Acrobats. The 'gates of heaven' swing open on the court within; worshipping priests from 10,000 countries kneel before the royal insignia. The first rays of the sun gild the 'fairy palms'; smoke of incense swirls round dragons writhing on each royal robe—they seem to float among the clouds.

It was a very strange first trip indeed, and it was of many hours' duration, perhaps fifteen. What I had experienced was the equivalent of death's abolition of the body. I had literally 'stepped forth' out of the shell of my body, into some other strange land of unlikeliness, which can only be grasped in terms of astonishment and mystery, as an état

de l'absurde, ecstatic nirvana. I could now 'understand' why death could produce the sort of confusion I was experiencing. In life we are anchored through the body to such inescapable cosmic facts as space, gravity, electromagnetic vibrations and so forth. But when the body is lost, the psychic factor which survives is free to behave with uninhibited extravagance.

It was only after many, many acid sessions that I learned how to cope satisfactorily with the incessant barrage of sense-eclipsing distractions, pleasant and unpleasant, delightful and horrible, which acid induces. I discovered, for instance, that I could, by concentrating my attention on some object, put a stop to the whirling distractions. The object on which I concentrated became a radiance of pure light, very wonderful — so wonderful that one could be wholly absorbed in it. It would be possible to stop at this point, to convince oneself that this was the Real Thing, the ultimate illumination, Nirvana! Or the 'Divine White Light'!

But — let's face it — LSD is not the key to a new metaphysics of being or a politics of ecstasy. The 'pure light' of an acid session is not this — it may even be the apotheosis of distractions, the ultimate and most dangerous temptation. But it does allow one to live at least for a time in the light of the knowledge that every moment of time is a window into eternity, that the absolute is manifest in every appearance and relationship, and that Love is Wisdom in daily practice. And though hard, it is possible to live this way. It is the development of another state of consciousness within 'one's' own self, one that leads to a vision of existence in which only the sense of wonder remains and all fear is gone. It is also the impetus that makes a few travellers in each generation set off in search of the grail, the genii in the bottle, the magic ring....

Once back in the present, when the 'mountains were again the mountains, and the lakes again the lakes' I felt a degree of apprehension about the acid I had by now stashed away in my study. It was pretty volatile stuff. How on earth could the energy of this strange atom be utilised; how could man adapt it to his needs? LSD was a bundle of solutions looking for a problem, the problem being how to undertake a work of integration on a massive scale. Modern man had fallen victim to the merciless vision of his own sceptical intelligence. Caught up in a wilderness of externals, he was a stranger to himself.

Accordingly, I telephoned Aldous Huxley at his home; he might at least advise me about what was happening with regard to LSD. Huxley had used both mescaline and LSD and had found in them, perhaps, the visions he had so long sought. On the phone, he was very sympathetic. No, there was still no one in a position to say what was happening in relation to visionary experience via LSD, though it seemed to excite a great curiosity in the minds of many he had discussed it with.

Of course, there was a lot of work to be done; unconsciously, if not always consciously, everyone knows that this Other World is there, inside the skull — and any news about it, any discussion of its significance, its relevance to other aspects of life, is a matter of universal concern. Perhaps 'mindchangers' should be used in the context of some

kind of yoga of total awareness, leading to enlightenment within the world of everyday experience — which of course under acid becomes the world of miracle and beauty and sublime mystery when the experience is what it always ought to be. This could not be achieved by acid alone but is achieved, essentially, through constant awareness — conscious even of the unconscious, by means of the ordinary processes of living.

Perhaps acid is above all a therapy for the wide spread sickness of insensitivity and ignorance which psychologists call Normality' or 'mental health'.

Huxley called me back a few days later, having thought over my problem, and suggested that I go to Harvard to meet a Dr. Timothy Leary, a professor there, whom he'd met earlier that year in Copenhagen, when he had presented a paper on induced visionary experience before the Fourteenth International Congress of Applied Psychology. Leary had also read a paper on 'How to Change Behaviour' describing the induction of visionary mental states by psilocybin, the synthetic of the sacred mushroom of Mexico. He spoke very warmly of Leary as a scientist but also as a man, whom he described as 'a splendid fellow'. Leary had also written three classic monographs on personality and psychotherapy.

'If there is any one single investigator in America worth seeing,' Huxley assured me, 'it is Dr. Leary.'

1961

There had been quite a bit of free-floating acid around Greenwich Village that winter, but mostly restricted to the 'beats' of the East Village and a few wealthy Manhattan cats to whom they sold it. It was legal, of course, in those days, and this considerably reduced the paranoia level. 'Taking acid' had not yet become the popular pastime of a turned-on youth, for such didn't exist. The world of the late fifties and early sixties was unimaginably drab and dreary.

It was still a tight little conformist world of roles and rules and rituals. Our culture had drowned itself in a sea of contradictory and conflicting voices. And, politically, Dulles & Co. had tied the coldwar noose around all our throats. We had finally coned ourselves into submission to some nameless fear. Western civilisation lived under the paranoia of the mushroom cloud. Liberal and religious values had eroded to the point of insignificance. Twentieth-century mass-society showed the political inhumanity inherent in technological life-worlds.

And it was perhaps inevitable that some of us took to acid (and later to myths and ancient stories) to seek a formula that would turn the surrounding world to dust and reveal the portals of paradise.

But I think that for perhaps the majority of the avant-garde. in this very early period, LSD was still something of an 'exotic' whose effects could not be taken for granted.

LSD involved risk. It was anarchistic; it upset our apple-carts, torpedoed our cherished illusions, sabotaged our beliefs. It was something you had to guard against, or you might explode. It was a difficult experience to assimilate. It was impossible to integrate with the ordinary world. And so on and so forth.

‘Turning on’ had not yet become a natural part of our existence, or a symbol of certain life-styles, or philosophy, or religion, or personal liberation. Yet there were some, of my circle, who, with Rimbaud, could say, ‘I dreamed of crusades, senseless voyages of discovery, republics without a history, moral revolution, displacement of races and continents: I believed in all the magics.’

And our Crusade was to launch LSD on the world! Whilst other artists/visionaries/seers had been content to observe the world, the New Message was simple: if things are not right, then change them! We would make the dynamic life-giving adventure of exploring Inner Space the New Romance! We would set off an explosion that would sweep through our culture and give birth to a New Radicalism!

We would even found a drug-based religion, whose message would be ‘Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out’! We would proclaim the Reign of the Happily Integrated Modern Soul ! We would become the first signatories of a new ‘Declaration of Evolution’ as published in Timothy Leary’s *The Politics of Ecstasy*.

After my first few acid sessions, I began to undergo some kind of metamorphosis. None of the successive issues in my life were plain, nothing was concrete; I was now that helpless drifting man, cut off from his roots, with no destination told.

The reality on which I had consciously tried to build my personality had dissolved into Maya, the hallucinatory facade. Stripped of one kind of reality, and unwilling or unable to benefit from the possibilities of another one, I was acutely aware of my helplessness, my utter transience between two worlds, one inside and the other wholly within. It set up a dichotomy, and I was at the mercy of two contradictory yet seemingly inseparable attitudes.

There was, on the one hand, still the familiar world of ordinary appearances, which I could cope with without ever needing to find any meaning for, and then there was this ‘Other World’ whose existence alone seemed to disclose the nature of reality as it concerned me personally. In the former I was a stranger to myself, a puppet of rote-consciousness, a cipher on the face of existence, an object furnished with a label and a price-tag, numbed and numbered by a neutral time that is neither duration nor eternity.

In the latter I was not a dot but a species in the great evolutionary experiment, a conscious agent in the cosmic processes called life; it provided me with some ‘meaning’ for solitary existence, beyond the falsifications of the mind, where I hoped I could achieve a simple awareness and even affirmation of the world.

I was faced with the necessity to prepare a set of 'spiritual coordinates'; a set of natural harmonious rules to follow as I spun off into neurological space, and more effective instruments of symbolisation in order to leave this swampland in which I moved. I was lost and exhausted, ambushed by stagnation and depression. Yet it was the energy created out of this tension, verging on strain, that kept me going in New York for a few more months.

I was working in New York at that time as the executive secretary of the Institute for British American Cultural Exchange. This grandiose title meant that I was in the service of a semi-official British propaganda agency in the field of international cultural relations. There was an impressive board of directors, which included Lord and Lady Natalie Douglas-Hamilton, Huntington Hartford (the megamillionaire whom Tom Wolfe has described as someone who had come amongst us in the role of a 'Martin Luther for modern culture'), Lionel Trilling, W. H. Auden, Congressman Seymour Halpern, General Frank Howley, the Vice-President of New York University, Buell Gallagher, President of City College, New York.

My offices were in the Huntington Hartford building in the East Fifties, which cost a million dollars to convert into Nassau Paladian and housed, in addition to the Institute Speedparks Inc., The American Handwriting Institute, Show magazine, and downstairs, a private art gallery. It was a neat little set-up, and I felt rather pleased that we had got it.

Some of my time was spent selecting scholarship candidates for a Junior Year programme at St. Andrews University (Lord Douglas-Hamilton's brother, The Duke of Hamilton, was Chancellor); and for short-term credit courses at Oxford and Cambridge; some of my time was spent meeting and talking with executives of the large Foundations like the Carnegie and the Rockefeller Institute, to try to get more money for our programmes.

But most of the time I spent smoking grass; and, towards the end, getting stoned on acid. And, as the summer of 1961 approached, it became increasingly clear that I should have to resign. The programmes had got all their dates mixed up, and nothing about accommodation had been firmed up; the files were in a mess, and piles of unanswered correspondence littered my desk; bills accumulated and income was reduced to almost nil. My hours became erratic.

I very seldom bothered to answer the phone. When people came to see me I would always be stoned and doubtless altogether incoherent. I attacked the Queen. I spoke disparagingly of British culture. I spoke of 'kingdoms yet to come' with a sort of women's magazine glibness. And I kept having visions of this 'Golden Dawning' of consciousness in man which would enable us to get things whole, to see life's magic miracles, to know that indeed all is in everything from blade of grass to man and woman. It was a vision of some ideal existence in which there was only the sense of wonder, and all fear gone; of a certain state of being that was there not to be judged, but simply to be.

September 1961

Cambridge, Massachusetts . . . The New England Fall was just beginning, and the leaves on the trees were changing colour; the air was fresh and clear, like Vichy water, and Cambridge seemed an altogether nice place to be. I didn't know anybody, so I rented a couple of rooms in a house on Brattle Street, and moved in.

My object in coming to Cambridge was to meet Dr. Leary to discuss LSD, or more exactly, to seek his advice about what I should do with the some 4975 trips I had left in the mayonnaise jar. The next day I telephoned him at his office on Divinity Avenue and arranged to meet him over lunch at the Faculty Club.

On the telephone Leary was very much the cautious professional and I was a bit apprehensive.... Leary, the author of *Interpersonal Diagnostic of Personality*; Leary, the no-nonsense behaviourist; Leary, the number one American expert in personality testing. And yet, according to Huxley, this was the man who was doing important new research in the non-clinical uses of the Sacred Mexican Mushroom.

At twelve o'clock I walked along Mount Auburn Street, flanked on one side by white colonial houses with pretty gardens, and on the other by the river Charles. A university boat crew lazed by the boathouse. On the banks tidy groups of students sat rapping or reading. Across the river, sharply outlined in the bright sunlight, I saw the Georgian features of the Harvard Business School, and the busy Boston Freeway reminded me of Robert Lowell's lines:

Everywhere

giant finned cars nose forward like fish;

a savage servility

slides by on grease.

Soon I was in Harvard Square, and it was not long before I reached the Faculty Club, an impressive building just across from the Library.

I had arranged to meet Leary inside the main lobby, near the cloakroom. But the place was jammed with intense, garrulous, smooth-suited, young men, and, since I had no idea what Leary looked like, I asked a porter at the reception desk whether the professor had arrived. He pointed to a handsome, clean-cut man in his late thirties wearing a Harris-tweed jacket and grey flannels. He also had on a pair of torn sneakers and one red-socked toe peeped out from one largish hole. He had the conventional Harvard short-back-and-sides and a hearing-aid visible on one exposed ear. He was reading the sports section of the *Boston Globe*.

'Dr. Leary? How nice to meet you. I'm Michael Hollingshead.' We shook hands, and he smiled broadly and beckoned me to the dining-room door, seating us at a small table by the wall, where we could talk without being disturbed. I asked him to order for both of us. We small-talked during the meal. Leary seemed a bit distracted with other thoughts, and sometimes would fiddle with his hearing-aid, as though blaming the instrument for his inability to catch what I was saying. So I said nothing, and encouraged him to talk. He was a very funny raconteur and told stories about his life in Berkeley and his family and his sabbatical in Florence. It wasn't until the coffee came that he got on to the subject of psychedelics. He began telling me about his work with psilocybin, the mushroom drug.

It seemed that the University had let him set up something he called the Harvard Psychedelic Research Project for the study of these drugs and to test their potential as aids to facilitate behaviour change. He felt they had great potential use in such areas as alcoholism, recidivism, even in juvenile delinquency. He then elaborated his theory of the game-structure of Western society; how we all play games, for which there are definite roles, rules, and rituals.

Sick or mentally deranged persons were 'game-losers'. If the game was, say, football, then a neurotic person would turn up wearing cricket gear and insist that everyone play his game. Efficient game players were those who could make definitions and from them decisions which corresponded to the consensus reality. He told me that the psilocybin experience helped people get out of all games, move into a space he called 'non-game', from which Olympian height the subject could see his own hang-ups. And it was this insight, he felt, that would provide them with the necessary impetus to change.

I said that I'd never taken psilocybin, but it interested me and I'd like to try it, if that could be arranged. I then told him a bit about my first acid experience, and how I had been taking it on average about once a week since then, and was now more baffled than when I started using it. I felt LSD was probably more confusing than illuminating.

Leary said there was still a lot of work to be done in the field. He had not himself yet taken LSD, but he imagined its effects on the mind to be similar to those he had experienced under psilocybin. The main problem was one of communication: how to verbalise an essentially non-verbal experience in such a way as to make sense to people living in the ordinary game-reality who anyway thought of these drugs as mysterious rather than mystical. Here we were talking of temporary alterations of the human consciousness brought about by these extraordinary substances — which cause a by-passing of automatic programming in human speech and action, making possible direct awareness at higher-than-normal levels of intensity and in other-than-utilitarian worlds of experience.

These drugs, if properly used, could be the source of energy that is to transform the human mind. But for the majority of his behaviourist colleagues, these drugs were a threat to their game. They tend to hide their mediocrity behind 'scientific' models and mechanical designs of the human organism which are by definition mediocre, generat-

ing triviality and error. As a consequence, they veer easily into paranoid fantasies about the subjective nature of the psychedelic experience, probably thinking anyone using these drugs is pretty crazy anyhow.

Nevertheless, the situation at Harvard was pro the Behaviourists — B. F. Skinner, the American Pavlov, was getting massive appropriations from the Federal Government for programmed teaching machines and research into conditioned and re-conditioned human behaviour, and for whom the term 'mind' was about as meaningless as the word 'snow' to someone living in the middle of Africa. Mind, if it existed, was an aberration of the computer's 'mind'; man was a conditioned animal, imprinted from birth for life in ordered, concrete society. His brain was a problem-solving mechanism, either efficient or inefficient. Skinner and his boys were engaged in nothing less than a massive programme of human conditioning, starting at primary school level.

Skinner's philosophy stood in direct contrast to Leary's. Rather than thinking of mind in man as some kind of spanner in the works, the psychedelic-user is more likely to see it as a truly miraculous instrument for new perceptions and insights about those aspects of reality which concern him personally. He may feel awed by the sudden power it releases during a session and realise that his mind is his greatest endowment.

Leary had little time for those scientists who extended the machine paradigm to living organisms.

'Qualitative change is needed in the pattern of mind-research if we are to discern an enlarged meaning of nature and of man extending beyond mathematical and experimental analysis of sensory phenomena and human behaviour. The new direction of research has been to hasten the technicalisation of human nature and ignore as a superstition all work on those aspects of human nature which do not conform with the orthodoxy of the body-machine concept. We must move beyond this sort of scientific tyranny of behaviouristic and mechanistic procedures, where man is understood in terms of controls or biological-drive mechanisms. This is carrying Descartes too far. A psychedelic user cannot reduce the mind-brain problem to a materialistic monism. He is more likely to see how the current over-emphasis on mechanism has produced a corresponding dislocation of vision, one that is resulting in a de-humanisation of man. He is more likely to turn into a revolutionary than a college professor.'

It was getting late. Leary had a class at three o'clock. I wondered how best to approach the fact that I had some LSD with me. I decided to leave the matter for another day. We shook hands and I said I'd call him again in a few days' time, for another meeting. Fine. Perfect. We parted feeling it had been a good lunch.

A couple of days passed, one of them tripping around the museums and the banks of the Charles. The students seemed strangely distant, and, in an odd sort of way, English-looking, probably as a result of wearing tweedy clothes and baggy grey trousers. Perhaps these are the robots Skinner has conditioned, I thought, their minds sanctioned

by scientific objective reality as information-storing, predicting and computing mechanisms, a 'tool' with which to shape a better life-style in the great American dream.

They seemed unaware that there exists a range of energies and awarenesses beyond rote-consciousness or the imprinted symbols of rational thought which can work with a rapidity and efficiency beyond the workaday conceptual processes. For every moment of human life is affected by the way man's mind works. Everything we see, touch, think and feel is linked with it, so that when the mind is extended for brief moments, as it is under acid, these elements can be used more freely and creatively, and can therefore be a tremendously important influence in a person's life....

My need to communicate this was very great indeed. But the few people I did talk to about LSD seemed blithely indifferent, or even a little shocked. I felt like some sleazy drug operator in Marseilles, trying to hook young kids on heroin. I began to get depressed, feeling that I'd got life cocked or somehow incomplete after fooling about with all this acid. By the end of my third day in Cambridge, I was feeling suicidal. A communication problem, Leary had said. Okay, then, I'd try to communicate with him, perhaps he would be able to empathise with my plight.

I got him at the office the next day. I had already mailed him a short note the night before alerting him to my inability to cope with my life-situation due to the disruptive influence of acid. And when he got on the phone he spoke calmly and authoritatively about how we must all share our knowledge about these drugs, and how I had a lot to contribute, and that a George Litwin would drive round to pick me up at my digs and bring me back to the office.

George turned up some ten minutes after putting the receiver down. He was a genial and open Leo with lots of energy forever rising. On the way to the office, he told me that he was a graduate student in psychology, and Leary was his thesis adviser. He'd taken psilocybin a few times, and had even taken mescaline at the University of Chicago where he went to school. Now he was a behaviourist who believed in psychedelic drugs, which he felt was a bit heretical of him to say the least.

Soon we pulled up outside a pretty colonial style house marked 'Social Relations Department: Center for Research in Personality', which I later discovered was the same building in which William James had done his researches with nitrous oxide (laughing gas) until he was told to stop.

George lead me along a corridor to Leary's office. Leary was seated behind a desk dictating something to his Chinese secretary, who kept giggling every time someone came through the door. A few young men sat on a sofa quietly reading from piles of mimeographed papers. One wall was entirely covered with a huge blackboard on which the day's timetable was noted.

Leary waved me to a chair next to the desk, finished whatever he was dictating,

and screwed in the ear-aid in an obvious attempt to let me know he was listening with all ears.

I repeated some of my thoughts explaining how my personal philosophy had changed since LSD. I needed a place where I could simply be, without always having to justify what I was into. I also explained that I was broke and needed a place to crash.

He invited me to move in to his house in the Newton Center suburb of Boston. He said that I could use the attic, which was large and spacious, where I would not be disturbed. He gave me a \$20 bill and asked George to take me over there. Once I was more settled, I could join his team working with psilocybin. Would I like to teach a course one hour a week to a class of graduate students — a course in existential philosophy, concentrating on the phenomenological aspects of heightened states of consciousness? Would I like to borrow his Volkswagen to drive to New York and pick up the rest of my things? Would dinner at eight suit me?

He could not have been more helpful. I began to realise what Huxley had meant when he called Leary 'a splendid fellow'.

Apart from Tim and myself, the only other people living in the house were his two children, Jackie and Susan. There were the occasional girl-friends, and visitors up for the weekend from New York. But usually the house was quiet and its life simple.

It was a big house with a beautiful garden and sited next to the Little League Baseball ground, where Tim, Jackie and myself would often join one of the evening games with the local kids. The rest of the evening might be spent in telling each other amusing stories, discussing the implications of psychedelics, baseball or travel. Tim was also a great fan of D. H. Lawrence, and we would chat about Lawrence's life and his 'message'. Every now and then I'd bring up the matter of the mayonnaise jar, but Tim didn't seem particularly interested in trying LSD, probably because he didn't want to get other issues in the way of his on-going (and officially sanctioned) 'mushroom research', as it was referred to in those days. His view might be summarised as saying: When you've had one psychedelic, you've had them all. But he did give me some psilocybin to try, which came in the form of tiny red pills from Sandoz.

I dropped three of these pills, which was considered about optimal dosage, for my first trip. I was alone in the house. And I felt good about taking a session, especially as I was very curious to see how the experience would compare with acid.

The effect was excellent, though not as powerful as LSD. It contained lots of magic and induced all kinds of very pleasant visual changes, with colours deepening, turning the house and garden into a Persian miniature of exquisite beauty and prettiness.

I was a little disappointed when, after four hours, the landscape changed back into twentieth-century American reality. But I enjoyed it and used to take it pretty regu-

larly after that. Perhaps after all, LSD was too powerful for our fragile nervous systems to bear? Besides, the effects of psilocybin were of only four hours' duration, compared to anything up to twelve hours on high-dosage acid.

I had been living at Tim's for about a couple of weeks when Maynard Fergusson, the Canadian trumpet player, arrived with his wife, Flo. They were old close friends of Tim, and to us seemed the ultimate manifestations of the current New York 'in' crowd they were witty, urbane, hip, and cool in all areas. They also enjoyed smoking pot.

There was in those days no popular voice speaking for marijuana, although it was considered by the 'in' crowd to be the last word in status symbols. It was also illegal, a fact that made Tim feel a bit paranoid about people smoking it in his house. He did not use it himself. He took nothing stronger than a few micrograms of psilocybin. And of course wine and whisky, which he believed were 'indispensable luxuries'.

One evening the subject turned to LSD. They discussed acid in terms of a fluent flow of neologisms, jazz slang, and weird verbal formulations. They treated the subject lightly, as they also would marijuana and getting stoned in general. And it became apparent to me that they had never actually tried it.

Later, when they heard that I had some, they suggested that we all have an acid session together, including Tim. Tim excused himself, saying he had some papers to mark. But said we were welcome to take it if we wished.

I brought down the mayonnaise jar and gave Maynard and Flo a teaspoonful of the confection. I also took one myself. We then settled comfortably around the blazing log fire, lit some candles and incense, and prepared for take-off. Tim had been fussing about in the room while all this had been going on, trying not to let his curiosity take him away from whatever other business he was engaged in.

After about thirty minutes, Flo, who until that moment had been lying fully reclined on the sofa, sat up, suddenly, her face one huge smile, and started waving her arms at Tim. 'You gotta try this, Tim, baby. It's f-a-n-t-a-s-t-i-c!'

'Yeah, really, Tim,' confirmed Maynard, his face glowing like an electric toaster. 'It really gets you there — wow — it's really happening, man.... '

Perhaps Tim was impressed by the evidence of his two friends, who were after all pretty hip and experienced in using drugs. Perhaps he saw that we were all having a great time, and he wanted in. Whatever it was, something finally decided him and he took a spoon of the acid. What happened to him next was the subject of a chapter in his book, *High Priest*, which he published several years later. As Tim described it in his book:

'It has been five years since that first LSD trip with Michael Hollingshead. I have

never forgotten it. Nor has it been possible for me to return to the life I had been leading before the session. I have never recovered from the shattering ontological confrontation. I have never been able to take myself, my mind, and the social world around me seriously. Since that time five years ago I have been acutely aware of the fact that I perceive everything within the around me as a creation of my own consciousness.

From that day . . . I have never lost the realisation that I am an actor and that everything around me is a stage prop and setting for the comic drama I am creating . . . LSD can be a profoundly asocial experience.

Since that first trip with Michael I was never able to commit myself to the game of proselytising for LSD itself. Nothing that doesn't ring true to my ancient cell wisdom and to that central vibrating beam within can hold my attention for very long. From the date of this session it was inevitable that we would leave Harvard, that we would leave American society and that we would spend the rest of our lives as mutants, faithfully following the instructions of our internal blueprints and tenderly, gently disregarding the parochial social inanities.'

[T. Leary, High Priest, The New American Library, New York: 1968.]

PART TWO

1961

At Harvard University in the early sixties, students had not yet discovered pot; the great majority were into booze, and there was considerable emphasis on physical prowess and middle-class, American WASP values. They had not escaped from the prison of their conditioning and the grand diagonal of crisis in student sensibilities was between those who went to football games and those who didn't. There was also a snob element, the Ivy League ethos, which pervaded the campus. Harvard was a sort of club designated by the imprimatur of the establishment. Yet 1961 was to herald a change of consciousness that was to have a seismic effect not only on the sensibilities of many Harvard students but on all sections of American culture. I refer of course to the advent of psychedelic drugs.

Leary had returned from a holiday in Mexico where he had first taken the Sacred Mushroom called teonacatl or 'flesh of the gods' which had been used as a kind of sacrament in Aztec religious rites, with a history going back more than 2000 years. The botanical name for this narcotic mushroom is *Psilocybe mexicana*, which has autonomic side-effects similar to those of LSD, though milder. According to the Harvard ethnobotanist, Dr. Richard Schultes,

' . . . psychedelic plants act on the central nervous system to bring about a dream-like state marked by extreme alterations in consciousness of self, in the understanding of reality, in the sphere of experience, and usually marked changes in perception of

time and space; they almost invariably induce a series of visual hallucinations, often in kaleidoscopic movement, usually in rather indescribably brilliant and rich and unearthly colour, frequently accompanied by auditory and other hallucinations and varieties of synesthesias.'

The *Psilocybe mexicana* mushroom was synthesised by Dr. Albert Hofmann in 1958 at the Sandoz Laboratories and given the trade name Psilocybin. It was one of a range of psychedelic (mind-manifesting, mind-opening) plants which dramatically alter psychological functions such as mood, sensation, perception, consciousness, and cognitive function, which are described as 'mystico-revelatory' by various investigators, but statements about the subjective effects and clinical differences among these substances are, at this stage of our knowledge, in the realm of folklore.

There is considerable disagreement in the literature as to the interpretation of the effects of psychedelics, but there is substantial, one might say unanimous, accord on one major point: they do drastically alter human consciousness. They apparently knock out inhibitory processes in the nervous system (which select, discriminate, censor, evaluate) and they thus release an enormous flow of previously screened-out awareness.

The words which one uses to describe the psychedelic experience depend upon the investigator's cultural background, his language repertoire, his literary breadth. If you usually label 'psychotic' anything which lies outside the middle-class cultural ego of your tribe, you will call these psychedelic experiences pathological. If you define 'maturity' in terms of those modes of perception popular in urban America of 1961, then you may call any experience outside these limits as 'regressive'.

It was Leary's thesis that the psychedelic effect is a transcendental experience, accompanied by intense positive or negative psychological reactions. There is transcendence of space-time categories, of the ego, of subject-object worlds of experience, of words.

There is usually a sense of unity or 'oneness' with internal and external process which can be ecstatic and exalting, but which can also be frightening to the unprepared person in a strange or non-supportive physical setting. Whilst most psychologists tend to emphasise the pathological reactions; most subjects, who do not think in pathological categories, stress the positive aspects of the drug experience.

This would suggest that specificity of reaction to a psychedelic drug is primarily a function of set and setting. If the mental set of the subject and the physical setting or environment are positive, supportive, anxiety-free, then the reaction of the subject will be ecstatic, insightful, and educational. If the set and setting are clinical, experimental, non-supportive, and impersonal, then the reactions will be frightening and confusing.

Take the case of the American Indians who still use peyote in connection with their religion. The peyote rite is one of prayer and quiet contemplation. Their doctrine

consists of belief in God, brotherly love, care of family and other worthy beliefs.

Peyote is conceived of as a sacrament, a holy god-given food and an available means of communion with the Spirit of the Almighty. When ingested, it causes the worshipper to experience a vivid revelation in which he 'sees' or 'hears' the spirit of a departed loved one, or experiences other religious phenomena; or he may be shown the way to solve some daily problem, and experience a deep reverential attitude to the divine; sometimes he may be reproved for some evil thought or deed. For the Indian, there is nothing debasing or morally reprehensible about using a psychedelic substance to establish contact with the gods, for he believes the peyote cactus to be of divine origin.

For the modern-day Westerner, the psychedelic experience can be very unexpected, seeing how personality is the product of conscious and unconscious imprinting as it may also be seen as the subjective expression of the society in which we happen to be brought up. We like to believe in the general regularity of our mental life, in the constancy of our views or opinions, and like to think how much we are alike, our so-called normality.

But in the psychedelic state, our mind seems to obey no rules and, except in trivial ways, seems to exist outside the scope of ordinary rational consciousness.

It was not surprising, therefore, that psychedelic drugs like LSD, psilocybin, mescaline, and peyote were considered by the American psychological establishment as psychotomimetic agents, and in the literature we note that researchers use the language of psychopathology to describe mystical and ecstatic experiences, in what Leary calls 'catalogues of anguish and conflict'.

The psychiatric researcher is trained to see the world through negative, pathological lenses. He is myopic and cannot see the wood for the trees. When he observes mystical or transcendental or ecstatic reactions the psychiatrist falls back on the concepts to which he is committed. He uses the language of pathology. Psychedelic drugs produce reactions which are not conventional. Somebody else's ecstasy always looks rather bizarre or foolish or insane to such an observer. Since ecstatic behaviours are not conventional and 'normal' it follows that they must be abnormal. Psychotic. Crazy.

A typical psychiatric interpretation reads like this:

"This paper describes our initial pilot study of clinical effects of psilocybin. The volunteers selected were told only that they might receive a substance which would produce temporary changes in perception and bodily feelings or an inert substances A baseline EEG, mental status and checklist of symptoms was completed before the drug was administered.

(Notice the suggestive use of a 'list of symptoms'; a researcher not oriented towards pathology could have checked the subject out on a list of ecstasies and illuminat-

ing experiences.)

"The experiment was conducted in a dark room. A nurse or doctor or both were constantly in attendance. Every fifteen minutes the psychiatrist rated the subject's responses on the checklist and conducted a mental status examination. Volunteers were told that they might be required to remain in the hospital for twenty-four hours, but only in two instances (out of fourteen) was this necessary. Results visual hallucinations, illusions, a form of hyperacusis, body image distortions, euphoria, anxiety, depression, blocking, disorganised thinking, distractibility, flight of ideas, clang associations, inability to abstract. A subject in response to the proverb "People in glass houses shouldn't throw stones" said before the drug, "You shouldn't point out faults in others that might exist in yourself".

After the drug he said, "At who? That depends on a lot of things." Autonomic responses, pupillary dilation, nausea, dizziness, flushing, abdominal complaints, blood pressure and pulse.... Usage of these drugs especially in an out-patient setting is fraught with the danger and should be undertaken only with the greatest caution. Psilocybin, LSD and mescaline are extremely potent agents capable of producing acute psychotic behaviour in many individuals. Depression with the ever-present risk of suicide may develop during or after their administration.

'Additional post-drug effects also occur. Once a patient has been entrusted with a hallucinogen even when instructed to take the drug in small doses, below the hallucinogenic threshold, we have no control over the number of pills he may take. The use of hallucinogens should be restricted to research in a hospital setting.'

The genius of Leary was that he avoided the behaviourist approach to the study and use of psychedelics. Avoid labelling, depersonalising the subject. Don't impose your own scientific jargon or your own experimental game models. Do not set out to validate the redundant implications of your own premises. Do not limit yourself to the pathological hypotheses. Do not interpret ecstasy as mania; calm serenity as catatonia; we must not diagnose Buddha as a detached schizoid; nor Christ as an exhibitionist and/or masochist; nor the mystic experience as a symptom; nor the visionary state as a model psychosis.

Right from the start the Harvard Psychedelic Project was surrounded by a charged field of excitement, glamour, adventure, enthusiasm, mystery, hyperbole, passion, controversy. Those who were running the show were charismatic, distinguished, articulate and colourful. Whilst the majority of the Harvard faculty was content to observe the world, our message was revolutionary: if things are not right, then let's change them. LSD et al was the New Heresy that gave birth to momentous social change in the form of a New Radicalism, which had as its core the experience of transcendence.

Man could take a 'third eye' view of himself. He could escape from the prison of his conditioning, his robot-self, and move towards wholeness, completeness, place-in-

the-world. We could all be conscious agents in the evolutionary process. This was to be our brave Golden Age of Anarchy when man would free himself from the dehumanisation of self-perpetuating, oligarchical bureaucracies and build a new, socialised, humanized super-society. We wanted to make 'turning-on' a natural part of modern man's existence, for the experience of liberation from the tyranny of the ego is an experience so extraordinary, so unique, that it is never forgotten by the individual—indeed, the vision is the impetus to behaviour change.

Our offices at that time were located in an old, remodelled Cambridge house—Five Divinity Avenue. About nine faculty members and seventy graduate students in psychology used the building as their place of research and study, and it was a division of the Social Relations Department.

As fate or chance would have it, the building was called Morton Prince House after one of the first American psychologists to recognise alterations in consciousness as a critical area for research. Morton Prince would still be considered 'far out' today with his curious and bold interests in multiple personality, hypnosis, trance states and visionary experience.

It seemed somehow most natural and proper that we should be initiating a research into altered states of consciousness in this building.

Although Morton Prince was the founder of the Center he was not the first Harvard scholar to adventure boldly into the uncharted realms of inner space. The lineage of this research can be traced to the turn of the century, to that most venerable and greatest of American psychologists, William James, who saw that if the riddle of consciousness was to be solved then the researcher must use psychophysical means on himself. James tried the peyotl cactus, the sacramental food of the Indians—only to be daunted by the stumbling block of nausea. He also tried nitrous oxide (laughing gas) as an available means of enlarging consciousness, and refers to his experiences in his classic work, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*:

'Some years ago I myself made some observations on this aspect of nitrous oxide intoxication, and reported them in print. One conclusion was forced upon my mind at that time, and my impression of its truth has ever since remained unshaken. It is that our normal waking consciousness, rational consciousness as we call it, is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the filmiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different. We may go through life without suspecting their existence; but apply the requisite stimulus, and at a touch they are there in all their completeness, definite types of mentality which probably somewhere have their field of application and adaptation.

No account of the universe in its totality can be final which leaves these other forms of consciousness quite disregarded. How to regard them is the question—for they are so discontinuous with ordinary consciousness. Yet they may determine attitudes

though they fail to give a map. At any rate, they forbid a premature closing of our accounts with reality.

Looking back on my own experiences, they all converge towards a kind of insight to which I cannot help ascribing some metaphysical significance. The keynote of it is invariably a reconciliation. It is as if the opposites of the world whose contradictoriness and conflict make all our difficulties and troubles, were melted into unity. Not only do they as contrasted species, belong to one and the same genus, but one of the species the nobler and better one, is itself the genus and so soaks up and absorbs its opposite into itself. This is a dark saying, I know, when thus expressed in terms of common logic, but I cannot wholly escape from its authority. I feel as if it must mean something, something like what the Hegelian philosophy means, if one could only lay hold of it more clearly. Those who have ears to hear, let them hear; to me the living sense of its reality only comes in the artificial mystic state of mind.'

So the genealogical line of research in altered consciousness at Harvard starts with William James and from him to Morton Prince. And after Prince came another giant of psychology: Henry A. Murray, who was the director of the Center.

Professor Murray used fantasy, dream legend, folklore, mystic vision, poetry and esoteric writings as the raw material of his work on human personality. It was perhaps inevitable that he would request a psychedelic session, and in the spring of 1961 he took the drug for the first time. As he said of his decision afterwards, 'Curiosity and the envisaged possibility that I might revel in a little efficacious lunacy spurred me on to it. Why not?' It was a bold decision for a modern behavioural scientist at a time when the behaviourists were the tough-minded guys who wanted to apply impeccable scientific methodology to the study of the human organism, hiding their mediocrity and lack of imagination behind 'scientific' models, techniques, and mechanical 'designs' of the mind which are by definition mediocre and unimaginative, generating triviality and error.

Professor Murray realised that modern man is sitting on top of a simmering volcano. The psychedelic experience is one possible solution to avoid the deepening chaos; but thinkers, philosophers, psychologists and scholars have been singularly reticent about the possibility of expanding man's awareness and as a group are disinclined to face up to the existence of this new range of mind-changing chemicals by modern synthetic chemistry. If the minds of men are blind, then surely we should utilise whatever available means we have to restore true vision.

The psychedelic experience and the insights it provides entail the obligation to communicate and to listen. Revelation and response are not a man's private affair; for the revelation comes to one man for all men, and in his response he is representative of mankind. And since the response is representative it endows the recipient of revelation, in relation to his fellow men, with the authority of the prophet. But here we come to the central problem. Spiritual fervour is not necessarily accompanied by tact; and men at large do not willingly recognise a new voice of authority when they hear it. (Vide Leary,

Aldous Huxley, Herald Hear, Alan Watts, Robert Graves, Henry Murray).

The difficulties are infinitely aggravated in our present-day world of easy mass communication which encourages a multiplicity of successive and often parallel authorities whose rival claims extend all over the place by virtue of the large followership which they have found. I think if a Jesus or a Buddha were to appear in our midst today he would be hard pressed to convince anyone of the relevance to mankind of his teachings.

We find ourselves in a situation that Aldous Huxley, the patron saint of the psychedelic movement, touches on in his essay 'Art and the Obvious', where he talks of the incompetence and vulgarity with which the great obvious truths have been trivialised by hacks, and goes on to say that 'on some of the most sensitive and self-conscious artists of our age, this state of affairs has had a curious and unprecedented effect. They have become afraid of the obviousness of things, the great as well as the little.'

But perhaps the communication of an old obvious truth—that the fullest kind of maturity has its core in the experience of personal transcendence—consists not so much in looking for new things to do as in finding new and relevant ways of doing the obvious things.

It is evident that every scientific, ethical, aesthetic and spiritual advance has been made by individuals who, to some extent, broke out of the prison of their linguistic and social conditioning. And when we consider the present situation of the world, we see that advancing technology has rendered our prevailing nationalistic and militaristic culture completely obsolete, inappropriate and appallingly dangerous. Populations, civilisations and their rulers are everywhere the prisoners of this obsolete culture.

They can't escape. Indeed, they have been so thoroughly conditioned that, although on the intellectual level they are aware of their danger, they do not, on the subconscious levels really want to escape.

What can be done to help individuals to become the beneficiaries of language and culture without, at the same time, becoming their prisoners and passive victims, or running amok under the intoxicating influence of misused words? There are several 'obvious' things that might be done.- We can give young people (and adults) instruction in the nature, limitations and capabilities for evil as well as for good, of language. We can drum into their heads (as every wise man from Buddha and Saint Paul down to those of the present has always done) that words are not the same as things, that concepts are not experiences, that pigeon-holes do not exist in nature, that it is both stupid and unjust to hang a dog because somebody has given him a bad name (Hitler massacred six million Jews who were regarded not as human beings, but as the embodiment of a bad name). We must teach our youth to take their ease with words, naively, by reflex.

These thoughts are pretty 'obvious' to those who use psychedelics.

(Huxley: Private correspondence.) 'The accelerating rate of technological advance, of preparation for war, and of population increase leaves the human race very little time in which to get out of the prevailing mess. Perhaps within a decade the difficulties created by increasing pressure of numbers upon resources and by the disruptive impact of technology upon established behaviour patterns, may easily involve the whole world in a deepening chaos, to which the only antidote will be the iron dictatorship of generals or commissars.

Those of us who worked with psychedelic drugs believed that within this short period we must try to train up a sufficient and effective minority of individuals, capable of profiting by language and culture without being stultified or made mad by them, capable of changing obsolete behaviour patterns in such a way that mankind may find it possible to live in conformity, not with disastrous slogans and dogmas inherited from the past, but with the life process, the essential Suchness of the world.'

My own view is that LSD may be nothing more than the extreme lengths to which a handful of individuals were prepared to go in order to ensure the continuity of their necessary freedoms.

This slight digression over, let us return to the activities at Five Divinity Avenue, to that tiny group led by Leary and sustained by Murray, who were to fiddle with irrelevancies while the giant powers multiplied their infernal weapons, threats, and provocations.

As soon as it became known that a research project involving the use of these new psychedelic drugs was to be organised, large numbers of graduate students came round to join the project. There were many planning sessions, and an air of excitement pervaded Morton Prince House. We also examined the available literature on the subject, including the works of Aldous Huxley—*Heaven and Hell* and *The Doors of Perception* which detailed his experiences with mescaline, as well as his novel *Island* about a 'positive Utopia' in which psychedelic drugs are used by a community to help expand awareness and bring its members closer to God.

It was Huxley's solution to the problems and horrors he described so dramatically in *Brave New World* and *Ape and Essence*. There were also Leary's papers on the subject as well as monographs by Frank Barron, a leading American authority of creativity, Richard Alpert, a member of the Harvard Faculty, and William Burroughs. It was not much, but it was enough to start planning sessions based on non-clinical methodologies.

My job at this time was as an assistant to Leary. I was living in his house and we would drive to the office each morning from Boston, just across the river from Cambridge. I was also given a course to teach, two hours a week, when I would meet with perhaps a dozen graduate students in psychology to plan and discuss LSD sessions. We would sit around discussing how best to run group sessions, the function of the 'guide' or administrator, and the ethical and interpersonal principles involved. The atmosphere of the Center

hadn't been this stirred since Harry Murray was trying to solve the Lindberg kidnaping, since Morton Prince tried to get in touch with the co-conscious 'spirit world', since William James started a rage of nitrous oxide parties in Boston's Back Bay.

What we wanted to achieve was an 'open', collaborative and humanistic response to our research in order to produce optimally positive reactions to the drug experience. And by 'positive reaction' we meant a pleasant, ecstatic, non-anxious experience leading to a broadening of awareness and an increase in individual insight. The following principles were laid down by the team:

1. Participants whenever possible will alternate roles of observer and subject.
2. Participants will be given all available information about the drug and its effects before the experiment. We will attempt to avoid an atmosphere of mystery and secret experimentation.
3. The participants will be given control of their own dosage. A maximum dosage will be determined by the principal investigators. This maximum number of tablets will be given the subject and he will be told to dose himself at the rate and amount he desires.
4. The sessions will take place in pleasant, spacious aesthetic surroundings. Music, art reproductions, sympathetic observers will be available.
5. The subject will be allowed to bring a relative or friend to be his observer.
6. No subject should take the drug in a group where he is a stranger.
7. An attempt will be made to have one observer for each two subjects. The subjects will be given complete freedom of the house but cannot leave the premises. Observers will be available at all times for discussion.
8. Observers will be present at the end of the session for follow-up discussions.

It is interesting to look back at some of the original members of the Harvard Psychedelic Project, who were first introduced to LSD via the contents of the magic mayonnaise jar, and to note their successive and deepening involvement in the psychedelic movement, which was to spread from Harvard to all sections of our Western culture as well as introduce a new vocabulary for a turned-on youth movement ('psychedelic', 'acid', 'trip', 'stoned'); new slogans ('turn on, tune in, drop out'); new artistic forms (psychedelic art, acid rock, psychedelic discotheques, a Beatle album openly celebrating the psychedelic experience); new drug-associated organizations (The International Federation for Internal Freedom [IFIF] in Cambridge, The Agora Scientific Trust in New York, The World Psychedelic Centre in London, The Castalia Foundation at Millbrook); new religions (The Neo-American Church, The League for Spiritual Discovery, The Free High

Church of Cumbrae [Scotland], The Church of the Awakening, San Francisco); new lifestyles (head shops, ashrams, communes, The Brotherhood of Eternal Love); an underground newspaper service; new literary forms and themes (High Priest, Time Psychedelic Review, The Ecstatic Adventure, The Psychedelic Experience, Psychedelic Prayers, The Varieties of Psychedelic Experience) and so on and so forth.

Along the crowded corridors of the Center walked Aldous and Laura Huxley, Arthur Koestler, William Burroughs, Charles Olson, Allen Ginsberg and Peter Orlovsky, famous musicians and painters, ministers, cured dope addicts, New York hipsters, oriental religious leaders, rabbis and even a couple of Jesuits. 'There is some possibility that my friends and I have illuminated more people than anyone else in history.'

It was not long before the Harvard Research Project had grown to include some forty professors and graduate students, who had sensed in the psychedelic experience a new tool with which to shape and extend their awareness of the world and the other people in it. And their claims on behalf of LSD et al were highly articulate, and perhaps tinged with a fervour usually associated with religious belief. Naturally, this had a disturbing effect on their colleagues, who were doing real psychology—Delay of Gratification Experiments; Need for Achievement; Personality Studies of Lower-Class Irish in South Boston; The Rorschach Test; Need for Approval; Perception and Motivation Studies. Psychology was the science of rats and tests and statistics. Exploring and mapping new realms of internal experience didn't belong here. Or did it? Who could now really say? The hermetic vase had been opened, and the avis Hermetis had flown the nest. The dynamic life-giving adventure of exploring inner space was to become the new romance.

It was inevitable that, as our drug programme expanded, criticism and rumour began to flourish about our activities. One of the most vocal of the critics was Professor David McClelland, a professor of psychology, a protestant-ethic man, highly intelligent, an expert in the psychological basis of 'fantasy', a prominent Quaker, dedicated to external achievement.

McClelland had decided to bring matters to a head by calling a meeting of the staff of the Center in which he revealed in no uncertain terms his growing concern over the Psychedelic Project. To judge by the behaviour of Mexican curanderas and Indian mystics, he said, one would expect the chief effects of psychedelic substances to be to encourage withdrawal from contact with social reality and to increase satisfaction with one's own inner thought life.

Research reports from the current Harvard project, he said, 'are not inconsistent with these expectations'. And went on to note that 'initiates begin to show a certain blandness, or superiority, or feeling of being above and beyond the normal worlds of social reality'.

He was concerned about a developing interpersonal insensitivity, about the 'inability to predict in advance what the social reaction of a "psilocybin party" would be'.

And religious and philosophical naiveté: 'Many reports are given of deep mystical experiences, but their chief characteristic is the wonder at one's own profundity rather than a genuine concern to probe deeper into the experience of the human race in these matters', and impulsivity: 'One of the most difficult parts of the research has been to introduce any order into who takes the drug under what conditions.'

Any controls have either been rejected as interfering with the warmth necessary to have a valuable experience or accepted as desirable but then not applied because somehow an occasion arises when it seems "right" to have a psychedelic session'. He concluded his statements with this warning: 'It is probably no accident that the society which most consistently encouraged the use of these substances India, produced one of the sickest social orders ever created by mankind in which thinking men spent their time lost in the Buddha position under the influence of drugs exploring consciousness, while poverty, disease, social discrimination, and superstition reached their highest and most organised form in all history.'

Another critic, Dr. Herbert Kelman, lecturer in Social Psychology, said at a later meeting that he had observed that graduate students in the project had formed clannish 'insider groups'. 'I also question whether this project is carried out primarily as an intellectual endeavour or whether it is being pursued as a new kind of experience to offer an answer to man's ills,' he said.

The problem was one of communication, or rather the lack of any, for we had let the rumours go unchecked. From the point of view of those of us working on the project, psychedelic drugs had an amazing potential, not only as aids to psychotherapy but in such areas as prisoner rehabilitation, personal growth and individual freedom, interpersonal community structures, improved human relations, creativity, art and entertainment, education, religion and philosophy, politics and sociology, experimental behavioural science, to mention just a few of the practical applications we had pursued.

We came to believe, as a result of our own experiences and those reported to us by others using psychedelics, that they had the potential to facilitate for the individual the experience of major insights and problem solutions of an intellectual-emotional nature. The realm of these insights or problem solutions is in any area which is meaningful to that individual be it social or personal, intellectual, religious, philosophical, things like that.

It was also our conviction that these insights, enlightenment or solutions provided a firm educational foundation for (a) change in the social or intellectual behaviour of the individual, (b) the development of new models regarding the nature of man along with suitable research designs to test such models, (c) the development of more subtle methods of communication between individuals and (d) the conceptualization and formulation of modified social systems.

We tried to counter the criticisms by gathering together some of the students who

had used psychedelics, at which time phenomenological reports were made. We also had two graduate students in the Harvard Divinity School and one student from M.I.T. Philosophy Department attending who were considering Ph.D. dissertations in this area.

We also brought out a Newsletter in which we tried to illustrate the impact of the psychedelic experience by quotes from subjects' reports:

"The atmosphere could hardly have been made more pleasant and congenial. The freedom, spontaneity, and personal warmth within the group and between members of the group became very meaningful. In these moments the psychology vs. theology business dropped off, the faculty-student barrier just did not matter, even the friend-stranger game was minimised. For these few moments we interacted not as role players or status seekers but as human beings—men who share common sorrows and common joys, some of which we discussed.

"Things going on inside me took all my attention. Early in my session I fastened upon the question of the distinction between knower and known, recalling Allport's and Hall and Lindzey's discussion of whether the self should be conceptualized in terms of the processes of knowing (self-as-subject, James' pure Ego) or in terms of the structures, patterns, abstractions by which one defines himself (self-as-object, proprium). It seemed to me that these were being dissociated in me, and I as knower was unable to confirm my knowing or to sustain my sense of identity by referring to any stable elements of myself.

I recall looking at a Buddhist symbol, a circle divided into two S-shaped parts, one black and one white, with a centre in each of the semi-circles which formed the S. I struggled to bring the two centres together, as if "the I" had to do so to survive. I can remember twisting and straining with all my might, saying I-I-I-I and somehow being aware that the batter of my universe was to maintain the "I" while all else was stripped away.

"Two related feelings were present. One was a tremendous freedom to experience, to be I. It became very important to distinguish between I and Me, the latter being an object defined by patterns and structures and responsibilities—all of which had vanished—and the former being the subject experiencing and feeling.

'What it all means: First, for psychological theory. One striking aspect of the experience was the lack of sexual feelings or thoughts. We all commented upon this. Another was the lack of aggression—moments of irritability produced only a desire to move away from the irritating one. Moreover, I experienced no developmental regression. While this does not in any way disprove Freudian theory, it makes it utterly irrelevant to this experience....

"To begin with, the usual: the experience is so fantastic in both its novelty and its power as to beggar all possibility of adequate depiction through words. The most that can be hoped for by way of description is an approximation, and only those who have

had the drug can know how far removed from actuality the approximation must be.

‘The things that can be said easily and unequivocally are: (1) My physical symptoms were a pronounced quaking which centred in my lower limbs, climaxing (I would judge) about one and a half hours after taking the drug but continuing off and on for about five hours; a slight stomach cramp for about ten hours; the feeling of physical depletion—having been wrung through a wringer—on coming out of the spell; and inability to sleep (bright flashes of light) until 3.00 a.m. (2) No disorientation—at no point did I lose awareness of who I was, where I was, or the group experience that was underway. (3) Considerable apprehension, but no real terror or paranoia.

‘Now to the difficult part. The best way I can describe the experience as a whole is to liken it to an emotional-reflective-visual kaleidoscope, with the words listed in order of decreasing importance—mood and emotion most important, thought next, visual (internal, of the sort you can get with your eyes closed) least. Experience involving these three components kept dissolving continuously from one pattern into another.

‘Emotionally the patterns ranged from serene contentment and mild euphoria to apprehension which bordered on, but never slipped into, alarm, but overwhelmingly they involved (a) astonishment at the absolutely incredible immensity, complexity, intensity and extravagance of being, existence, the cosmos, call it what you will. Ontological shock, I suppose. (b) The most acute sense of the poignancy, fragility, preciousness, and significance of all life and history. The latter was accompanied by a powerful sense of the responsibility of all for all—all this, it must be pointed out, while lying comfortably and privately flat on one’s back.

‘Intellectually, the dominant impression was that of entering into the very marrow of existence. Instead of looking at a painting, I was climbing into it, almost through it, as if to view it from behind. So too with being in general. It was as if each of the billion atoms of experience which under normal circumstances are summarised and averaged into crude, indiscriminate wholesale impressions was now being seen and savoured for itself. The other clear sense was that of cosmic relativity. Perhaps all experience never gets summarised in any inclusive over-view. Perhaps all there is is this everlasting congerie of an infinite number of discrete points of view, each summarising the whole from its perspective with the sum of all perspectives running the entire gamut from terror to absolute assurance and ecstasy.

‘During the supper, after the two groups had gathered together I found myself disinclined to speak much. And the reason seemed clear—and still does. Several times a thought began to take shape. But immediately one saw three or four feasible (and very different) ways any overt expression of it could be taken: straightforward, platitudinous, farcical, too personally revelatory to be publicly broadcast, etc. As language seemed too gross and clumsy to screen out the senses I did not intend, it seemed, not so much more prudent as more truthful in the sense of not-multiplying-misunderstanding, to remain for the most part quiet.

'Felt clean—cleansed, actually—clear and happy the next day; the reverse to about equal degree the day following: normal, thereafter.'

We also tried to scotch the rumours by 'coming out front' and including mention of them in the Newsletter:

'During the fall of 1961 reports circulated in Manhattan literary, artistic and intellectual circles about the availability of black market hallucinogenic drugs, allegedly psilocybin. These substances were sold in liquid form. Because of our interest in the anthropology of consciousness-altering substances we investigated these reports. Conversations with a physician who analysed this liquid revealed it to be a form of LSD mixed with another substance, probably amphetamine.

'In December we were informed about the case of a well-known model who had been wandering for several weeks in lower Manhattan in a delirious state which was attributed to liquid "mushrooms". A New York businessman who is producing a movie on the Mexican mushroom heard of this case—his wife being a former friend of the model. The girl was located and a physician called. The girl made an apparent recovery. After a week, at the suggestion of the physician, and at our invitation the girl came to Boston for a rest. We had anticipated that we could assist her in integrating her experience into her life. However, she was immediately seen to be suffering from a severer psychosis. A psychiatrist was called and hospitalization arranged in a local hospital. Subsequent investigations have determined that the girl had probably been functionally psychotic for several months.

'On Saturday, morning 7 October, we were asked for help by an undergraduate who knew of our work and was concerned about his girl. It seemed that he had obtained (from New York) and taken a hallucinogen the previous evening and had spent this evening with his girl, who was, apparently, already quite emotionally disturbed as the result of a series of recent traumatic experiences. During the night, although the girl did not take any drugs herself, she was affected by the situation, so much so that she lost contact with reality a number of times during the course of the evening. After a review of the situation, we arranged for the girl to see a Cambridge psychiatrist whom she reported having visited previously. We have continued to see the boy up to the present time in order to help him integrate and make use of his experience.

'A recent rumour suggested that the punch at a University function had been "spiked" with hallucinogens by a student who obtained the material from us. In fact, our materials are carefully safeguarded and are signed out only to the members of our staff (who sign a requisition for all material) for specified research purposes. We were unable to ascertain the source of the rumour.

'In the fall of 1961 members of our research group were approached by and met twice with several young men who have been informally experimenting with consciousness-altering substances. All of these young men were or had been Harvard undergraduates.

They wanted to talk with us about their experiences, and particularly about their plans for a model free community in Mexico. Two of these young men did go to Mexico to look for a location, but they returned to Cambridge. To our knowledge no community has been established. In our discussions with these men we found them to be imaginative, decent, and full of youthful exuberance. We did nothing to encourage their use of consciousness-altering substances. Rather, we expressed concern about the clandestine atmosphere in which they used these substances and talked very frankly with them about the frightening experiences that stem from secretiveness, suspicion, and fear.'

The Newsletter ended with a paragraph about 'Group leaders':

'There is, at present, a group of psychologists who, during the past year have become very familiar with psilocybin and its effects. They have each participated in a number of sessions both as member and leader. We start with this group as a nucleus of administrators. The group includes: Timothy Leary, Richard Alpert, Michael Kahn, George Litwin, Ralph Metzner, Gunther Weil, Ralph Schwitzgebel, Michael Hollingshead.

But the paranoia was not restricted to Harvard. The Press were having a field-day, and reports of our activities began to appear in such mass-circulation magazines as The Reporter ('The Hallucinogenic Drug Cult'); Look ('Weird Story of Harvard's Drug Scandal'), and even an article entitled 'Psycho Chemicals as Weapons' which appeared in The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, which prompted us to reply in an article duly published in their next issue; our article was headed 'The Politics of the Nervous System'.

(Published in The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists. Pub: Educational Foundation for Nuclear Science, Inc., 935 E. 60 St. Chicago 37, III.)

'The article by Dr. E. James Lieberman entitled "Psycho Chemicals as Weapons" (January, 1962) could lead to serious confusion in the minds of a credulous public and of a credulous military. The author seems to be moved by admirable democratic sentiments, but he has mixed together an astonishing combination of psychiatric folklore and chemical warfare fantasy. The results are misleading.

'The so-called "psychotropic weapons" emphasised in this article are Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD), Mescaline (the synthetic of the "divine peyote cactus"), and Psilocybin (the synthetic of the Sacred Mushroom of Mexico). The author, a psychiatrist, warns that "catastrophic damage that would be neither reversible nor humane" might follow the ingestion of these drugs.

'Dr. Lieberman has presented one of the many sharply divergent viewpoints about the interpretation and application of these drugs. Many psychiatrists believe that LSD, Mescaline and Psilocybin produce psychiatric symptoms—anxiety, depression, detachment, confusion, suspicion, psychosis. Many other investigators have come to the conclusion that these symptoms exist mainly in the mind and eye of the psychiatrist, and that consciousness-expanding chemicals, far from being dangerous weapons, may produce

dramatic changes in personality leading to unprecedented peace, sanity and happiness.

'Perhaps it depends on what you are trained to look for. Most psychiatrists who have experimented with such consciousness-affecting drugs report danger. Most non-psychiatrists see these drugs as great benefactors of mankind. Included in the latter group are Albert Hofmann, the brilliant bio-chemist, who first synthesised LSD and Psilocybin; Alan Watts, author and philosopher; Robert S. de Ropp, bio-chemist; Aldous Huxley, novelist and philosopher; and the great American psychologist and philosopher, William James. Also included among those who hail the humanistic promise of consciousness-expanding drugs are a few psychiatrists who have seen beyond psychopathology to the adaptive potentials of the human brain.

'So much for the controversial. Research and not words will resolve these issues. But let us look next at the secure knowledge which exists concerning Mescaline, LSD, and Psilocybin. What are these substances? Sacramental foods? Devilish weapons? Wonder medicines?

'It is easier to say what they are not. They are not addictive, nor sedative, nor intoxicating. There is no evidence for any lasting and very few transient physical effects. Everyone agrees on one factor—they dramatically alter consciousness and expand awareness.

'There is a second generally shared conclusion. Set and suggestibility, expectation and emotional atm

PART THREE

1962

As the Harvard Psychedelic Project grew in both numbers of people and sessions, and as we become more aware of the effects of these drugs, it seemed that the hinterland of the 'psychedelic mind' is not the obscure forest in which Blake saw his tiger, nor the dream-world from which Coleridge conjured the mysteries of Christabel and Kubla Kahn. It was a place altogether different, and much more mysterious.

We studied the reports from students using LSD or psilocybin, and began to chart maps of their interior space (which we also compared with our own experiences). We were hopeful that some of the mystery would thereby be revealed to us, for the 'psychedelic experience' looks intelligible enough. But here we came to certain other realisations.

That this Other World is vibrant with strange energy transformations and exists—if it exists at all—in another dimension of mind or self; like the inside of an atom, it is a space forever recreating itself and its own mystery. The more we began to peer into it, the less we could actually 'see'. It seemed to proceed, under pretence of showing you how it works, to display a series of much more surprising worlds. It might be called a

more or less 'magical preparation'.

All we could say at this time was that this Other World could be experienced as the moment when one emerges from the prison of 'limited mind' and becomes identified—by the simplest but most intense of the acts of mental life—with the 'limitless mind', whatever it may be, however slight. And we felt this form of identification or sense of 'oneness', far from being an acquired or learned state of mental discipline, was a natural state, the only true natural state for man to be.

It was then but a short step from this realisation to individual members of the project linking their secret 'psychedelic life' to the Beyond. And all sorts of claims on behalf of LSD et al. were made on the campus. Some advocates of the psychedelic experience suggested that God may himself be at work in these biochemical compounds, and would quote the work of W. T. Stace, William James even Henri Bergson, in support of their growing mystical beliefs. Professor Huston Smith of M.I.T. said that the subjective drug experiences are sometimes 'strikingly like those reported by mystics, seers, and visionaries of the past'.

And in an extensive questionnaire study of eighty-two subjects who took psychedelics at Harvard, the following 'mystical' characteristics were cited by well over half the subjects as occurring 'quite a lot' or 'among the most important aspects of my experience': loss of time sense; objects snore significant and beautiful; being able to operate out several levels at once; extreme pleasure, ecstasy, cosmic joy, paradise; feeling of being very wise, knowing everything; feeling that nothing need be said.

According to Freud, at the basis of the human personality lies sex and aggression, the twin poles of deep consciousness around which we revolve. But we found that when the ego-personality was ripped away completely, which can happen during an intensive LSD experience, what was left was 'purest love' and a sense of oneness with all living creatures. No sex; no aggression. Subjects felt free of anger, pity, and disgust. It was as though the supremely ordinary human aspiration to be free could be reached, albeit only briefly, by means of these drugs, which is perhaps what Freud meant when he also spoke of 'the Nirvana instinct' in man, this yearning for peace which lies at the very core of our being. It has always seemed to me a pity that Freud did not write more about the mystical or spiritual dimensions of knowing, for he was obviously aware of the existence within realms which do not easily fall into the categories of psychoanalysis.

But in New England in 1962 the subject of mysticism was one that, for most people, was synonymous with religious faith. And so it was rather natural for project members to turn to spiritual masters in order to help them identify the nature of their new experiences, which were not like anything they had ever imagined before. It was the start of their search for an answer to the riddle of consciousness or for the Grail, as for something from the sky. They felt certain in their own minds that what they had undergone was something which they had personally experienced deeply, and not really something which they had done for themselves. It was a gift from God, a gratuitous grace,

aided and abetted by modern synthetic chemistry. God was not only in his heaven all right; he was also here with each single one of us, but wholly within.

Naturally, the 'good news' quickly spread across the Harvard campus, and the sort of feedback we got suggested that the rest of the faculty thought Dr. Leary was starting a new religion, with psychedelics as the new sacraments. And to the rest of the psychology faculty, this was absolute heresy.

Accordingly, we began to experiment closer to home, as it were, trying to find other areas in which these substances could be used, particularly those with distressed or helpless people, for whom life had become one long unrelieved struggle. Such was the case with prisoners at the maximum security prison at Concord, just north of Boston.

Tim Leary had had the good vision to see that if a large-dose acid session could help end-of-the-line alcoholics, it might also work with 'hard-core' criminal recidivists. And he had spelled out a research project, using psychedelics, to the officials at the Massachusetts Department of Correction, the Department of Legal Medicine, and to the head of the Harvard Social Relations Department. After a lot of hassle and red-tape cutting, the proposal was accepted; and thus began a unique and very successful experiment.

We started slowly, with small groups of three or four prisoners and two members of the Harvard group (who at this time included, in addition to Leary and myself, Dr. Allan Cohen, Dr. Alfred Alschuder, Dr. George Litwin, Dr. Ralph Metzner, Dr. Gunther Weil, and Dr. Ralph Schwitzgebel, with Dr. Madison Presnell as the medical and psychiatric adviser). We would usually work in pairs, and go to the prison twice a week, with one of the days given over to running the prisoners' psychedelic sessions, which were held in a locked room in the prison hospital, and one of the days devoted to planning future sessions or in follow-up discussions.

I am not a psychologist and it would be ridiculous if I were to attempt to give a scientific appraisal of the Harvard-Concord prison project. But one thing is certain, the sessions 'worked' in the sense that very few of the inmates who underwent the intensive LSD or psilocybin sessions ever came back (which was the whole point of the exercise). Statistically, fifty to seventy per cent of inmates paroled or released return within a five-year period, with a nationwide average of sixty-seven per cent.

We found that one and a half years after the termination of our project the return rate had been reduced to seven per cent, which is a completely objective index of success. How did we achieve these results ?

After an initial discussion meeting with an inmate, when he would be told about the drugs and the kind of effects they produced, we would then meet three or four more times to plan his session. We explained to him how he would 'lose his ego' and soar off into 'non-game' worlds of experience, and how this would enable him to see himself and

his criminal games with greater clarity. We also encouraged the prisoners to propose the kind of changes they would like to see happen within themselves, which might take the form of a hefty South Boston American Irishman saying 'I want to understand what drinking means to me' or a coloured inmate from Georgia 'I want to get over my paranoia'. We would also draw 'internal maps', huge circles in which we could fill in the expected positive changes and note areas of the personality best avoided in a session.

On the day of the session, we would get to the prison early, and after chatting to the guards as we moved through the different locked doors to the prison hospital, we would assemble the group of perhaps six inmates; and then all take the psychedelic—which included, of course, ourselves, since only by taking the drug with them could their fear and suspicion and paranoia be averted.

The physical setting was the best we could do under the circumstances—we spread mattresses all over the floor, played taped pop and Indian music, made sure that the session would not be interrupted by visitors or guards and thus that the atmosphere would be relaxed and open and permissive.

We found that it was best not to really do anything during the session, except be there and give reassurance to anyone who started getting paranoid or fearful; everyone was best left free to explore whatever material came up, whether it be entirely personal or involve personal issues with any of the others present. We found that in a benign, supportive, friendly session and with a favourable mental set on the part of each subject, the drug produced a detachment from everyday thoughts and actions which was correlative with an increase in degrees of reflectiveness and insights into normal behaviour patterns and in turn opened up the way for the construction of alternatives.

For those of us responsible for conducting the sessions, our orientation was, to quote Gerald Heard, the British philosopher who first introduced Aldous Huxley to mescaline, ' . . . concerned but not anxious, interested but not engrossed, diagnostic but not critical, aware of the seriousness of what is being conveyed and all the more incapable of coldness or shock, aloofness or dismay'.

But what about the inmate, for whom the psychedelic experience came as something not far removed from, if not actually akin to revelation? I think for the majority the experience was intense and highly emotional, with hallucinations of colours, of positive and frightening scenes; yet it apparently stimulated them to do some thinking about their lives and what they were doing with them.

One inmate, who initially presented the classic picture of a 'hardened criminal' of the well-known American variety, emerged from his heavy shell as a sensitive, lonely, child-like human being. At the time when I was feeling highest I had a terrific feeling of sadness and loneliness, and a feeling of great remorse at all these wasted years . . . and of the harsh and brutal things I have done in order to survive at all.... ' Or another, a twenty-eight-year-old coloured brother who was serving a five-year sentence for rob-

bery and had attended a school for retarded children till the age of seventeen: 'I kept saying to myself in thought—where do you belong ? Where do you belong?' And yet another inmate, a forty-eight-year-old man serving time on charges of theft, forgery, larceny and escape with a prior history of thirty arrests, the first one being at the age of twelve:

' . . . before taking this drug my thinking always seemed to travel in the same circles—drinking, gambling, money and sex, I guess what you'd call a fast life. Now my thoughts are troubled and at times quite confusing, but they are all of an honest nature, and of wondering. I feel somehow detached now from prison life, uninterested in gambling or even talking to the other cons, except those in the group. I think I now know what I want to be and I am sincere in my mind when I say that I want to make it so. Because the drug opened my mind and I got a better understanding of myself and also of the other people in the group, I now feel free to say and discuss things, which you generally do not do.'

(He was discharged a few months after his first session and obtained a job with a construction company; he worked ten to thirteen hours a day and one month later he was promoted to assistant foreman. A few months later he became assistant cook in a large restaurant. Ten years later he was still out and running his own auto body paint shop.)

But perhaps the most interesting of all the prisoners who took part in the project is Jimmy Kerrigan, one of the 'notorious' Kerrigan Brothers, a safe-cracker and part of the Irish mafia, who is still serving out his sentence, even as I write these lines, some twelve years after the events I have been describing. When the project terminated, which it did with Leary's dismissal from Harvard, Kerrigan continued the programme but without using drugs, and started a group within the prison called The Concord Self-Development Group to assist its members to sort out their lives' priorities and to give guidance on job-getting and how to 'go straight'. He got together this group composed of inmates, starting with the ones who had been in the drug programmer who then voluntarily pledged themselves to help each other find a new direction in life that would not automatically lead straight back to prison. I recently received a brochure from Jim in which the aims of SDG are spelled out. It ends with a list of questions that each member has to ask himself, first alone and then with the rest; and 'a hypothetical case history':

THE PERSONAL ANALYSIS

1. AM I WILLING TO GET HONEST WITH MYSELF FOR THE PURPOSE OF GETTING TO KNOW MYSELF AND OTHERS BETTER?
2. DO I SINCERELY WANT TO HELP MYSELF?
3. DO I NEED HELP TO DO SO?
4. WHAT KIND OF HELP DO I REALLY WANT?

5. CAN I GAIN IT THROUGH THIS PROGRAMME?
6. WHAT DO I REALLY THINK OF MYSELF AS I AM NOW?
7. WHAT ARE MY REAL MOTIVES FOR JOINING THIS GROUP?
8. WHAT CAN I HONESTLY DO TO IMPROVE MYSELF, AND AM I WILLING TO TRY?
9. CAN I VISUALISE WHAT LIFE PROBABLY HOLDS FOR ME IN THE FUTURE AS THINGS NOW STAND?
10. WHO BESIDES MYSELF CAN AID ME IN RE-ESTABLISHING A GOOD LIFE IN THE FUTURE?
11. WHAT DO I HONESTLY THINK CAUSED THE TROUBLE I AM PRESENTLY IN?
12. AM I WILLING TO EXAMINE THE CAUSES AND TRY TO UNDERSTAND THEM AS THEY REALLY ARE?
13. HOW MUCH OF MY LIFE HAS BEEN WASTED THROUGH MY OWN MISMANAGEMENT?
14. DO I THINK AT THIS TIME MY LIFE NEEDS TO CONTINUE IN A DOWNWARD MANNER?
15. IS A VALID APPROACH TO SELF-HONESTY REALLY NECESSARY?
16. DO I WANT TO THINK POSITIVELY TOWARDS DEVELOPING MYSELF?

THE HYPOTHETICAL CASE HISTORY

NAME: John Doe

AGE: Any years

OCCUPATION: None

PROSPECTS: None

RELIGION: All religions

EXPERIENCE: Lyman, Shirley, County Jail, Y.S.D. (Youth Service Board)

JOB EXPERIENCE: Restaurant worker, stock boy, dishwasher, labourer

SCHOOLING: 6th to 10th Grade

ASPIRATIONS: No work, rich widow or drift and see the States, steal when necessary
FAMILY TIES: Mother, father, brothers, sisters, loose relationship. Rather travel or 'cut out' on one's own

RESULTANT SITUATION

In Concord, five years, indefinite sentence, feeding off fantasy and delusion for the most part; identified with the 'boys'; satisfied with sense of belonging to rebellious fragments of society; 'real' people are people in trouble, in jail. The rest are 'way out'. No communication via legitimate channels nor respect for norms of community.

THERAPY SUGGESTED

Reduction of fear, fantasy, and hang-ups, via open discussions in small group, with trained inmates (A A's; Harvard Experimental Group; Legal Medicine) who wish to pass it on. Crash programme (classes two hours; once, twice, or more often per week) towards self-development, consideration of proper goals and attainable achievements tailored to variable individual potential. Readiness for follow-up outside programme. Finally, acceptance of social norms with respect for self and others in all areas worthy of same.

It seemed to me then, as indeed it still does, that LSD can be useful if it helps a person free himself of his habitual patterns of thought or some kind of 'absolute' sense of identity in order to see aspects of his life and reality as it concerns him personally. It is useful for what it can yield in terms of self-understanding, and is fruitful if it causes someone in a bad life situation to exert himself to overcome it and learn how to adapt the new insights to his needs. I think that perhaps for the majority of the thirty or so prisoners with whom I had sessions at Concord, something happened during their experience that took them beyond the falsifications of rote-consciousness and, in time, led them individually to achieve a simple awareness and even affirmation of the world.

There is a little light burning in each one of us which is something we are all too inclined to forget, though with sometimes quite terrible consequences. And if a psychedelic-associated programme is shown to help 'hard-core' cons regain the lost light of that which makes them truly human, then it is sad when politics and unconscious attitudes work against those who would like to share something of their experience and knowledge in precisely these human areas.

If we call a man an animal and then put him behind bars, we should not, after all, be too surprised if later he reacts against us with ferocity; it is perhaps significant that Charles Manson spent over fifteen years inside various jails before he let the society of plain and ordinary people know precisely what kind of animal they had turned him into, though our admiration can be given to such men as George Jackson, Eldridge Cleaver,

Huey Newton, Jimmy Kerrigan who, despite absolutely dehumanising conditions over long periods of time, were nonetheless able to detach themselves sufficiently from the 'prison system' and keep some kind of light of humanity burning within themselves, sufficient at any rate to preserve their sanity.

Perhaps mankind needs to discover a new culture of humanity before it is all too late in a world that finally submerges into deepening chaos, which will only happen if we find alarm-clocks sufficiently powerful to wake us from the sort of sleepwalking existence which nowadays passes for 'normality'.

Enough, enough; let us pass on or rather back to the Harvard of 1962 and try to understand how LSD helped spawn a 'generation of visionary maniac white mother country dope fiend rock and roll freaks'. I had got to know Leary quite well by now; not only was I installed as a member of his household in the Boston suburb of Newton Centers but I would accompany him each day to the Harvard office, which we now ran as a sort of command headquarters for planning sessions. There had been a rapid acceleration of interest in the drug programme, and it was not long before we had a constant stream of visitors asking about LSD and psilocybin, and their availability.

But perhaps one of our most curious visitors was a young man called Walter Pahnke, who was, incidentally, both an M.D. and a Bachelor of Divinity. He was also a candidate for the Ph.D. in the Philosophy of Religion at Harvard, had studied Christian mystical literature and had established nine categories which he felt described a genuine mystical experience. It now occurred to him that if a group of extremely religious individuals were to take a psychedelic drug, then they too might also have a genuine mystical experience.

He wanted to know whether Leary would help him run a drug experiment for twenty divinity school students from the Andover-Newton Theological Seminary, ten of whom would be given a psychedelic, and the other ten an amphetamine. The plan was to run the session on Good Friday in Marsh Chapel at Boston University, a long-established Methodist-affiliated institution. It was a breathtaking proposal, though it only took Tim thirty seconds to agree wholeheartedly and commit himself to planning the session.

We had by this time run or arranged over one thousand psychedelic sessions for persons from all walks of life, including fifty scientists, quite a number of artists and musicians and writers, sixty-nine full-time religious professionals. We also had a religious advisory committee that included two college deans, a divinity school president, three university chaplains, an executive of a religious foundation, a prominent religious editor, and several distinguished religious philosophers. We felt that with all this experience we could cope with any drug-associated contingencies, including this one. This particular session was to be later sensationalised in the American press as 'The Miracle of Marsh Chapel, though perhaps the only real miracle surrounding it was the one of actually getting Walter Pahnke's Ph.D. dissertation accepted.

As I was to be one of the 'guides', I was naturally very curious to meet the twenty students who had volunteered to take part in this experiment. Our first meeting took place at the Theological Seminary, and Tim began to explain a little about the physical and subjective effects of psychedelics, though none of the students, I believe, had ever taken anything stronger than an aspirin in their lives. There were one or two questions, but on the whole the group seemed relaxed if not actually looking forward eagerly to what was to become for them a most memorable Good Friday.

One of their professors, Dr. Walter Clark, who had himself used psychedelics, was careful to point out that it should not be believed that psychedelic drugs are in themselves religious. He said it was a bit like organ music, which may be the means to a religious experience for some people. He also said that drugs had been used in esoteric religious rituals, from the days of antiquity right up to Boston in 1962, 'presumably as a stimulus to religious experience'.

During any profound emotional experience, he pointed out, religious or otherwise, chemical or hormonal bodily changes occur. 'Furthermore, we know that the natural chemistry of the body includes biochemical substances, known as indoles, which are similar in structure to the consciousness-expanding chemicals and seem to be associated with some of the same psychological states as those produced by LSD and psilocybin.

The question then immediately arises whether a naturally-occurring excess of the indoles might not predispose some people to certain kinds of mystical experience or whether a mystical state of mind might not, on the other hand, stimulate chemical changes in the body.'

All the students again agreed to take part voluntarily in a systematic demonstration of the religious aspects of a psychedelic revelatory experience along the lines we had suggested.

It was a double-blind experiment. The students were divided into five groups of four persons, each group with its own guide, who met with them before the session for orientation and preparation.

Finally, on the day, we all arrived at 10.00 a.m. at the Chapel. Everyone seemed serious, almost reverential, and Dr. Pahnke busied himself with the preparation of the drugs, which he was to administer. There had been a last-minute flap when Harvard University Officials, an ad hoc faculty group 'to advise and oversee' future drug studies, headed by Dr. Robert Bales, refused to release to the experimenters the supply of drugs held by Dr. Dana Farnsworth, head of the Harvard Health Service and one of the protagonists of the Pahnke experiment. Nevertheless, after representatives had been despatched to round up a sufficient quantity of 'non-Harvard' acid, there was enough to go round, mostly from my mayonnaise jar.

The session took place in a small, private chapel sited underneath the main building, one hour before noon on Good Friday, with the reverent sound of the story of Christ piped in by loudspeakers. The service would last for three hours and would consist of prayers, spoken meditations and readings from the Bible, periods of silent meditation, and religious music. We were asked by the minister to maintain a reverent silence during the service.

My little group of four were amongst those who received the psychedelic (neither the students, guides, nor experimenter knew beforehand who received the psychedelic); but it was pretty obvious after about thirty minutes, when one of my students normally a shy, sensitive person, given to reading aloud large passages of Donne's poetry, suddenly began to tear the buttons off his jacket and declared that he was a fish. Another student had meanwhile slipped silently off the pew on to the Chapel floor, where he began to slowly gyrate like a huge snake. The other two seemed quite okay; one was sitting bolt upright, his eyes staring fixatedly at the huge crucifix on the high altar, an insane grin on his face, and with his hands clasped tightly together, as though clutching his last remaining \$5 note; whilst the fourth member lay stretched out and as stiff as a board on an empty pew, a position he somehow managed to retain during the entire service, and then only coming to again after a huge injection of Thorazine had been administered.

I finally managed to subdue the student tearing off his buttons, but not before he had removed all of them off both his coat and his trousers and thrown his dental plate at the altar, much to the surprise of the students who had been given the amphetamine, who sat huddled together in the front pews, nervous and not very sure about where their own heads were at.

There was of course quite a lot of activity going on with the other groups who had been given the drug, almost total confusion, in fact with some of the students climbing across the pews, and one actually standing facing the crucifix, arms stretched out as if somehow able to identify physically with Christ and his suffering on the cross. One student even managed to get outside the Chapel and was almost killed when he walked into the traffic on Boston's Commonwealth Avenue, 'believing he was Christ and nothing could touch him'.

Finally, at two o'clock, when the story of Christ had reached its conclusion, we all retired to an adjoining room for discussions; since many of the students were still completely under the influence of the drug, however, we decided instead that we should all drive back to Tim's house, where our girl-friends had arranged a wine-and-cheese lunch, which we could have whilst taking turns to stay with those who were still out of it.

(While most religious leaders would probably be unenthusiastic over the idea of the drugged approach to religion, Archives of General Psychiatry reported that earlier that year one lawsuit brought attention to a pastor who told his congregation that LSD could bring them closer to God.)

For Leary, the Good Friday session was something of a personal triumph, and he began increasingly to study literary accounts of religious ecstasies from such pens as those of Wordsworth, Tennyson, Virginia Woolf, and even C. P. Snow, as well as personal experiences from classical mystics like Teresa of Avila, van Ruysbroeck, Plotinus, and Saint Augustine; he was also at this time getting into Eastern mystical thought and read extensively from the Tao Te Ching, I Ching, Vedanta, the Bhagavad Gita, Christ's Sermon on the Mount, Zen, Buddhism, Sufism, Hinduism and so forth. He believed at this time that in LSD he had found a truly religious 'sacrament', and one not too different from the Vedic Soma, the Dionysian nectar, the Greek ambrosia, the Mexican mushroom, the Red Indian's peyote, or the Chama Indian's ayahuasca. 'When the day comes—as it surely will—that sacramental biochemicals like LSD will be as routinely and tamely used as organ music and incense to assist in attainment of religious experience, it may well be that the ego-shattering effect of the drug will be diminished,' he later wrote, and added 'Such may be one aspect of the paradoxical nature of religious experience.'

This call for acceptance of LSD as an aid to genuine spiritual revivification was not only picked up by many people seeking answers to their own spiritual problems, but also by some of his professional colleagues who were in all other respects highly cautious scientists. Indeed, one of them, Dr. Frank Barron, a distinguished member of The Centre for Research in Personality at Berkeley, wrote the following: 'There is a new time coming, and we shall know it when it happens, when LSD is interpreted by those who use it as the source for the energy that is to transform human consciousness.'

But it must also be appreciated that part of the problem Leary faced at this time was in finding a 'model' acceptable to society at large in which LSD could be legitimately used. And religion certainly seemed more promising as a prospect than psychology, despite the drug's promise as an 'adjunct' to psychotherapy, prisoner rehabilitation, and the treatment of alcoholics; besides which, he was coming in for considerable criticism from many sectors of the American academic community, where it was widely believed that the drug sessions at Harvard were being run nonchalantly and irresponsibly.

Dr. Herbert C. Kelman, a lecturer in Social Psychology at Harvard, reported he had observed that graduate students who had had LSD experiences had formed a clan-ish 'insider group', and wrote: 'I doubt whether this project is carried out primarily as an intellectual endeavour or whether it is being pursued as a new kind of experience to offer an answer to man's ills.' John U. Monro, dean of Harvard College, wrote a letter to the editor of The Harvard Crimson newspaper, warning of 'the effects of LSD, psilocybin, mescaline and other mind-distorting drugs,' which ' . . . have been known to intensify seriously a tendency toward depression and to produce other dangerous psychotic effects.'

Yet religion was still very much a new area for Leary. I think his scientific training was the source of his thoroughness and even of his originality as a talker, for on the whole he did not always write very well. There was always a hint of journalism in what he wrote, a too-easy tendency to slacken off for long passages at a time, into just something

not far removed from the jargon of the hipster, and the related facility that suggests, if not exactly knowingness, at least a feeling that he is never at a loss, an essentially 'olympian' preparation.

He was a follower of Mao and Dionysus, Freud and Epicurus, and this was never more apparent than when he tried to define the religious situation. It was difficult to take him seriously as a 'prophet' or a 'holy man' or a 'high priest'; it was easier to see him as an inspired impresario, an Appolinaire, or a Cocteau. Yet he sought to find a common ground on which both science and religion could meet.

'Science is a social system which evolves roles, rules, values, language, space-time locations to further the quest for these goals—these answers. Religion is a social system which has evolved its roles, rules, rituals, values, language, space-time locations to further the pursuit of the same goals—the revelatory experience. A science which fails to address itself to these spiritual goals, which accepts other purposes (however popular), becomes secular, political, and tends to oppose new data. A religion which fails to provide direct experiential answers to these spiritual questions becomes secular, political and tends to oppose the individual revelatory confrontation.'

He found it hard to see how his results—which read: seventy-five per cent 'spiritual revelation'—could be disregarded by those who were professionally concerned with spiritual matters and individual religious development. But disregard them they did.

Thus, far from convincing everybody that the New Religion is really dedicated to the idea that we should only think of ways in which to bring-each other up, not down, he only succeeded in putting up people's backs. The problem was to find a sufficient number of people left who would listen to what he had to say. And part of this difficulty was due to a lack of austerity in the presentation, which alone guaranteed- public discussion though not necessarily of a kind calculated to produce either consensus or rational inquiry. Yet despite Leary's various resources of honesty and intelligence, his quest for understanding must in some sense be a frustrating one. Whatever his ideas or ideals, no two authorities seemed to agree with one another and each would be the first to declare that he alone spoke with authority. 'Lots of blacksmiths whose monopoly is threatened.'

Leary felt that LSD's significance lay beyond all social analysis and all psychological categories and, since the drug experience was completely unique, a new model was needed, a new structure. It presupposed a readiness on the part of those who used it to undertake a series of new departures, perpetual readiness to expose oneself to new mental dimensions, even to new forms of 'reality'. In that sense, no two sessions are ever the same; each one provides an entirely personal, and at times, highly idiosyncratic encounter with the self, with each person becoming his own explorer.

So that each session acts as a bridge between one reality and another, and to the internal voyager represents perhaps an attempt to penetrate into the deeper reality be-

low the externals of egocentric consciousness. And thus the voyager returns, bringing back an inventive fertility and diversity of experiences to talk about, to illustrate, through art, through words, through music, through being.

As a serious writer, Leary had to throw away the chance of seducing readers or listeners with too ready-made a view of human categories. Again and again he demanded that the reader, too, open himself to the new and unfamiliar, as indeed he had done himself. He began to speak of 'Man's Fifth Freedom—the freedom to use your own head and on your own terms', and of 'The Politics of Consciousness Expansion'.

And the more he used words, the less the clarity of expression. 'We must entertain nonverbal methods of communication if we are to free our nervous system from the tyranny of the stifling simplicity of words,' he wrote in an article published in *The Harvard Review*.

He wanted the freedom to live close to the hermetic and the incommunicable and even to the refusal of all language. Certainly, within those of us using LSD, it was developing a new sensibility, a new awareness, there was something wholesome about it, something healthy and vital. It had laid claim to new areas of its own, and we wanted to share our knowledge with the world. Verbal tricks were out. We had to make of our language an entirely new instrument of communication, something to be undertaken in the spirit of renewal, with a kind of reverence which you find in acts of faith.

The freedom we sought was not the freedom to say or do what we liked, but freedom as a value (internal freedom), something intangible yet also somehow more real. We saw that the traditional means for expanding or contracting consciousness such as the printing press, the television screen, the radio transmitter, the movies, were restricted by law and remained under government control. How then were we to change this situation? For the purposes of describing the psychedelic experience in 1962, he had no language, no trained operators, just a vision that a new language would inevitably develop to transfigure every one of our social forms.

'It is possible that in twenty years our psychological and experiential language (pitifully small in English) will have multiplied to cover realms of experience and forms of thinking now unknown. In twenty years, every social institution will have been transformed by the new insights provided by consciousness-expanding experiences. Many new social institutions will have developed to handle the expressions of the potentiated nervous system.' (Leary).

Perhaps because poetry is most responsive to the change of human sensibility or awareness, and is the only true advance guard of language today, much of the new 'visionary' poetry is written in lines of simple word associations, that is, with the poet taking his ease among words; he prefers a limpid image which floats rather than runs, an image more natural than precise, and in general strives for a direct, less intellectual expression or emotion. He sees the manipulative verbal machinery for what it is, an ego-

oriented, aggressive, goal-oriented, fear-ridden, guilty, unconscious use of language.

According to the American poet, Gerde Stern, 'In a world of simultaneous operations you don't have to be first to be on top. We are dealing with word as it exists in our own world as an object in sight and sound. This is a unique role for the word, which before our time has been a thing of thought and breath or written and printed on paper, more of a private experience than in public media like billboards, signs, radio and television. Most people still long for a world of one-thing-at-a-timeness.'

But it was not only true for poets. Artists, too, were having to readjust their work to match their new insights, find new forms of expression, use novel techniques to describe this brave new world of sensory experience. They needed an art that would reflect a deeper layer of consciousness; colour and especially shape or form became in themselves more meaningful than any object they might represent. 'Photographic' imitations of appearances were less interesting than patterns of colour which have a power to move us and in ways which we little understand.

The psychedelic artist was 'aware' of sensory patterns in the intense way that the Tantric artist is; that is, he created his art out of whatever it was that he had discovered within himself, which in turn was commensurate with an increase in degrees of reflectiveness. The artist who 'turned on' to his own psychosomatic body wanted to recreate this experience immediately in visual terms which electricity made possible. He was no longer surface-bound to a piece of canvas or to imitations of the world of external appearances for he had become more universal—now he could soar off into these new sensory realms of human experience. He understood the meaning of such words as 'liberation' and 'freedom', not only with reference to his own life but in the life of his art.

And he knew that the visible form would have to be a direct expression of the 'electric' 'pulsating' centre of which he had become aware. Thus it might seem to those who saw art as simply 'images' or aspects of nature, that the psychedelic artist—who flooded the room with colour, movement, sound, and light—was unconcerned with outer form, and of course they were right. For psychedelic art is expressive of an inner rhythm, like that of music. And the spectator who is not possessed of a self-conscious similar to the artist's, will never understand what response is expected of him. For the psychedelic artist is learning how to make himself part of the mystery of his own being by 'seeing' it, living in it; here can be no sense of separatedness, no difference between 'Me' and 'Thee'—'We are all one,' he says; 'the art, the spectator, and the artist are one. Threefold Always.'

This may go some way to explaining the widespread use of psychedelics at pop concerts, for truly great pop music must present a frame to enable the spectator to merge with the sound and the colour, and the musician achieves authenticity by means of the language of 'visual music' expressed in the beauties of his world of electronic simultaneities (Jimi Hendrix).

It would be a mistake simply to dismiss this New High Art as an art of naiveté, mental or logical deficiency, or general benightedness since it presupposes that the spectator has also been able to move beyond his ordinary relative vision and is thus able to get into the invisible forces within his own deepest self in order to 'see more seeingly'. And it is the psychedelic experience that frees one, albeit temporarily, of any 'absolute' sense of identity in order that one may soar off into the flux.

The psychedelic artist would rather see his art as something that arose out of the alembic of self, as a piece of reality salvaged out of the flux, which manifested itself in his consciousness from the hidden depths of his being, somewhat similar to the cave paintings of primitive man, which also arose out of the experience of living. He is trying to express something in a non-conceptual, highly-figurative and often emotive way, through symbols which may themselves be magical, i.e. that have the power to turn us on. The psychedelic artists had found a means of communicating directly what they had experienced internally. But what of the rest of us ? As Leary put it—

'We are, in a real sense, prisoners of our cognitive concepts and strategies. Passed on from generation to generation. The cognitive continuity of history. Our current reliance upon substantive and "closing-off" concepts will be the amused wonder of coming generations.

'The danger is not physical or psychological, but social political. Make no mistake: the effect of consciousness-expanding drugs will be to transform our concepts of human nature, of human potentialities, of existence. The game is about to be changed, ladies and gentlemen. Man is about to make use of that fabulous electrical network he carries around in his skull. Present social establishments had better be prepared for the change. Our favourite concepts are standing in the way of a floodtide, two billion years building up.

'Let's try a metaphor. The social situation in respect to consciousness-expanding drugs is very similar to that faced sixty years ago by those crackpot visionaries who were playing around with the horseless carriage. Of course, the automobile is external child's play compared to the unleashing of cortical energy, but the social dilemma is similar.'

(It was this particular passage which finally convinced the Harvard hierarchy that Professor Leary was now obviously suffering from real hallucinations and that he had to go!)

'The claim was made in 1900 that the motor carriage, accelerated to speeds several times that of the horse-drawn vehicle, would revolutionise society. Impossible to conceptualise because in 1900 we possessed no concepts for these possibilities. But we always have the standard objections to the non-conceptual. First of all, we object to the dangers: high speeds will snap nervous minds, gas fumes are fatal, the noise will prevent cows from giving milk, horses will run away, criminals will exploit the automobile.

“Then the puritanical objection: people will use cars for pleasure, for kicks.

“Then we question the utility: what can we do with speedy carriages? There are no men to repair them. There are no roads, few bridges. There are no skilled operators. The supply of fuel is small. Who will sell you gas?

“Then we raise the problem of control: who should be allowed to own and operate these powerful and dangerous instruments? Perhaps they should be restricted to the government elite, to the military, to the medical profession.

‘But why do we want cars anyway? What is wrong with the good old buggy? What will happen to coachmen, blacksmiths, carriage-makers?’

‘The automotive visionary of 1900 could have pointed out that his sceptical opponent had no concepts, no social structures to implement these possibilities. Remember, if one talks about experiences and prospects for which the listener has no concepts, then he is defined (at best) as a mystic. Our automotive mystic sixty years ago would have asserted the need for a new language, new social forms, and would have predicted that our largest national industry would inevitably develop out of this vision.

‘Can you imagine a language without such words as convertible, tudor sedan, General Motors, U.A.W., Standard Oil, superhighway, parking ticket, traffic court? These most commonplace terms in our present culture were mystical images three generations ago.

‘The political issue involves control: automobile means that the free citizen moves his own car in external space. Internal automobile. Auto-administration The freedom and control of one’s experiential machinery. Licensing will be necessary. You must be trained to operate. You must demonstrate your proficiency to handle consciousness-expanding drugs without danger to yourself or the public.

‘A final hint to those who have ears to hear. The open cortex produces an ecstatic state. The nervous system operating free of learned abstraction is a completely adequate, completely efficient, ecstatic organ. To deny this is to rank man’s learned tribal concepts above two billion years’ endowment. An irreverent act. Trust your inherent machinery. Be entertained by the social game you play. Remember, man’s natural state is ecstatic wonder, ecstatic intuition, ecstatic accurate movement. Don’t settle for less.’ (The Politics of Conscience Expansion’, Harvard Review, Vol. I No. 4, Pages 33-37.)

I think Leary was most prophetic when he noted one of the occupational hazards of the LSD game—‘You are more likely to find the evolutionary agents closer to jail than the professor’s chair.’ It is true, of course, that unlike more traditional occupations, the LSD one is not one in which you normally get smoother and smoother with experience, like a doctor’s: it is (to use Leary’s metaphor of the automobile) nearer to motor-racing, in that the changes are so rapid, the curves so sudden, and demands an immediacy of

response, a quality of sheer nerve—attributes not often maintained indefinitely at top pitch. Perhaps it is all part of the pilgrim's progress which, though undoubtedly preferable in many respects to the poverty endured by Renoir and Pissaro, Blake and Artaud, is likely to destroy more talents, in the end, than it nurtures.

And here again, we began to get echoes back from different parts of the world, from people who seemed able to identify with the message we were sending out. I still keep a letter we received from Alfred Schmielewski Yogi, the Siddha Guru from Canada, who had no doubts about the efficacy of psychedelics: 'Psychedelic drugs,' he wrote, 'are the breakthrough of the ages and represent an all-important contribution to racial history. Here seems to exist after a billion years of unconscious evolution an instrument that man can use to establish control of racial unconsciousness. Man can now say that the race can control itself, its unconscious processes. This discovery will be the birth hour of the cosmic history of the human species. With this instrument, man can conquer the stars.'

Another related area, though not necessarily always drug-related, was being developed brilliantly by Ronnie Laing, M.D., in London, and Joseph Berke, M.D., in New York, namely, the exploration of the experience of 'going-into-madness', with madness being seen as 'a fundamental human experience rooted in an untenable intrapsychic and interpersonal situation.' The possibilities for madness as enlightenment could now be discussed.

Joe wrote to me about some of this, and said he was trying to get a course together at FUNY (Free University of New York) in which 'madness will be seen as a key to understanding the entire panorama of "psychopathology".'

Whilst it was possible for us to observe that the drug research area was one composed of a wide range of sub rosa activity, utopian dreams, mystical aspirations, and ordinary vague enthusiasm, interpenetrated by a certain atmosphere of personal life-renewal, we also believed that young people, particularly intellectuals and artists, were looking increasingly inward and back into their archetypal past, turning, as it were, towards the inner life via the use of mind-altering substances, just as in the thirties many young intellectuals turned to the inner life via the church.

But what sort of church? And what sort of a religion could contain the 'LSD sacrament' ? Increasingly, it seemed, the answers to these questions were coming from the East, most particularly from Tibet, through the esoteric teachings of the Great Mantra and spinning-top sound of the universe: OM MANI PADME HUM.

We found that many of the visionary states expressed in the Tibetan doctrines described states of consciousness which compared favourably with induced visionary states recorded by many of our religious-minded subjects. And in the Mahayana Buddhist text Bardo Thodol, we found a most accurate description of the 'going-out-of-the-body' experiences as well as an entire symbology of 'ego-death' and 'rebirth'; it was, after all, a Tibetan instruction manual for the preparation of one's own death, the offices

of afterlife, and instructions for rebirth.

We found these Tibetan images and thought patterns conducive to flexible thought, and we began to discuss such matters as incarnation, 'white light', death, without embarrassment. Of this apparent unself-conscious use of highly-charged, emotive, tabu words and worlds, Richard Alpert once told a magazine reporter: "Two years ago, if a guy came to me, like they do now, talking funny, I would have thought he was nuts.

But what is a nut ? They're all on the same journey to the East that we are. They may come as a guy with a beard and a motorcycle or a Tibetan Lama. But we're in communication with everyone asking questions: What does it mean to truly be ? What is man's potential ?'

And of the Bardo Thodol (The Tibetan Book of the Dead), Gerald Heard wrote that it provided a method:

'which can give us essential aid and guidance in and for the most vital and most neglected phase of our lives.... But however necessary it is that our American and, indeed, all our "modernised" societies be taught how to get over our death phobia and so to be freed from the ridiculous tabu-dishonesties whereby we attempt to disguise our rightful exit, we shall not try this method and undergo this training unless we can be reassured on two points, unless two quite sensible questions can be answered, two rational objections be met.

The first is: "How can a Westerner accept the Buddhist, oriental, pessimistic, pre-modern, pre-scientific view of life: namely, that the best thing to do with it is to get rid of it?"

The second question runs: "Granted, that out of the psychological methods developed by Buddhism a valid terminal therapy could be extracted, what use could that therapy be to any but the old ?"

In 1962, the youngest and most typical Westerner, the American, was the most sincere of human beings. His potentialities were unlimited, and in a world of growth they had a right to existence. He was moving into a new age, a new culture of sincerity; the harmony based on heteronomy of the adult society was to become transformed into one based on autonomy, when everyone could do his own thing and not be thought of as either dangerous or crazy, and that all truth which was accepted previously on the strength of authority would in future become personal recognition through the development of personal self-consciousness. If man is to stand on his own two feet, autonomous, completely responsible for everything that he wills, thinks and does, then he must be completely conscious of his causes and reasons. He would have to develop a system of thought that deals with true bondage in a true world, whilst at the same time aim for the spiritual state of no-game, no-ego, the ultimate liberation and the very highest forms of maturity. Only along such a path can a new order develop, the OM-HUM of presence and loving

process.

After 150 years of fanatical exactitude in his conquest of the world of appearances, Western man was starting to discover that he could explore inwardness; though of significance he knew little as yet. But having once perceived it as a possibility at all, then he would use his ingenuity to find perfect expression for it, and establish the perfect harmony between essential being and the world of external phenomena. The affective spiritual state was not to be found in the great institutions of theology, which in fact no one inhabits, but there, inside the self. He found in his confrontation with the 'Void', things which alone disclosed the nature of reality to him. He was no longer a stranger to himself, a cipher lost on the face of an inhuman universe, a puppet furnished with a name.

(Excerpt from a post-session Report):

'This was the deepest drug state. Things became confused as to time and sequence. I have almost no recall of what I was seeing at this time, and only feeling was important. I was seeing something. It seemed that when I cried a whole new world unfolded and the fascination with the figure was lost. I became part of a vast universe, drawing my energy from the earth.

The order of things and in things became very clear. Love and hate were very important as I entered this state and seemed to be clawing at my back in order to gain control of the very core of me, a brilliant spinning core of energy. From here, probably as a result of being able to cry. I began contemplating the infinite sorrow of being alone. I felt, however, that infinite sorrow was the key to open the door of understanding, like washing the eyes so you could see.

I felt if you could suffer an infinite amount of sorrow and be patient enough to wait an eternity, you could understand the meaning of things. However, for me in this state, finding the real meaning of the world no longer seemed important, but only being part of it myself, a dot in the cosmos, and feeling the complete harmony of everything, both inside and outside, and knowing that because there was such complete order I did not have to worry about myself.

There was a sense of a lack of gravity and I was spinning, or rather spinning and floating at the same time around the earth, something like a satellite. I felt comfortable here in spite of the knowledge that from here I could not communicate with others because all people were One and a part of the vast energy of the world, as I was. Energy simply is; it exists but has no capacity or wish of communication; it has no way of communicating.

Death of the body was not important here. It was a very wonderful feeling to be able to give my energy back to the earth where it had originally come from.'

Clearly, after such an experience there could be no return to a culture based on

authority and blind surrender to a regime where personal opinion is largely erroneous. Courage and truthfulness, and they alone, accelerate the processes of evolution. It is in the nature of things that even our mistakes must turn into blessings, which presupposes a morality in the universe somewhere. And any crudeness is largely due to our sincerity.

We do not know, as they do in Bengal, how to unite externally metaphysical truth and telling lies, or, like the Chinese, how to maintain outer face without breach of faith, without even questioning to what extent it corresponds to inner personal truths. Accordingly, loyalty to one's own private beliefs and empirical truthfulness are among our highest ideals.

We had a lot of convincing testimony by people, impressively intelligent where academic and worldly achievements are concerned, which encouraged us to believe that in LSD we had a new chemical tool for human expression and development.

Although the comments and reflections are quite diverse, we felt on the basis of our evidence that, in the aggregate, the appeal is one in which humanistic values prevail. So far from the LSD experience necessarily being the withdrawal of the mind from reality, it brought it, for certain people, once again into an enriched everyday life.

And for some of us working with LSD at Harvard during this time, we believed we had found a means, on a manageable scale, with which our Western kind of civilisation could be renewed by the discovery of new mysteries, by the undemocratic but sovereign power of the human imagination, by the undemocratic power which makes poets the unacknowledged legislators of mankind, the power which makes all things new. We could feel somehow that we were involved in nothing less than 'The Great Work of Magical Self-Liberation' of the Tibetan doctrine when the eyes of the spirit would become one with the eyes of the body, and God would be in us, not outside. Entheos: enthusiasm: that was the essence of our 'unholy madness'. And how far Harvard was from that ideal was the measure of the defeat of the American Dream.

It seemed the more we studied the reports, the more we realised that no quick rational explanation would suffice to cover the range of the emotional power of LSD on the human psyche. Everything suggested LSD had a different meaning for different people, a different meaning for different professions, and even a different meaning for different social classes; people seemed to take it to fill their own particular needs.

The only intellectual danger, it seemed to me, was a tendency on the part of many subjects afterwards to convert the 'inner world' they saw into a cosy fiction. Yet the moment of illumination, the creative vision, the ecstatic encounter, the experience of true insight, is essentially brief; once achieved and expressed, one is again back on square one, a victim, like everyone else, to the merciless vision of our sceptical intelligence, or ambushed by stagnation (stasis) and depression.

I also had personal reservations about the claims made on behalf of LSD that it

was the key to the religious or mystical state or could lead to a truer metaphysics of being. In 1962, despite perhaps a hundred LSD sessions, I could still say with Flaubert, that 'I am a mystic and I believe in nothing', or echo the modern French existentialist, Coiran, who said that 'Once we have ceased linking our secret life to God, we can ascend to ecstasies as affective as those of the mystics and conquer this world without recourse to the beyond.'

For there is no evidence that LSD ever made nor marred a saint. Certainly, 'turning on' was interesting for its usefulness, for what it could reveal in terms of a creative understanding to those who used the psychedelic experience for their own purposes, and could benefit from such knowledge. But real courage and a tremendous sensitivity of mind is needed if one is going to hurl oneself into a madness that is not sacred, since the real temptation, it seemed to me, is to link the psychedelic experience to God and prepare to return to that Garden of which, through no fault of our own, we have lost even the memory.

But if reality still counts for something, then the psychedelic voyager had to become a practical dualist, whatever be the non-dual philosophical doctrines to which he intellectually subscribes. It is true that at certain peak moments during an intensive LSD session, it is only the Clear Light of the Void that alone is. One transcends at such moments the dichotomy set up in one's mind between 'inner' and 'outer' worlds of experience, and sees reality only from the standpoint of the mystical vision, of the Brahman; and may experience life beyond all dualism.

But after such a trip, when the mountains are again the mountains, and the lakes are again the lakes, there is still the empirical world to be dealt with; it doesn't disappear like the Cheshire Cat, leaving only an insane grin on your face.

The very nature of the psychedelic experience makes it capable of producing apparently impossible effects—hallucinations are things which are impossible, which can yet somehow be felt as real. LSD exerts an influence over consciousness by virtue of its proximity in the blood stream, but there is nothing whatsoever about LSD; it cannot exert volition on its own; indeed, there is a case for saying it is itself unconcerned.

Consciousness responds to its influence. This is analogous to what is called in chemistry catalytic action. The catalytic substance influences another by its presence but remains unaffected itself. LSD is in this sense an efficient but not instrumental cause of heightened self-consciousness; but the real powers of consciousness are will, knowledge, action: these are the great triangle of energy, which is something known to every Tantric yogin.

There was an attempt by Leary, Alpert and Metzner to start a new religion based on the psychedelic experience, which found its theoretical expression in their authorship of *The Psychedelic Experience*, a manual based on *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. They had adapted the classic work of Evans-Wentz on the Bardo plane, according to

Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdub's English rendering; but in such a way as to turn it into a guide-book for psychedelic sessions. It contained technical comments about: The Period of Ego loss (First Bardo): The Period of Hallucinations (Second Bardo): The Period of Re-entry (Third Bardo), following the Tibetan model.

'The first period (Chikhai Bardo) is that of complete transcendence—beyond words, beyond space-time, beyond self. There are no visions, no sense of self, no thoughts. There are only pure awareness and ecstatic freedom from all game (and biological) involvements ('games' here are behavioural sequences defined by roles, rules, rituals, goals, strategies, values, language, characteristic space-time locations and characteristic patterns of movement.

Any behaviour not having these nine features is non-game: this includes physiological reflexes, spontaneous play, and transcendent awareness). The second (lengthy) period involves self, or external game reality (Chonyid Bardo)—in sharp, exquisite clarity or in the form of hallucinations (karmic apparitions). The final period (Sidpa Bardo) involves the return to routine game reality and the self.... For the unprepared, the heavy game players, those who anxiously cling to their egos, and for those who take the drug in a nonsupportive setting, the struggle to regain reality begins early and usually lasts to the end of their session.'

In other words, its authors suggested that we die, creatively speaking, when we cling too fast to the definite. But if you cling too long to any idea, even to the idea of LSD as a means of human transcendence, it can become a chain like any other. There were times when I felt we had forged an 'LSD chain' around all our necks; our problem was were we ever going to remove it?

The Tibetan idea of 'ego death' leading to 'conscious' experiences in the after-world, with the possibilities inherent in that situation of selective re-lives, was a very appealing one, though it reminded me a little of the Irishman of 102, who, on being asked the secret of his longevity, said that we should 'choose our parents very, very carefully'. It seemed that the spirit generated in the generation of the early sixties was of a certain hopefulness in the possibilities of consciously making of their future something beautiful rather than brave. The origins of the Movement are thus in the loving direction of concord, better human understanding, and brotherly love.

Brotherhood: each person owns nothing but the whole.

might stand for our motto at that time. Sublime optimism or sublime nonsense? Who can really say for sure? And for the rest . . . let me just add the only man who managed to live without money was Robinson Crusoe. Therefore, Practical Dualism Always! ought to be the slogan of our new psychedelinquent youth movement, I believe.

Soon enough, the summer came, the conjunction of my planets suggested change. For a little rest and recuperation I went to Jamaica, accompanied by my girl-friend, Karen,

with whom I had been living for most of my time in Massachusetts. Tim, Richard Alpert, Ralph Metzner, George Litwin, and indeed the majority of the other members of the Harvard Psychedelic Project, took off for Mexico, more precisely, to coastal Zihuatanejo, there to start an LSD colony along the lines outlined in Aldous Huxley's book *Island*. It was history's first organised LSD youth colony. And a report from George Dusheck appeared in the *San Francisco News-Call Bulletin*, part of which I reproduce now:

'Dr. J. J. (Jack) Downing, a top San Mateo County psychiatrist and LSD experimenter, was among twenty Americans expelled from Zihautanejo by Mexican authorities June 16.

'Dr. Downing himself has treated about forty alcoholics with the mindboggling drug at San Mateo County General Hospital, with "hopeful" results, as the *News-Call Bulletin* reported last January.

'He was not, however, a member of the International Federation for Internal Freedom, sponsors of the Zihuatanejo LSD colony. Dr. Downing was there, in his own words, "as an observer and investigator of the group treatment situation...."

"The colonists were sedate, professional people, he reported. "There were no beatniks among them," he said. "The majority of them were successful people, who seemed to have a religious or self-improvement motivation in being there."

' "Zihuatanejo is a middle-class Acapulco," said Dr. Downing. "The very rich go to Acapulco, those moderately well off go up the coast . . . about 120 miles north . . . to Zihuatanejo."

"There Dr. Timothy Leary and Dr. Richard Alpert, both former Harvard psychologists, set up a Mexican branch of IFIF, headquartered in Boston.

"The colonists, screened from thousands of applicants, paid \$200 a month for food and lodging, lived in one of several bungalows above a beautiful white beach, dotted with palm trees and cabanas.

' "There was an open-air dining room," Dr. Downing observed. "The funicular, a little railroad going down to the beach, didn't run, so we had to walk. There was lots of fresh fish, caught in the bay by Zihuatanejo fishermen. The staff was friendly and casual. The setting is lovely."

"There are four rooms to a bungalow, he said. One of these was set aside for group LSD sessions. Every morning two to five persons would gather in this room, with Hindu prints on the wall, and Hindu woven prints on two double mattresses and boxsprings on the floor. The LSD companions, including one member of the IFIF staff, would swallow liquid LSD and plunge into the dream world of visions, mind-expansion, self-awareness and mystical ecstasy.

“The staff consisted of Dr. Leary, who was busy most of the time screening applications—more than 5000 were received from all over North America—and fending off the curious officials of the Mexican immigration service; Ralph Metzner, a pharmacologist, and his wife, Susan, twenty-two.

‘One of these sat with the LSD group, taking the drug also, so as to be simpatico. Those who take LSD and “sail”, as the saying goes, believe that only users can understand those who are taking it.

“The dosage was heavy: 100 to 500 micrograms. More than 300 micrograms is considered an overwhelming dose by most experienced pharmacologists and psychiatrists. There are twenty-two grams to an ounce, and a million micrograms to a gram. Thus, enough LSD to cover the head of a pin can send one off like an Atlas rocket.

‘As the hours wore on, the group . . . possibly consisting of an actress, a magazine writer, an alcoholic businessman, and Mrs. Metzner . . . would exchange visions, cry out at sudden insights of omnipotence and glory, listen to a motley collection of records. Gradually, towards four or five o’clock in the afternoon, the effect of the drug would wear off, and the drug therapees would emerge one by one into the bright Mexican evening.

‘For those not taking LSD, the day was relaxed and endless: Breakfast at 11.00 a.m., lunch at 3.00 p.m., dinner at 9.00 p.m.

‘ “The atmosphere was highly unusual,” Dr. Downing reports. “People accepted one another without suspicion or anxiety. They seemed very open, very relaxed.”

‘Even when immigration officials, embarrassed by stories of the LSD Paradise in the Mexican press, moved in to close the IFIF colony on June 12, nobody was upset.

‘ “Dr. Leary was very calm. He went to Mexico City to seek a modification of the order, but when he failed, took defeat without bitterness,” said Dr. Downing.

‘They all left for Mexico City on Sunday, June 16, on a special DC-3 chartered by immigration officers. The Zihuatanejo experiment had begun on May 1.

‘ “Six weeks is too short a period to measure any results,” said Dr. Downing. “It must be regarded as a ruined experiment. My own view is that Leary and Alpert have developed techniques of potential value. But I do not agree with them that LSD should be available to all who want it. It is a potent, potentially dangerous drug, and should be used on an experimental basis only, by qualified professional researchers.”’

Meanwhile, back in Jamaica, life had become quite idyllic for Karen and myself; we had rented a beach house at Seven Miles, in the grounds of the Copacabana Club, a popular hang-out and dancing place for people from Kingston. There was a garden ablaze with flowers, and hanging-plants around a veranda, from which we had a view over the

ocean and of the Blue Mountains behind the house. There was also a small pool for a swim after coming back from surfing.

Karen and I swam, and dug our limbs in the sand, made pilgrimages into the bush and to the tops of mountains, lived very close to nature, with the sun continually warming both body and mind. Already we began to yawn for the future of mankind.

But is it possible to get bored with a panorama that is the same virtually every day? It seemed to me after only a couple of months of Jamaican weather, that the sky remained an unvaried bright-clear blue and the sun a bright orange furnace every day; and I began to yearn for the varieties of nature you find in Europe. The pull of home was too great. I had to find a means of returning, somehow.

Accordingly, I wrote a letter to Eileen Garrett, a friend, the President of the New York Parapsychology Foundation and a celebrated medium, who was extremely wealthy. I suppose my letter was in some sense a call for assistance, which she responded to immediately by sending me a first-class air ticket to Nice, and a cable to say that her chauffeur would pick me up and take me to 'Le Piol', the headquarters of the Parapsychology Foundation in France.

When I arrived at Nice airport a few days later I was indeed met by a chauffeur and taken to what seemed to be a four-star restaurant, just outside St. Paul-de-Vence. But I was quickly reassured by seeing Mrs. Garrett, who welcomed me and explained that she had built the restaurant herself, 'to pay the bills', and there were a number of chalets in the grounds for guests of her Foundation.

After several days there, during which I met a number of very interesting people, including the Professor of Psychiatry at Edinburgh University, George Carstairs, who had written a monograph earlier on Daru (a potent distilled alcohol derived from the flowers of the mahwa tree) and Bhang (the Indian name for *Cannabis indica*) as a 'choice of intoxicant' in a village in Rajasthan. We also discussed other names in both India and elsewhere by which *Cannabis* is known—bhang, charas, ganja, kif, takrouri, kabak, hashish-el-kif, djoma, dagga, Samba, grifta, marijuana, pot, and even the American name—shit. But, alas, he was not holding at the time, whichever name you called it.

Anyway, the outcome of my stay at 'Le-Piol' was that Mrs. Garrett gave me a foundation cheque in the amount of \$3000 to write a report on the Harvard-Concord Prison Project, which interested her.

I was thus able to return to London, cable a ticket for Karen in Jamaica; as it also enabled us to spend a very pleasant autumn in a basement flat in Brompton Square. I did manage to complete the prison paper and sent it off to New York; my only acknowledgement was from the secretary of the Parapsychology Foundation, who replied saying that my monograph read as 'if it had come out of an "atomiser"'; and was a 'literary work' by which, as a scientist, the secretary was not much impressed.

After a few months, with the grant money nearly spent, Karen and I decided to return to America, this time to New York, with plans for setting up a 'foundation for mind research' called The Agora Scientific Trust Inc., where the 'Agora' in Greek times was a market-place, only in this case it was a 'market-place' for ideas about the nature of human consciousness.

PART FOUR

1963

Once more I wandered through the gigantic city of New York, and the busy arteries of Manhattan and its mighty Central Park. It was January. And it felt good to be back.

I had had quite a few new ideas since leaving Harvard about extending the availability of LSD to new groups, organisations, and selected individuals, which might lead to locating space for the psychedelic experience in modern American society. It was clear that if psychedelics were to enter into proper competition for society's mandate, we would need some kind of structure to disseminate our new knowledge.

The need for a legal framework into which psychedelics could be smoothly fitted was very great indeed, for non-medical use of these drugs, including LSD, was not yet governed by the Food and Drug Act—and if we were to use our legal advantages in a collaborative way, and fast, we might be able to get a project off the ground and circulating through inner space before the law finally got round to outlawing their use or amended the Act to prevent their use for religious purposes.

An American legal authority, Roy C. Bates, writing about 'Psychedelics and the Law'—what he called 'A Prelude in Question Marks'—comments on the situation of about this time, as follows:

'It may seem far-fetched but would be altogether in accord with the (Federal) Constitution to organise a group as a church, with the prospect of privilege.'

And he based this observation on a decision by the Honourable Yale McFate in 1960 in favour of a member of the Navajo Indian Tribe appealing a charge of illegal possession of peyote, a sacramental food of the Native American Church. There was also another Navajo-peyote case on the books: it was decided on July 26, 1962, by the United States District Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit (Washington), to declare a section of the Code of Indian Tribal Offences—'Peyote Violations' 'null and void, invalidly authorised and unconstitutional'.

As to such religious practices, William Blake (b. 1757) has this to say: 'I then asked Ezekiel why he ate dung, and lay so long on his right side and left side. He answered, 'The desire of raising other men into a perception of the infinite; this the North American tribes' practice.' (The Marriage of Heaven and Hell).

Bates also noted that

'Inner space law today (1963) is in the stage of underdevelopment outer space law was in A.D. 1903 when the Brothers Wright launched their airplane at Kittyhawk or, perhaps, when the Brothers Montgolfier ascended in the first air balloon, a hundred years earlier. Until it has matured, scholars in search of external on behalf of internal freedom will feel frustrated. They may believe themselves to be fugitives from injustice but in truth are victims of legal confusion engendered by the reversal of scientific objects, from the universe without to the universe within. Until psychedelics have found their place in law, a good many concrete questions will not be answerable with confidence.'

Tim Leary had also taken note of the legal uncertainty surrounding the use of psychedelic substances, and working independently in Cambridge, Mass., started a unique organization called 'IFIF' (International Federation for Internal Freedom) to preach the gospel that man's salvation lies in the expansion of his own consciousness—that the fruits, which hitherto have fallen only to the lot of him who renounces the world, can now be shared by him who partakes of the LSD sacrament, and that, no matter how little happiness can be regarded as the goal of individual human aspiration, it is yet the best means to its attainment. They sited the IF-IF offices on Storey Street—two blocks from Harvard Square. 'We welcome anyone interested,' Alpert wrote in *The Harvard Crimson*.

While Alpert continued to conduct his course in motivation at Harvard for undergraduates and graduates, and Leary taught his graduate seminars in research methods, IF-IF staff took care of enquiries, official correspondence, and mailing packets of literature to Harvard undergraduates, graduate students, faculty and anyone interested anywhere in the country. There was an application blank for membership in IF-IF (dues \$10 per year), an 'Agreement to Indemnify and Hold Harmless'.

AGREEMENT TO INDEMNIFY

AND HOLD HARMLESS

For good and valuable consideration, including access to the literature and other facilities of the INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR INTERNAL FREEDOM, its agents, servants, associates and employees, I agree to indemnify the said INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR INTERNAL FREEDOM, its agents, servants, associates and employees, and save them harmless for any loss, damage or expenses arising from the claim and demand of any person against the INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR INTERNAL FREEDOM, its agents, servants, associates or employees, in connection with the use of LSD, psilocybin and related drugs.

I have read the information concerning these drugs and substances and understand that they are classified for investigational use.

DATE:

WITNESS:

And messages from the Cambridge headquarters began to move along the system, telling the news, of odd happenings in Mexico, how 'Internal Freedom' is going to be like Zen this year, and of 'several million thoughtful people who have heard the joyous tidings and who are waiting patiently for their psychedelic moment to come', for whom LSD is becoming a major religious and civil rights controversy. It was a brilliant astonishing concept, even by eccentric New England standards, and deserved all the support it could get; indeed, it seemed for some of its membership to offer the umbrella under which they could enjoy their psychedelic experiences without much spiritual or financial outlay.

But even in the hands of Tim, the eternal juggler, things began crashing about their heads as 'news' about IF-IF circulated in the media and through casual gossip, which may or may not have been true but was certainly extravagant, contradictory, scandalous, libelous, comic and inspirational. An IF-IF-Los Angeles opened for the West Coast. Alpert and Leary went on radio in Boston to explain their mission. Television networks were becoming interested, and 'experimental multifamilial living' using psychedelics began to spring up in different parts of America, along the lines of Tim's model for 'transpersonative, transcendental communities' where family members could 'maintain a level of experience which cuts beyond routine ego and social games'.

Alpert, Tim and his young daughter and son, a married Harvard senior with wife and baby, and several friends had themselves already started one such multi-familial dwelling, in a house they bought in the Newton suburb of Boston. In it there was a specially constructed 'meditation room' accessible from the cellar solely by a rope ladder. The only furnishings were mattresses covered in Indian prints, with drapes billowing down from the ceiling like Tibetan clouds, and huge Afghani cushions on the floor. A tiny oil-lamp gave just enough illumination to see the Buddha statue in the corner. The fragrance of incense completed the effect.

But in the rich middle-class Boston dovecote of Newton, the goings-on at the house had become a source of irritation amongst neighbours, including one lady who had lived for thirty-two years in a house near Dr. Alpert's green ten-bedroom home. 'Some weekends,' she complained to one reporter, 'their house is like a motel. They all wear a beatnik uniform—tight pants and jerseys, no shoes or stockings. One young man in his twenties is letting his blond hair grow down to his shoulders and every time I look at him I want to vomit.'

Finally the families got together for a petition and invoked a Newton statute which allows only one-family dwellings in the neighbourhood. There was a hearing before the planning board in which the colonists were represented by Alpert's father, George Alpert, former president of the New Haven Railroad and a distinguished member of the Massachusetts bar, with his own law firm in Boston. The elder Alpert pointed out that the law does not specify that families must be consanguineous. And with that he won the case;

there was no further trouble from neighbours after that.

Nonetheless, all this, and events back at the IF-IF offices, used up a lot of psychic energy in those of us committed to keep the game going. It seemed that the best plan would be to dissolve the corporate legal structure and announce that from henceforth IFIF members could make their own way in the world—just their bodies and a willingness to stay ‘on the way’, very much as in Hermann Hesse’s *The Journey to the East*. Accordingly, the organisation’s board met to formulate the closing-up operation and to send its members the terminating Statement of Purposes.

It was all played as another conscious move in the cosmic ‘bead-game’—Remove the old ‘set’ and avoid setting up a new structure, and you have a brand new movie: ‘IF-IF will have no members, no budget, no dues, no officers, no meetings. It is now an anonymous system; not secret, not public, but private. The term “IF-IF” no longer stands for International Federation for Internal Freedom. It symbolises the “ecstatic process” as the endpoint of any game or as a point of the no-game experience.’

The basic notion was to aim at some loose association in being identified as ‘wayfarers’, but without any kind of specific structure anymore, a ‘move’ that guaranteed both end and start in one.

It was absolutely unique. Once understood, all manner of varieties and variations could be introduced.... Everybody has to find the way for himself, but can send messages and cues from his own voyage, like internal cosmographers charting new internal seas of experience and perhaps pointing out sensory landmarks yet no prescription, no rigid principles, for action. Total Autonomy Always . . . Just a message here and there, or a particular quotation or a description of an experience or exposure of getting stuck in a particular game, all with the general purpose of raising the general tenor of people’s lives with the ultimate goal that of complete self-liberation. In the lines immortalised by Bobby Dylan on the ‘Lay Lady Lay’ track of *Nashville Skyline*—‘You can have your cake and eat it too.’ Yeah!

The new IF-IF offered entry into a psychedelic paradise of delights with the price of admission only your own head. IF-IF was now free to develop its religious aspirations in the direction of the most ideally minded—the great American youth, by suggesting people who take psychedelics are destined to give that spiritual content to modern life. IF-IF was a church you associated with bringing you up, not down; the new religion was something associated with getting high.

One professor of psychology was very enthusiastic to propose new techniques and complex in-field play:

‘Perhaps one could start with or on the IF-IF members as the natural audience and introduce the notion through the news letter, then encourage everybody to send in a return-addressed and stamped envelope. This would reduce the cost.

Also send out all material in duplicate, with the instruction to give one copy to an interested friend. That would snowball the development. Also, initially perhaps the comic Zen koans ought to be relatively simple yet not too easy. Something in the nature of different languages, references to significant passages or books, or records, or anything. It is important to get people involved through action, they have to work to solve the koans. Then, gradually . . . one could make it more difficult, and more in “code”—you could circulate original “manifestos” analysing possible game hang-ups and traps in society; and you can build up a body of references one can allude to. Then make it gradually more difficult to obtain information, so that one would have to go through several persons and piece things together.

‘To meditate on a type of koan is a great idea. Set up a master file to collate correspondence, but keep everything cosmically anonymous. A lot of disguising and metamorphosis, using code names, etc. The whole thing ought to lead to a spiritual revolution in which everybody works for his own enlightenment, which will come to him in his own way through his own effort, carried by the feeling of participation in a brotherhood, yet without legislation and direct advice or feeding, which necessarily leads to control.

‘All this seems like a natural evolution from IF-IF that utilised accepted social games for its dialogue or “duel” with established social structures.

But the previous effort is not the way to fight it. In doing so, we submit implicitly to their rules. We have to find new rules which transcend the old ones without direct conflict, but we have to play on our own terms and have the others adjust to finding out what we are up to. Not that we really have to know—as a matter of fact we can’t know, because the idea is to keep everything in flux and go beyond the structures as soon as they are built and have been used once.

Transcending is being elusive but in a marvelous sense. (Socratic irony.) If we state fixed goals—other than personal, unique enlightenment—we set ourselves up for being attached, shot at. The secret is that “the way itself” or “being on the way”, is its own goal, which means you have to keep changing as you go along. Only the here-and-now counts—the here-and-now which is anyway pregnant with future and past (although it is wrong to worry about that). Complete responsive surrender to the challenge of the moment is equal to complete transcendence. Following the call and tuning in on the demands that present themselves; reading the signs of the way through the jungle; being in tune with nature and responding to it, rather than trying to redo everything in one’s own image; trying to impose one’s own game on to things, people, events: only this leads to liberation, I think. So every event, every manifestation of being, stands on its own terms and wants to be understood as such. One can only serve as the guardian of being, as the custodian of phenomena, to let oneself be swept up and carried away. There need be no questions asked: affirmation and acceptance!

‘But people are phobic about “drugs”—a strange phenomenon unto itself—and they rationalise about “artificial” and “short-cuts”, etc. If we could use gimmicks and

natural disciplines like sensory isolation, movie techniques, and explore other techniques, meditation, what have you, in order to effect some kind of loosening up and ecstatic sweep or upsurge—then it would be easy to convince people about the value of “shortcuts”. This effort would allay their fear. Not that we need to worry about convincing people, but to point out to them various possibilities for them to consider. All arguing about pros and cons seems futile. One should report on events, give messages about where we are, what we see, what there is to behold. Persuasion is not needed, but affirmation and signposts, which manifest their own persuasive power on those who are interested.

‘I also hope we can write and tape a few programmed Perhaps one could interest a record company in cutting a few discs and distributing them. The communications network could be a powerful influence on tastes. The meditation-room idea is gaining wide recognition here—everybody should build one. There will be tremendous need for meditation guides as well as manuals for trips. All this is very exciting and I hope we can talk about it soon.

‘There is a “magic theatre” wherever you look, if you can only relax and forget about yourself as an actor caught in a net struggling to get out. Total involvement and total detachment at the same time, which sounds paradoxical but it seems a desirable and realisable ideal, the 100 per centness, here and now, which makes every moment (even of deadliest routine) seem like a totally new experience merely by letting yourself be addressed each time anew.’

Doctor Strangelove, indeed . . . But it was left to the Grand Master and High Priest Tim, to explain how, in future, messages (verbal and non-verbal) were to be found in the seed that lies at the core of each one of us. He wrapped it up in his own esoteric way—‘IF-IF is conservative—it seeks to return to the wisdom of the tribe, to the wisdom of the body, to the wisdom of the nervous system.’

It was all perhaps just a problem of ‘unicornity’, for Hermann Hesse had written of the pilgrimage:

‘Throughout the centuries it had been on the way, towards the light and wonder, and each member, each group, indeed our whole host and its great pilgrimage, was only a wave in the eternal stream of human beings, of the eternal strivings of the human spirit towards the East, towards Home. The knowledge passed through my mind like a ray of light and immediately reminded me of the phrase which I had learned during my novitiate year, which always pleased me immensely without my realising its full significance. It was a phrase by the poet Novalis, “Where are we really going? Always home!” ‘ (The Journey to the East).

And in a practical way, IF-IF—if, IF!—had anticipated Marshall McLuhan’s theoretical basis for what lysergised nervous systems believe about non-verbal, i.e. telepathic, communication:

‘Tribal man is tightly sealed in an integral collective awareness that transcends conventional boundaries of time and space. As such, the new society will be one mythic integration, a resonating world akin to the old tribal echo chamber where magic will live again: a world of ESP... Electricity makes possible—and not in the distant future, either—an amplification of human consciousness on a world scale, without any verbalisation at all.’ (Playboy interview).

Something similar happened to us in New York, where a parallel development was simultaneously taking place at the offices of The Agora Scientific Trust, Inc., on the corner of Eighty-First Street between Madison and Park Avenues. It was only in New York City the game possibilities were different, that’s all; it required a different scenario, new players, a fresh response to the organisation possibilities inherent in our new situation.

Agora was to be a living metaphor for the kind of idea-sharing an LSD session entails. In our ‘Statement of Purposes’ a group of us introduced a theoretical model for Agora as a Foundation for Mind Research, and wrote:

‘In the seventeenth century Rene Descartes advanced the theory that the body is a machine and is subject to the same investigational techniques that we apply to the natural sciences. In contrast, he considered the human mind to be of immaterial and supernatural design, linked to the body by means of some unknown divine fiat. The ramifications of Cartesian dualism were to provide all areas of Western science with the result that today the body is accorded extensive study and scientific analysis whereas those aspects of human life which are identified with the mind have been greatly neglected by experimental scientists.

The tremendous advances of modern biology and medicine are the direct products of the great progress made in the knowledge of the body-machine which have resulted from the mechanistic procedures initiated by Descartes. On the other hand, these same procedures have had a debilitating effect on the study of the phenomenon of consciousness thereby seriously curtailing the studies related to the problem of life. Since biologists tend to extend the machine paradigm to living organisms, they neglect the phenomena not found in machines.

Qualitative change is needed in the pattern of our studies if we are to discern an enlarged meaning of nature and of man extending beyond mathematical and experimental analysis of sensory phenomena and human behaviour. We believe, finally, that man has reached a crisis in consciousness within which he has the choice to continue in the path of the growing technicisation of human nature or to enter upon an intensive and comprehensive investigation of mind and its creative process in the pursuit of a greater use of human potential and a deeper understanding of the nature of reality.

‘In recent years, there have arisen groups of social scientists and psychologists who have striven to fill the existing vacuum in the study of consciousness. Guided by the

successes of the natural scientists they have applied mechanistic attitudes to the study of mind and have sought to understand their subject in terms of behavioural controls and biological-drive modalities. In so doing, they have carried the theory of body-mind dualism to its logical and dangerous conclusion so that today we are faced with a growing tyranny of behaviouristic and mechanistic procedures applied to the exploration of human potentiality.

'We are a group of scientists and researchers who wish to move beyond our own scientific tyranny. We have ceased to be intoxicated with technological proficiency. We cannot endorse a mechanistic interpretation of human behaviour that reduces the mind-brain problem to a materialistic monism. We believe that the current over-emphasis on mechanism has produced a dislocation of vision, one that is resulting in a de-humanisation of knowledge and a de-humanisation of man. We believe that an investigation into the nature and potential of mind, a dynamic consideration of the range and chemistry of consciousness, the utilisation and evaluation of new and old techniques of intensifying and extending the mind's apprehension of its reality—this is the substance of the research programme that is the Foundation for Mind Research.'

In addition to myself, there were two other directors, John Beresford, M.D. (a long-term friend from the old London days of the fifties, who now lived in New York), and Jean Houston, Ph.D., a young, beautiful woman with two Off-Broadway acting awards and an impressive list of academic involvements and interests (Instructor in Comparative Religion and Philosophy of Religion, Columbia University; Instructor in Philosophy, Hunter College; Associate Professor in Philosophy and Religion, The New School for Social Research; author of *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Re-evaluation of the James Work in the Light of Modern Psychological Theory*, and *Tragedy In an Age of Scepticism*—and was later to co-author with Bob Masters *The Varieties of the Psychedelic Experience*, a work based largely on her experiments at Agora, where she was guide to many intensive LSD sessions). And to help and advise us, we gathered an impressive group of active 'research affiliates', including Victor Lowmes as our 'Tantric' consultant, a position he filled—or fulfilled admirably.

The set-up on Eighty-First Street was tasteful, cosy, well-equipped, and expensive; we rented the floor-through garden apartment in a private building with three rooms, toilet and bath, and a tiny tree-shaded garden at the back.

By chance or by good fortune—or it may even have been by magic—we had discovered in Howard Teague, the Nassau millionaire, that rarest of cultural beings, the patron. He had understood our needs and made the acquisition of the property and furnishings possible, in a very open and generous way. All we had to do in return was keep in touch and maybe visit him in Nassau now and again.

The large centre room fronting the garden was our 'session-room'. No interior decorator ever devised this psychedelic paradise of Swedish six-inch pile rugs and huge, canvas 'mandalas' on ceiling and walls, but once inside you dissolved all normal barriers.

ers of consciousness and flowed off into the well of infinity. We had been on a spending spree during the first few hectic days of getting the place ready—a hi-fi sound system with tape-deck and two speakers; a stroboscope; a machine for emitting sub-audible (low-frequency) sound waves; and a 'synchrotron', a device which delivers sound to the right and left ears alternately. This room was also my bedroom.

The front 'office' had a couple of desks, telephones, chairs, electric typewriters, small bar and cabinet, a miniature FBI-type wire recorder, things like that, but was nonetheless decorated in the conventional Manhattan office style, without anyone ever actually using it, except possibly as a place to smoke dope (very illegal in those days!) if there were otherwise straight subjects undergoing a session in the other rooms.

At first, most of the planning and programming was shared by Jean Houston and myself, each with our own little slot to fill or speciality to develop. Jean was curious about what she called 'Phylogenetic recall', the proposition by Jung that in-built in the psychology of modern man there exist archetypes related to the early history of the human race. She was interested in setting up drug-related experimental designs and a fool-proof methodology of administration of long-term and short-term psychedelics, most particularly the administration of LSD-25, psilocybin, Dimethyl- and Diethyl-tryptamine, which we had at the office in large supply; and, for myself, the question of my role in Agora is a bit academic since I was both artist and spectator at one with it and myself at the same time, though I remember I used to write memoranda quite a lot and papers, doubtlessly altogether quite meaningless, with titles such as 'Multicentricity and Incongruity; Epistemological Significance of Recent Findings in Research Using LSD-25' and 'Experiments in Thought Acceleration using Psilocybin' and 'The Nature of the Subjective LSD Experience', all of which was, admittedly, pretty didactic stuff compared to IF-IF, but nonetheless rather funny and inspired for all that.

In our psychedelic yellowstone we had found food for both the lion (science) and the unicorn (fantasy/myth/magic), even if in the end we could not persuade them, for all the correctness of our opinions, to lie down together. What we had tried to do was to blend new concepts and theoretical frameworks—utilising such diverse areas as the geometry and energy dynamics of molecular 'flowing' structure to biochemistry, genetics, vision, memory, and accelerated learning: Yes, ethical and moral practice, too—with all the magical arts, including the 'I Ching', 'Quabhalla', The Tarot pack, and Alchemy, in order to shed new light on what we believed was a crisis in the 'Order' and 'Symbolisation' in Western civilisation. I suppose you could say that our orientation was humanistic.

Our 'humane science' aimed towards a simultaneous description of Man from multiple points of view, which itself is nothing more than the multidisciplinary understanding of the way mind and matter work in man.

Sir Julian Huxley, from London, wrote,

'In the psychedelic drugs we have a remarkable opportunity for interesting research. Nobody else, so far as I know, has done any work on different types of psychologically healthy and normal people—people of high or low IQ, of different backgrounds, of different affective dispositions, on verbalisers and visualisers. This would be of extraordinary interest: we might find out not merely how to utilise our mind more energetically and more dynamically, but how to promote creativity by enhancing the creative imagination.'

But as a research area, the psychedelic experience was baffling for most researchers, whose speciality was 'compartmentalized' and who could not visualise the possibility of a 'whole', when perhaps even a new branch of knowledge would have to be developed to embrace new claims, concepts, as happened in mathematics with the discoveries of quantum mechanics and relativity theories, which revolutionized our understanding of the forces at work in the external world but which have yet to be integrated into a unified field theory of modern conceptual knowledge.

In modern America in 1963, the available literature looked more frightful than fruitful. Perhaps understandably, the revolutionary impact of psychedelics was not recognised during the early period of research. Occasional glimpses were found, but the majority of reports suggest that the researchers describing their results were seriously biased by their existing frames of reference. A carry-over of former conceptual systems into the radically new experience provided by these drugs inevitably caused distortions in interpretation of the material covered.

Thus, while the work of the British psychiatrist, Dr. Humphrey Osmond, concerning the biochemical nature of schizophrenia was furthered by the introduction of LSD et al. during the mid-1950s, at the same time psychedelic theory itself was not advanced. It was in fact restricted into a pre-existing mould by the unconscious association that came to be made between psychedelic drugs and mental illness, which subsequently proved to be as erroneous as it was misleading.

However, even in restricted scientific research, sometimes something could happen to provide a valuable psychedelic programme. In the field of treatment of alcoholism, for one, there were several studies showing a close to fifty per cent (one in two) control rate following 'LSD therapy', a figure which cannot be matched by any other therapeutic approach to this problem, and successful beyond the wildest dreams of Alcoholics Anonymous, to say nothing of conventional psychoanalysis, which has a success rate of curing alcoholics of about one in every hundred, which is nobody.

Or on another part of the investigational spectrum, Dr. R. A. Sandison, a Canadian psychiatrist, has reported the emergence of archetypal material during psychedelic sessions, lending weight to the hypotheses of C. G. Jung. Then there were a number of 'naturalistic' studies from different schools of thought, artistic and otherwise, as well as all the Harvard reports when subjects reported states of consciousness, variously described in terms of transcendental experience, i.e. visionary, mind-manifesting, con-

sciousness-expanding.

Yes, a lot of research had been done with psychedelics, by comparison with perhaps every other important area of research, the total volume was minute. At the same time, it was also becoming increasingly evident that there were deficiencies in the published work which existed, and, curiously, there had been little if any advance during the previous two to three years over projects well under way before the 1960s. For example, a review of the position by the psychologists Terrill, Savage and Jackson, published in November, 1962, but dating from a round-table conference in January, 1960, is not essentially different from reports published in 1954 and 1956.

There were grounds for believing that the main factor which stimulated the widespread interest in psychedelics, which characterized the period of the mid-1950s, was the belief that, through their use, long-standing problems in psychiatry were about to be settled; further, that with the abandoning of this hope a general decline of interest became noticeable in psychiatric circles.

There were even disagreements between some of the developing 'psychedelic theoreticians'. John Beresford, for one, believed that what he called 'the Leary attitude' results from 'a static, unidirectional, relatively fixed set of preconceptualisations of entity caused by and arising from deep psychological disturbances, displaced on to and hence "derealising" a potentially dangerous drug. The error stems fundamentally from passive-receptive tendencies on part of erstwhile principal investigators, causing passive, permissive attitude during the highly suggestible LSD-state, criminally neglecting to acquaint the subject with the essential knowledge, that he can always control whatever his mind is involved with, rendering the subject helpless, and at times, extremely fearful.'

Beresford was a proponent of the counter-theory that the LSD experience is a bi-phasic phenomenon: You must act, as well as feel; decide, as well as submit; allow out, as well as in. He felt quite strongly that LSD provided the 'only curative hope for the "crisis of civilisation" type of malfunctioning', and that 'the cure can be summed up in the one word "integration"; and that integration requires activation of both self and image store. Leary fails miserably because total resistlessness in the end saps strength, leaving character no room in which to grow or form. Partly out of diabolical "Gnosticism", and partly no doubt due also to ignorance, some of Leary's group have flipped out, and sometimes for months at a time, in sessions conducted according to the Leary precepts.'

Beresford believed sincerely in the vast potential of psychedelic drugs. 'With safe and intelligent handling (of LSD),' he wrote, 'the following facts can be substantiated:

- 1) There is no possibility of "psychic accidents".
- 2) Standard psychotherapy can be reduced in duration from a matter of years to a matter of months, with long-lasting, if not permanent results.

3) The degree of “internal decision-making” possible is very impressive. A new pattern of Gestalt formation, on a level never before thought possible outside of classical conversion reactions, is coming to light and should be explored.

4) Knowledge is waiting for the asking concerning alterations of the human mind which were thought non-existent or merely freakish before new psychedelic drug techniques were elaborated. An extensive new area of knowledge of mind is waiting to be opened. It is folly to ignore this.

5) It has been beyond all doubt, though perhaps beyond credibility, that thirty-five per cent decibel increases in hearing are obtained on minute doses of LSD; that intellectual procedure beyond the normal capacity are commonplace; that new potentials are brought into existence; the probability of a high incidence of thought transference between two individuals should be brought out into the open. Other equally important researches are waiting.

6) The sensation-minded public press, and the providers of scandal, and the prevalent public fear of “losing control” through drugs combined to drive the most valuable chemical discovery of the century almost out of existence.

7) No more essential publishing service could be rendered than to place before the public the unadorned scientific, historical and psychological analysis of the “extraordinary history of LSD”.’

Beresford wanted to keep the drug and the research in proper perspective as tools of the scientifically trained as specialist. But any tool can only be as good—or as bad—as the competence of those who use it. Certainly, one must not assign to LSD intellectual problems which defy our present intellectual capacities.

Jean Houston, on the other hand was interested in advancing the intellectual capabilities of the modern American—to meet and solve the problems not of today or tomorrow—but the day after tomorrow. And by means of a process that you might call travelling in the ‘ANTECEDENT FUTURE’—that is inducing the ego to scan the cognitive parts of the cortex in order to develop the ability to bring into the present what is already in the memory and retrieve ‘forgotten’ information which is then integrated into the normal intellectual processes of ordinary consciousness.

Jean was an intellectually brilliant thinker in her own right, and, if such things still mean anything, it had been discovered in a nationwide survey of the I.Q.s of American Ph.Ds, that Jean’s was the highest—a little over the 200 mark’, she once told me, though there was never any question in my mind about her obvious intellectual gifts, which were always adequate to meet her function as an Agora director, our third and most junior member.

As with Beresford and myself, she saw modern culture strangled by a crisis of

value correlative with a breakdown of its traditional ontological structures. The 'eleventh hour condition' of humanity is that of 'the dark woods'. We are lost in the woods...

'Alone, alone, about a dreadful wood

Of conscious evil runs a lost mankind,

Dreading to find its father lest it find

The good it has dreaded is not good;

Alone, alone about a dreadful wood...'

—W. H. Auden

The poignant theme of the dark wood emerges in the life of the mind as a symbol of the chaos that must precede the restoration of Order and the revitalisation of the human condition. How then is it possible for modern man to extricate himself from the 'dark woods' of his mind? Jean believed that in psychedelic drugs we had a means to dispel the clouds of despair, and spoke of the promise they held 'of Homecoming'; and of the possibility 'of guiding man past the dark woods of non-being, past deep shadows of aloneness to a world where no longer does man view himself as a creature separated and estranged from all other creatures but rather as a participant in a rich and fertile reality, a reality so interrelated and so full that it could only best be described as a dynamic continuum; the new reality that unfolds in the "psychedelic experience".

'The universe is not a collection of separate bits and pieces, divided in time and space, but is in reality the metaphysical "One", wherein everything is tied up with everything else in a pattern which is absolute for the entire universe. The social hierarchy reflects the psychological hierarchy, the cosmology hierarchy, and the celestial hierarchy; only this reality is not displayed within a single action, but instead, in an abundance of actions in which the most diverse tonalities follow one another in quick succession.

'It is thus with the psychedelic experience. When the threshold of consciousness is crossed we are flooded with the kaleidoscopic vision of cultures, peoples, symbols, remnants of historical and pre-historical memory—the veritable infinity of humanity which seeks to constitute our being. Like Dante in the dark forest we can easily get lost in the labyrinth of strange byways and unknown paths. (This is an all too frequent episode in the unguided psychedelic session.)

It should be one of the chief duties of the session guide to lead the subject through the newly exposed terrain of cultures, histories, eras, and symbols to evoke these contents to lead finally to their interrelationship in the mind of the subject, much the same way as Virgil led Dante through the medieval hierarchical cosmogony so that its many parts became inherent in Dante the man. It should be one of the chief tasks of the guide

to assume the role of Virgil in this psychedelically induced Divine Comedy and to indicate and select out of the dynamic continuum in which the subject is immersed some of the historical incident, cultural awareness and racial memory that seems to lie buried in the cortex.'

Jean believed that the reality of the existence of archetypes had been confirmed and demonstrated in the LSD session, which seemed to bring mythological and archetypal structures into conscious awareness. Thus, the role of the session guide is crucial if the subject is not to lose his way in the woods.

'The guide must steer a course of gradual intensification and enhancement of consciousness. The first suggestions must be simple and familiar, geared to focus the subject's attention on the heightening of colour and form perception of well-known objects. Pictures and flowers, music and natural objects—these are the data of initial discovery and consciousness enhancement in the experiencing subject. It is only after several hours of helping the subject build up a familiarity with his extended reality that the guide may begin to prepare the subject for an exploration of transpersonal and phylogenic material.'

Simple, in theory, perhaps, but what in praxis ? Jean ran many LSD sessions at Agora, which she conducted along the lines just adumbrated with some quite astonishing results. She makes some observations on these sessions, as follows:

'In the course of my experimentation I have discovered that a most conducive mode of preparation for phylogenetic investigation is to be had by taking the subject through a "Cook's Tour" of world history. A variety of historical situations and occurrences are suggested in a sketchy manner. The subject, whose eyes are closed, is asked to describe the pictorial display of historic scenery and activity which now he "sees".

This he often does with a detail and amplification and frequently an accuracy which far exceeds his normal historical awareness. Whether or not this is owing to the activation of previously learned but long forgotten historical information or to a utilisation of as yet unknown processes of historical evocation cannot be answered at this time. Suffice it to say that the probability rests with the former theory and that the subject's heightened imagination adds to the vividness with which he responds to these suggestions.

'The subject may be invited to walk along the Piraeus with Socrates, to witness a battle in the Thirty Years War, to participate in the bull-leaping at Knossos or to help in building the pyramid of Khufu. He may be asked to gaze over the shoulder of that Cromagnon man who painted the great bison in the cave at Altamira. He may join in the violent thrust westward of the troops of Gengis Khan. He may have a front row seat at the battle of Hastings or mingle among the courtiers at the court of Louis XIV. History is his prerogative and it may be explored as fact or fantasy.

'In addition to the historical panorama, the guide may invite the subject to partici-

pate in a recapturing of the evolutionary sequences of life. In many cases the subject discards the spectator role which he had assumed for the historical tour and finds himself taken up into a seeming identification with the stages of the evolutionary process. Thus the guide can suggest that the subject become that primordial piece of protoplasm floating in an early ocean. (This is described as a very restful state.)

Then, either through the promptings of the guide but more frequently through the subject's own initiative there may unfold a reliving of the evolutionary process from gill stage to man. This re-experience of phylogeny is possible because of our germ plasm. Our body contains (however small the bit) a part of that physically real primeval mud from which we grew, through orders, classes, phyla—to what we are. Thus the physical reality of the evolutionary sequence of life may become available to our consciousness and we may select for it in the psychedelic state.

The psychic system has an anatomical pre-history of millions of years as does the body. And just as the body today represents in each of its parts the phylogenetic process, and everywhere still shows traces of its earlier stages—so can the same be said of the psyche. It is for this reason that the activated psyche can be called upon to remember states which to us seem to be unconscious.

'I would suggest then that ages and attitudes of man that are long gone by still survive in the deeper unconscious layers of our mind. The spiritual heritage of archaic man (the ritual and mythology that once visibly guided his conscious life) has vanished to a large extent from the surface of the tangible and conscious realm, yet survives and remains ever present in the subterranean layers of the unconscious. It is part of our being that links us to a remote ancestry and constitutes our involuntary kinship with archaic man and with ancient civilisations and traditions.

Depth psychologists have pointed to the universality of psychic processes and the continuity of psyche within the race. We may add to this the theory that the psyche contains all the contents of time—extending backwards, across and through time; history being latently contained in each individual. It is my contention that the psychic depths and the time depths can be tested and explored through the medium of the guide in the psychedelic experiences. The theoretical foundation of such a statement is that the ingestion of psychedelic substances evokes an activation of deeply buried psychic contents and a bringing of them to the surface of consciousness through the selective use of phylogenetic suggestion.

As electrodes applied to memory or sensory areas of the brain can stimulate vivid and realistic recall at the moment of contact, so can suggestion activate phylogenetic memory in the subject undergoing the psychedelic experience.

'In the course of human history man has come to the discovery that he is a foreconsciousness that sees only a manifold, incoherent world. Gradually he has been able to order the incoherence of pre-history by perceiving natural laws, by making hy-

potheses, and by his technological advances beginning to apprehend basic common factors and linkages in what at first appeared as sheer chaos.

Through mythological structures he was able to gain some measure of surety in an incoherent world. One step further and he was able to perceive himself as being largely lawmaker and inventor. And now through the agency of the new physics man has attained to a knowledge of the mathematical structure of all matter as being in reality not inert but an instrument of infinite potentialities from which one may draw what forces one will.

The pursuit of truth is now in fact akin to the creation of beauty. Yet all this new extension of potentiality bears with it the threat of unparalleled destruction. I maintain that the new physics can be nothing but a deadly danger unless to that knowledge is added that of a new history a parallel and balanced knowledge of ourselves brought back from the subterranean regions of our psyche—our phylogenetic awareness.... Then and only then may we use the new knowledge of outer nature for life and not for death. Our new vision in physics whereby we see ourselves actually devising new natural laws and even creating life must be equated with a deeper insight of ourselves given by a new knowledge of the past. This may be done by restoring man to a dynamic communion with his own sundered psyche, with his old sense of community, and with the whole of life and the universe.'

Of course, Agora was not entirely free from the crackpot element, in whom the doors of perception seemed, if not permanently unhinged then certainly wide open. One correspondent writing from Flamingo Marina, Miami Beach, told of his work with 'a magnetic machine which will hypnotise you and a second machine which goes inside the brain by rays and removes that part of the moral degeneracy involved'. And added 'The patient may be slightly ill for a few days, but his tendencies to sin will be gone.'

I simply replied that we already had one to deal with the libertine tendencies of our staff, and hoped that his fine work in 'prophylactic phrenology' would have wider application, perhaps as an instrument of the church'.

Then there was a complicated correspondence with an American Air Force Major from Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, who wanted Agora to build a 'life-size' Moebius Strip for people to climb in and walk around 'accompanied by the entire spectrum of colour and music'. The object of the envisaged 'Strip' is 'to evoke in the participant any synergic, intuitive or emotive process/product of which he may be capable. This is for the purpose of unlocking his particular iron curtain by working directly on his subconscious through symbols (including language), the energy spectrum (light and colour), form, and even motion and odours if feasible. The super-computer qualities of the mind, including an ageless universal memory core, above-time-space programme actions, and conscious read-outs makes the mind our greatest resource, yet our greatest enigma. It is easy for this mysterious "black box" to be fed with sensual inputs that turn out a disordered state of consciousness.'

In both these examples, it is impossible to ignore the high moral tone of the two inventors. On the other hand, which of us would not settle, at whatever cost to our reason, for a febrile and creative, rather than static way of life ? And the fact that the light these two ideas throws is a murky one, doesn't, after all, seem inappropriate to our present situation. Indeed, you could say that they illuminate the stresses placed on the modern psyche in its relationship with modern society.

And yet—I was sensitive to the fact that much of the stuff going on at The Agora Scientific Trust must sound every bit as 'crackpot' as the two examples just noted. The intellectualization of what we had and were doing was a formidable task. We had to find a way to describe certain changed or altered states of consciousness, which lie beyond all rationalization and even beyond all power of words, in a completely new way which would also be intelligible for other people, whether they'd taken LSD or not. Thus, no area of possible fruitful research was ever turned down which could be organised on the basis of rational belief, and we decided to structure into an existence an idea or a series of ideas which were derived from peoples' experience with LSD. During the first few months of activity our own 'internal' viewpoints were projected on to the outer world with a content that was found to be full of meaning for other people.

There is an intuitive basis which precedes the intellectual which provides us with something like a magic armour with which during LSD sessions nothing ever goes wrong. Objectively my initial intuitive behaviour during a session when I have given a person LSD can be codified into a set of precepts and illuminations which may collectively serve as starting-off point for others who may want to consider the principles of what it means to be an 'LSD guide'.

The following are some facts and ideas from our 1963 Agora days I have assembled—they involve the means by which the 'internal logic' of the LSD situation may be realised in ordinary consciousness, with what assumptions one proceeds, with what goals, and what are the determinants of the goals, and what is the relationship of the knowledge gained through the LSD experience to daily life and ordinary affairs. I had by this time given LSD to some 300 people and taken it myself about 100 times, and learned by making mistakes, as was inevitable, that no prior frame of reference can do anything but hinder.

I 'knew' certain things I had no way of telling before. The intuitive leap had become standardised. For this reason perhaps it was inevitable that I would sooner or later leave Agora, terminating one phase and starting another.

But what sort of people did we give LSD to ? We had hundreds of requests from people all over America who wanted to take it, but the facilities on Eighty-First Street were lacking for such a large-scale operation. Perhaps I could note four sessions which can be accurately dated and leave it to the reader to decide how far they are relevant. (1) An abstract painter, (2) a Captain in the U.S. Navy Office of Naval Research, (3) a Yogi, (4) a hedonist sceptic, a wealthy resident of Manhattan's fashionable Beekman Place and

of Gstaad, Switzerland.

(It should be understood that axiomatic to my belief-fabric is that with LSD each person discovers, or gets, what they want.) The abstract painter, in the course of the most extraordinary visual experiences, in concrete and specific detail, of a mythological residue of a pre-Hindu Indian religious fantasy, discovered the identity of the image which had been eluding him from his paintings.

The Captain achieved extraordinary insight into a problem of mathematical 'transformations' with which he had been unsuccessfully grappling for the past five years. His work was in artificial intelligence via computer design. During the LSD session, he wrote to us afterwards.

'I suddenly realised that whenever I concentrated on a single form and brought it into focus, the situation was analogous to setting up a random set of sensor inputs and connecting these inputs via a fixed but randomly designed network to a series of nodes. I realised that recognition of any given pattern is dependent upon calling a halt in the normal flow of transformations; and, most importantly for my own work, the achievement of really useful automata would appear to depend on mechanism that can effectively monitor the products of a large number of transformations, select from them the important one for study, and the halting of the process long enough to classify the signal from the one transformation for purposes of pattern recognition.'

(Translated into ordinary English, the Captain was trying to invent a 'seeing' machine as effective as the human eye, for use in atomic submarines.)

The Yogi, a man who spent seven years before his arrival in America (where he had become a successful Wall Street stockbroker) studying yoga in a dhoti on the banks of the Ganges, jumped from the eighth of the twelve yoga stages—the name eludes me, but that is as far as he had got—to the twelfth, called Samadhi, and the very highest form of Bliss, wherein he achieved the state of total identification with all of reality that made him—momentarily—God. The man from Beekman Place for the first time in his life was appraised of a higher, that is more embracing and inclusive, logic than the one he had known hitherto.

In each of these four instances—people widely different in background, education, character, nationality and physique—it was nonetheless possible to abstract a basic, simple set of philosophical understandings, which are valid enough to permit anyone to integrate on a higher-than-usual level of awareness without any danger of paranoia (the common defence against chaos, and one which mitigates against anything of value deriving from the LSD experience) or of anxiety. The talked-about 'hellish experience' is actually completely unnecessary, avoidable and non-contributory, reflecting inadequate mental 'set' or physical 'setting' or technical knowledge on the part of the guide or a mixture of all three.

There was of course no scientific follow-up on these four individuals, but it was possible to deduce certain things when we saw them again a few months later. The painter had entirely reoriented his method of painting and when I last saw him, was working fast and productively (and his paintings do still sell in New York). From the Naval Captain have come some engineering hardware—'resistor networks to accomplish types of transformation to be included in patent disclosures being processed by the Office of Naval Research, Washington under Navy Case 29093'. The Yogi was found to be, I fear, bewailing the ordinariness of not being God, but was—and still is—making money nicely on the Exchange, while the millionaire believed that he had undergone a complete change in his beliefs about other people. He has not been heard from since.

It was thus with the establishment of the New York centre, plus a form of status stabilisation with Washington (via the U.S. Navy, who intervened on our behalf with the Federal Drug Agency by placing our work in a rosy, even golden, light which resulted in a letting-up of investigative pressure on Agora by the FDA), plus the sketching out of rational (or neo-rational) methods of managing LSD sessions, that this New York phase ended.

An astonishing, fascinating period, filled with interest, and with lots of humour at all times to prevent us from becoming LSD's dupes. But it was only achieved by an enormous amount of work fed by the energy from our emotional fires. At once the impatient reminder comes, and it is true: Agora experiment was achieved at the cost of 'real' emotional contacts with other people, including, at times, ourselves. The emotional content of my existence was reduced to a working absolute minimum (though it was difficult to recognise this process as going on at the time; only afterwards did one realise at what cost the work had been achieved).

Perhaps it was all an elaborate form of 'self-therapy' during the tormenting time after the collapse of my marriage in 1960 and plans to reconcile with my wife and the consequent loss of my daughter which became formalised at the moment of my 'rearranging of priorities' intellectual, rational/artistic creative work = No. 1; love, emotion pleasure, sanity = No. 2. I had reached the end of my emotional tether; I had been 'on the way' before I took LSD, but the paving had given out, and there were not even stones left to pave new intentions.

The country ahead was dark, impenetrable. I was alone at the mercy of my own awful fluidity of self; a time indeed of that 'eleventh hour condition' of which Jean Houston speaks—an impossible hour of the day which is not marked by the sort of clocks you see in shops—so I was never sure of the present or certain enough to determine the content of my emotional future. It is the temptation to withdraw from emotional involvements, perhaps even to curl up inside and stay remote from even the slightest continuity. But of course all things pass—'an afternoon does not last all day, nor a sunset all night'—and by the end of the year I began to realise that the pointer of my 'eleventh hour' was turning and that 'deadened time' was gradually being displaced by a palpable and love-centred present pushing to the future. 'The world, like the big wheel in a deserted funfair, spun

slowly toward the final revolution.' (Roger McGough).

All I had really achieved at Agora was the realisation that the sombre doctors, scientists, technicians point only to the rigour of their own particular method. Ah ! but to go without aid in search of truth; perhaps this is the beginning of wisdom—to proceed with the utmost determination towards a forbidding future through a series of 'crisis' instants in which you think you're about to slip over the edge into the awful Abyss of Elsewhere, but catch yourself just in time but by not shrinking from the lightning and thunder, by hurling yourself forward, unafraid of taking risks, in your struggle towards love, consciousness, enlightenment, light and God. And thus the Way was suddenly much smoother; I was over the hump of the year. And it was in this way, out of such emotional despair, that I stumbled out of my dark existential forest into the daylight honesty of Millbrook . . .

PART FIVE

1964

Although the world of Millbrook may seem nonsensical by rational standards to the outside world it was merely another way of saying reason is not enough. We lived out a myth which had not yet been integrated into our personalities. Millbrook was itself the work of art, or a mirror, or simply something going fast like a watch, some time. Like Kafka's castle, it gave out messages into the ether in the form of one high resonant sound which vibrated on the ears of the world as if it were trying to penetrate beyond the barrier separating 'us' from 'them'. We felt satisfied that our goals were every man's, a projection of every man's private ambition.

We sought for that unitary state of divine harmony, an existence in which only the sense of wonder remains and all fear gone. Here was a philosophy of TO BECOME in which appear bits of Vedanta and bits of popular pantheism, bits of the Tao and bits of the Ching.

In the Fall of 1964 I arrived at Millbrook. Leary and Alpert, who had proclaimed themselves the International Foundation for Internal Freedom (IFIF), had had to leave Zihuatanejo, Mexico, where they had set up a training centre for people using LSD. They got back to New York and started looking for an alternative base somewhere in the States. The solution to their problem came in the form of a sixty-four-room mansion on a 2000-acre walled estate within two hours motoring distance of the city. They had rented the estate from the young millionaire Billy Hitchcock, at a nominal rent more or less—\$500 a month.

The mansion was empty when they and their tiny fellowship arrived, but it was the ideal place for them to be; it was secluded and spacious and not entirely lacking in antiquated charm. It had been built in the 1890s to the rather bizarre architectural specifications of the German-born gas-lamp magnate, Charles F. Dieterich, who christened his

country seat 'Daheim'.

The spires and turrets pointing above the trees into a clear open sky, 'Daheim' looked, at first glance, like the creation of some neo-baroque American King Ludwig. In addition to the main building, there was an out-building that consisted of a downstairs bowling alley and a large fireplace room upstairs. It was built in the style of a Bavarian chalet and had a little verandah from which access to the roof was easy. There was also a lodge house at the entrance to the estate, in which Maynard Fergusson and his beautiful wife Flo lived with their children.

Millbrook was the headquarters of the Castalia Foundation, so named after the intellectuals' colony in Hermann Hesse's book *Das Glasperlenspiel* (The Glass Bead Game), the last and finest novel by Hermann Hesse, the story of which is set in the Alpine province of Kastalien around the year 2400. In this emotionally chill utopian future, isolated from the mass of population, the elite monastic Castalian Order displays its intellectual mastery through the ritualised game of glass beads, a game encompassing all human knowledge.

'The pattern sings like crystal constellations, And when we tell our beads, we serve the whole, And cannot be dislodged or misdirected, Held in the orbit of the Cosmic Soul.'

Tim was greatly interested in the writings of Hesse, but at this time, it was the glass bead game that held him under its hermetic spell... Joseph Knecht ('servant'), hero of the novel, rises to be a Magister Ludi, the High Priest of the Castalian Order. Gradually he becomes dissatisfied with the exclusive and esoteric nature of those who play the game, for the rules of the game had evolved into an astonishing complexity:

'These rules, the sign language and grammar of the Game, constitute a kind of highly developed secret language drawing upon several sciences and arts, but especially mathematics and music.... The Glass Bead Game is thus a mode of playing with the total contents and values of our culture.... All the insights, noble thoughts, and works of art that the human race has produced in its creative eras, all that subsequent periods of scholarly study have reduced to concepts and converted into intellectual property—on all this immense body of intellectual values the Glass Bead Game player plays like the organist on an organ... (the Game represents) an elite, symbolic form of seeking for perfection, a sublime alchemy, an approach to that Mind which beyond all images and multiplicities is one within itself in other words, to God.' [Hermann Hesse, *The Glass Bead Game*, tr. by Richard and Clara Winston, Jonathan Cape, 1970, p. 14ff.]

Knecht left the rarefied world in which he performed with such eminence and resolved to fashion a link between Castalia and the outside world. After making this decision, Knecht fortuitously drowns in an Alpine lake with his protégé, a misfortune that yet points a precedent for action, as the protégé feels henceforth, life will 'demand much greater things of him than he had ever before demanded of himself'.

Tim thought most people missed the real message of Hesse, himself the member of the Hermetic Circle; entranced by the pretty dance of words and theme, they overlook the seed message, for Hesse, in the spirit of Mercurius, is a trickster.

Like nature in April, he dresses up his code in fancy plumage. The literary reader picks the fruit, eats quickly, and tosses the core to the ground. But the seed, the electrical message, the code, is in the core. The seed meaning is within, concealed behind the net of symbols. Millbrook's Castalia Foundation was its own 'sublime alchemy', and its own High Priest in Timothy Leary, who saw in Hesse's story of the Castalian Order, both an inspiration and a warning against constricting rigidity.

'Groups which attempt to apply psychedelic experiences to social living will find in the story of Castalia all the features and problems which such attempts inevitably encounter: the need for a new language or set of symbols to do justice to the incredible complexity and power of the human cerebral machinery; the central importance of maintaining direct contact with the regenerative forces of the life-process through meditation or other methods of altering consciousness; the crucial and essentially insoluble problem of the relation of the mystic community to the world at large.

Can the order remain an educative, spiritual force in the society, or must it degenerate through isolation and inattention to a detached, alienated group of idealists?' [Timothy Leary and Ralph Metzner, *The Psychedelic Renew*, Cambridge, Mass., Vol. 1, No. 2, Fall 1963, p. 179.]

For those of us who comprised the household, Millbrook was simply 'a house', in the sense that a house is also a home. We lived as a community of people who had accepted a certain way of living, which had rules and goals, shared by all. We felt that our life-style was a creative solution to the problems of living in the cinematic, labour-saving world. We wanted to explore our spiritual individuality, discover our secret life within, but also to test the validity of our search by means of living and loving and sharing with other people in close community.

It was some kind of heightened feeling of self, combined with movement, a natural and instinctive reaction in such a setting, the light, the landscape, an all-pervading tactile quality about the place, the texture and the music of natural surroundings, created a corresponding ambiance of colour, affective tonality, and seriousness in our minds. Here we could travel into our own minds, to remote and hitherto inaccessible realms within. We sought the god who inhabits each and every man. We took this lofty house and turned it into a small stepping stone.

Elevated or metaphoric levels of consciousness have been sought by a few men in each generation. The possibility of transcendence has attracted the thoughts of men throughout the ages. The visionary experience has coloured the visions of a few Western thinkers, and has been recorded by many Eastern mystics. It is described in the seventh book of Plato's *Republic* and mapped in the *Bhagavad Gita* and *The Tibetan*

Book of the Dead. For the most part, Western psychology has ignored the possibilities of mind-expansion and has become almost entirely externally oriented. During the last hundred years particularly we have gained an incredible expertise in manipulating the objective environment while simultaneously setting up barriers against the exploration of the internal. This imbalance between the outer and inner creates an over-emphasis on action and aggressive behaviour, and a neglect of the fundamental question of what consciousness is.

Everything is internal. Everything happens in the mind. At Millbrook we wanted to develop a methodology to guide us in our journey within. In the West our most ready metaphors are neurological. At Millbrook we wanted to substitute a more apposite imagery. We wished to confront the realities of our nervous system, not in a clinical but in a creative setting. To overcome the superstitious dread of 'tampering with the mind' we set out to learn the language of inner space. Can this internal language be understood? The problem is phenomenological.

To go into external space we have to overcome gravitational inertia. By analogy, our ego spins around inside the mind compelling us to be tied to its field of gravity. Transcendental experience is the only escape from the prison imposed by the ego. It is the Saturn rocket that boosts us into a more differentiated and freer space. Yet so far from LSD being the withdrawal of the mind from reality, it has enabled people to appreciate the authentic beauty of what we understand by objective reality.

In the early days at Harvard we didn't know much about this. We knew enough not to impose rules, roles, rituals on the brain of another; enough to plan sessions beforehand in an open way, to remove any fears a person might have that he was going to have an experience put over him. And while we knew not to get people out of their minds, we had to find a way to bring them back.

It was like having no equipment to plot re-entry. Millbrook was an attempt to bring people back in a position to sustain their spiritual transformation. And while we drew on the collective wisdom of the great mystical texts we were not attempting a crude transplant. We desired a coalescence of Eastern insights and Western intelligence. A combination, for example, of the Tantra and Western psychology.

Regularly the permanent members of the household would participate in group sessions, using LSD, and we would take it in turns to plan these. Fourteen people would turn on together. The appointed guide would be responsible for the music, the tapes, the readings, the lights. In one of these run by Dick Alpert, we agreed not to speak for three hours, but to wholly give ourselves in responding to the input. Dick read from Meher Baba, the celebrated Indian mystic who ceased to speak on July 10, 1925 and communicated, through disciples, by means of an alphabet board:

"The sole purpose of creation is that the soul should be able to enjoy the Infinite state of the Over-soul (Paramatman) consciously. Although the soul eternally exists in

and with the Oversoul in an inviolable unity, it cannot be conscious of this unity independently of the creation which is within the limitations of time. It must, therefore, evolve consciousness before it can realise its true status and nature as being identical with the Infinite Over-soul, which is One without a second.' [Meher Baba, 'The Divine Theme for Meditation', cited in C. B. Purdom, *The Perfect Master*, Williams and Norgate, London, 1937, p. 309.]

After three hours we looked in the little hand mirrors we had all been supplied with before the session and watched the various physiognomic metamorphoses. For some people it was like entering the world of Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* watching 'in the dim light the hideous face on the canvas' and realising, like Dorian, that 'each of us has Heaven and Hell in him'. Some had a horrific experience of seeing their faces melting or turning bright orange or red or green.

In fact these paranoid symptoms are described in the Tibetan mystical writings where they are hallucinations of devils. In Tibetan tanka paintings fearful dragons with huge red eyes belch flame and smoke from their nostrils. These are images of energy that exist in the mind. Under the session conducted by Dick we also saw the snake, which is the coiled DNA, the Kundalini serpent which lies at the base of the spine. Once released it fills the mind and heart with light. Unprepared for such images they create fear and terror.

As we became more sophisticated with the use of drugs and studied the mystics we could deal with the images. We saw them as mandalas, as screens of energy. By suspending analysis we were able to pass through the screens. We noticed that in the centre of all these images is a black hole, the vortex of mystical works. By focusing on this swirling, sucking void we moved through its entrance to the other kingdom. The blind spot in the centre of each mandala is recognised by Tibetan monks as a device to reach transcendence. It comes to life and triggers off archetypal images. We learned to move through the mandala to Nirvana, the state of absolute bliss.

In our hand mirrors we saw former selves, lives past, and lives we might yet live in the present. And in this session with a dosage of 800 gamma LSD (justified because of the secure supportive system) we saw the multiple facets of our potential. Indeed, 'it might be proposed that what we encounter here is an activation of the phylogenetic inheritance.' [R. E. L. Masters and Jean Houston, *The Varieties of Psychedelic Experience*, Anthony Blond, London, 1967, p. 217] I had experiences of living in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and of living in India 2000 years ago. I also dissolved into a very old man, receded into a young man, spun and shrunk into a baby being born.

After five hours we still had not started to verbalism We silently prepared for the period of re-entry. Here daily consciousness is slowly intruding and our conceptual mind perceives it with all its inhibitions, its whole pathology of content.

'So far you have been searching for your past personality. Unable to find it, you

may begin to feel that you will never be the same again, That you will come back a changed person. Saddened by this you will feel self-pity, You will attempt to find your ego, to regain control. So thinking you will wander here and there, Ceaselessly and distractedly.'

(The Tibetan Book of the Dead)

At peak experience the being is filled with love, joy and ecstasy; under LSD it is impossible to think of killing anything. On reentry we would try to choose who we wanted to be. If we were to return from spiritual heights we wanted to do so changed, still possessed of love and radiance. This was the point of the session, but none of us really managed it. The re-entry periods we wanted to freeze were elusive. Dick's session was followed by a walk in the woods, a silent exercise in looking. And after experiencing the sensuous impact of the grass, and the trees, and the animals we went back to the house and prepared a meal of rice and tamara, wine and cheese, and we began to speak to each other.

We also played behavioural games with each other, accumulating evidence to test various hypotheses. As an example, in June 1965 we had all been studying Gurdjieff's Meetings With Remarkable Men, Ouspensky's The Fourth Way, and Orage's Psychological Exercises. Gurdjieff maintained that most people sleepwalk their waking hours away, and saw his own role as that of an alarm clock to wake people from this diurnal somnambulism.

To test this we planned a Self-Remembering game. It started at 9.00 a.m. and, in an arbitrary sequence, a bell would ring four times an hour throughout the day. The bell was the signal for us to stop and record what we were doing at the time. Under the heading EXTERNAL we answered the questions Where are you? and What game are you playing? Under the heading CONSCIOUSNESS we answered the questions When? (i.e. Past, Present, Future), Where? and What game? As the house was full of behaviourists this seemed a normal thing to do.

Tim's wedding to 'the beautiful blonde Swedish model' Nena Von Schlebrugge took place six weeks after I had moved into my upstairs room at Millbrook. It was a radiant morning and we were up early to welcome the guests, most of whom drove up from New York. The marriage service was held in the Episcopal church in the village of Millbrook in the early afternoon and afterwards we returned to the estate where we had arranged a Swedish-style buffet in all the downstairs rooms of Castalia, so guests could wander around the house eating delicacies. I had met most of the guests individually, or in small groups, but this was the first really big gathering of assorted heads.

There were some 150 of us, all high on LSD, or pot, or both. It was a brilliant festive occasion with everyone dressed up so brightly that it was like watching an idyllic pageant from Elizabethan England. Most of the girls had dazzling ornaments over Indian saris. They held flowers and seemed to glitter in an extraordinary delicacy. The men

wore robes and brightly coloured costumes—harlequin pants, richly textured jackets, sumptuous shirts. To view them on the lawn from the roof of the bowling alley was to peep into a kaleidoscopic garden party of glorious humanity. Castalia had been transformed into a palace and it embraced this ceremony.

It was one of those days when everyone was happy and joyous and loving. Felicities filled the air. Charlie Mingus played his bass, Maynard Ferguson cogitated on his trumpet, and other musicians joined in to produce an elegant weaving series of improvisations. Don Snyder took a wonderfully sympathetic series of photographs.

Before Tim and Nena left for New York to catch the plane to New Delhi for their first visit to India there was a receiving line and we all filed past with our presents. Psychedelic presents of course. Some gave hashish, some gave bags of excellent grass. Some gave mushrooms. A snuff box of cocaine. A quantity of LSD. The entire range of mind-expanding substances were proffered to the newly-weds, and all the while people were turning on. When Tim and Nena left we carried on with the celebrations into the dawn, and watched the sun edging over the horizon as the earth heaved over and took us into another day.

Tim was away for more than a month, during which time we sent him messages about what we were doing. Tapes would arrive at New Delhi via American Express and would be taken up to Tim and Nena, about a mile away in Almora.

'Dear Tim and Nina. We're missing you very much. We've been studying the works of Meher Baba, particularly his book *God Speaks* and we find this fundamental to our journey. We've also been reading Rene Daumal's *Mount Analogue* and our souls are climbing the mountain. Our bodies too: we've built our own mountain from chicken wire and plaster of paris, and we've painted routes and markings on this mountain, a metaphoric statement of where we're at, all climbing the mountain together. We ran seven sessions last week. Some wonderful.

Jacky and Susan are very well. Jack is doing well at school, making new friends who he brings round to watch the deer in the park. Susan has been learning to bake. On Tuesday some of us went to Salvador Dali's birthday party at the St. Regis hotel. We were all dressed up, wearing ski masks, each with a different musical instrument. They were about to throw us out when they discovered we were Dali's guests. Gabi gave Dali his pet iguana for a present.

Later, when Dali took us to the Stork Club for a meal, he paid and left the iguana on the table as a tip. We are sending you some LSD by next mail, to c/o American Express, New Delhi. Enough for forty trips. Love from Millbrook.'

Gabi, the photographer, had entered Millbrook during the time Tim and Nena were away, a period when we spent a lot of time working on multi-media techniques. The genesis of the multimedia show '*Psychedelic Theatre*' came about when, late one

evening, Arnie Hendin arrived at Millbrook with his girl, Lois. He was a very active person, tall with a little beard and long hair. He told me he was a photographer. None of us had thought much about using photography in sessions, but Arnie mentioned it as a possibility and asked if he could show me some of his slides.

He set up two projectors in the session room, selected some music, and we took some LSD. Then he began to manipulate the projector to inform his photographs with a dynamic quality. Inexorably I was caught up in this dance of the fixed image. It was a weird mosaic of visual rhythm, pulsating vibrating colour. Arnie used our huge mirrors to reflect his slides and bounced them round the room. He took them in and out of focus, blended photographs together, and used this controlled agitation in uncanny counterpoint with the music. These pictures were real! I lived in them. A shot of the East Village, New York, would come so alive that I could see the sounds, sense the smells, watch the people move. At times I had to avoid the traffic.

Suddenly Arnie switched to a pastoral scene of an old New England barn, and the mood changed abruptly. He had a triangular arrangement of three mirrors which he put in front of the lens to break the image up into multiple facets. Taking the slides out of focus he elevated shapes to forms, and then reduced these to primal blobs of chaotic colour. It anticipated Stanley Kubrik's psychedelic continuum in 2001 when the space pod enters the visionary atmosphere of Jupiter. I felt Arnie had visually duplicated the early stages of the LSD experience. Words had never been equal to the ineffable. These graceful gymnastics of colour which Arnie had produced, by sheer artistry, were the apotheosis of distraction.

He was a magician—not only a technically brilliant photographer, but a being possessed of mysterious creative powers, able to utilise new forms of energy. He had understood that LSD is a non-verbal, visionary experience. An intensity of seeing whether the eyes are opened or closed. Arnie had changed our session room from the inside of a cigar box to the inside of a diamond.

I asked him if there were any other photographers who were his peers in these realms.

'Yes,' Arnie said. 'There is Gabi. He comes from Detroit like me and came to New York to take up a scholarship at the Cooper Union. Gabi spent one day looking round the place and decided it was not for him. He lives in a small basement in the lower East Village.'

I had to go into New York the following day to pick up a Tibetan monkey which had been gifted to us. Why not see Gabi then? Arnie told me the address, but asked about the monkey. I explained that the Tibetan monkey had been destined for the Baltimore zoo, but had been rejected by the zoo. The donors were friends of the Fergussons and suggested to them that the Castalia Foundation could have it if we wanted. Of course, we did. So I was to drive in and pick it up from an animal emporium just off Broadway,

near Wall Street.

I drove into New York next morning in the Ford station wagon we had, and went first to see Gabi. He was seated at a table in his basement sticking coloured polo mints on to a discarded car axle. Quite naturally he showed me a champagne glass with broken polo mints stuck around the base. Then a silver spoon hanging from a string in a box with the coloured sweets stuck on to it. After a period spent looking at these and similar creations Gabi introduced me to his animals. He had a pet iguana, a pet crow, a pet mouse. Later on the crow ate the mouse, and the iguana freaked the crow by doing something the crow could not do—blink! It was this same iguana that ended up on a table in the Stork Club as the Salvador Dali tip.

Gabi was a six footer, with long blond hair, and the largest blandest eyes I had ever seen. He looked a bit like Lewis Carroll. I suggested he come out to Millbrook, but told him that first I had to pick up the Tibetan monkey. Would he help me as obviously he had a way with animals? Certainly he would, but if we were going on to Millbrook he wanted to take his animals. Gabi put on his head the northern hemisphere from a metal atlas, and we boxed the mouse, and put the iguana in a cage.

Gabi felt that a trip to the financial district might so upset the iguana that it might bite, and we didn't want that. The crow, however, was not nearly so sensitive so we let it fly above the station wagon and follow us to the Wall Street district.

We got into the emporium without incident, and the crow still hung about the station wagon. The monkey, about two-and-a-half feet high with snowy white eyebrows and beard, was put into a huge cage. Gabi said he could speak to animals, so I carried the cage and he carried the monkey. So we walked back to the station wagon, an extraordinary trinity—me in my raccoon coat and tam o'shanter, Gabi with half of the world on his head, and the Tibetan monkey completely at home in Gabi's arms. From the looks on the faces of passers-by it seemed as if a whole section of New York had freaked out! Rush hour took on a new meaning.

As soon as we got back to Millbrook everyone wanted to see some of Gabi's psychedelic magic. He installed the animals and then set up projectors, as Arnie had done. We were soon transfixed by the beauty, dazzling colour, and unique insights performed by Gabi with light and colour. The magicians were taking over. And we liked it.

This development led to other groups coming. Probably the most important was USCO—'US company'—three performers from the artists' colony at Woodstock, N.Y. The group comprised Gerd Stein, poet and former Playboy correspondent; Steve Durkee, previously a pop artist; and Michael Callahan, an electronics technician. USCO communicated through a multichannel media mix, a psychedelic orchestra of film, colour slides, kinetic sculpture, strobe lights, and live actors. They had developed a system of linking all projectors to one control manual. With this ability to control all visual effects from one source they used techniques of spinning sound from one speaker to another. This, in

conjunction with the images, seemed to us to offer an exciting dramatic possibility, a unique form of theatre. A performance where the audience would be involved intimately in the field of action, participating.

At Millbrook we did not isolate ourselves hermetically from the world outside, but wished to contribute to and reflect something of the spirit of our time. Our Psychedelic Theatre or 'Tranart' (transcendental art) did not arise like a diversion or arrive like a gilded Pavlova. It grew out of alembic of creative minds, from aspects of personal experiences of living. We continually exposed ourselves to novel departures in our conceptual, label-making process and tried to get rid of ideas of what art must necessarily be.

In the case of the Psychedelic Theatre we suspended the general assumption that Theatre is concerned solely with formal, fixed construction like the plays of Ibsen. We wanted to avoid the mistake tacitly committed by both spectator and artist of submitting to a mental trap of knowing what is expected of them. The Psychedelic Theatre arose out of something like the cave-paintings of primitive man interested in constructing a piece of reality from the flux. It was a theatre of controlled spontaneity, offered not as a virtuoso performance by a signature-artist, but as a sensory embrace.

The first public psychedelic event ever performed was at the Village Vanguard jazz club in Greenwich Village on Monday, April 5, 1965. Those taking part were myself, Dick Alpert, Alan Watts, Charlie Mingus, Pete La Roca, Steve Swallow, Charlie Lloyd, Ralph Metzner, Susan Leary, Mario (a dancer), and Bjoern Von Schlegel as stage manager in charge of the electronic equipment.

I introduced the event thus:

'Our purpose in being here is to expand our awareness. To assimilate and to see aspects of the psychedelic consciousness. To observe the phenomena of inner space. This is the Magic Theatre. By magic we mean the phenomena of everyday life through which we pass most of our time asleep. Tonight we shall be mixing auditory and visual phenomena. The brain is capable of processing all this data. It will see different images moving in a random/planned fashion. Sound tracks, some of which have been cut up, will be heard. Films and light will perform. All you have to do is focus on one point. And then you will see the rest. Diversity will be unity. But do not try to understand. The brain will do all that later. Here you will have 10,000 visions. So sit back and relax. Extend yourself to an aesthetic distance. You may have the opportunity of leaving your body. Leaving your mind. You are going on a voyage. The price of admission is your mind. For if you attempt to analyse and conceptualise you will cheat yourself of the opportunity to see things in a fresh manner.'

Then I read:

Is it a dream ?

Shadowy

Elusive

Invisible

All things

All images

Move slowly

Within Shimmering nets

Here Essence endures

From here

All forms emerge

All forms Emerge

From this second

Back to the ancient beginning

(Tao Sutra 21)

And we began. The impact of this event is perhaps best appreciated from the review in the New York Times of Sunday, April 11, 1965:

"Tamara, her blonde hair falling to her baggy white pyjamas, was passing out Tibetan incense. "That's because it's delightful," she explained.

"The patrons who jammed the 123-seat basement jazz club accepted the offerings with an equally earnest mysticism, for they had come to experience the debut of the Psychedelic Theatre—a simulated "session" with the consciousness expanding drug Lysergic Acid Diethylamide, or LSD.

"It was "speakout" night at the Village Vanguard... last week an LSD symposium transcended the merely verbal because, as a grave young man backed by a throbbing bass declaimed, "Our limited lexicography, with its procrustean subject-object limitations cannot communicate this experience."

'Darkness. Up tempo bass. Lights flash through the audience; slides flash on a

sheet: Mount Rushmore, biological specimen, Buddha sliding in and out of focus. Drums and a clarinet pick up the rhythm. Tamara, accompanied by Tasha, a thin, haunted-looking young man also in baggy whites; they dance, not quite to a twist, with Siamese arm motions. Later, more dancing, to the Beatles, while a flickering blue light seems to stop the motion into jerks.... A noise like three monotone bears trapped in a sewer, transforming itself into an oriental fluting, bonging and chanting. A movie of a frog embryo in a glass bowl, evolving rotating and flipping to a cool jazz score, while a voice quietly intones universal truths and insights: "... muddy water cannot be fathomed."

'A hundred would-be experiencers were turned away, business at the bar was slow, and the audience was rapt and curiously split. "There's an awful lot of uptowners here," muttered a hostile hipster, glowering at a section of Wednesday matinee women.

"There was a scattering of ageing beards, but the other face was that of youth, sure of its terminology—"Cosmic consciousness", "re-entry", and "set".

'Some matched the religious fervour of the performers, residents of a Millbrook, N.Y. "utopian colony" who soberly passed out jelly beans and balloons during intermission.'

As well as passing out jelly beans (which some of the audience imagined, with delight or apprehension, depending on their attitude, to be treated with LSD) we gave Dick Alpert a spot. He sat on a stool and began telling funny stories about his experiences at Harvard, about his early experiences with his millionaire father, and how this world now seemed several light years away. The audience laughed uproariously at Dick's stories and, after the show, the owner of the Vanguard, Max, came up to Dick. 'You are a natural-born comedian. Would you like to try a week here as a comedian, doing what you did tonight?'

Dick said he would try it.

A couple of weeks later Dick took up the offer. Unfortunately only half a dozen people were watching him and they were boozy and incapable of understanding Dick. Apart from myself, who accompanied Dick to New York for his 'gig', and some friends, no one got the point of his humour. It simply seemed crazy to them that a man could jeopardise an enviable family security and a top academic job to live as Dick was doing then. It was clear to us that for Dick's jokes to be understood everyone had to be high.

Subsequent to the Village Vanguard evening we set up a regular Monday night series of 'Psychedelic Explorations' at the New Theatre, East Fifty-Fourth Street, in collaboration with USCO. There would be lectures, psychedelic improvisations, discussions, performances by the Castalia Foundation and USCO, and finally an informal question-and-answer period. The idea was that the Psychedelic Theatre would illustrate and amplify the themes discussed in the lectures which in turn supplied the theoretical background necessary for an understanding of the new techniques of audio-olfactory-visual

alteration of consciousness.

Our other main forum was the Coda Galleries in the East Village. This opened in April 1965 and acted as a salon for exhibitions, discussions and demonstrations. It proved immensely successful and on one occasion some 6000 Villagers tried to cram into the sixty-five-person capacity gallery to hear a panel of psychologists and artists discuss the value of chemically-induced transcendence for artists. The Coda's director, Ray Crossen, also sponsored the 'Theatre of the Ridiculous' and many poetry-readings in which I took part.

There is no question but that the work we did at that time in New York has been seminal in the development of kinetic and optical art, the new cinema, and freer forms of theatre. It opened up a whole vista of new entertainment possibilities. Arnie Hendin, who had suggested so much of this potential growth on his first evening at Millbrook, was by now developing into a one-man theatrical event; as three Yale psychologists were shortly to find out.

So involved had we been in the Psychedelic Theatre and so closely had we communicated with Tim in India that it seemed like days not months had passed when he eventually returned with Nena. After the preliminary salutations of welcome, Tim made it very clear that he had mainly learned from India that all fire and metals should be kept underground. 'The great work of the future,' he said, 'will be to return fire and metal back to earth. This will be a work of joy. All works of destruction involve fire and metal. We must overcome them. In future we will separate our garbage into metallic and non-metallic substances. All the metal must be buried.'

I took it upon myself to bury all the empty tin cans by sticking them upside-down into the footpath through the garden. So we would walk on the metal and it would eventually subside into the earth.

Tim began to take up his psychological work with some intensity and announced one morning that three senior Yale psychologists were coming to see around Millbrook that afternoon. Tim wanted this to be a serious exchange of ideas so he asked Arnie Hendin—who wore funny hats, trousers made out of multicoloured curtain-material, and bells—if he would mind discarding his technicolour clothes for the duration of the psychologists' visit.

'Uhuh,' nodded Arnie.

And, true to his word, he went to borrow a lounge suit and a tie and a white shirt and shoes.

The psychologists arrived for lunch and sat, rather stuffily, listening to an affable Tim making jokes and lighthearted conversation. Most of the members of the household present for lunch were stoned, but, in deference to Tim's wishes, we maintained an ex-

ternal propriety. In the middle of lunch Arnie walked in sporting his splendidly conventional outfit and carrying a copy of the New York Times under one arm.

He nodded and sat down opposite the three psychologists who seemed suitably impressed by his impeccable attire. Arnie opened the Times and began to read it. Then he smiled and, as he did so, a trickle of green liquid started spilling from the corners of his mouth, and slowly ran down to his little beard. Next Arnie opened his mouth a little and the green liquid spurted over his chin and on to his white shirt. By now everyone was staring at Arnie, so he opened his mouth in a yawn and the green gushed from his mouth over his newspaper and his shirt, all the while reading the news as if nothing was happening. Arnie had filled his mouth with green vegetable dye and it produced the first one-man happening I had ever seen.

The psychologists observed this event fastidiously and seemed, from frowns and raised eyebrows and movements of the mouth, to have agreed that this irreproachably dressed young man was inoffensive—merely afflicted by a slight idiosyncrasy. Tim said nothing at all about it. Neither did we. It seemed the wisest course to smother the scene in silence.

After lunch, Arnie having excused himself with a nod, we suggested to the psychologists that we show them around the house. Indulging the frivolity of a moment, one of the psychologists asked if we had any animals in addition to the four dogs that wandered about the front porch. Tim pointed to the line of Tibetan monastery flags strung along the turrets on the roof of the house and jocularly linked that with the presence of our Tibetan monkey upstairs. Often the monkey roamed about the house, but at meal times it had to be kept in its huge cage because it would perch high up on shelves and throw eggs at people. Obviously that couldn't happen to a distinguished group of Yale psychologists.

Tim said he would remember to show them the monkey. We got to the room, entered, and there, sitting in the cage with a banana in one hand and engrossed in the New York Times, was Arnie. Tim let the psychologists draw their own conclusions.

Arnie was not only magical and mischievous, though; he could be practical. Once Dick Alpert got a severe cold, dosed himself with aspirins and sleeping pills and retired to the bowling alley where he curled up in a sleeping bag before the big log fire. Arnie asked me about Dick and I confirmed that Dick was miserable and had just gone off to try to sweat out the cold in front of the fire in the bowling alley.

'He doesn't need to do that,' said Arnie.

'Oh ? Why not ?'

'I know of a way to cure colds.'

I had considerable faith in Arnie's powers and agreed to accompany him at midnight to see Dick. When we got into the bowling alley Dick was sleeping like a twisted log in front of the burning fire. Arnie started to prepare the room. He arranged coloured pieces of glass on the floor and built a shrine with a statue of the Buddha quite near to Dick and his sleeping bag. Then Arnie lit about twenty candles. I was watching him, at a loss to see what he was doing other than to create a setting that would normally appeal to Dick. Arnie rushed out again and came back with a primus stove and a huge metal crucible in which he melted lead.

'This,' smiled Arnie, 'is an old recipe for curing colds.'

I nodded.

Every now and then Arnie would throw an apple or a banana into the molten lead and they rapidly disintegrated into sparks which filled the room with a pungent smell. Arnie felt he should now wake Dick but it proved impossible. So Arnie filled a hypodermic with DMT (N,N-dimethyltryptamine—a very fast-acting but temporary psychedelic drug which throws the subject into fantastic realms and renders him incapable of physical action) and injected Dick in the buttocks. Just as he was pulling the needle out, Dick sat bolt upright and we watched him maintain this position rigidly for half an hour while he swirled through neurological space. When he came round, Arnie fed him 800 gamma of LSD from a spoon. After about fifteen minutes Dick turned round and saw the flowing colours of the glass, the Buddha, and the crucible.

He looked at Arnie, who was wearing a hat with a tassel of bells, like a troll from Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, and who still periodically threw fruit into the molten lead. As a final measure Arnie put on three separate record-players simultaneously—a Beethoven symphony, a Coltrane record, and a Stockhausen record, all at full volume. Dick seemed to swim in this incredible sonic tidal wave for an hour. Arnie asked Dick if his cold was any better.

Dick smiled: 'It's gone completely.'

The wonder was that he was still there after such drastic treatment, but in fact the cold never returned. We might, therefore, claim that Arnie had found a cure for the common cold, but somehow I cannot see his methods being universally adopted by the medical profession.

Millbrook was not confined to the activities of the permanent household. As its name spread we received many people we admired. As I had been the first person to turn Tim on to LSD, with what he felt were satisfactory results, I was usually called upon to act as guide for the special guests.

Several of these had memorable trips. Feliks Topolski got in touch with me, saying he had heard about me from Alex Trocchi in London. Feliks had come to New York to

do murals in the St. Regis Hotel and when he arrived at Millbrook we agreed to do a Cook's Tour of the mind. We went to the upstairs room of the bowling alley and I decided to concentrate the visual input on colour, using the projectors to suggest amorphous masses of undifferentiated tonality. I blended images and sounds and let Feliks think on them.

'Remember: The hallucinations which you may now experience, The visions and insights, Will teach you much about yourself and the world. The veil of routine perception will be torn from your eyes. Remember the unity of all living things. Remember the bliss of the Clear Light.'

(The Tibetan Book of the Dead)

The session commenced in the late afternoon, and at one point Tim came into the room with Billy Hitchcock. Not wishing to disturb Feliks they sat in a corner, talked briefly, and then left without interfering with Feliks. To Feliks, however, this seemed like a conspiratorial tête-à-tête, and he said to me when they'd gone: 'Wow, they're just like gangsters.'

Our session continued into the early hours of the next morning and as the first light was being refracted from the clouds I took Feliks out on to the balcony of the bowling alley. Just as we stepped outside there was a flash of lightning.

'The world is charged with the grandeur of God. It will flame out, like shining from shook foil...'

(Gerard Manley Hopkins, 'God's Grandeur')

Feliks was stunned.

'My goodness,' he mumbled in his gentle way, 'look at that.'

'Yes,' I smiled, 'we try to do our best for someone on his first session.'

Dawn came, and later sunlight filled the entire room. Another day, another world, had come. We went back on the balcony, smelling the air, listening to the sounds of the birds, feeling as if we were being reborn with the day. And as our eyes were scanning the horizon we saw a car being driven very fast up the road followed by clouds of dust. The car halted at the bowling alley and out stepped Arnie, a male friend, and a girlfriend. They were naked, and painted all over with colourful symbols.

One of Arnie's legs was blue, another green, and looking down I could make out a painting of a torso on his forehead. All he had on was a feather in his hair. He brought a flute out of the car and his friend got a saxophone. Then they started to play and dance at the same time. It lasted a few minutes and then they got back into the car and drove off.

They came from nowhere, hadn't been expected, and went away again. Disappeared.

'This was a very vivid hallucination,' Feliks said to me.

I knew it had not been an hallucination, but had to question the whole concept of what was real and what unreal at Millbrook.

Saul Steinberg the cartoonist, who lived in New York, came up for an LSD session. He was very fond of romantic composers and I played records of Ravel, Debussy and Chopin. I laid on some large drawing cards and pencils in case he wanted to draw, but he didn't. Nor did he want any slides. We used a downstairs room in the house, and respecting his wishes for as much solitude as possible, asked the others not to disturb him.

After turning him on I left and looked in every hour or so to see how he was doing. He was quiet, smiling at the fire, but asked me to stop the music. He was finding it abrasive and brittle though this was his normal preference for music.

Hours later he came out on his own and spent some time with our coatimundi, a South American animal resembling a raccoon. It was a friendly beautiful animal and it curled up in Saul's lap. He put his finger to its mouth and it gently rested its teeth on his finger. I sat beside Saul on the porch for a while, then he went off on his own for a walk through the woods.

Driving him back to Poughkeepsie for the train to New York next day, I asked Saul if he had gained anything permanent from his LSD experience.

'I discovered trees,' he said.

Saul's life was usually spent either in his New York home or in his little summer house in East Hampton, a select Long Island bathing resort for the very wealthy. The trees he saw there seemed desiccated.

'At Millbrook I discovered real trees. I have never thought about trees before. That was the principal thing I got from the session.'

And sure enough about two months later, on the New Yorker cover, there was a Steinberg drawing which featured—a huge tree.

On Monday, April 19, 1965 Paul Krassner came for a session. Krassner, editor of *The Realist* and later, with Abbie Hoffman, founder of the Yippie party, took LSD with me upstairs in the bowling alley. Krassner later recorded his experience in *The Realist* No. 60, June 1965:

'My LSD experience began with a solid hour of what my "guide" described as

cosmic laughter. The more I laughed, the more I tried to think of depressing things—specifically, the atrocities being committed in Vietnam—and the more wild my laughter became . . . I laughed so much I threw up.

The nearest “outlet” was a window. My hands seemed absolutely unable to open it. My guide opened the window with ease, and I stuck my head out. Was this a guillotine? Was he to be my executioner? Such fantasy occurred to me, but I trusted him and concentrated instead on the beautiful colours of my vomit.

‘On the phonograph, the Beatles were singing stuff from A Hard Day’s Night... I started crying... for false joy, it turned out.

‘I had seen the film with my wife—we are separated—and there was, under LSD, an internal hallucination that she had not only helped plan for this record to be placed, but, moreover, in doing so, she had collaborated with someone she considered a schmuck in order to please me.... Filled with gratitude, I decided to call her up (the power of positive paranoia), but I also decided that she had planned for me to call her up against my will.... Then I called—collect, since I was in another city. ‘The operator asked my name.

‘I suddenly answered: “Ringo Starr !”

‘ “Do you really want me to say that ?”

‘I was amazed at my calm, logical response: “Of course, operator. It’s a private joke between us, and it’s the only way she’ll accept a collect call.”

‘The operator told my wife Ringo Starr was calling collect, and naturally she accepted the call. When I explained why I was calling, she told me I was thanking her for something she didn’t even do. I had been so sure I’d communed with her.

Millbrook was music and musicians, too. Charlie Mingus and I were in the kitchen one evening, high on LSD, and unaccountably the tap started making yowling sounds followed by bangs. Charlie got out his bass and played arco in counter-point to the sound coming from the watertap. He seemed to know exactly the pattern of the sound. ‘I am conducting the sound,’

Charlie told me. ‘I’ve taken it over. I’ve tuned into the vibrations and resonate to them.’ Millbrook was Charlie Lloyd playing his flute in the woods. I walked in the woods during the afternoon following the agitated sound of flute music. And there was a very high Charles Lloyd playing to a squirrel who jumped from branch to branch. Charlie performed a flute obligato which matched and predicted the movements of the animal. It was as if it was bewitched by the music as it slowed down and relaxed. It was like watching a Disney film.

Millbrook was Pete La Roca, the drummer, taking LSD and wanting to play. We hung a sheet from the ceiling and projected on to it a nine-minute time-lapsed colour film sequence of a frog embryo. From a black dot in the middle of the screen it grew into a tadpole and the eyes and head appeared. Pete drummed in the dark, behind the sheet, providing a rapid pulse that speeded up at the climax of the film. His wife said she had never heard him play so fast. He seemed hypnotised by the record of creation before him. And Steve Swallow, the bass player associated with Mingus, took LSD and watched one of Arnie Hendin's photographs of a flower being taken in and out of focus and mixed with colour filters.

I was operating the projector, when I heard Steve stop playing his bass and groaning 'It's so beautiful, it's all so beautiful'. Then there was a double crash as Steve and the bass fell to the floor. He had fainted.

Jazz musicians, psychiatrists, social scientists, people who were crazy enough to think us crazy. Mediums, spiritualists, people who had had spontaneous visions, church ministers. They all came to Millbrook by special appointment.

From my point of view one of the most interesting, fluent and beautiful visitors was Joan Wainscott, an American girl in her mid-twenties who had been studying anthropology at London University. She had acquired a convincing English accent, very sharp and unbreakable. She told me she was a second-degree witch in the British Coven of Witches, and that she had spent a year in Africa living with primitive tribes. Before our LSD session she told me about witches.

She reckoned they were priestesses of religion who had simply had a bad press down the centuries. They followed a divine calling. We chatted one another up and then had our session. During this I read her 'Gate of the Soft Mystery', the Sex Cakra:

'Valley of life Gate of the Soft Mystery Beginnings in the lowest place Gate of the Soft Mystery Gate of the Dark Woman Gate of the Soft Mystery Seed of all living Gate of the Soft Mystery Constantly enduring Gate of the Soft Mystery Use her gently and Without the touch of pain.'

(Tao Sutra 6)

It became obvious that we were going to make love. We fed each other grapes, and touched each other on the hands and face. Slowly we merged together in an ecstatic union.

What disasters we did have usually had a comical aspect. As most of the household had taken LSD anything up to 200 times we did not see fit to store it surreptitiously. For example, some liquid LSD was poured into a half-empty port bottle and left on the top floor, usually out-of-bounds to visitors. A Canadian TV crew came to record a Weekend Experimental Workshop for a programme called Seven Days on Sunday.

The head of the CBC crew, a large man of about six feet, eight inches, began to wander about the house on his own. When he saw the bottle of port, to him a measure of normality in an inscrutable world, he guzzled down a few slugs. Within twenty-five minutes he was on a very high LSD trip, something he was not prepared for. We were sitting in the dining-room when this huge man lumbered in with one shoe off, his tie half undone, his jacket buttons ripped off, 'his doublet all unbrac'd; No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd Ungarter'd and down-gyved to his ankles; Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other; And with a look so piteous in purport As if he had been loosed out of hell To speak of horrors.'

(Shakespeare, Hamlet)

The weekend visitors found it somewhat extraordinary that this huge TV producer, ostensibly present to record the activities with a detached professional eye, should be stumbling around under the influence of LSD quite incapable of doing anything. We sat with him through the night, comforting him and playing music, until he was afraid no longer. In the morning he was fine. I hope the programme was too. It is the sudden impact of the unexpected that causes so many bad trips on LSD. Or any other drugs for that matter, as I was to discover when I tried JB118 (the space drug) in an attempt to go as far as possible in mapping the inner Hebrides. The connection with NASA, who were developing JB118 came quite by chance.

One morning the telephone rang. It was a Dr. Steve Groff calling from Miami. As staff hypnotist with NASA he was interested in the use of psychedelic substances in connection with astronaut training. He had just come from the space centre and told me that all the astronauts had taken LSD to prepare themselves for weightlessness and disorientation due to the lack of external coordinates from which to take their bearing. Could he come to Millbrook for a session to see how we were administering LSD? Could he examine for himself our claim to have joyful experiences with LSD, a claim in direct contradiction to the results of sessions taken in clinical psychiatric surroundings?

'Of course,' I said.

Groff arrived and I ran the session for him. During the session he played the Beatles' A Hard Day's Night so many times that I, as guide, felt it truly was a hard day's night. Then after he was saturated with the music we took a walk on the lawn. He told me how he had been in the Olympic sky-diving team and that the LSD experience had certain similarities with a free-fall from an airplane. After describing his sky-diving exploits in some detail he suggested we go to Poughkeepsie airport to rent a plane.

It was easier than I expected. At the airport he presented his Hertz rentaplane card and his flight licence and within minutes a small Cessna had been put at his disposal and we were airborne. As we had no maps we followed the winding road to Millbrook and flew towards the turreted house where apparently miniscule Tibetan flags fluttered.

By this time there were people up on the roof, and some on the verandah and we were 4000 feet high physically, and higher still metaphysically, when Groff began to zoom to within twenty feet of the roof before shooting back into the sky. We did this about a dozen times and enjoyed seeing friends waving up at us. It was a strange visceral experience, like going on a huge roller-coaster on Coney Island. I felt no fear, but enormous elation and was disappointed when after half an hour Groff returned the plane to the airport.

Over lunch Dr. Groff told me of his friend Jim Arender, the former world champion sky-diver. If anyone would appreciate a session it was Jim. And three days later Jim arrived, twenty-six, handsome, dynamic. All-American in appearance but with an un-American interest in astrology. Jim brought along a movie of himself sky-diving and we showed this to him backwards during his session by bouncing the images off a mirror. He was stunned at the correlation between memories of actual flights and the heights reached during his session. And he stayed on at Millbrook to repeat the experience many times.

The links made through Dr. Groff with NASA resulted in us obtaining some JB118, the space drug officially on the secrets list. Dick and I volunteered to try it and remarked that it looked as if we were becoming the guinea pigs for NASA and the CIA. We went to the recording room and when Dick sat down on the couch I took up the lotus position on the floor. We ingested the drug and waited for the slight change in body metabolism one associates with LSD.

But wham ! ! ! ! This took effect instantly in the somatic sensory areas. I felt myself moving round the room in leaping acrobatic backward somersaults. I could not prevent this, yet I was not hitting any of the electronic equipment in the room. I was spinning round and round the centre of the room gliding past everything. I had the absolute conviction that I was in a small space capsule about the size of a tennis ball and that I had broken loose from the safety-belts.

I felt alarmed and sensed a paranoid antipathy to whoever had been careless enough to put me in the capsule in such a dangerous way. Suddenly a door in the capsule opened and Whoosh ! ! ! ! I was sucked out and down towards the atmosphere, hurtling down an air corridor, free-falling, able to move any way but upwards. Observers said that all the time I was spreadeagled on the floor, lying on my stomach. But I remember a horrific sensation and suddenly there was a lurch and I stood up. It seemed a parachute had opened just a foot before I hit the earth's surface. Yet it had broken my fall.

I wanted to fly again and I was a crow. I started to caw and flap my arms. Caw! Caw-caw! My eyes were tightly closed and I knew what it was to be a bird. I started to hop around the house, pegged my way downstairs and into the dining-room. With my eyes still tightly shut I touched people to see who they were, let my blackfeathered wings brush over human faces. And still I didn't bump into anything. With my eyes closed I steered my way through the house several times. Through doors. Through corridors.

Through passages.

Eventually I was coaxed back upstairs with a piece of bread as bait and I nested militantly until I finally evolved back into a man and came round. The whole trip had lasted three hours. Dick had sat on the couch for the duration of the trip. He told me his experience was fantastic.

'The first thing I saw was this young chick coming in. She was beautiful with long dark hair. She had a glass in her hand and asked me if I would like some grapejuice. I said yes. She put a glass on the floor and proceeded to fill it with grapejuice until it overflowed and then a red trickle of grapejuice moved across the floor, up the side of the opposite wall, along the ceiling, down the wall near me, on to the floor again, and towards the couch. I had to get up as it threatened to pass over me. I managed to avoid it and it got back into the glass. It was utterly real.'

I agreed. This JB118 drug made hallucinations palpably real. LSD gave a sense of bliss and oneness with life. JB118 was a solid slab of hallucinatory experience that offered nothing for the traveller to bring back to the real world.

Even more extraordinary, if we indulge our empirical prejudices for a moment, was the experience of Alan Eager and Arnie Hendin on the space drug. They went on an identical trip and were aware of doing so all the time. Like me they were pulled into the vacuum of space and moved freely above the blue curvature of the earth. They saw a little dot approaching them and noticed, when it came closer, that it was a space-craft, with the hammer-and-sickle on the side.

As it floated towards them they clung to the side and saw two Russian cosmonauts inside the craft. The men saw Arnie and Alan and seemed frightened. So agitated did they become that Arnie and Alan decided to float away on their own and eventually they returned to earth in Millbrook. Next day, March 19, 1965, it was reported that the Soviet Voskhod 2, containing cosmonauts Pavel Belyayev and Alexei Leonov, had encountered difficulties in reentry. On their first attempt to do so their automatic re-entry system failed and the Voskhod 2 pilots had to make an extra orbit and then bring the spacecraft back to earth themselves.

This change in landing site meant a long wait in the winter cold before rescue helicopters located them.... As few of us at Millbrook took much interest in current news it is doubtful if either Arnie or Alan had heard of this flight. They were sure they had not read about it prior to taking the space drug and firmly maintained that the delay in re-entry had been caused by the panic of the cosmonauts in seeing them. We await confirmation from the Soviet Union.

Alan and Arnie were to take another sort of trip, this time through the heartlands of America.

'In New York we set up a centre in a large townhouse with a full working theatre in the basement, bought a roomful of diverse musical instruments and opened another chapter in the history of psychedelia. In reaction to the programmed existence at Millbrook, a constant party developed which continued nonstop for months. Many of the Millbrook tribe would visit with us on their days off to play and learn. After a while we got restless.

There were too many people around and it got repetitious and dull. We decided to take a trip. It was very cold in New York. I was shooting a lot of DMT... at that time a smoking form had not been discovered. Arnie, Cathy, Simba the Siamese cat and me, plus guitar, soprano sax, pocket coronet, phono, records, psychedelic magic kit and a suitcase of drugs piled in the white Alfa and headed for warmer territory. The I Ching might have suggested it, I think.

'The total picture we gave freaked out every cop south of the Mason-Dixon line and we were busted every time Arnie drove. (From the driving seat that is... we all drove at once which can be very tricky sometimes but taking a trip while tripping is another trip—if you know what I mean.) Arnie and I were in costume, he looking like Jesus, but in baseball pants, high sneakers, beads, etc., which is quite the mode now... in '64 it was extraordinary and worth a hundred gamma just to look at it. When he would add extra touches to his gear like those kid space-helmets we wouldn't get half a mile before a cop would see us go by and flip.

No harm . . . we were always released very quickly. Arnie, in his best prophet manner, would promise interrogating police chiefs fire and flood unless we were released at once. It always worked.... He's a fine magician. Our clothing was a time trip and it caused short circuits in robot people. Although we ate in all types of restaurants we were never asked to wear ties or jackets. Mainly, I think, because it never occurred to them. It would have been like asking an Eskimo to wear a tie. After a few days' travelling we had it worked out pretty well. Anything we needed from the establishment would be gotten by Cathy as she had a fairly straight appearance.

'We had gotten into warm weather and we travelled and explored all over the countryside on and off the roads... cutting across fields and meadows and treating the Alfa as if it were a Land Rover; stopping at our slightest whim. Antique stores, underground caverns... far-out little towns with one gas pump the man cranked, little stores that sold penny candy in glass jars and had spittoons that were used. Rural America almost unchanged in fifty years.

'In Charleston we checked into the bridal suite of the Holiday Inn, had supper in our room (preferable to going out) and after bathing proceeded to set up shop. Out came the incense, candles, bottles, India prints, mirrors, toys, comics, phonograph, musical instruments, movie camera, fireworks (we had bought \$100 worth a few hours before), magic kit and the drugs. We had everything but grass... the brown rice of drugs.

Arnie tried to score some from our coloured bellhop but his mind had been white-

washed. He brought us a bottle of vodka which we duly set in place unopened. We had about thirty-five caps of beige acid which we hadn't tried yet. We each took a cap. As it came on we saw it was good and took a few more. We were feeling great and proceeded to get married. We had bought funny fake marriage licences which we signed with our other names; Vazy McKoops, Ring, Hank and the Cat Paw Print. We kissed, danced, lit roman candles off the balcony and sparklers inside, which Arnie photographed in the candlelight. We danced and drew arabesques with them, and I drew a showering sparkler out of the bell of the golden soprano. We were flying!

'I took some more caps. Arnie followed. We were travelling very fast now. The speed of sound (all motion is relative) at least. Again we took some more caps and now really started to move. We were at a rate that was so glorious that we decided to add a little JB840 to it.

'I went out into the hall and got some Coke. Then instead of putting a normal dose in a glass, overcome, we poured three-quarters of a bottle of JB118 into the glass and drank. Suddenly, violently, and with a sickening lurch we were moving faster than light. I fell back on the bed and had a vision of a Roman or Etruscan warrior holding a sword to my stomach. It was no vision. I knew it was real. We had poisoned ourselves. Death was here. Real Death. I remembered and gave in surrendering to it. A pain lanced through my right side and my convulsive gasps stopped. BLACKNESS. And then pinpoints of light in the stygian dark. I realised the lights were stars and we were moving through the very edge of our solar system at some unknown speed, but without the feeling of movement. Then to the front of my mind, I sensed an alien intelligence.

'Curious, I probed further, trying to contact it, when it started a mind-probe in an area it thought empty of life it tripped every alarm in my nervous system and body. I could feel my body on earth panicking, ready to explode with terror. I had to withdraw the mind-probe and take care of my terror-struck earth body. My mind came and, carefully, slowly, I began to turn off the alarms and unlock the muscles, sinews and nerves, calm and soothe the glands and get my body back to normal.

'As I was working I realised through visions in another part of my mind, that all of us on earth are remnants of other races and civilisations from various solar systems seeded into earth bodies for a reason not yet revealed. I had been from this solar system originally and had been a galactic ambassador, quite used to dealing with other cultures. Arnie was not of this universe originally, and I vaguely saw his shape as it had been; huge, swift and somehow, feline... fifteen feet tall, five tons and covered with golden fur.

'I opened my eyes, candlelight flickered, and the Holiday Inn took shape. Then a silent screaming came into my mind. It was on the edge of sanity driven there by fear. It was Arnie, Arnie the Great, The Prophet, Magician, Seer, Artist, Arnie was flipping out. I tried to lock my mind on to his, but he was so frightened, his mind was like greasy Jello. I couldn't hold on, so I followed, and when it would stop for an instant, I would hover and try to coax him back.

It would have been all right, but Cathy didn't understand. She was trying to help vocally, and every sonic vibration only drove him further out. It was horrible! Arnie was moaning and flickering in and out of reality, sanity pain and dimension. I finally took Cathy to the next room and made her promise to remain silent, but she has a very strong mind and, when she began thinking of medical help, I couldn't block her thoughts completely. Soon Arnie began to think for help.

'After a time I gave up and called the desk for a doctor. Less than three hours had passed when we started and we were still very high to say the least... plus slightly in shock. The doctor after a game attempt to get Arnie hospitalised, reluctantly gave him a mild sedative. After several stern reminders from me that he was a doctor, not a judge, he finally left, radiating disapproval.

'After a few more eons—earth time, about an hour—Arnie fell asleep. By then it was dawn. We were asked to leave soon after. When Arnie awoke, we moved to the nearest motel (a block away I think) and ate in bed rather quietly and slept till the next day. When we awoke we ate some more, discussed the dumb doctor, and the strange intelligence we had encountered, took stock of our drugs (we had thrown out all of the JB), and packed, giving all the fireworks to a bellhop as Arnie was afraid he would set them off mentally.

We were quite down from the experience so we each took two capsules (Cathy wasn't having any), and I drove us out of Charleston through spiral type buildings, heading south, the top down. By the time we were out of the DMT-coloured city-limits and on the open road, we were feeling normally glorious. The car purred, the cat slept, and overhead the most tremendous, white thunderhead in a purple-rose sky formed a glorious paean to earth and the future and we sped into the technicolour southern dusk.'

Probably the most highly-publicised feature of our work at Millbrook was the Weekend Experiential Workshop. These were held on alternate weekends when some fifteen guests would arrive at 7.30 on Friday evening and leave on Sunday afternoon. The idea was to simulate the LSD experience by means of Hindu and Buddhist yogic traditions, Gestalt therapy, Gurdjieff's selfawareness training, and Psychedelic Theatre techniques. We wanted to use all the means at our disposal to provide a nonchemical means of transcendence. Our handout advertising the Experiential Workshops outlined three steps to take to the ideal of maximum awareness and internal freedom:

'The first step is the realisation that there is more: that man's brain, his thirteen-billion-celled computer, is capable of limitless new dimensions of awareness and knowledge. In short that man does not use his head.

'The second step is the realisation that you have to go out of your mind to use your head; that you have to pass beyond everything you have learned in order to become acquainted with the new areas of consciousness. Ignorance of this fact is the veil which shuts man within the narrow confines of his acquired, artifactual concepts of "reality",

and prevents him from coming to know his own true nature.

‘The third step (once the first two realisations have taken place) is the practical theoretical. How can consciousness be expanded? What is the range of possibilities outside of our current verbal-cognitive models of experience? What light do the new insights perhaps most important, how can the new levels of awareness be maintained?’

It was to provide the answers implied in the third step that the weekend workshops in consciousness-expansion were instituted by the Castalia Foundation. We noted carefully in our brochure that ‘because of the complicated current legal situation in the United States, psychedelic drugs will not be used in these workshops’. This did not prevent many visitors from asking us for drugs but we had to protect ourselves by refusing these paying guests. Several guests, wise to our methods, took LSD before arriving but that was not officially our affair.

The vulgarisation of these weekends commenced at an early stage. In an article in the New York Sunday News of August 29, 1965, beneath a banner headline asking ARE THEY OUT OF THEIR MIND ? and suggesting ‘You might call these sect members a bunch of weirdos’, the article noted:

‘On alternative weekends they are joined by ten to fifteen paying guests recruited by direct mail and word of mouth. Most are middle-class professionals—teachers, doctors, psychologists, students. The fee of \$75 a person or \$125 a couple includes plain home-cooking and a mattress on the floor.... There is no happy hour of cocktail chatter. Instead, each guest is escorted silently to a box-like room in the old servant’s wing and left there for an hour to meditate.

‘The rooms are decorated with madras hangings, wall-sized paintings of Buddha, a collage of words and images collected from a psychedelic fantasy, or religious posters from India. The only furniture besides the mattress may be a lamp, a bookcase or a writing table.’

Such succinct details suggest the guests were paying for a self-imposed ascetic exercise in hardship, but it was nothing of the kind. The money from the workshops paid for oil-heating bills and food, and helped to secure a self-supporting community for the weekends. The Castalia Foundation, after all, was a non-profit corporation.

Before the guests arrived on the Friday the guides, of which I was one, would prepare spiritually by taking LSD or pot and would reflect on the imaginative possibilities of Millbrook. The house would be completely silent and the guests were met by a beautiful girl in a sari holding a flower and giving out copies of Max Picard’s text on silence:

‘Silence has greatness simply because it is... It is and that is its greatness, its pure existence... There is no beginning to silence and no end... Man does not put silence to

the test, silence puts man to the test... Silence contains everything within itself; it is not waiting for anything, it is always wholly present in itself and completely fills out the space in which it appears... Silence is original and self-evident, like the other basic phenomena, like love and liberty and death and life itself... And there is more silence than speech in them, more of the invisible than the visible... There is also more silence in one person than can be used in a single human life... ‘

This observation of silence had two reasons. First, as Tim said, ‘One of the oldest methods of getting high is silence.’ Secondly, it allowed us to impose an essential mood that saved the time of the visitors. For the first workshop we had welcomed the guests with a cocktail party, to break the ice, and the straights immediately plunged into the cocktail party game of which they were the experts.

‘Hi, I’m Jack Smith from Denver, who are you?’ ‘Jack Smith, eh?’ And so on. The whole evening had been wasted, and as we were novices in the cocktail party game we were completely flattened. The guests were merely putting an extra spin on their social whirl, while the household was brought down by the experience.

In instituting the idea of silence we wanted to impress on the guests that they were entering a new kingdom. That they were tuning out of their everyday ‘normal’ world and turning on to ours. Passing through the gates of Millbrook had to be like stepping on to a spacecraft—they had to leave behind them all their usual judgements and normative expectations.

Having welcomed them with silence we gave each guest MESSAGE ONE which requested absolute silence and asked them to look, listen, to non-verbal energy and experience directly. With the initial ambiance established we took each guest to a separate small room on the ground floor and gave them three more messages to read in solitude:

MESSAGE TWO: This period of silence is designed to help you clear your mind from routine thoughts and to encourage an opening of your awareness in several ways.

Please follow this programme:

1. Fill out the question sheet.
2. Then spend the next ten to twenty minutes trying to meditate. Focus on the candle and see if you can turn off planning and thinking. Concentrate on the moment-to-moment flow of time.
3. After ten to twenty minutes turn on the light and read MESSAGE THREE: This is your game contract for the weekend. There are many implications and meanings contained in each paragraph. Read it carefully. Make note of any questions or comments. These will be taken up later.

After reading MESSAGE THREE, then re-read it.

4. Turn off the light and meditate again for fifteen minutes. Watch how your mind keeps interrupting.

5. Next, turn on the light and read MESSAGE FOUR.

6. Wait serenely until you are contacted by a staff member. Be aware of your body, your flow of thoughts, your emotion (you may be bored, or feel rejected, or irritated; you may be excited, hopeful, etc.).

MESSAGE THREE "HOW TO PLAY THE 'EXPERIENTIAL WORKSHOP GAME' "

What Do We Mean by Game?

A game is a temporary social arrangement with the following characteristics:

goals, roles, rules, strategies, space and time limits, values, rituals.

All of these characteristics of any game are subject to revision. Ecstatogenic games are voluntary and the contract explicit.

You have been invited to participate in the "Experiential Workshop Game" during your stay at Millbrook. This means you are a three-day member of a social system which in some ways may be novel to you. This contract is designed to lessen your "culture shock" and aims to set up a memorable weekend.

Goals

1. To communicate and exchange ideas about consciousness and its expansion and control. Relevant theories about consciousness-expansion will be discussed—neurological, philosophic, religious, psychological, oriental. A wide variety of methods will also be reviewed.

2. To employ several of these methods during the weekend, to expand the consciousness of participants and to maintain as high a level of ecstasy as possible.

Roles

While there are many roles involved in running such an enterprise, in this contract we are solely concerned with the roles involved in the visitor game.

The roles which have been most comfortable to you and of which are of most use to you in your regular life will be of lessened utility here and, indeed, may handicap you. The aim of the workshop is to get out beyond your routine robot consciousness. Thus

there is little interest in who you are (were) and much more concern with where and how far you can go. What you can obtain during the weekend depends in part on how much of your routine ego you can leave in your room.

. . . Why don't you check it in your suitcase ?

Staff roles.

Around ten people will be present during the weekend whose job is to facilitate the goals of the seminar. Their functions are assigned and scheduled. Visitor roles. In general, the actions of visitors are addressed towards the two goals of the seminar: i.e. to learn as much as possible about the theories and methods of consciousness-expansion and to put this knowledge into practice. It is assumed that each visitor is here because of his past experiences and his current interest in consciousness-expansion. It is hoped that you can contribute any special knowledge you have when it seems relevant.

The Seeking Help Role.

This is not a psychotherapeutic situation and the doctor-patient game is not played. Personal problems cannot, therefore, become the focus of discussion.

Rules

1. Be aware of and try to minimise the attempt of your robot to capture audiences for its personal dramas.

2. Please obey the laws of the land. In particular do not bring marijuana or any other illegal chemical to the weekend workshop.

3. Visitors are asked to maintain their own room during their stay.

Strategies

The ecstatic-psychedelic experience can be reached by several means:

intellectual

emotional

bodily movement

sexual

somatic-sensory

One of the aims of the workshop is to encourage expansion of consciousness in all five of these functions in some sort of balanced harmony. (Consciousness-expansion in the sexual will be limited to indirect methods.) Since the average person quickly falls into habitual and stereotyped modes of awareness—mental, emotional, physical, sexual, and instinctive—the weekends are designed to produce novel experiences which deliberately “break through” these stereotypes.

If you feel yourself reacting with shock or outrage at the challenge to your favourite habits, please remember that this sort of friction probably points to an under-development of some function and is a challenge for growth. For the same reason, do not concentrate only on one of these methods of consciousness-expansion. Take advantage of this opportunity to expand consciousness at all levels.

Space Factors

After a while one of the staff will show you around the house and grounds. During your leisure time you are free to use any areas except for the third floor (which is residential) and the kitchen, except during breakfast period.

Time Factors

The schedule of programmes will be announced. Consult a staff member about additions and revisions to the schedule and about leisure play.

Values

According to the “game model”, values are specific to the particular game and hold only for the defined spacetime limits of the game. In the ecstatic game, the “goodness” or greatness of your robot performance is of lessened importance. Each person starts each second with a fresh neurological slate. “Good” is what raises the ecstasy count of all persons present and “bad” is what lowers the ecstasy count.

Mythic Context

While any human behaviour sequence can be seen as unique and original, another illuminating perspective can be obtained by recognising that certain classic human games are continually being re-enacted and that any social situation you find yourself in is a current version of an ancient drama. The question is not How does it turn out? (that is probably pre-ordained by the script and the role) but rather, How well do you play your part? and, How conscious are you of your role at each moment? and, How can you change your my/this game?

The Millbrook Workshops are clearly a re-enactment of one of the oldest and most ambitious games—the transcendental game, expansion of consciousness, internal exploration, ecstatic discovery. Our endeavours here are descended from and indebted to

those groups of explorers in India, Persia, China, Greece and to their current western counterparts.

Rituals

The creation of consciousness-expansion experiences usually involves rituals—some of which are directly practical, others of which are designed to evoke mood or readiness to change. The use of certain rituals (candles, mandalas, pictures, incense, etc.) is strictly experimental and does not involve any commitment to sectarian systems on the part of staff members or visitors.'

Finally MESSAGE FOUR reiterated the five most important areas of consciousness accessible to the average person—intellectual, emotional, body movement, somatic-sensory, sexual—and requested the visitor to spend the next ten minutes reviewing his stereotyped methods of awareness in each of these five areas.

Naturally many of the visitors were overwhelmed by reading MESSAGE THREE in solitude, and there was always one guest each weekend who would decide—in silence—that the experience was going to be too much. 'They think they have fallen into the hands of a mad scientist,' Tim used to say, 'and that's when we hear them creeping down the back stairs and screeching out of the driveway.'

Those who stayed on would be divided into groups of five and taken by their appointed guide for a walk in the woods by candlelight. We walked silently in Indian file, then returned to the oak-panelled library for a lecture by Tim or Dick or Ralph or myself. We outlined and discussed our philosophic and methodological ideas and hoped that the guests would sleep on them. For some sleep was rather difficult as they tried to anticipate what was to come.

Saturday morning breakfast was a food game. Everyone had to be up at 7:30 for Ralph Metzner's yoga session, including instructions on sitting in the full lotus and half-lotus positions, standing on the head, and eliminating the doubting fly of the mind. After this Ralph took them to the kitchen for breakfast (where a cupboard door bore the legend 'Take LSD and See') and let them look at it for a while. He had reversed the visual connotations of all the food. The scrambled eggs were green, the porridge was purple or bright orange, the milk was black. As the guests sat down to eat Ralph would say:

'Our ideas dictate to us what we imagine reality to be. And we are very much affected by the imprints we have, particularly those of colour associations. When someone says sky, we think of blue, when someone says meadow we think of green, when someone says scrambled eggs we think of yellow. But this is a mental hangup. It doesn't really make any difference whether scrambled eggs are green as they are today, or whether they are yellow. Why is this? All of these colour changes were achieved by a non-toxic, odourless, tasteless vegetable dye and as you are eating your green scrambled eggs and drinking your glass of black milk try to reconcile in your mind the different

subjective responses that you have, and notice how your brain deals with this input.'

Needless to say Ralph always took the precaution of eating before the visitors and he would sit and observe their attempts to appreciate the anti-food. Hardly any visitor got through this breakfast and, as well as having a mental impact, this method of serving food cut down our weekend budget as we only needed to offer very small portions.

The rest of the morning was spent in sweeping up the parquet floors, and in relaxed preparation for the simulated session. In the afternoon I would take groups to the waterfall where, submerged in the gently churning water at the bottom of the fall, I had a bottle of sherry on a string. As my group stood looking at the waterfall I would slowly pull this piece of string, finally revealing the sherry bottle. I also had a box of glasses hidden in the bushes flanking the waterfall.

After spending some time in the woods we went back for the evening meal, taken in the huge dining-room where guests sat crosslegged or knelt on cushions around a circular table raised six inches above the ground. From this room, dominated by the massive fireplace, great windows offered a view of the front lawns. There was an oak-panelled ceiling, a carpetless parquet floor, and sliding doors which led off into the corridor. The meal was simple brown rice or wheat and fruit. Hiziki soaked in water. Baked pumpkin. Aduki beans and onion. And our own bread baked from roast corn flour, water-salt, and sautéed vegetables. The meal itself was a yoga.

Once the guests were seated, the mantra OM was chanted by Tim, followed by a suitable period of silence. Then a little bell would ring and a disembodied message would be relayed into the room: 'With the next mouthful of food contemplate on the wonders of the body: where this food goes, how it is digested, how it is transformed into energy, into you. Think carefully as you chew the next mouthful.'

'Observe your body

Mandala of the universe

Observe your body

Of ancient design

Holy temple of consciousness

Central stage of the oldest drama

Observe its structured wonders

skin

hair

tissues

blood

bone

vein

muscle

net of nerve

Observe its message.'

(Tao Sutra 24)

After the meal we took the guests to a long darkened room at the back, the session room. It was dominated by mirrors and a huge mandala painted on the ceiling. I always felt conscious of the wood panelling and felt that at times it was like being in a cigar box. All around were mattresses covered with Indian prints. Slide projectors were humming in the dark.

Six speakers were linked to a tape recorder so that we could get circular sound. Several pre-programmed movie projectors were ready. I would then say: 'This is not a show, not something outside yourself.

We, for our part, will experience some of the same things as you. This is a teaching device. All of us in the household have been engaged in psychedelic work for a number of years and we have developed methods of duplicating the world we see on these trips. We want you to share some of these methods of seeing inner space. We want you to go out of your minds and into your heads.' And I would read:

'Let there be simple, natural things to contact during the session —

hand-woven cloth

uncarved wood

flowers—growing things

ancient music

burning fire

a touch of earth

a splash of water

fruit, good bread, cheese

fermenting wine

candlelight

temple incense

a warm hand

fish swimming

anything which is over

five hundred years old

Of course it is always best to be secluded with nature.'

(Tao Sutra 19)

In an instant, from all sides, came an electric bombardment of sound and image including many of the images used in the Psychedelic Theatre: the US flag, Buddha, the frog embryo, amorphous colours. A voice would spin from speaker to speaker saying:

'That which is called ego-death is coming to you

Remember:

This is now the hour of death and rebirth;

Take advantage of this temporary death to obtain the perfect State—Enlightenment.

Concentrate on the unity of all living beings.

Hold on to the Clear Light.

Use it to attain understanding and love.'

(The Tibetan Book of the Dead)

Then there would be silence and darkness relieved only by candlelight. Watching the perplexity on some faces I thought how strange it was that modern Americans should find something strange in a technique that had been used for thousands of years in one form or other. It was clear that the one who resisted the experience needed a new morality, a set of natural harmonious rules to follow as they spun off into neurological space.

They sat, some responsive, some astounded by the assault on their senses. Just as they were becoming accustomed to the candlelight, the stroboscope would start making multiple divisions of light, hitting the retina in a staccato burst and forcing chemical changes. By now the whole concept of environmental reality had been altered. We encouraged the guests to walk around in the flickering movement-stopping light. As a body moved in the stroboscopic light it looked like a series of still photographs being crudely animated.

Guests who tried to dance in the light were reduced to chaos because they could not coordinate with their apprehension of their partner's movements. Abruptly the strobe was stopped and we saw only the candles, their light weaving in the warm air of human breath. Slowly the room was bathed in yellow which is the colour of the Root Cakra which we reinforced with Tibetan chanting music. After twenty minutes the Water Cakra would be played on the tape-recorder:

'Can you lie quietly
engulfed
in the fierce slippery union
of male and female ?
Warm wet dance of engeration?
Endless ecstasies of couples?
Can you feel the coiled serpent writhing
While birds sing?
Become two cells merging
Slide together in molecule embrace
Can you, murmuring Lose All fusing.'

Twenty minutes after this came the Sex Cakra when the room would be suffused in

a pale silvery light and we thought of the energies surrounding our sexual feelings. Ravi Shankar music would dissolve into a Caribbean bossanova and we watched slides of men and women in the act of love.

So on to the Heart Cakra. Colour of red fire. The room bathed in crimson light. Music by Scriabin and Miles Davis and Bach. And the sound of a child's heartbeat. Then the Throat Cakra: blue bubbles of air. Debussy, Indian music, Japanese flute music. Finally the Head Cakra with Stockhausen and the sounds of outer space. Slides of the stars and galaxies would edge around the room.

At the end of this timeless session we would bring the visitors back, carefully prepare them for re-entry:

'As you return

Remember to choose consciously

Power is the heavy stone wrenched

from your garden of tenderness

Virtue is the heavy stone crushing your innocence

What can be learned

From nature is

Harmony

Therefore—Shun the social

Cuddle the elemental

Avoid angles, lie with the round

Shun plastic, conspire with seed

Do no good

But

For God's sake

Feel good

And

Nature's order will prevail'

(Tao Sutra 3)

Undoubtedly many of our visitors obtained genuine spiritual edification from these simulated sessions, though it is my experience that they can never be a substitute for the sacrament of LSD. For their money they had been changed in some ways. Even those who did not seek change had access to the Millbrook facilities of seminar rooms, meditation house, forest paths, the lake for swimming, vegetable gardens, art and photographic libraries, music and book libraries with an extensive section on Eastern Philosophy, and our library of tape lectures and experiential films.

Some were astounded at what they found. Those willing to drop the sensation-seeking game had an insight into the religious aims of Millbrook. Though many members of the public who might have been otherwise willing to open themselves to the experience were alienated by lurid press reports of which the following, from The Charlotte Observer, is typical:

'A quick belt of whisky from the suitcase improves things considerably. OM.

' "I am Michael Hollingshead," says the man in the doorway, half an hour later. He is tall, thirty-ish, baldish, with cold, cruel grey eyes. "I am your guide for the weekend. Will you follow me?" He has an English accent and a soft voice of sinister authority.

'Down the hall (OM OM OM) down the stairs. Outside four people gather silently in the back of a battered Land Rover: two women and two men, one of them an egg-bald bespectacled young man from Ottawa.

"Right now we're in the period of silence," says Hollingshead. "First we'll go for a little drive, then a little walk, then dinner." He drives along a track through dusk-hushed woods, then out into a field and stops at a pond... Hollingshead produces a bottle of cocktail sherry and paper cups. Dusk deepens. The pond is covered with a film of green growth, which creeps.

' "Is the period of silence over?" asks the poison ivy woman, emboldened by sherry.

' "Not for you," says Hollingshead with a little smile.

'The drive continues through the woods and fields, then back to the house... Timothy Leary enters and sits. He is tall, forty-five, handsome, barefoot, a dentist's son, the father of three: a boy, a girl, and the psychedelic movement... Leary talks... The reason psychedelic experiences are important and valuable is that people live their lives by

their own “chess-boards”, playing the lawyer-game, the merchant-game, or some rule-ridden ego-game, rarely if ever expanding their consciousness to the point of true awareness and understanding of man and nature, including themselves.

‘He demonstrates: Susan Leary and Hollingshead enact a short skit, she as a wife asking her overworked husband to take a holiday, he as a school principal firing a teacher. Their chessboards do not match; they do not understand each other...

‘The appearance of things around Castalia’s baroque bastion indicates a certain abandonment of modern survival values... No particular concern is shown for the house... Castalians are above the landed-gentry game. Furniture is not important to them...

‘The woodwork and windows need washing, the old parquet floors need polish... the dogs... anoint the porch at will...

‘An air of sad decline pervades the house, like a Rolls-Royce being used as a dump truck.’

The fact that the local press had praised our work in maintaining the house and improving the lawns and planting three acres of corn and vegetables is beside the point. Like so many people, that reporter looked without seeing, listened without hearing, calculated without thinking.

I had been a guide for invited guests, a guide for paying visitors, and after taking so many people on an internal journey I felt it might be time to do the same in other countries. Mark Twain said that ‘Guides cannot master the subtleties of the American joke’, and though he was not thinking of a psychedelic guide, he had a point. There were too many American jokers doing injustices to Millbrook. One of the greatest guides, Virgil, says to a Dante tormented by frightening phenomena

‘But, as for thee, I think and deem it well

Thou take me for thy guide, and pass with me

Through an eternal place... ‘

(Inferno, Canto 1, tr. Dorothy Sayers)

And Dante passes through a hell which in its realistic aspects corresponds closely to the unenlightened daily life. It is the desire of the guide to take his voyager to paradise. As guide to many travellers I have taken them out of their hell and offered them at least a temporary glimpse of paradise.

‘The role of the psychedelic guide is new in our society, but the newness of the role should not blind us to the antiquity of its precedents. Priest and shaman, after all,

were the first purveyors of its technique. Seer and sibyl mapped the cosmography of its domain.

Perhaps the finest of its precedents is to be found in the figure of Virgil in Dante's Divine Comedy.... It should be one of the chief tasks of the guide to assume the role of Virgil in this chemically-induced Divine Comedy and to help the subject select out of the wealth of phenomena among which he finds himself some of the more promising opportunities for heightened insight, awareness and integral understanding that the guide knows to be available in the psychedelic experience. [R. E L. Masters and Jean Houston, op. cit., p. 130f.]

I guided Leary and Alpert through their first trips. I guided the authors of the above passage through theirs. I acted as guide to Krassner, Topolski, Steinberg, Mingus, Steve Groff and dozens more. None had bad experiences. None returned with distaste for the spiritual or natural worlds. I endorse the ideal of the guide as Virgil, though could not claim to be an ideal guide. At the most I could claim to be conscious of my subject's creativity and that, in itself, is a step on the road to paradise.

And so I felt it to be time to take to the road again myself. By September 1965 I felt that the Experiential Workshops had been stimulating and often extremely successful. I felt satisfied with our work in New York developing the Psychedelic Theatre. Americans, the sensitive ones, were responding to the wonderful implications of LSD. Artists and scientists were admitting they could learn from mind expansion. LSD was becoming quite popular with a growing number of people and, in addition to the black market supply emanating from the West Coast, two very devoted student alchemists were synthesising it at Yale.

As a European I felt the time had come for us to share with Europe some of the things we had discovered about the methodology of taking LSD in positive settings. I wanted to rid people of their inhibitions about mystical writings and demonstrate to them that The Tibetan Book of the Dead, the Tao Te Ching, and the I Ching were really basic manuals with fundamental instructions about taking LSD sessions. We felt we had supplemented this ancient knowledge by the exploitation of modern technological means of transmitting aesthetic phenomena.

From what I had heard in letters and conversations, the psychedelic movement in England was small and badly informed. It appeared that those who took LSD did so as a consciously defiant anti-authoritarian gesture. The spiritual content of the psychedelic experience was being overlooked.

We had a meeting at Millbrook to discuss this question of disseminating the results of our experimental research. It was agreed that I should return to London with the idea of introducing The Tibetan Book of the Dead in the translation by Tim, Dick and Ralph; the cyclostyled typescript of the Tao Be Ching by Tim and Ralph; and the Psychedelic Review, a magazine devoted to the theoretical discussion of psychedelic experi-

ence.

Tim came to see me on the day of my departure. He was going to join me in London in January 1966, which gave me three months to set the scene for his arrival.

idea was to rent the Albert Hall, or 'Alpert Hall' as Tim called it, for a psychedelic jamboree. We would get the Beatles or the Stones to perform, invite other artists, and, as the climax of the evening, introduce Tim as the High Priest.

Taking a piece of paper from his pocket Tim said, 'These are your marching orders, your instructions.' What they were I don't know because he decided to scrap them and took a clean sheet of paper and wrote the following on it:

'HOLLINGSHEAD EXPEDITION TO LONDON 1965-66

Purpose: SPIRITUAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To introduce to London the interpretation and applications and methods developed by and learned by Michael Hollingshead.

A YOGA-OF-EXPRESSION BY MH.

Plan

No specific programme of expression can be specified in advance.

The Yoga may include

1. Tranart* gallery-bookstore.
2. Weekly psychedelic reviews—lectures—questions and answers—Tranart demonstrations.
3. Radio—TV—newspaper—magazine educational programme.
4. Centre for running LSD session.'

Thus it was I arrived London in the fall of 1965, with several hundred copies of The Tibetan Book of the Dead and thirteen cartons of the Psychedelic Review on their way.

* Tranart was the term we used to describe the art of psychedelic simulation. The name never became widely accepted and to this day there is no adequate label for psychedelic art .

PART SIX

London 1965

It is always interesting to come back to London (why do we love the places we are born in?) and see how you react to the people. Here I am no longer 'the traveller', but a resident, which is something you realise the moment you step outside Heathrow—abroad, you can treat the outer world as mere reaction; at home this is impossible. When an Englishman looks at London he is seeing in its masonry the reflection of his race, like a clean slate, with his own face on. He may not like what he sees, but it is a place he may nod to and really feel he knows. Here, then, I am at the mercy of my own particular form of existence; here I am responsible in a definite way, just a citizen like everybody else....

Accordingly, I exchanged the consciousness of Millbrook as rapidly as possible for that of the resident. Through the far-sight of a generous friend, I soon became the lease-holder of a large, comfortable, Pont Street, Belgravia flat, with high ceilings and thick walls. It was here that we opened the WPC ('World Psychedelic Centre') with Desmond O'Brien, a Lloyd's underwriter and Etonian, as President; and, later, Joey Mellen, also ex-Eton and a graduate in law from Oxford, as its Vice-President.

I had brought with me from America a quantity of LSD, about half a gram, or enough for 5000 sessions, part of an experimental batch made available by courtesy of the Czech Government laboratories in Prague, who had taken over as suppliers after Sandoz stopped selling it anymore, that is, after the Leary-Alpert Harvard storm. But as far as Britain was concerned, there were as yet no provisions for LSD et al. under the 'Dangerous Drugs' Act.

The possession of this drug did not become an offense until the summer of 1966, when Britain fell in line with American legislation in this matter. But it was through this loophole in the 1965 legal situation that the WPC was able to operate in an open way—though we had to watch anything else, particularly hash, for which we could be busted (and eventually were, just five months after we started). But for the time being, and encouraged by the accelerating interest in psychedelics amongst our Chelsea neighbours, we believed that London would indeed become the centre for a world psychedelic movement.

In a city where world-feeling is expressed in the form of an impulse for empirical expansion, our 'message' was simple: If you can't capture the world, then try to conquer the heavens. For the idealism of the conquistador would be changed to that of the mystic, the man who conquers nobody except himself. 'The energy which, a little while ago, was able to fill universal space is now condensed into the confines of the individual self; for isn't it said that what is without, is also within?'

It is just that the eye of insight—the eye that "gets in" where reality "gets out"—has atrophied in man during the past few thousand years; man is blind to the world inside himself and needs the help of three eyes instead of two to gain true wisdom of his own individuality.' We wrote it; we may even have believed it sometimes: and 'acid is to

help us see ... ‘.

Now we could believe with Camus that ‘real generosity towards the future lies in giving all to the present’. And since it happens so rarely in a lifetime that one ever gets the chance to give one’s all to something, or someone, we felt a tremendous sense of involvement now that we had pledged ourselves to spread the psychedelic doctrine. And in one of our earliest manifestos, we wrote ‘Man’s vision of the future is his recreation—the fulfillment of it is his procreation. The essential ritual is procreation—creation.

‘The future is what man thinks up in the present—the logical extension in all cycles of thought of the point of each revelation—the illumination of darkness by the word.

‘In the dawn of a new evolutionary phase poets chirp like sparrows.... disregarded—like sparrows—the poets keep singing of a vision which is theirs pour encourager les autres.... ‘

But the nagging question in such matters was how were we going to communicate this message with the rest of the world?

Some of us had begun to wonder if the solution did not lie in the direction first suggested by William Burroughs (in 1961): ‘The forward step must be made in silence. We catch ourselves from word forms—this can be accomplished by substituting for words letters, concepts and verbal concepts, other modes of expression: for example, colour.’

And silence is golden for those who live in the land of gold. But from the revolutionists’ point of view, the huge monopolies of power and influence could be seen in 1964 to have become places synonymous with intellectual bankruptcy and spiritual (religious) emptiness. To take one example, the situation with regard to the University Establishment. They could be seen to be institutions of intellectual servitude: ‘Students have been systematically dehumanised, deemed incompetent to regulate their own lives, sexually, politically and academically. They are treated like commodities with a price-tag, so much raw material to be processed for the university’s clients—business, government and military bureaucracies. Teachers have been relegated to the position of servant-intellectuals, required, for regular promotion, to propagate points of view in harmony with the military and industrial leadership of our society.’

The silence of responsible opinion in the face of such calls to integrity, and ultimately even to sanity itself, all but amounted to a scandal; and certainly a scandal wider in its implications than any freedom movement growing up around psychedelic drug-use, which the mass media promptly called ‘abuse’, and saw LSD made into a ‘dirty’ word, like masturbation or VD.

We couldn’t simply bundle the drugs into a bag and bury it, hoping psychedelics could all somehow be forgotten. This was the problem—what do we do with these psychedelics now that ‘we’ in the sense of Everyman have them?

It was—and is—a bit extraordinary, in Britain of all places, that LSD has been rarely a subject, and even more rarely a successful subject, for our best thinkers (with such notable exceptions as Robert Graves on the subject of ‘mushroom’ visionary experience, Aldous Huxley, and Gerald Heard, all of whom, perhaps significantly, lived abroad).

The reality of the LSD world was too random and fragmentary for any but the most mentally flexible to identify with it, and the unemotional ‘cop-out’—synthesis—was impossible. British intellectuals were not going to confuse the LSD experience with their literary ‘stream-of-consciousness’ techniques for discovering the truth about processes of deep consciousness, either—you would hardly call Tom Wolfe or James Joyce an ‘acid tripper’! What they were unwilling, or unable, to see was that acid literature and acid thoughts are really only those ideas that deal with high level revelation, mysticism, telepathy, and transcendence of the ego. And to that extent we were a new human game and had a message of universal interest.

The developing cult of Exploring Inwardness had become a new truth, the stable core around which a new radical movement would evolve. Truth and response are not a private affair, for the truth comes to one man for all men, endowing the recipient of it in his relation to his contemporaries with the authority of the Prophet or of the High Priest.

But men do not willingly recognise a new voice that cries from the modern wilderness ... and if they are ever at a loss for a scapegoat, they have their man in him who would seek to remove the distorting web of Maya, the cause of all illusions in the self.

Martin Buber, and a prophet of our time, reminds us that, according to Hasidim, the ‘teller of tales’, ‘... the effective exploration of the heart is the beginning of the way in a man’s life,’ it is the one journey in which ‘each man must find his own way for himself’. Or such were my esoteric influences in this period, which fed my vision of a future happier world ...

Thirteen cartons of books arrived at Pont Street via the S.S. Samaria from America, a private importation for which H.M. Customs required a Bill of Lading and a completed form C.3. (Now you can’t get more accurate than that). This was our ‘psychedelic stock’ for this ‘Operation London’—300 copies of the Leary/Alpert/Metzner *The Psychedelic Experience: A Manual Based on the Tibetan Book of the Dead*, 200 issues of *The Psychedelic Review* ed. by Drs. Weil and Metzner, and 200 copies of *The Psychedelic Reader* ed. by Gunther Weil. It was not only that, at this time, in 1965, there was nothing similar originating in Britain, but such literature was virtually unobtainable here, except possibly through Bernard at Turret Books in Kensington. It also meant that we had a Manual for running ‘guided’ LSD-sessions through which we could observe the elaboration of ‘the Art’ as well as various new art-forms. Now we could conduct intensive group-sessions in which the group-mind might participate in an ancient Tibetan ritual, and in the safety of our own homes.

All that now remained was an opportunity to use them, which soon presented it-

self on the night of the first Full Moon. (Alas, for those who do not actually feel the biogenetic vibrations of a Full Moon, it must seem no more than a pathetic, paltry, 'astronomical' phenomenon.) But for the tiny circle of participants who asked to take part in an experience on the Bardo plane, it was a night to hear mysteries which quicken the heart, the mysterious power that makes all things new again ...

There were twelve of us on this spacetrip. We saw ourselves as voyagers in search of answers to the secret of magical self-liberation. In Tibet the responsible institution is, or used to be, the College of Magic Ritual. Since it was obviously impossible to duplicate any of this, we structured the decor of the large living-room along the lines of Sutra 19 from the great esoteric work, the Tao Te Ching ... soon the front room was emptied of all furnishings, except the carpet, and we tried to have around simple, natural things to contact during this session—hand-woven cloth uncarved wood flowers—growing things ancient music burning fire a touch of earth a splash of water fruit, good bread, cheese fermenting wine candlelight temple incense a warm hand fish swimming anything which is over 500 years old.

We also had lots of cushions, some excellent tapes and hi-fi equipment, a slide projector, and several chillums.

We began shortly before midnight, moving into the new temple room with a kind of piety and seriousness you find in acts of faith, when we all took our place in the 'Magic Circle of Liberation'. After a short silence, we passed round the bowl containing grapes impregnated with acid—about 300 micrograms, or what is considered to be a relatively high dosage, likely to last from between eight to twelve hours—the sympathetic discharge would follow in about forty minutes, indicated by enlarged pupil diameter, rise in body temperature, increased heart-rate, variable blood pressure, and sometimes a moderate amount of physical trembling. Yet they are no stronger on the body than the effects of a game of tennis—only thinking makes them so.

During this first period, the period of 'countdown', when the psychic energy first begins to be felt, there is a growing sensation within of thousands of delicate threads moving about the body, subtle lines of force which tremble like Pampas grass, as if some thing had opened inside and they were all streaming out. It is as though one's body is dissolving and floating away, and the 'essence' of Me was being liberated to join the 'essence' of everything else about me.

One feels open to a total flow, over and around and within the body, and one becomes more and more conscious of these threads of energy, of their vibrations, like harpstrings giving forth their individual tones. There is something purely physical about it, a sensation, something felt rather than recognised, a matter for intuition, not intellect.

This sensation lasts for perhaps ten to fifteen minutes (though one is hardly conscious of the passing of time). Then the threads seem to collect themselves into a single vibrant strand, circular, coiled like a snake; and then like a snake it slowly begins to

unwind, moving almost imperceptibly up the spine, which feels like a hollow tube, gathering in force and intensity and bathing the body in a silvery light and very, very sensual indeed.

And one's pale introspective self sits in the boon of these tingling strings, sensitive to the least vibration beyond time, beyond place, rocking to the motion of all that is.... The dominant impression is that of entering into the very marrow of self ... as if each of the billion atoms which compose the body under normal circumstances is summarised and averaged into crude, discriminate wholesale impressions which are now able to be seen and savoured for itself. The impressions become more intense. The vibrations turn into colours—brilliant blues, purples, and greens with dashes of red and streaks of yellow-orange.

One gradually becomes aware of movement, a rocking type of movement, like on the crest of a wave, yet the body does not move at all ... with an overwhelming acceleration one is turning around and around, swirling, then shuttling back and forth like a piece of potassium on water, hissing, sparkling, full of life and fire.

This experience may be likened to an emotional-reflective visual kaleidoscope ... experiences involving these three components keep dissolving continuously from one pattern to another. Emotionally the patterns ranged from serene contentment and mild euphoria to apprehension which bordered on, but never quite slipped into, alarm. But overwhelmingly they involved (a) astonishment at the absolutely incredible immensity, complexity, intensity and extravagance of being, existence, the cosmos, call it what you will; (b) the most acute sense of the poignancy, fragility, preciousness, and significance of all life and history.

The latter is accompanied by a powerful sense of the responsibility of all for all ... intense affection for the others in the room ... importance and rightness of behaving decently and responsibly—of trying to remain 'open' and cool in all areas simultaneously.

As the 'guide' for this first Bardo session, my job was to look after the music, the pre-recorded taped messages from the book, and keep the participants in the flow. The set and setting are positive, supportive, anxiety-free so that the reaction will be ecstatic, insightful, and educational, just as when the set and setting are clinical, experimental, non-supportive, and impersonal, the reactions are invariably frightening and confusing.

Thus, In the greatest sessions One does not know that there is a guide In the next best sessions One praises the guide In the good session One admires the guide It is worse when One fears the guide The worst is that one pays him If the guide lacks trust in the people Then The trust of the people will be lacking The wise guide guards his words The wise guide sits serenely, When the greatest session is over The people will say— "It all happened naturally" Or "It was so simple, we did it all ourselves".'

(Adapted from Tao Sutra 17, by Timothy Leary)

Shortly after dropping the acid, I played a tape of Buddhist Cakra music, followed by Concert Percussion by the American composer, John Cage. I then read from the Psychedelic manual:

'O voyager The time has come for you to seek new levels of reality. Your ego and identity are about to cease. You are about to be set face to face with the Clear Light of the Void. You are about to experience it in its reality. In the ego-free state, wherein all things are like the void and cloudless sky and the naked spotless intellect is like a transparent vacuum; at this moment, know yourself and abide in that state. O voyager That which is called ego death is coming to you. Remember: This is now the hour of death and rebirth; take advantage of this temporary death to obtain the perfect state; Enlightenment . Concentrate on the unity of all living beings. Hold on to the Clear Light. Use it to attain understanding and love. If you cannot maintain the bliss of illumination and if you are slipping back into contact with the external world, Remember: The hallucinations which you may now experience, the visions and insights, will teach you much about yourself and the world. The veil of routine perception will be torn from your eyes. Remember the unity of all living things.'

About one hour had passed since we ingested the drug, and we were well into the first Bardo. We were beginning to confront the awesome illumination of the metaphysical void and new energy transformations. The instructions from the manual acted as necessary guideposts. We were learning how to spin in neurological space. Psychedelic equals mind-opening consciousness. Psychedelic means ecstatic, which is to stand outside our normal patterns.

It means going out of your mind, your habitual world of contingencies, space-time coordinates. And the key issue: 'Anything that exists outside exists there inside'. The human brain is analogous to the galactic one—there are some ten to thirteen billion cells in the brain, about the same number as there are stars in the universe where the planet earth is invisible. The problem of consciousness-expansion is the same as the external inertia to get off this planet. The brain is 'hooked' to the external world. Put a person into a sensory-deprivation tank for very long and he is overcome by 'withdrawal' symptoms—anxiety, tension, physical discomfort, and paranoia.

Next I played some music by Ravi Shankar and some bossanova. Interval of fifteen minutes. Then some music by Scriabin and part of a Bach cello suite. Interval. Some Debussy, and Indian flute music by Ghosh. Interval. Bach organ music and some John Cage 'space' music. Interval. The Ali Brothers and Japanese flute music. We also looked at slides projected on to the ceiling Tantric yantras, Vedic Gods, the Buddha, Tibetan mandalas.

I suppose that the room in which we had gathered would appear eccentric to most modern minds—candlelight, flames, incense, drapes flowers, bowls of fruit, but to us it all seemed harmonious, natural and very appropriate for the experiences we were undergoing. The session was not to be thought of as some kind of show, a piece of theatre,

an entertainment, but a demonstration and a sharing of novel energy levels and unusual forms of perception. And the decor was to assist the voyager in his experience, a sort of ABC of internal language.

It was a device to help one go outside routine modes of experiencing, beyond learned or familiar concepts, so that one was—albeit briefly—no longer aware of oneself as a social figure, but as another entity. We stood outside the familiar self, outside parochial worlds of experience, outside London outside the idea of being English/American/Danish.

In this sense, the psychedelic experience was not something invented by the Sandoz Chemical Company, but has been known since Vedic times and for which an enormous literature exists. In the West we seek to explain mind in terms of a science called psychology, which is externally oriented towards action and behaviours. But here one faced the fact that in the last analysis everything is internal, everything happens in your own mind.

'O friend You may experience ego-transcendence, Departure from your old self. Do not cling in fondness and weakness to your old self. Even though you cling to your mind, you have lost the power to keep it. You gain nothing by struggling in this hallucinatory world. Be not attached. Be not weak. Go forward. Relax. Merge yourself with them. Blissfully accept the wonders of your own making.'

There were still the instructions of the Third Bardo to follow, and crucial to this session, because they gave instructions on how to re-enter one's normal state of consciousness and thus the everyday world ...

'O Voyager, Now, if you wish to see the truth, Your mind must rest without distraction. There is nothing to do, nothing to think. Recognise that this is the period of re-entry into the normal world. Do not struggle to re-enter the denser atmosphere of routine game existence. Do not attempt to use force or will-power. Do not hold on to thoughts. Allow the mind to rest in its unmodified state. Meditate on the oneness of all energy. Do not struggle to explain. Trust your guide. Trust your companions. Trust the compassionate Buddha, and meditate calmly and without distraction. Do not struggle to return. The re-entry will happen by itself. Recognise where you are. Recognition will lead to liberation.'

Recognition, in this sense, does not lead to liberation, but is liberation. He who really knows (that is to say, vitally, not merely theoretically, with his intelligence) that he is one with the entire universe, is beyond all fetters by virtue of this knowledge. The world no longer binds him to it; because, having once been above or outside ordinary existence, he sees the things of the world differently, from a different point of view, and they no longer possess the same power over him.

This 'seeing differently' means at the same time recognition; recognition, there-

fore, does not only condition, but is, liberation. In his deepest being man is spirit, and the more he recognises this, the more firmly he believes it, the more chains fall away from him. Thus, it could happen that, in accordance with the teachings of the Bardo Thodol, complete recognition overcomes even death. All it needs is a believing soul, which is what is meant when we talk about the power of faith. Ordinary people will only be able to believe when they are convinced simultaneously that the content of their faith is also objectively real: that Krishna was really an Avatar, that the Bible is really the Word of God, that Christ saved humanity from death in the historical sense.

The visionary, on the other hand, knows that faith in the religious sense, and believing-to-be-true in the scientific one, have nothing in common with each other, that religiously it is completely indifferent whether Christ existed or not, and that the true visionary who is spiritualized, employs faith as he would an instrument. Ramakrishna, for instance, was, for a while, a Christian and also a Mussulman; he wanted to know the effect of these ideals; and in the meantime his faith was so strong that Mahomet as well as Jesus appeared to him in the spirit. For the rest, he kept to the worship of Kali, the heavenly mother, as being the cult best suited to his nature, for he knew that no one form was intrinsically adequate to divinity.

In the session we have just considered, it was collaborative, and the planning increased the likelihood that each person would have the sort of experience he wished. Thus his internal freedom, his control over his consciousness is increased. The readings from the Tibetan Manual were to bring about 'recognition'; that is to remind the voyager at the moment of ego-loss that he is prepared; to insure that he will flow with the process trustfully.

While the Buddhist language may strike the Westerner as 'far-out', keep in mind that this is only one of many manuals and instruction sequences from which the prospective voyager can choose, and that the esoteric quality of the language serves as a mnemonic device, that is, say, a sharp memory tap so that the former instructions and resolutions can be recalled.

If we agree that the human mind was born free but everywhere it is in chains, it will take a miracle to free it: because the chains are magical in the first place. We are in bondage to authority outside ourselves; and to exorcise these chains is the great work of magical self-liberation. And the one way of doing this is to activate the soul. Then the eyes of the spirit would become one with the eyes of the body, and god would be in us, not outside. God in us: entheos—enthusiasm: this is the essence of the psychedelic experience.

And how, you may wonder, shall we recognise the individual who has thus freed himself from the bonds of appearances, the man who has liberated himself and now walks the earth?

'He who returns in the flow of spirituality Brings back a mysterious penetration So

subtle That it is misunderstood.

Here is his appearance

Hesitant like one who wades in a stream at winter

Wary as a man in ambush

Considerate as a welcome guest

Fluid like a mountain stream

Natural as uncarved wood

Floating high like a gull

Unfathomable like muddy water

How can we fathom his muddiness?

Water becomes clear through stillness

How can we become still?

By moving with the stream.'

'He stands apart

Serene

Curiously observing

He stands quietly

Looking forlorn

Like an infant who has not yet

learned to know what to smile at

He is a little sad for what he sees

While others enjoy their possessions

he lazily drifts, homeless

do-nothing, owning nothing

Or he moves slowly close to the land

While others are crisp and definite

he seems indecisive

He does not seem to be making his way in the world

He is different

A wise infant nursing at the breast of all life Inside.'

Again and again I must think of these verses from the Tao Te Ching, for they remind me of so many of the hippie voyagers I meet on the trail, who live at a different level as the result of extraordinary internal experiences, which alone affect men. With Jesus, they can say: I have, like my father, all life within me.

They are 'different'.

The milieu of 'swinging London' in 1965 appeared to me like the best possible caricature of the Edwardian world, that mighty institute for the threefold passion of independence, indulgence, indifference, which gave soul to their esprit and their art of living. Real love was unknown to them, they had no serious interests of any kind- the whole of their existence was spent in grooving, getting high, making the scene. And yet many of them were intelligent and profound and their profundity was not impeded by their life-style; on the contrary, it gave them a means of expression.

And for this reason the frivolity of this period occasionally gave an impression of gravity and profundity which struck me as being strange and made one dream.... It was a period when people paid attention to dress, and clothes were no less essential than their bodies—it was a means of expression, and their dressed condition mirrored in their consciousness the outer expression for themselves. 'By changing his clothes he changes the man within.'

The mode of dress assisted in expressing certain traits of his being. In this way the process of dressing-up can not only heighten or lessen the individual's power of expression: it can indeed bring about self-realisation.

How did I come to make this observation ? Shortly after I moved into the Pont Street apartment, a couple of my friends took me aside and suggested that I get some new clothes, costumes of the Chelsea of the mid-sixties—Edwardian jackets, embroidered in gold and silver, and silk shirts with huge collars, velvet pants and blue suede shoes, and so forth—and thereby prove that the spirit of this age is the spirit of its wearer.

It was a method of clothing oneself with a certain purpose—expressing certain traits of one's being which in the ordinary course of events remain in the background. It is a mode of dress to reveal what the individual is; it alters, as it were, the centre of his being. Such an individual, they argued, is more himself than he is otherwise in his 'real' existence.

Accordingly, I let myself be persuaded to exchange my jeans and sweat shirt for a new wardrobe, and Michael Rainey's shop 'Hung On You' sent round a huge pile of fashionable clothes and a bill for £600. There were about five of us staying at the apartment and we divided the clothes between us. I ended up with a pair of flared pin-stripe trousers with an enormous belt and silver buckle, several silk shirts and ties, and a couple of hand-embroidered jackets.

Now I was at one with the fashion of my times. The only problem was a psychological one—I was embarrassed to be seen in them and consequently I stayed indoors, ignoring all invitations and gradually reverted back to my jeans and sweat shirt much to the chagrin of those for whom clothes had great significance. There was also the additional factor of the cheque, which bounced, and I felt somehow uncomfortable wearing these expensive clothes as a result.

My associations in this period with a select group of young aristocrats and artists and musicians and writers, responsible for influencing sharply the patterns of the New Vanguard of British culture and intellectual life, was felicitous in the extreme; but it cannot be held solely responsible for making a revolutionary of me.

I was certainly surrounded by a number of high-powered anarchists. My partner, Desmond O'Brien, was already achieving renown as one of the most far-out LSD exponents in London and had ever been described in one publication as 'Mr. LSD'; and our Vice-President, Joey Mellen, one of the first persons to trepan himself, had already embarked on a career as a priest in a new order which was to make him a distinguished figure of great importance to English evolutionary religion. In addition to my colleagues, associates of the World Psychedelic Centre included such notables as Victor Lowndes, who co-founded the Playboy empire with Hugh Hefner; Julian Ormsby-Gore, the film maker; Alex Trocchi, the philosopher-writer; Michael O'Dwyer, the art gallery owner; Julie Felix, the singer; George Andrews, the poet; Jo Berke, the psychiatrist working with Ronnie Laing- Feliks Topolski, the painter; John Hopkins, the writer; Nick Douglas, the painter; Kim Ella, the singer; Ian Sommerville, the multi-media expert; Roman Polanski, the film maker; Bart Hughes, the high priest of the trepanation movement; Sir Roland Penrose, a director of the Tate Gallery; Hugh Blackwell, the writer; as well as Roger Lewis, Billy Bolitho, Virginia Lyon, Steve Groff, Mark Warman, Olivia de Haulleville, Shelley Cholst, Maggie Russell, Shirley Scott James, Bill Burroughs, Bobby Davidson, Donovan, Paul McCartney, Jim Arender, John Eason, Nicholas Gormanstone, Christopher Gibbs, Suna Portman, and Victoria Ormsby-Gore, all of whom made outstanding contributions to the current London scene.

They exemplified a constellation of attitudes that were of great importance to the cultural-artistic life of London. They represented perhaps the seminal non-conformism of England's mid-sixties intelligentsia—not the evangelical non-conformism of such as the Millbrook sect, but an intellectualized form of psychedelic enlightenment, of which popularised Learyism was largely a culmination—that freed so many of England's educated people from the rigidity of social and class and cultural patterns which had outwardly been solidifying into right-wing Toryism.

Their rebellion was typical of this period; the Establishment was the enemy, the representative of the rigid patterns they felt needed to be violently rearranged.

These exotic friends were supplemented through their contacts; and affiliations developed with such places as St. Martin's School of Art, the Institute of Contemporary Arts, where we conducted a 'Workshop in Consciousness Expansion', and such literary figures as Professor Neville Coghill, Norman Mailer, and Philip O'Connor.

And yet ... there was a problem, a self-indulgence of mine which earned me some social suspicion, if not also social ostracism, and which led me—though against all my instincts—well over that line which divides the normal from the abnormal.

I refer, of course, only to my taking of methedrine.

It was not illegal to take methedrine, provided that one has a prescription, signed by a registered medical practitioner; and one could legally receive regular supplies of this (or any other 'hard' narcotic) drug, provided that the physician prescribes for an 'addiction'.

In 1965, not only was my purchase of methedrine legal: friends bought their heroin and their cocaine with no more trouble than that with which they purchased their cough syrup. I took my methedrine in the 'pure' form, as a liquid, being the form in which the drug is most easily assimilable. And in doses that medical descriptions of the typical methedrine-addiction syndrome indicate to have been heavy ones, about seven injections a day.

But that I had a serious addiction, a description of my nervous activity makes clear: the restlessness, the ability to work for days without adequate sleep, and even without rest at all; the abrupt changes of mood; and the equally abrupt collapse into somnolence not far (if at all) removed from a torpor bordering on coma these, to those who have studied the effects of methedrine addiction, are the unmistakable evidence of heavy and prolonged indulgence in a powerful narcotic.

I also smoked pot and hashish constantly, and tried every chemical I was handed. I also took acid about three times a week and in dosages in excess of 500 micrograms. I never slept, and after about two months I had turned myself into a sort of zombie. Every now and then I injected myself with dimethyl-tryptamine—a fast-acting psychedelic of

short duration—to jack myself back into life again.

Naturally, this ‘hard’ drug-taking led to a complete disorientation of my life, which was now chaotic in the extreme, and I spiralled further and further down until I was caught in a mental prison of anxieties, paranoia, frictions and most despairs of consequence. It was all very, very frightening, and I began to think that I would remain forever hung up on an endless chain of manic-depressive emotions. It was ironic, really, that after all those lessons in meditation, all those disciplines and yogic exercises those trips under LSD, those austerities and years of metaphysical reflection, the mystic dreams, quiet days, the idea that there was no need to achieve anymore or to go about and do things and make things happen, I was now at the mercy of a non-miraculous addiction.

In vain I tried to kick the habit, but it was impossible, the monkey was on my back and I could not remove it. I began to believe that it was all somehow a cosmic plot in which I was the victim. I had nightmares which nearly scared me to death. I reached a point where communication with other people was impossible.

I saw the whole world conspiring against me. I was literally out of my mind and living in some kind of hell of my own making. And, worst of all, there was no one I could turn to for help, for there was no one I trusted; such were the effects of this poison I injected into myself.

And the situation at Pont Street became more and more unreal so much so that all my friends stopped coming round and everyone thought I was crazy, which I was, if my behaviour was anything to go by. That is how I appeared to them, what I was for them—a stupid, insensitive, unthinking person. What this drug had done was to reveal the hidden monstrousness and infernal depths within my psyche. Certainly, I made conscious efforts to exorcise the sources of my confusion, but in vain. How would I ever rid myself of this methedrine hell, this habit which was killing me?

I had plunged into the abyss, gone beyond my limitations, beyond even the confines of my reason which had served me so well. This was the land of madness, of death. How undignified, despicable, meaningless!

Yet, like all addicts, I clung to my drug. I had grown accustomed to it, I had even formed a superstitious affection for it. I didn’t want to stop my habit. One fix meant four more hours of life another fix, four more hours of life. I couldn’t just let myself go, for this would have meant death, and I still clung stubbornly to life. But there was a sense in which I was already dead.

The taking of methedrine implies excess of life, intemperance, and surfeit; it is also a way of killing yourself. This realisation accounted for the uncontrollable terror, the panic, which gripped my soul at nightfall, when I was alone with the alone and lost in a maze of contradictory emotions, when I knew that my addiction was at once tragic, dangerous, terrifying and immoral.

And I was not the only one who thought so. George Andrews, obviously disturbed by what was happening, wrote me a letter:

'Dear Michael, I have been hearing some strange stories about you from a lot of different people. In Tangier I learned to draw a very sharp line of distinction between the psychedelic guide, who is rare, and the psychedelic hustler, who is a dime a dozen. For someone with as much experience as you have had, to be using it the way you seem to be, you have in your hands the Void in crystal form, the lightning of the gods, the jade wine of the immortals. All the flip-outs and bad trips one is responsible for are added to one's daily load of karma. Why make the load even heavier? Why not lighten it instead?'

But the advice could not be heeded. Like a poison gas, the methedrine had become all-invading, and I knew that I was close to death.

I ought to have known better. What a situation to be in! The euphoria of the drug had become my refuge from the real world. It was a barrier between myself and other people, a wailing wall, a wall of separation. And I wondered what would become of me. Was I a helpless puppet in the hands of some unimaginably cruel demon, tugged and pulled on invisible strings, but off from myself, since my innermost being was no longer in control. What was the use of knowing mystical truths? What help were they now? That I had to stop injecting toxins into my body was obvious enough. But how must I do this? Never have I, the wanderer, felt such pains of anguish in my soul. It seemed to me at times as though the demon methedrine was at hand to strip my mind of all reason.

I was in the depths of despair, and anguish. Where I should be laughing and playing, I felt horror and disgust. And I did not understand how I had got myself into such a situation, how my addiction was possible. The demon laughs: what is there to understand? It is something to like and enjoy. It is a matter of course! Is this the secret?—I felt as though in some mysterious manner, in some indescribable sense, I was living in a plastic world where there was neither light nor fertility nor, on the other hand, any wish to understand my former research after truth. The spiritual light was extinguished in the same sudden and mysterious way as it flashed up.

The old dregs filled me up, took me to task, threatened to weigh me down; I felt my humanity as something alien, burdensome; worse still than that of the helpless animal in a trap, because I knew how to question the validity of that which was beyond my power to control.

It was an impossible situation. It would never have occurred to me a few years ago, when I first started to extend my sensory appreciations and nervous system, that one day I should find myself sitting in the living-room of a Belgravia apartment trying to inject myself with 'speed'; or that if by some freaky accident such a bizarre experience had come my way I should wish to write about it. (Still less that my publisher would condone such an eccentric choice of subject.)

But the relation of the individual fettered to earth through addiction with the individual who knows the light of Brahma or Jesus or Buddha, resembles that of the ant with the human being who crosses its path: no matter how certain the ant is by instinct, it cannot help itself when faced by problems which must appear transcendental to its organism. Just so in the case of the addict who attempts to solve the riddle of his own addiction. From the angle of reason, it is insoluble. 'Don't you see?' says a well-intentioned friend. 'Just look at the mess you are making of your life ! Stop ! Understand ! ... ' How can an addict understand?

And even if he wants to give it up, he cannot do so. The intentions he calls forth turn back, thoughts take flight, he cannot grasp the totality of the experience, he is afraid of exploding into a million bits of protoplasm. So he continues. And to ask a psychiatrist or the local vicar to cope with your addiction is as senseless as to ask an Indian yogi to repair a jet aircraft. Today, neither psychiatry nor religion have much to offer in the way of comfort or cure.

Hugh, a friend of mine, also shooting speed, came round to see me. He was desperately seeking to reassure himself that there was some meaning to his life and that this drug could help him find it. He had been up for the last three nights writing his 'Journal' in which he attempted to solve the riddle of the universe, seeing in his crazed eye previously invisible relations and connections between words and worlds, and himself as the sun-like source of boundless energy, ceaselessly giving, ceaselessly pouring out words without hindrance or resistance. He showed me a few pages from his never-ending work-in-progress ...

'Aquamarine light smoke the slow drift and eddy of youth in blue jeans and a painted face—sounds like chandeliers drip glitter and tinkle chime pagodas—Pont Street and Sunny South Ken sweet sounds of Donovan on a pyramid of people spotlit in a flurry of congas—the black saint dressed in tribal white moans blues and mike yells lights hurt by the finger gleams of lunatic heads creating a collage of movement—HEY BABY WHAT IS THIS ?—it happens in murmurs and purple planes of light in mauve rhythms in slow syncopated tinsel quivers and glitters in their eyes—blond hair—stripes and fragrance—Drugs, man?

Sure

Likewise ...

It all made coherent sense to me when he read it aloud, but I include it now as an illustration really of the random processes of thought which occur in states of methedrine narcosis. It was also fortunate for Hugh's reputation that, as popular prejudice against speed began to grow—and the law began to take cognizance of that prejudice—Hugh was steadily being weaned from his habit by the undemonstrative, patient and assiduous attentions of his girlfriend.

In my case, three events occurred to shake me out of any feelings of indifference. The first was a telephone call from Texas telling me that Leary had been found guilty of transporting three ounces of marijuana across the Laredo-Mexican border as well as failing to pay taxes on it and had been fined \$40,000 and given the maximum sentence of thirty years in jail. 'That's the same what Prometheus got,' the lawyer added, somewhat casually.

The second was a half-page advertisement in the London Evening Standard:

'LSD—THE DRUG THAT COULD THREATEN LONDON. Just for kicks, some famous artists, pop stars, and debs are "taking a trip" on LSD—one of the most powerful and dangerous drugs known to man. It produces hallucinations. It can cause temporary insanity. Kicks like this may be bought at the appalling cost of psychotic illness or even suicide. It is banned in America and elsewhere—but is still available in London, quite legally.

Still more appalling—just half an ounce of LSD could knock out London. Socially, the stuff is dynamite. London Life magazine has investigated LSD fully and has uncovered a social peril of magnitude which it believes demands immediate legislation ... to stop the spread of a cult which could bring mental lethargy and chaos. London Life reporters have also traced the man who calls himself Mr. LSD. He has given them an astonishing series of interviews. Read all about him, and about LSD, in this week's London Life.'

Mr. LSD was of course our President, Desmond O'Brien, and believe it or not—the reporter was Hugh, whose mind, as I have already indicated, was racing ahead of itself into the higher realms of associative paranoia due to methedrine poisoning. When I telephoned Hugh about all of this, he said that he had been so stoned that he had told the story of what was going on at the World Psychedelic Centre to the London Life editor who was, as it happened, the reporter who first broke the Profumo-Keeler scandal. 'This thing is bigger than the Keeler story,' he had told Hugh.

But of course it was too late for me to do anything. There were even advertisements on television—spirals of colour in and out of focus and a voice saying 'LSD—the drug that could turn on London. Read the exclusive story in next week's London Life.'

And the third and final straw was an article in the Sunday tabloid, The People, that was headed in one-inch lettering.

'THE MEN BEHIND LSD—THE DRUG THAT IS MENACING YOUNG LIVES.... The drug is LSD-25—Lysergic Acid diethylamide. It is by far the most dangerous drug ever to become easily obtainable on the black market. LSD, which is said to give "visions of heaven and hell" is used legitimately by psychiatrists to produce carefully controlled hallucinations.

In the wrong hands, the hallucinations it produces can lead to utter irresponsibility, disregard for personal safety and suicidal tendencies.

IT IS, IN FACT, A KILLER DRUG.

We have obtained evidence of "LSD parties" being held in London.

We have discovered an alarming group of people who are openly and blatantly spreading the irresponsible use of this terrible drug.

These men run what they call the Psychedelic Centre.

It has operated from a number of addresses, including one in St. James's Street, and a flat in Pont Street, Chelsea.

Amongst the Centre's activities is the publication of a handbook called A Psychedelic Manual.

This lists recommended doses of LSD and other drugs and antidotes, and contains a treatise on drug-induced hallucinations and other "benefits".

The manual gives various reasons for the use of drugs such as LSD. These include: "For personal power ... for ... fun ...for sensuous enjoyment ... "

The manual which is written by "B. Goldstein", says the taking of LSD and similar drugs offers "a release from our conditionings" and "senses become more acute".

Recommending group sessions of drug-taking, the writer says: "A person should approach the experience with love and trust in the company of those he trusts."

"A psychedelic experience lasts normally from eight to sixteen hours ... but the results may last from several days to several months.

"The voyager should set aside at least two days for the experience itself."

This is irresponsible, dangerous gibberish.

The Centre was deserted and in a state of considerable chaos when our investigators gained entry on Thursday.

There were used hypodermic syringes, empty drug ampoules and a variety of pills.

Among the litter of papers were dozens of phone numbers, some of them of well-known show-business stars and personalities.'

A 'paranoid', according to Bill Burroughs, is someone who has some idea of what is really going on. In this sense you could say that I was a 'paranoid'. I had read the newspapers and realised that my time was up, that the police would now be on to me, so I split London for the country, though with little or no idea of where I should go or what I would do.

I rented a car through Hertz and set off for the North, to Durham to be exact, arriving there late one evening, and very, very stoned indeed. I still had several dozen ampoules of methedrine, about two ounces of hashish and a similar quantity of good grass. I spent a couple of days in Durham retracing familiar places of my early childhood, visiting family and generally grooving around. London seemed a memory only as I wandered the narrow streets and alleyways surrounding the Cathedral, a place that had become somehow unreal in my imagination, a place I did not wish to return to.

But in my paranoid state (one of the real dangers of modern life), I began to suspect that the Durham police were on my heels, so I left as suddenly as I came, this time for Yorkshire and the open moors.

For the next three days I just drove and drove and drove, staying at country hotels and leaving early in the morning. I think I must have clocked up 2000 miles since leaving London. My drug intake had also increased, so much so that there were times I had to park the car because I could not see the road—my vision was blurred and distorted, and I had difficulty remembering how to change the gears or which pedal was the brake and which was the clutch. My paranoia level also increased and to such a degree that I thought I was being followed by the police (such are the delusions of the advanced methedrine-taker, who sees danger even in shadow).

But the most amazing experience occurred on the fourth night. I was cruising through the lanes and by-ways of the Lake District in the early hours; there was no traffic on the roads and the countryside was still and motionless, when, suddenly, the mirror lit up and I experienced a sort of panic. Police. It could only be the police at this time of the night, and they had somehow got on to me. I immediately accelerated and sped through the lanes like an express train, swerving round corners, darting through empty villages ... but still the light in the mirror. I could not shake my pursuer, probably a cop specially trained at the Police Driving School, I reflected. Faster and faster I sped.

And still the light in the mirror. Sheer panic. I was trembling all over. Terror gripped my soul. I was like an animal being chased by a pack of dogs, with no hole to dive into. Then I saw an open farmyard, and turning into it, I drove through the potted yard until I came to a narrow path overgrown with grass. But it was straight and somehow I managed to keep on the path.

I must have driven three or four miles along this bumpy grassy path when the headlights picked up a gate blocking the path, and for a moment I was tempted to accelerate and smash my way through it, as they seem to be able to do in the cheaper Ameri-

can movies.

But I stopped, and very fortunately so, because when I got out of the car to open this 'gate' I discovered that it was a barrier fence with a drop of about 100 feet to a river below. And that the 'path' was not a path at all but a disused railway track with the railway lines removed. My next discovery was equally surprising—the 'light' I had been picking up in my mirror and which I had believed was the light beam of a pursuit police-car was only the reflection of a full moon!

I was being chased by the moon. And it was this extraordinary hallucination that brought me back to some kind of sanity again, and I slowly backed my way to the farm-yard and on to the road again, where I parked the car and fell asleep, thankful that I had had such a lucky escape from certain death.

At dawn, when my head was a little clearer, I decided that I had had enough of this fantasy existence and, at a leisurely speed, drove back to London and to my flat in Pont Street. Strange! Back in the face of this flaming world I am reminded of the serenity of the Buddha. And my mad car ride was like a dream, induced by all the drugs; I had been to hell, but the flames had done me no damage; they were as harmless as shadows.

... A new dawn breaks. Once more, as on the first day of creation, I am born. The laughing moon, insecure and pale, hurries away from the flaming sun in a sweeping curve. The silver has changed into a dull red. The black background which but a few hours ago threatened to absorb me, reveals itself now as a grey crust of dross. And I am back in reality once more. A thought strikes me: must addicts all contend with a nisus to self-destruction? In my case, it is only bad temper that keeps me going ... the blessing of Siva. Bom!

PART SEVEN

Six accused in Chelsea drugs case

'Arrested at a flat in Pont Streets Chelsea, yesterday evening, an artist, writer, physician, company director and an art dealer and his wife were each remanded on £100 bail until March 18 at Marlborough Street today.

All were charged with unauthorised possession of cannabis sativa (Indian Hemp). They are:

Joseph Chase Hunt Mellen, 25, writer; John Laurence Doyle, 29, art director; and Mrs Monica Doyle, 23, all of Pont Street; Sheldon Cholst, 41, American physician and author of Pembridge Square, Bayswater; Mark Anthony Warman, 21, company director, of Bywater Street, Chelsea; and Michael John Hollingshead, 34, artist, and occupier of the flat, who was also accused of permitting it to be used for smoking cannabis.'

Being busted is like going bald. By the time you realise it is happening it is too late to do very much about it. So one tries to minimise the consequences as best one can, though of course the damage is already done. Later, perhaps, it may even become one of those stories that, suitably edited, you tell against yourself..

No one was particularly surprised when the police raided my flat. The place was a centre for all kinds of psychedelic experimentation, and it was only a matter of time before someone complained or turned me in. There had been a number of 'incidents' surrounding the history of this flat, such as a party attended by some eighty guests who got accidentally turned on via a spiked fruit-and-wine punch, amongst whom were some police spies masquerading as hippies.

There was also the problem of noise since the speakers were seldom off, always playing at full volume. Yet despite all this, I observed the scene with complete indifference; I was in any case unable or unwilling to do very much about it. It was an oversight I was to 'learn to regret', as the saying goes. Indeed, yes, it was, for I had not expected anything quite so serious as it subsequently all turned out.

I think this was due in part to the fact that Leary himself had been busted in Laredo, Texas, only a short time before the police in London got after me. Tim had been passing through Laredo on his way to Mexico with his daughter, Susan, and his son, Jackie, and Susan had a small stash of grass hidden in her brassiere, which the American customs found. Tim did the only thing a parent could do under such circumstances, he admitted that the grass was his and that he knew where it had been hidden. The Texan judge sentenced him to thirty years' imprisonment. And Susan got off. The American Establishment had got their man.

But this left me in a somewhat difficult situation in London, for the plan had been that Tim would join me before Easter for a big Psychedelic Rally, possibly even at the Albert Hall, with pop musicians, poets and members of the British underground taking part. I had come on ahead to set it up, and, like a juggler, I had several things suspended in mid-air at any one time in the sure knowledge that when Tim came he would be able to act as my 'apologist' and catch them.

Now that he was unable to leave America, I suddenly found everything tumbling about my head. My world had come crashing down and I was unable or strangely unwilling to do much about it. I simply let events take their course, that's all.

It was difficult to explain any of this to either the judge or the jury. The 'politics of ecstasy' was a completely foreign world to them, and one moreover they seemed to equate with drug-taking of the very worst kind. I had also violated the law. I was now liable for a penalty of ten years' imprisonment and a fine of £1000.

Yet despite the seriousness of the charges and the fact that I would almost certainly be found guilty, I treated the whole matter as an exercise in breathtaking intellec-

tual negligence. It seemed to me that the whole purpose of the British legal system, with its roles and rules and rituals, is to convince you that, by its gravity and seriousness, it knows better than you do. And it was through this insight that I decided to defend myself rather than have a barrister do it.

I had also taken some LSD before arriving at court, which enhanced the unreality of the scene, myself high in the witness box on a charge of getting high, the judge in his robes and wig, the jury banked in rows like eggs, a gallery filled with plain and faceless men, and I saw myself as an actor in a B-movie.

There was one exchange I remember; it was during my cross-examination of a Detective Sgt. Dalton of the London Flying Squad, who had arrested me in the first place. The case had begun to drag a little. The witnesses—for the prosecution—were uniformly serious in their evidence. They all made me look like some kind of horrible pervert who took non-prescription drugs as for themselves it would be, say, whisky or beer. The scene had become 'heavy'. Now that Dalton was in the witness-box, I could try to lighten the proceedings a little, and addressing myself to him, I asked him to tell the court what he had done when he first entered the bathroom, where the marijuana had been found.

'I went over to the toilet-bowl,' he replied.

'Very good, you went over to the toilet-bowl,' I said, carefully lowering my voice so that it was almost a whisper. 'And did you see anything in there?'

'Excuse me, but I didn't hear the question.'

I raised my voice slightly: 'Did you see anything when you looked into the toilet-bowl?'

'Yes. I saw some leaves of what I believed to be cannabis sativa floating on the surface of the water.'

'So,' I said, my voice in rising crescendo, 'you saw some grass floating about in the toilet. Well, isn't that a good place for it, then—in the toilet-bowl?'

I thought it was a good joke, and inoffensive, but I was told later that it had probably cost me an extra six months on my sentence.

As it was, I was unprepared for the sentence—twenty-one months for less than an ounce of hashish and a negligible amount of marijuana. It seemed altogether too long and I must have just stood in the dock in utter amazement, for the next thing I knew was being grabbed on both sides and propelled down the staircase to the cells under the court, there to await the Black Maria or something, to take me and the other new prisoners to Wormwood Scrubs.

When my name was finally called, I was brought out and handcuffed and put in the van. And it was a strange sensation to observe London through the grillwork and glass, handcuffed, and coming down off a trip. It also happened that the van actually drove past my old flat, and I wondered how I would have reacted if a few weeks earlier someone had said that one day I would be passing the place under the exact circumstance I described. It was all very curious.

Soon enough, however, we reached the Scrubs, a huge mausoleum of a place that could have been built as a Victorian factory, with high walls and gothic towers, dustbin-dirty in the way of railway stations, and rife with the smell of incontinence of urine. I felt as if I were entering the bowels of the earth. I don't think that I have ever been quite so depressed as I was for those first few minutes in prison. My soul turned grey, if such a thing is possible.

I felt drained of all light in this netherworld place in which it was impossible to imagine how anything had ever been young or beautiful. My sensibilities simply turned themselves off in the face of this monstrous universe. I could have been a stick a stone, a zombie, for here there were none who could empathise with my plight.

But after a night's sleep, my heart began to revive, and my curiosity about my unknown daily routine got the adrenalin working. There was also the novelty of getting into my new prison clothes—a striped shirt with a black tie, socks about quarter of an inch thick, a pair of trousers and military-style jacket made of thick material, and a pair of heavy marching boots. Nothing fitted properly, of course. Oh, I felt like a walking scarecrow, which was probably the intention anyway.

I had no sooner got dressed than the landing officer unlocked the cell and told me to go down and get breakfast. The noise in the hall and passageways was quite deafening, redolent with the sound of male voices, hoots of laughter, crashing metal and bells. It was like living inside a huge alarm-clock, I reflected, as I made my way down the narrow iron staircase to the main hall. Prison is one huge sensory deprivation tank, an incredible human vault that echoes to the least footfall. It is a way of life to suit a sort of monk.

Breakfast consisted of a plate of watery porridge, a couple of table-spoons of milk, a dry sausage, as much bread and marge as you could eat, and a mug of tea.

After breakfast, I was told to go back to my cell where I would be called during the morning to see the Governor who liked to meet each new charge. He would also allocate my work.

My cell was not very big. The walls had been painted a sickening pink, the colour of corned beef, and the cell door was a bright green. Light entered through a barred window recessed some two feet into the wall. There was a table, a plank hard chair, a bed, and a metal chamberpot. To look out of the window you had to stand on the table,

and it was possible to discern in the distance beyond the high prison wall the contours of the city, to look out nostalgically at all the lightness of heart and foot going past in the park, never knowing for sure whether you would ever rejoin it. This is something of what it means to be a prisoner.

The morning passed with monstrous slowness. A prison sentence is a certain fixed period of enforced idleness. Things—I was to learn—have their own momentum of realizability. You can rush your life on the outside by the scruff of its neck, but in prison everything happens according to the rules. It is a permanent ‘working to rule’, you might say; rushing anything would be like trying to rush a stalactite. So one needs to be philosophical about the slowness of it all and develop the necessary mental and physical yogas to overcome inertia, impatience and boredom. It’s not so strange this world as so different.

Like most new inmates, I suppose, I went through quite a few mental changes during those first few days. They were appallingly difficult. My head was ambushed by depression and stagnation, and it seemed that I was beset with all sorts of cares, existential longings to be free again, angst. I think that to be locked up without freedom—that is, without access to love—is something you have to adapt yourself to, for man cannot live by bread alone. We like to think it.

And of course we should, but we really cannot, you know. Individual human life needs the closeness of another body, a warm hand or look, the occasional kiss and merging with another. The inhuman regimen of prison existences does not allow for spontaneity with joy, but dictates a certain style of living in a prescribed manner, always to form, always to rules accepted as facts.

It is indeed an experience of so-called reality. I continue to be amazed that there are so few suicides, singly or even on mass scale, a reaction to the tyranny of a system that allows bodies of men to press on the bodies of men, and usually for so little reason. But with patience and the passing of time, the mind-body adapts itself, trying as best it can to keep a little flame of humanity alight in the dark, womanless silence, and later, even achieve a simple affirmation of the world.

You must or otherwise you would die. So you live on in the hopefulness that once beyond these walls your heart will quicken and your tongue renew. I think prison is really dedicated to the idea that we should think of ways in which to bring each other down not up, and is thus the antithesis of the aims of our new ‘psychedelic revolution’.

When the Governor finally sent for me, I was taken to the main administration block, and told to remove my shoes before entering his office. I saw the reason for this when I went inside. The Governor sat at a desk about fourteen feet from where I stood. We were separated by glossy linoleum as smooth and as slippery as an ice-rick. It seemed that inmates were sometimes in the habit of reacting violently to the Governor’s decisions, and this (almost) foolproof method protected him from assault. He had of course

nothing to fear in that way from myself.

The Chief Prison Officer gave my number and name to the Governor, who looked up and asked me if I had ever been to prison before. 'No, but I've worked in a prison.' 'In this country?' the Governor asked.

'No, in America, at a maximum security prison. I was with a group of people from Harvard who used to run LSD sessions for some of the inmates—revelation followed by reformation, that sort of stuff.'

'Yes, I see. Now, it seems you were charged with possession of dangerous drugs. And that is why you are here now. It seems a pity that someone like yourself who is obviously well-educated and literate should find consolation in drugs. How is such a thing possible?'

Like the New York call-girl from Radcliff who is asked how a nice girl like her came to be in such an occupation, I replied 'Just lucky, I guess.'

The Governor also expressed concern about what work to give me. He finally settled on the steam laundry. And I was told to report there after lunch.

The chief laundry officer was an amiable sort of man who had been at the same job for twenty years. He began by showing me around the laundry. There were huge steam rollers and presses, washers and dryers, ironing rooms and drying rooms, and about thirty prisoners variously engaged in keeping the flow of laundry moving at maximum speed, or so it seemed at the time.

He then showed me what I had to do. My job carried 'a lot of responsibility'; I was on the reception desk, and I had to check in and check out all the laundry and to see that what came in also tallied with what went out. A simple enough job on the face of it. There was one snag, however: the nurses' laundry. It could happen, if one didn't watch the articles like a hawk, that brassieres and panties simply 'disappeared' at some stage on the way through the various laundry processes. And a number of such articles often found their way back to the cells.

My main job, the officer told me, was to see that this didn't happen. There was also a complicated system of record keeping, which was explained to me, but my brain couldn't embrace all the details and I simply 'tuned out' halfway through the hour-long laborious explanation by the officer.

The result was that by the end of the third day the laundry was besieged with complaints, particularly from the nurses' home, which reported nearly a dozen panties missing and several brassieres. There were also complaints from the long-term prisoners, for whom clean laundry was one of the few remaining pleasures, who were understandably impatient that their bespoke shirts or specially fitted trousers had not been

returned.

I was transferred to the ironing room and told to iron shirts. Here again I seemed to get things cocked or somehow not quite right. And this time the complaints were that shirts were coming back from the laundry with big burn marks, missing buttons, and twisted collars.

Once more I found myself standing shoeless before the Governor. I had not been charged with negligence or insubordination, but the implication was there. I was given a 'second chance' and transferred to the book bindery, which is considered something of a plum of a job at Wormwood Scrubs.

The book bindery is run by a civilian, and it is quiet. In appearance it resembled a Dickensian solicitor's office, with high tables and chairs and strained faces buried in piles of books. I was put in the paperback section to be trained in the craft of hard-cover binding, a job by which none would be particularly impressed but requiring a certain amount of manual skill, nonetheless. The civilian supervisor told me in this connection that book-binding required three things: 'The first is dexterity, the second is dexterity, and the third is dexterity.'

I was glad to be away from the old steam laundry and was quite enjoying my new job when another one of those unwritten minor tragedies occurred. I had left a foot-high stack of books in the press; the new covers had been glued on and the idea was to let them dry overnight. This was the culmination of a week's work, and I was naturally excited to see how the finished products looked in the morning. The civilian supervisor came over with me to unscrew the press and see what kind of a job I had made on my first assignment.

He began to turn the handle; and his dismay was equal to my own, for all the bindings had stuck together with the result that the books rose as one, in concertina fashion, and then crashed on to the floor, sending loose pages all over the place. The civilian supervisor stood for a moment, his mouth wide open, and then said very, very slowly, and with great pathos: 'Good God! Good God! Good God!' (I was with him on the first two all right, but he lost me on the third.)

That was the end of my stay in the book bindery. A complaint was made to the Governor who immediately despatched me to a foetid factory building to sew mailbags, the final degradation, no doubt, for after mailbags there is nowhere further down the work rung to go, except possibly being a waiter in the Prison Officer's Mess.

With the slowness of the Himalayan range, it seemed, my average uneventful days passed into routinely ordinary weeks. There had been quite a bit of news about hash and LSD in the daily Press, mainly about people getting busted, so that by the beginning of the summer quite a few of my friends were inside with me—Nick Douglas, the painter; Hugh Blackwell, the writer; Hugh Lansdowne, the poet; Pat Ryan, the musician; Robert

Fraser, the art gallery owner; and John Hopkins, one of the editors of the International Times of whom Christopher Logue wrote in his poem:

'Mistakes like mine occur Bored with the cosy spiral of my galaxy I went off limits
And time slammed around me like The door into a pillar box.'

And there were to be several hundred more 'psychedelic' inmates in British jails before the year was out.

The Press was having a field-day on the topic. Pot and LSD were the new twin menaces of our Western kind of society, evils which had to be stamped out. 'At least 100,000 more Britons will take psychedelic drugs this year in spite of new provisions in the Dangerous Drugs Act of 1966,' said one headline, and went on to say that this figure was the result of twelve-month nationwide survey conducted by a Dr. Jim Marle, the Atlantic psychiatrist, at a meeting in Oxford.

In fact this was more likely to happen because of the provisions in the Dangerous Drugs Act. Restrict anything and immediately people want it. There must be thousands of readers now buying grass and LSD who would never have done so but for articles of this kind; and quite a few I daresay now believe that LSD is compulsory, like vaccination or fluoridation Besides, total prohibition has never worked.

Yet drugs is a subject that can never come under discussion without so much emotion that rational argument becomes obscured if not totally banished. The Press, and to some extent publishers as well, seem to delight in touching people where they are most vulnerable—producing articles and books which threaten the incredulous and the superstitious. Whenever one of these articles or books appears in public they set off a chain of articles or letters, each more heated than the last. This is possible because the problems concerned with drugs are not susceptible to single convulsive solutions. It is as though where questions of morality come in that detachment quits the scene.

And often the Press would slant a particular piece so that not even an idiot reader could miss the point. One example comes to mind, also from this period in the mid-sixties. It is from the now defunct Daily Sketch. It showed a photograph of Leary, smart and serious in a suit, deep in conversation with the reporter. The article was headed 'I'll Turn On Britain, says the leader of the Drug Church'.

And Leary is then quoted as saying: 'I don't imagine I shall run into as much opposition for my religion in Britain as I have here in the States. The British are more tolerant and have a sense of humour.'

The question of drugs inside the prison was also a matter of some concern, for as the 'psychedelic' inmate population rose, and as other prisoners became cognizant of the phenomena LSD and hashish, there was a corresponding increase in their availability. Many ways were used to get psychedelics in, from felt-tip pens stuffed with Red Leba-

nese to bunches of grapes spiked with acid. I myself had a reasonably steady supply of hashish, and a stash of LSD which Richard Alpert and Owsley had left during their visit to the Scrubs. There was very little if anything the prison authorities could do to stop it.

Naturally, I would often be approached by other prisoners to tell them something about these drugs, or they simply wanted to score. And as a general rule, I would share any hashish I might happen to have, whilst refusing to give them LSD, that is, unless they were already pretty experienced in using it.

There were exceptions, however, most notable of these being George Blake, the spy then serving a sentence of forty-three years' imprisonment. He had served about five years of his sentence when I met him. And it was not long before we were having long discussions about 'turning on'; and he said he would like to try it.

We decided to run a session on the Sunday, when the cells in 'D' Hall are left open all afternoon and one can roam at will about the landings without supervision. Blake's cell was on the ground floor, comfortably furnished with a carpet and curtains, a bookcase stuffed with books and, on the table, a short-wave radio, which he had somehow acquired in order 'to listen to Arabic language stations'. Nothing much happened for the first hour.

But as the session developed, Blake became quite tense, a nervous strain verging on complete paranoia, and seemed to believe that I was a Secret Service agent who had administered him a truth serum. He told me that I'd be killed within the next twenty-four hours, and made other similar threats. I felt quite baffled as to what to do, so I did nothing, merely listened as he went through his flip-out, and tried to reassure him by means of treating the whole affair as if it were all somehow something quite ordinary strewn into the everyday, though secretly I was quite alarmed in case a prison officer happened to look in and hear what was going on.

He finally settled down, however, and the last couple of hours were spent in deep thought and quiet reflection concerning his future existence, and he said he might not be able to stand up to many more years of incarceration. I suggested they'd probably let him out on parole in a few years' time, but he doubted this. He felt that he was in prison as a living warning to others who might be similarly tempted. But I said that was an old cliché, and had never worked anyway.

As it happened, Blake escaped only a few weeks after the session, by scaling the wall one Sunday afternoon by means of a rope-ladder thrown over by an accomplice, who had been in touch with him via the short-wave radio in his cell. When I last heard about him, he was living in Moscow and working for the Cairo Section of the Russian Foreign Ministry.

I had been at Wormwood Scrubs for about four months when I was asked about going to an 'open prison' at Leyhill, near the English-Welsh border. I said I'd prefer the

country. And shortly after this interview, I was transferred to Leyhill Prison.

Leyhill was in some sense a reprieve from the double-dense monotony of a 'closed' prison like the Scrubs, where no-life and all-life hang precariously together there. Here in the country one could not only see the beauty of the natural landscape but also feel it, and I am eternally grateful to whoever it was who got me there.

Upon arrival, I was taken to the kitchen and given a dinner of fried eggs, bacon, beans and chips, freshly baked rolls and butter some cake, and coffee. The Duty Officer told me that there were some 450 inmates and two night guards, that there were no walls or fences surrounding the prison, and that anyone was free to escape at any time.

I was then shown into a dormitory of about fourteen people and given a bed and bedside locker. Pat Ryan, the musician, occupied the bed on my right, and Jerry, a singer and lyricist, the one on my left. They had both been busted for hashish. A couple of others in the dormitory had also been similarly busted for possession, and not a few of the ordinary prisoners were starting to smoke.

I was called to meet the Governor the next morning. He was an amiable, elderly Scot, who managed our meeting very well. He told me that this was his retirement year, that his wife was dying of cancer, and that he was a lover of Robert Burns and Ella Wheeler Wilcox. He suggested that I join both the bridge club and the debating club, help start a flying club, and apply for a course in fish ecology at nearby Bristol University, all of which I subsequently did.

My first job at Leyhill was as a waiter at the Prison Officers' Training School, which was sited in the former Earl of Duncraig's estate and house, next to the prison. It was a good job as it meant in effect that one ate civilian food, which made quite a change from the plain prison fare. And the work was far from boring. I would wait on about four tables at which would be four trainee prison officers attending their eight-week induction course. I was probably the first live prisoner they had ever seen. And it was interesting to observe their reactions.

My initial approach would never vary. I'd meet them at the table on their first day, extend my hand to each one, and welcome them individually. By the end of the second day they all knew why I was in prison. And by the end of the week, our conversation was generally about ways to get high. Some of the groups were quite generous, and would slip me the occasional bottle of wine.

Some let me use their billiard room. Some even said they were looking forward to meeting me again at some point in my future, when they would see that I got an easy deal. They were a pleasant crowd, by and large, mostly respectable working-class, who needed some kind of job with tenure in order to keep their game going. It was a job. It gave financial security. It made their respectability possible.

Life at Leyhill had a particular flavour all its own. Physically, the layout was perfect. There was a huge sports ground with cricket, rugby, and soccer pitches, running tracks, and places to fly your kite. The Ducy estate contained an arboretum filled with trees and bushes from every part of the world, a constant delight to both mind and eye.

There was one tree in particular I was attracted to. It was Japanese and, I believe, magical, whose flowering one spring turned me on to the plant kingdom. The exquisite beauty of this tree was like a window in which you could see the existence of this Other World. And it was a point of routine for me to spend most of my lunch time smoking praises for Shankar in the half-lotus position under the boughs of this holy tree.

One of the highlights of my stay at Leyhill was the production of a physio-psychedelic musical called Paradise Lost — The True Story, which had been sent to me by Joey Mellen, friend and former associate from Pont Street, who had decided that the best way to stay permanently 'high' was by trepanning a hole in his head the size of the old sixpenny piece. The play was a strange mixture of Milton and Mellen, with lyrics in praise of trepanation or 'getting the hole'. I reproduce one of the songs below, called 'The Great Brain Robbery':

THE GREAT BRAIN ROBBERY

Up stood the ape—down came the drag— The beginning of the blues— Can't talk your way out of it adult Daddy there's a drag on you.

Oh adult the mistakes you make You ignorant little man Adult oh the liberties you take You mistaken little man.

Between your meals you make your deals And send your sons to war Talk all you want but don't you know We've heard it all before.

Adult will you never see All you want is to agree— The lies you tell to save your face Constitute your grave disgrace.

You're losing and you think you're gaining It's just your ego needs maintaining Adult d'you know what is true ? The drag is bearing down on you.

What you're trying to regain Is blood belonging to your brain Will you know before you're dead That paradise is in your head ?

You was robbed—so you made belief— It's gravity—we've caught the thief All you prayers won't save your soul Adult you need a hole.

Another song, called 'Brainbloodvolume', has been set to music by Julie Felix in her furthest-out number yet.

BRAINBLOODVOLUME

It was lost and now it's found again

Don't drive it underground again

Brainbloodvolume—

They call it love and heaven above

Some take it for the hell of it

That's sugarlack—

Brainbloodvolume—

It's you it's me

it's good

Understood?

Brainbloodvolume.

It's what the poets have written for

Painters have painted for

Priests have prayed for

Prisons have filled for

Soldiers have killed for

Brainbloodvolume.

It's what the pipes have been smoked for

Witches have been cloaked for

Headstands have been done for

The whole thing was begun for

It's what the world was made for

The price must be paid for—

Brainbloodvolume.

It was necessary to approach the Governor to obtain permission to stage it in the prison theatre, perhaps even before an invited audience of students from Bath and Bristol universities. I decided to plug the Milton section at the expense of the rest, feeling that the Governor would be more sympathetic to it than the modern additions.

The Governor was most attentive during my outline of the play, and wrote a memo to the Prison Chaplain that he should consider staging it one Sunday in the Church.

Accordingly, I met with the Chaplain, a nice, easygoing man with a strong sense of Christian vocation, who had been at Leyhill for four years and had a good understanding of prisoner psychology. I introduced the matter by suggesting that there is a mystery in the story of Paradise Lost that lies at the heart of all our lives. And this is older than that of Oedipus. In the play there are overtones of the great four stories of the world's various religions, and specifically of the Hebrew-Christian tradition.

Guilt and Sin are pretty powerful themes of the Christian Church, and any attempt to understand their place in the world and their relevance to contemporary man was, I assured him, a matter of concern to today's criminal. One begins by depicting man as some kind of "hairless talking ape" who is unable to benefit from the possibilities of his own existence, who then has a revelation, in this instance, through piercing a small hole through his skull to increase the volume of blood to the brain.

The Chaplain looked puzzled. 'But what has Paradise Lost got to do with making holes in your head?' he asked.

'Well, the theory is that by increasing the amount of blood to the brain the surface of the capillaries—millions of them—increases, which in turn release glucose from the blood into the brain cells. This is the physiological secret of "getting high". So the "hairless talking ape" who does not know that his "fall" (loss of brainbloodvolume) has a purely physiological cause. Thus he lives out his simple life or death without ever realising his golden future, truly the parable of fallen man.'

'It sounds all rather godless to me.'

'Well, the modern writer uses myths and metaphors in order to get his message across. And in the case of this play, he has found modern counterparts to the story of the Fall in poetry, science, and music to express an awareness that we all have, however obscurely, that there are vast capacities in man which he continually fails to realise. The message of the play is simple. If things are not right inside yourself, then change them. The evolutionary leap in being from monkey to man produced a new kind of animal, a creative animal, an animal with imagination, who could devise ways to regain the lost

paradise of lost brainbloodvolume.'

'But why trepanation?' the Chaplain persisted.

'Because trepanation offers a solution on a manageable scale.'

'A solution to what?'

'A solution to the problem of staying "high".'

'But what has staying "high" got to do with putting on a musical play in my Church?'

'The Governor and I thought that because of the religious themes you might...

'But I find the whole thing utterly "godless", and I could never allow such a production to be shown. And now that you have explained it to me, I doubt whether I could allow it to be performed in the theatre. Prisoners are very suggestible you know, and we could not risk wholesale trepanations. It is just what the Daily Express are looking for. I really think, Hollingshead, that you ought to concentrate instead on more practical plans for your own future than try to launch a social movement based on people putting holes in their heads. Have you ever considered the profession of the church?'

'I'm sorry you don't like the play. I thought you would. What we are seeing today is merely the visible aspect of a universal neurosis, and the Fall myths, in whatever language, illustrate humanity's unconscious awareness of human suffering, which is the failure of humanity which Paradise Lost symbolises. God is simply a creative power which is part of human life in the Garden. A voice within man tells him that he can and should regain the lost brainblood of childhood—should exercise some degree of control over his own consciousness, in other words, which is the message of the new developing religions in the West. The problem facing the established Church is that if man lived up to his full creative capacities, there would be no religion.'

We decided to go ahead anyway, and started rehearsals. Hugh Landsdowne, a poet and magician, who had been imprisoned for growing half an acre of marijuana at his farm in Essex, linked in the I Ching; and together we made a huge stroboscopic mandala with an electric motor we pinched from one of the machines in the tailor's shop. The play was never performed in either the church or the theatre, due to the misunderstanding as to what the play was actually about; but it was seen by most of the inmates at some point in its actual unfolding; and helped keep our minds off more dangerous matters.

I tend to remember perhaps only the positive things about my last year in prison. Yet in all honesty I cannot rid myself of the thought that my life there might have been very, very different indeed. I think all of us carry around in our heads some picture of how we imagine prison life to be, though doubtless altogether impossible to identify in

reality. Mine was a superstitious mixture of Gestapo camps and what I had seen in American movies. The reality is quite different; there is, for instance, very little real fear of the intentions of the prison authorities, who tend to stick to a rule book that does not include physical brutality or torture or idiosyncratic sadism. There is also very little physical violence going on between inmates, though incidents happen from time to time, like anywhere else. Man is only human after all. And violence is part of his human nature.

And yet... the experience of prison is a painful one. It may be no more than an enduring slight headache, but it is always there, forever encroaching on your private world, an impersonal, indifferent environment in which you are physically contained; and all for the greater public good. Prison is a feeling, a subjective as well as a purely physical thing. It hits directly at your sensations, but acting more like a dampener than an actual brake. It lowers by its sense of decay, its corridors of refuse, its wasteland approach to fallen humanity. No wonder one feels saddened to observe how as our twentieth century develops so too does the machinery of incarceration and the illegality of our various legal actions, who seek to condemn even the children who comprise our future brave generation.

Prison is some kind of other place in which I would never wish for anyone to have to live out their simple life or death.

PART EIGHT

Scandinavia 1967

'And when he came to the place where the wild things are they roared their terrible roars and gnashed their terrible teeth and rolled their terrible eyes and showed their terrible claws till Max said "BE STILL!" and tamed them with the magic trick of staring into all their yellow eyes without blinking once and they were frightened and called him the most wild thing of all and made him king of all wild things...' (From a children's story by Maurice Sendak)

My life has something of Peer Gynt's about it, more intimate to me even than I am intimate to myself; just now I happened to hear Solveig's song on the radio; it quite got hold of me; to wait loyally a whole lifetime for someone... the kind of love that triumphs over the hostility of space and time and separation: this is love.

So it is not entirely without reason that it is to Norway my spirit will sometimes return, back, I suppose, to its mythological roots and the magic landscape from which it sprang. For I am at heart a Northerner, most at home in my Scandinavian Kingdoms of the snows; essentially a Tundra type.

It had been a long, steamy pig of a summer in prison and I wanted to empty its bog breath out of my bones: Norway sounded like the one good place to be. It was thus with a delicious sense of escaping from the freedom of the cage that I sat down at the

First Engineer's table on the M.S. Blenheim as she slowly broke anchor in the Tyne at the start of a two-day voyage to Oslo. This I had arranged.... Once more Proteus expands across the space of the North Sea, returning to a place where there is someone 'who loves him best of all', to the land where the trolls and the Solveigs live—to the Gudbrandsdal Valley, to be exact.

A few days later I was sitting by myself in an outfarm high on the upper reaches and timber line of Rayneberg overlooking Lake Mjoesa and the town of Lillehammer, where the air is as thin and as pure as Vichy water; and all sounds are permanently sharp in the mountain stillness.

Rock was now a feature of my landscape—and the tiny farm I rented sat plum in a nest of great rocks, and it was easy to see why the old dalesman family left it for a State-provided modern apartment in the town. My window looked out over an untouched moor and the eye was drawn downwards down tousled slopes of ubiquitous bracken to the lake some 2500 feet below.

There was a prehistoric feel about the place and I now understood why it was this valley which Ibsen chose to set the home of Peer Gynt, the universal wanderer, the exile in the heart of each one of us. Yet would a Himalayan Rishi understand Nordic gods (which the vision of these mountains quite naturally created in my soul) were he to observe the landscape of this valley?—I think not; he would probably die of excessive cold.

Yet I loved the place, especially at night, sitting by the open peis or fireplace, listening to the softly stirring firs outside, so silent in my solitary retreat. For my life here had something of Advent about it—waiting and hoping and getting on with ordinary things. In certain moods I'd occupy my time translating Old Norse Sagas. I found this to be an excellent aid to concentration. There is one text I particularly remember, from Morkinskinna, a history of twelfth-century Norwegian kings, which was compiled by an Icelander in 1220; the text is called 'Audun buys himself a white bear', which actually turned out to be something of a white elephant; the story is about one Audun who, desiring to see the world, made the dangerous voyage from Iceland to Greenland; there he exchanged his entire cargo for a single white bear.

That is all. Nothing more; it is an exquisite story, exquisitely told: and in the mind of the thirteenth-century narrator, Audun's behaviour in spending his cash like this was perfectly reasonable, for Greenland was an important place at that time, and a white bear a great treasure—like a white Cadillac might be today, something whose price is simply our All and not a penny less.

I also got to know a few people in the district and also in Lillehammer itself, where I would go for my weekly shopping. On one of these trips I met a Norwegian poet—whose name escapes me who invited me to attend a reading of 'Nordic poets' which he had arranged at the local Folk High School, when I could also read something myself if I so wished. A lot of people from Oslo were going to be there. And Vesaas, the celebrated

author of *The Ice Palace*—by which English reviewers are not much impressed—had promised to attend.

Thus it was, on the appointed day, at the appointed time, and with due solemnity appropriate to the almost reverential sense of 'presence', if that is the right word for a rather stiff atmosphere. It reminded me more of a meeting of Kirk Elders than any poetry-reading I had been to before. Absolute seriousness is not without a dose of humour except in Norway, where it is absolutely serious that is, until the 'snaps' begins to flow, when everyone seems to get very wild and something in the structure of their thought completely snaps, as it were; it is a completely different psychophysical effect from that of getting stoned on hashish or marijuana. (A recent report by WHO, Geneva—"The Use of Cannabis" notes that 'Individuals who have no taste for the cannabis experience per se—regardless of moral or other considerations—are more apt to exhibit a preference of a controlled, structured, rational and secure approach to life,' as it also suggested that alcohol is much more closely associated with crime, aggression, and violence than is cannabis.)

At any rate, I had taken the precaution of smoking several joints on my way down the mountain, and arrived very stoned that is, 'quiet' and 'sensing'.... 'Those who enjoy cannabis tend to prefer an unstructured and spontaneous style of life, are relatively prone to take risks, value states of altered consciousness, and tend to seek such effects both through drugs and through other methods.' (Same WHO report).

Soon the booze began to have its effect, and the first poet—from Sweden—was helped on to the stage, where he raged through his mother tongue like a prairie fire, his bull voice crashing through our heads like falling masonry—and with about as many mixed metaphors in each line as in my description of his reading. He finally collapsed in a wave of laughter or tears, and disappeared backstage and was seen again no more.

Then followed a lady poet from Denmark, who read a series of poems on the theme of Vietnam, and in the form of imaginary letters from a Vietcong private to his mother in Haiphong, telling her about the effects on his mind of being bombed from planes 'too high in the sky even to see'. And this had a temporary sobering effect on the listeners, who had perhaps become aware, even if ever so faintly, that they were somehow, in some way, also a bit culpable.

Three or four poets in quick succession. And then it was my turn.... 'Cannabis users are most frequently young, male, unmarried, and exhibit some instability with respect to residence, work, school and goals.' (Ibid)... I seated myself on the stage in the half-lotus position, lit two candles, which I put on either side of me, and asked that the hall lights be put out, which was done, though not without a bit of protest from members of a party from Oslo, who had, I gathered, been wanting to dance on one of the large tables. There was a hush, finally. And into this silent space I inserted, in the Danish, Timothy Leary's translation of Tao Sutra number fourteen from the Chinese classic, the Tao Te Ching, which I reproduce here in its more familiar English form:

'Gazing ... they do not see it

they call it empty space.

Listening ... they do not hear it

they call it silence or noise

Groping ... they do not grasp it

they call it intangible

But here ... We ... spin through it

Electric ... Silent ... Subtle'

And since it was the last poem of the evening, and since Tarjaas Vesaas insisted only upon us speaking what for me was the obscure dialect form of 'Nynorsk', I made my farewells and silently...softly... I spun off into a crisp, clear night of stars, gliding like a fish upstream, reaching Ravneberg just as a new dawn was breaking. To the sounds of the clapper of the cattle bells swinging back and forth, moving in flow, regular, without stop or start so harmoniously held...

After a few hours' quiet reflection, I realised that what had really upset me about the poetry-reading the evening before was an overheard remark following Ulla Ryum's 'Vietnam poems'... 'Det tross alt er farlig aa leve i Norge ogsaa—hva med superhighwayene og alt, ikke?' ('Despite that, it is pretty dangerous living in Norway too—what with these "superhighways" coming along and everything.') From one point of view, the person was right but I could imagine there were many in Vietnam who would gladly exchange the dangers of Norwegian highways for the sort of life they had to contend with there.

But if I felt this strongly, why should I remain 'aloof with Hermit Eye' ? Wasn't my situation just as much a 'cop-out' as for the indifferent majority—just living out our simple life or death? Or in some Nietzschean sense, was not my life now also a kind of 'germinative regression', an attempt to return to my roots ? I had taken to acid and later to myths and ancient stories to seek a formula that would turn the surrounding world to dust and reveal the sought for paradise.

'For now I am homesick after my own kind: and these people touch me not.... ' I remember myself as an ancient hero, a wild man of the mountains, a guardian of the door, a paradox— To sing... of heroes... Now? In this forgotten age? of giant men? No! — Yet I shall speak that our giant flies might listen and would know the glory that man is... IN THE BEGINNING, then were men men hard and tall, the warriors, who fought with man and beast, who knew the call of blood and fire, and whose swords cut paths to...

but who shall hear this—here? The paths, the paths! Immortal paths! Cuhulain rides his five fiery chariots across the firmament!

Arthur and Lancelot in battle! The ground shakes! IN THE BEGINNING was blood and fire...

And now ? The matterings of the civilised yet impotent conscience of modern society?

No.

The sound a new-minted coin makes upon a concrete street?

No.

Silence then?

Yes—silence. Heroes are dead!

We buried them, and did the rites

And they've long forgotten us.

by Kristof Konstanty Jastrzebski-Glinka)

And thus one sits, day in, day out, in urn-like silence, staring wearily into nothing—you can almost see the nothing.

And yet in this nothing it was something to know that it's not enough to see the light; you have to market the message. The meaning of silence is only the suspense of our breath before the storm and the stillness is nothing but the prelude to catastrophe... like a thunder-cloud in the process of materialisation, it is the tension of violence held in check.

And do we notice? Not a bit. We sail on in our aimless craft lulled in the cradle of all that is—that supremely ordinary human condition of wakefulness which accepts, without reflection, the universe as we find it. We are the proverbial 'sleepwalkers'... we experience without any awareness of the meaning of our experience of life; we are the monolithic mass who act and speak like men asleep. We are as good as dead.

And is acid to help us wake, or help us dream ? It can make us conscious of our own mental states as somehow dependent on the predispositions left by the world we experience as an impersonal universe; the all too personal soul fashions its own world in the imagining of dreams—the spirit serves as light for itself: or worse, we somehow see the visionary delight of the ego in its own spirituality, its purity, as if it were itself abso-

lute and infinite.... 'Behold! from the travails of my soul, before me, above me, between heaven and earth, finite and yet all penetrating, I see a tremendous figure growing out of the nothingness of my being, the figure of One whose materialisation is the Spirit Mercurius!'—Or is it 'Aquarius'?—there is such a pantheon of gods in the alchemic line.

But about the state of conscious wakefulness, or prajna (wisdom), the Vedas tell us that it is a divine attribute in one who has become aware of the One and is full of Bliss, Bliss, Bliss.... 'In conscious wakefulness there is no need or greet, no desire, no thought, and all confusions are fused into a blessed peace; only knowledge and Bliss remain.'

And as for the state of 'transcendental wakefulness', the truly wise know it is incapable of being spoken of, grasped held, imagined or manipulated; it is without distinctive marks of any kind—unthinkable, unnameable, for it is that into which the essence of the knowledge of the One is resolved, it is the Peaceful, the Benign, the Non-dual. And—the metaphysical paradox!—One is the self; 'He' is to be known.

Whenever imaginative man penetrates into the mystical universe which surrounds him, it brings forth spirits and gods. And the creatures thus born into the world appear different according to the peculiarity of their parents—just look at all the historical pantheons, the first recorded divinities of the Vedic poets, the gods of the Old Testament, the Egyptian and Greek gods—sometimes maternal, sometimes paternal...

But the unknowable, unnameable, ungraspable 'He' is at the root of them all, and thus the source of all that was, and is, and will be, living as an ancestor continues to live in His distant descendants. And occasionally 'He' appears again in His own intrinsic form. 'He' is not Jahveh neither is he Allah nor the Vishnu of the Hindus; 'He' is none of the historical Gods, for 'He' is nameless. But when 'He' appears we know it—it was 'He' whom the tribes of Israel saw in the wilderness, as it was also 'He' before whom the Aryans of the Himalayas once trembled.

Thus Leary himself writes in each generation a few men stumble upon the riddle of consciousness and its solution; they discover, once again, that beyond the ordinary world of macroscopic tangible, material things, there are endless levels of energy transformations accessible to consciousness. They learn again the age-old lesson taught by mystics and wise men of East and West: that most of mankind is sleepwalking, moving somnabulistically through a world of rote perceptions and conflicting emotions. As have many internal explorers of the past, they become dedicated to the process of consciousness expansion, to the ideal of maximum wakefulness and internal freedom.

It is perhaps significant that the psychedelic experience, which has been popularised by Leary through his lectures and books in America, has not helped a single American to a higher education and here I do not exclude myself—but, on the other hand it has brought all the more into hospitals and jails. LSD is considered, even in India, as dangerous. Or is it that it takes a very great deal of acid to produce even a little elevation of consciousness. The fact is, no one has yet proved that an increase of individual

human awareness—drug-induced or not—is appropriate to the organisation of twentieth-century society in the West; it may be that it does more harm than good in the case of most people.

No, I think the psychedelic experience does something quite different—it is not a question of the validity of facts or even of personal manifestation of the spirit, but of becoming aware in oneself of how to fashion a new and better reality.

I wanted to go on living in Norway, but however well one tries to understand oneself and sort out one's priorities for happiness, reality is forever getting in the way. You never know what you will be doing until you find yourself doing it, mysteriously at work again. I had been toying with the idea of writing a book about my experiences in America, something positive and forward-looking, reflecting somehow the optimism I had for the future, the 'practical Utopia' of the Underground's manifesto of liberation.

My need to communicate was very great indeed, but it had nothing to do with the ego or things like that; it was, I think, something similar to the urge that compelled Marco Polo to write about his travels. But there are two things more important than writing—action and meditation—and I was impelled by the former. There is perhaps a transcendentalist anticipation of what I mean in Emerson's address on the American Scholar:

'The sacredness which attaches to the act of creation, the act of thought, is transferred to the record. Instantly the book becomes noxious. the guide is a tyrant. The sluggish and perverted mind of the multitude having once received this book, stands upon it, and makes an outcry if it is destroyed. Colleges are built on it. Meek young men grow up in libraries. Hence, instead of Man Thinking, we have the bookworm. I had better never see a book than to be warped by its attraction clean out of my orbit, and make a satellite instead of a system. The one thing in the world, of value, is the active soul.'

Books make bondage. But the bondage is to an authority outside ourselves. Freedom lies in getting control of our own lives back into our own hands—to stand on one's own two feet—and everyone united by mutual affection with personal relations as the touchstone, creating an environment of creativity and harmony. But it will take a miracle to free the human mind: because the invisible reins and chains are magical in the first place; and each individual will only free himself in the measure that he knows how to locate and discover his own proper powers. Whitman, likewise in a transcendentalist sermon says, 'You shall no longer take things at second or third hand, nor look through the eyes of the dead, nor feed on the spectres in books.'

And the man who is not possessed of an active soul, or of a self-conscious able to recognise that it is everywhere in chains to authority outside itself, will not know how to set about the task of magical self-liberation. But to concentrate oneself in this direction is a thing which very few individuals of the West have ever known how to do, for to the rational mind the ideal of a 'practical Utopia' accomplished on earth is an apparently impossible task. It would seem to depend upon direct incarnation of the soul/spirit/Christ

in each individual if he or she were to give direct expression of spiritual values in daily life.

Our Western philosophers have always been rationalists, for their insights do not depend upon the awakening of their own souls (most philosophers lead private lives that are really quite hellish sometimes) but upon a special facility in their treatment of symbols which awaken spiritual/religious/philosophical associations in the mind of the reader. Any true change would have to be based on a different concentration from that of reason. We must create ourselves out of whatever it is that is within ourselves, unconcerned with standardized answers, the so-called scientific methods: it has an inner rhythm, like that of music.

Or, as my Guru puts it, 'We must first recognise Atman within ourselves, and then realise him in the world; we should assist Brahman, whose partial expression we are, to perfect himself in appearance.' And this is something beyond all power of words—Life is not an art so much as an experience. 'With the Pillar of Fire goes the Pillar of Cloud.' At dawn, a pair of trousers; at noon, a cloud.

But such mysteries are unpublishable except as poetry, the veiled truth. This is also the new doctrine of Ezra Pound, who says: 'Prose is not education but the outer courts of the same. Beyond its doors are the mysteries. Eleusis. Things not to be spoken of save in secret The mysteries self-defended, the mysteries that cannot be revealed Fools can only profane them. The dull can neither penetrate the secretum nor divulge it to others.'

What is the poet doing in trying to express mystical reality objectively ? He is looking for a scheme which would circumscribe it from all sides. And if he describes its contours clearly and correctly, then every other intelligent human being could place the content there for himself, so that he might believe that the poet had shown the 'thing'.

But that is impossible. All the poet has done is to present a frame for that which we must be conscious of anyhow in order to recognise it. And recognition is liberation.

That is perhaps why people who have had a psychedelic experience can 'tune-in' to the secret and occult, in which God is better honoured and loved by silence than by words, and better seen by closing the eyes to images than by opening them. So let's not try to understand everything. LSD may provide you with a clue as to what is happening. It opens the Doors of Perception and beyond those doors who can really say ?

There is no future, with modern man and man of the future, which does not resemble what 'free' people are doing in the world. All are trying to get control over the making of their own lives; growing their own food in country meadows or backyards, building their own homes out in the forests, learning how to farm 'liberated' land and live off the produce of the sea; learning how to bake their own bread... and learning to love one another as one enormous family, and with a conscious relation to, or respect for,

the environment.

And this implies, in one word, Revolution, not the revolution against the 'given' which has since the time of Hegel provided the avant-garde with an excuse for anarchist expression or behaviours—the answer from the outside—but the revolution within the self. Total Revolution is inner-change-in-the-world; the tools are a cultural framework which bypasses (transcends) the existing projection structure; and 'religion' is an artistic tool for getting there, through image, vision and symbol's symbol. ONE METAPHOR CAN CHANGE THE WORLD: 'Peace of Mind brings Peace on Earth?'—Yes, but only if we recognise how the ego is the cause of all the wars inside the human mind and, by implication, also of all the wars in the world-at-large.

How strange that I 'should' do anything again! But these 'revolutionary' ideas were becoming decisive: action would decide the rightness or wrongness of our ideas, success that of volition. It is not enough to take your ease in the world of ideas and live there naively, as I had earlier thought, for this would mean that we had merely allowed ourselves to be driven by the stream of events. We have to know how to guide ourselves to the goal.

I found it increasingly difficult simply to sit and reflect on all this, for there was still the job of translating recognition into action. I could not hope to 'change myself' through 'meditation'—a temperament like mine collapses under the burden of living in another kind of existence that simply 'is' and needs the challenge of 'should' in order to realise the goal of 'becoming', which is, I suppose what our Western sort of life is all about—we believe we 'should' grow, become, create, perform, perfect again, and this is the impetus for conscious volition, since our ideas remain nonexistent until they have been tested in reality, with the self as the first testing ground. From the point of view of the world, it is mere illusion, if a holy man regards himself as an incarnation or a Saint he must become saintly, change himself, if he wishes to be taken seriously.

In my own case, I felt strongly that I should return to America, see how my old psychedelic friends were making out on their 'voyages of self-discovery', meet Tim and Richard Alpert again, perhaps even settle over there for a time and try to build a structure in which I could exist without losing sight of my goal. But it was a difficult decision to make, seeing how I had been out of touch for so long. And apart from considerations like these, there was the fact that life in America actually scared me stiff. If paranoia is 'having some idea of what is really going on', then you could say that I was definitely paranoid about returning to our brave New World.

Just thinking about New York could send icicles up and down my spine.... my paranoia took the form of imagining myself walking alone on 11 5th Street from Riverside to Broadway at midnight, or equally—due to some error in my direction—ending up, an object of unpleasant attention by members of the 'Roach Guards' or the 'Five Points Gang', in Broome Street down on the Bowery...

At any rate, my fears and doubts were overcome somewhat by Christmas, and early in January I found myself once again airborne over the Atlantic on a flight that was to land me a few hours later at Boston's Logan Airport, and the start of a new chapter

PART NINE

1968

'Turn on to acid, man, Get into the channels of your mind Go see what there is to find— No one knows the human mind...

There are doors as yet unopened So much to see, Drop some acid, man, Go see what you can find.

I never saw life as I know it, man, It was all in my mind. Things have become much clearer Now that I've opened up my mind.

Before all this, life was such a drag; Working on Chrysler's pressure line Just to pay for a shag. Working on the track Just to score some bread So I and the wife and kids Could be fed and comfy In our suburban shack.

But all that's gone now Since I've seen life for the first time Through the channels of my mind. Acid was the key, it turned me on And helped me to find The right channels in my mind.'

(Anonymous—Found in a book in cell-block beneath Bristol Central Prison)

Returning to America after an absence of nearly four years was much more than a sentimental journey, much more than just filling in time; I was a man trying to maintain his soul alive. Keep the candle flame ablaze.... When all was growing dark. It was the wriggling to avoid death, essentially a poetic thing, undertaken without either rationality or reason. I wanted to probe something solid to live by. And travel was an available means to see, look, find — 'la vraie vie'.

My internal space had changed since Millbrook and our first brief experiment in 'transpersonative living', when acid was the lance with which to ride after the Grail. There was now (1968) little good acid around, and what there was—the so-called 'street acid'—came mainly from California. There was something wrong with the synthesis; it was not pure. And you were never sure what it was exactly that you were taking, so I only dropped it on those rare occasions when someone gave me either 'Sandoz acid' or 'crystal acid'.

I think the problem for the underground chemists manufacturing clandestine acid was shortage of ergot, without which the synthesis of d-LSD-25 is impossible. Until 1965, supplies of ergot could be bought with little or no difficulty from three or four European chemical companies; but pressure from Washington put a stop to this, doubtlessly hope-

ful that this would lead to an end of clandestine LSD. In one sense the Federal authorities were right.

The underground ceased turning out d-LSD-25; instead, they discovered a wholly synthetic substance, akin to d-LSD-25 in so far as it produced marked change in consciousness. But the new synthetic acid lacked, in my opinion, that invisible non-pharmacological factor—the magical, spiritual component that was really what acid was all about. Sure, the new stuff ‘worked’ in the sense that any mind-altering chemical ‘works’ to produce subjective effects within the body, but it didn’t seem to produce in those who used it any particularly noticeable elevation of either head or heart; at least, that was the conclusion I had reached in London.

But it was—and probably still is—an unpopular view amongst the ‘cognoscenti’, who claim that some of the street acid is capable of producing positive subjective effects of a ‘long-lasting nature’, though they readily admit that a lot of the stuff sold as ‘pure acid’ is actually methylamphetamine (a concentrated form of amphetamine, first developed by the U.S. Army) or a stripped-down ergotamine compound by modern molecular chemistry.

My evaluation had nothing to do with the notion that a wholly synthetic drug produced a wholly synthetic experience—the intellectual response—but was based on direct, first hand experience (about thirty trips with street acid in all). And in each session I felt there was something it lacked—it was too ‘electric’, too ‘speedy’ and too ‘mind-shattering’. The earlier clarity of ‘insight’ which I had obtained via the Sandoz acid was replaced by confusion, brokenness, words and worlds thrown into absolute dismemberment or even, absolute chaos, though, I must add, often coupled with a feeling that I can only describe as ‘sublime inflation’, a superabundance of emotive energy; but it could not signify; more a passionate flame and less the life-giving sun, as it were. I have read that d-LSD-25 is a semi-synthetic substance, of which ergot is the organic, i.e. ‘living’ part. And to say that the ‘spiritual’ component is contained within the ergot molecules must sound like a superstition to some, but what I intend here is to suggest that ‘pure’ acid has ‘metapolitical’ implications—there is a hidden truth or statement in each acid session which is unaccountably missing in most of my experiences using the clandestine stuff, Owsley and ‘white-lightning’ notwithstanding.

There is, it seems to me, a qualitative decline in the subjective acid experience which is something that does not admit of scientific analysis; it is an intuitive thing I’d say. At any rate, I personally observed a voluntary moratorium during this period and would take nothing until I knew the exact chemical synthesis and where it was made and by whom. Besides, there was little or no shortage of good marijuana or hashish, our so-called ‘mild psychedelics’.

A psychedelic is the solvent which dissolves the vigorous stereotypes of egocentric behaviour—it transforms the familiar self without changing a thing; it expands the moment: yet there isn’t anything we can count on or accumulate; its value is poetic—it

helps ferry us across the abyss and we may thus gain a new amplitude; it is not a 'psychological' experience but a poetic one. It is best of course to undergo such metamorphosis by means of tuning in to nature, though it is only the very rarest of Westerners who can do this; we seem unable to develop our own power of concentration sufficiently to live consciously and continuously in our deepest self. We cannot become more than we are. It may be that we cannot even become what we are—'there is only becoming' e.e. cummings says; for us, then, Being is becoming; yet it remains possibility only, never achievement. It is all a matter of recognition; we must become capable of visualising ideas in order to live at the very heart of our being. It is all so simple that any child could do it (if only we don't try to explain). Or: only a child can do it.

Cambridge, Mass., is the home of both Harvard College and M.I.T. and stands across from the city of Boston, separated by the River Charles, about thirty minutes by taxi from Logan airport. It was snowing when I reached Gunther's house in Mount Auburn Street; the town was as if deserted by man. The gigantic apartment block on the opposite side of the street towered up from a snowy wasteland, surrounded by a few straggling trees. Every now and again one saw the lights of a car slowly moving along the driveway flanking the river; visibility was soon almost reduced to nil. The lady taxi-driver swore as I paid the fare, wishing she'd stayed in Boston.

Then she propositioned me. 'We could get to know each other in the parking lot,' she added, waving to the back seat. 'There's not much else to do on a night like this.' I said I was bushed after the long flight from London but this only seemed to add spice to her game. 'I've only made it with one English guy before, and he was the best ball I've ever had, though a fucking bastard otherwise,' she added.

Why not? She was pretty, in her late twenties. 'Okay. Let's get to the parking lot,' I said. 'Crazy! But in case you're kinky or something, you know, want to cut off my tits or anything, Jack-the-Ripper style, I'll blow your brains out with this.' And reaching inside the glove compartment she suddenly produced an enormous revolver. 'Protection, you understand. If you want to live in Boston, baby, you've gotta have a piece. Bam! Get it?' 'Are those things legal here?' I asked, seemingly dumb. 'Legal, regal; the fuzz ain't gonna bust ya for a piece, though they get pretty rough if you kill someone. No, it's protection.' 'But what if everyone carried a gun, then what...?' 'Then you'd be stupid not to, right? Anyway, I was only kidding. It ain't got no bullets in the chamber, maybe just two or three. I use it to scare drunks who get fresh.' I was in the right mood when, a couple of hours and several drinks later, I rang Gunther's doorbell. I had called Gunther from the airport but the baby-sitter said he was at the Gurdjieff centre and wouldn't be back much before midnight—(a well-observed ritual vouches for the truly human and therefore natural sequence of human behaviours; if the meeting which a person needs is missed, then the psyche feels cheated, and a sense of loss and remorse or worse is bound to follow. Gunther believed in the ritual attendance of the Gurdjieff meetings; he didn't necessarily believe in Gurdjieff rituals, which, so far as one can understand them at all, seem to depend on the presence of the Master himself, but the weekly thing was important for the harmonious function of his creativity.)

But Gunther was back, and we greeted each other warmly with hugs and smiles and 'Wow-it's-great-to-see-you' stuff. Yes, it really did feel good to be back; (almost) as though I'd never been away. We spent the first few hours rapping, filling in the blanks, trying to find out what had happened to us both across the random and haphazard years since Harvard and Millbrook. For myself change, unceasing change, as though change was the only constant in my life. And Gunther? He was now teaching at Boston College. 'A bit ironic, really, a Jew teaching at a Jesuit establishment', working as a consultant with a New York media company, "They sent me to India recently to tape some Indian music for a record", and running the Boston Gurdjieff Centre. 'Man, that cat knew more about human psychology than anyone I've come across before. I really dig his work.'

I then discovered that quite a number of the old Harvard psychedelic class of 1961-62 now worked for the Harvard Corporation—George Litwin was a professor at the Harvard Business School, Al Alschuler lectured at the Harvard School of Education, Dave Kolb was an instructor at M.I.T. and Huston Smith was still professor of religious philosophy (M.I.T.), Dave Katz was teaching at Boston's Brandeis University, Walter Clark was a professor of the psychology of religion at Tufts University and had helped start the Cambridge Neurobiological and Psychedelic Study Group (together with Clemens E. Benda M.D., and the late Max Rinkel M.D.).

Obviously, the medicine of hallucination and the wonders of indiscipline had lost their appeal—everybody wanted to forget the 'Harvard Drug Scandal'.

'It all seems so ordinary now.' Gunther was almost apologetic when he spoke about former times. 'People turn on differently nowadays, you know, sans drugs, sans trips. Not Young-Man-Left-to Old-Man-Right but evolution of sensibility. Today people dig astrology, Meher Baba, the Tarot, the I Ching, Gurdjieff, macrobiotic food, yogas, even plain work....'

Sure enough, when I did the telephone rounds the next morning, everyone was into their own 'non-drug' thing. It was as if Tim Leary and the Harvard Psychedelic Project had never existed—Al Cohen hadn't taken acid for over four years and now busied himself as head of the American Meher Baba Group. 'I dropped acid for three years, and it took me three years to transcend acid. Now I don't even think about it. Of Acid, the Avatar had this to say: "It doesn't bring you closer to God, for I am God and I tell you it takes you further away from Me".' Rolf von Eckartsberg, who used to co-edit *The Psychedelic Review* was a psychology professor at the University of Pennsylvania and was running a 'global village' project in Pittsburg; Paul Lee, also a former co-editor of *The Psychedelic Review* was teaching humanities and religion at the University of California in Santa Cruz; Stanley Krippner was the director of The Dream Laboratory at the Maimonides Hospital in Brooklyn; Frank Barron was a professor at Berkeley and the author of 'Creativity and Psychological Health'; Joe Havens was also still lecturing and writing papers on the theme 'Religion Ponders Science'; and Richard Alpert was in India with his Hindu Guru, Neem Karolli Baba, or simply 'Maharaj-ji' as he is usually called, who told him, à propos LSD, '

In a quiet place where it is cool and you are feeling much peace, taken alone, it can bring you into the presence of Christ to do pranams. But you can only stay a few hours and then must leave. Better by far to become Christ. For that, Love is the best medicine, better than LSD. LSD is not the true Samadhi. These medicines were known about in the Kulu Valley, but now that knowledge is lost.'

It felt almost obscene to mention this three-letter word under the circumstances and I began to wonder whether I had got things cocked or somehow not quite right. I was frequently asked the same question: 'Do you still take acid?' which always contained a definite, if unspoken clause—after what happened in Manhattan's Lower East Side and the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco, after reports of people jumping out of windows or staring at the sun until they were blind, can the psychedelic experience still claim to a place in the New Age? Did Leary do for LSD as the liberal-humanist did for stereotaxic surgery (leucotomy), (which is the selective destruction of brain tissue—'Law'n Order surgery') and its claim as a therapeutic adjunct to mental anguish?

Not a few thinkers have thought so. During the years following the Leary-Alpert firings many attacks against non-prescriptive drug usage have appeared in the mass media. The corruption of the original mystical insights reported in the early (1960-63) literature has led to the corruption of popular opinion, who now view the psychedelic experience as a subject too complex, too weird to be discussed in a rational way. The mystic with the gift of the third eye expected to proclaim the reign of the happily integrated modern soul but instead he had found himself considered something of an oddball, and a resented one at that. Now he sits in solitary exile or behind the bars of the lunatic asylum whilst the village idiot walks Times Square with a gun in each hand.

'Do you still take acid? Does Leary still proselytise for LSD, trip out for days?' our visitor asks, as one may also be supposed to know about heroin, cocaine, speed, glue-sniffing and nitrous oxide. 'Mass-mysticism is poetry, an open secret—the message is in the seed.' As ancient Zen might have had it—'Take LSD for ten years, become LSD, and then forget about it'. The power of Zen—there is nothing to hold on to; the power of the aphorism. In his Frederick William Atherton lecture (Harvard University, 1967), Norman O. Brown reminds us that

'Aphorism is instant dialectic

the instantaneous flip instead of the elaborate system...

And so perishable

that it cannot be hoarded by any elite

or stored in any institution.'

'Aphorism: the word smells of literary self-consciousness the reality is

brokenness

words in absolute dismemberment

or even, absolute self-contradiction.'

Like the historical Oxford Movement the Psychedelic Movement is a Western response to the pathogenic signs of our inner disruption, and is recognised as such by the New Radicals and by a tiny circle of metaphysicians in both the West and the East, just as the revolutionary anarchist movement was a century ago. For LSD is anarchistic, it shatters our complacency, explodes our stereotypes of ideology and dogmas, wakes, shakes, and makes the inner sleeping man from the somnambulist gravity of rectitude or righteousness. It is the madness that revels in the categories of being in which not one member is sober.

Madness need not necessarily be a cause for gloom—our greatest blessing, says Socrates in the Phaedrus, come to us by way of madness—provided; and the madness comes from God, he adds, someone like the God Dionysus or the spirit Mercurius or Siva, a condition which cannot be programmed, something whose truth lies beyond all power of words. Yet smile at our sad impasse. We cannot simply let ourselves go. 'I am fully aware of this,' Ionesco says, 'teach me how to untie the knots. I know I ought to undo them on my own and that this is a task everyone must carry out for himself, but at least give me a little guidance, so that I can see how the bonds I cannot loosen are tied.' But no help is forthcoming. The only reality is the truth of our own contradictory nature; truth is simply a more efficient form of fiction, Maya like everything else.

Can anyone teach Ionesco to untie the knots? 'The principal instrument of monopoly and control that prevents expansion of consciousness is the word lines controlling thought, feeling and apparent sensory impressions of the human host,' says Burroughs, but he makes a common error for he fails to distinguish the word from the experience. Another answer: according to Joey Mellen and Bart Huges, is that it is man's rigid cranium that prevents him from expanding his consciousness, not his words...

'When the skull seals the tide of brainbloodvolume is out on the beach the adult dangles from the gallows— around his neck a chain of word associations— suspended on his own sentence the adult passes judgement on his children— his children—if they've any sense—pay no attention but bounce about on a cushion of intra-cranial pressure until their skull seals.... '

Ionesco, the new message is: 'If you want to get ahead get a hole in your head.' Perhaps the advantage is with Tibet where prayer wheels are another way of arriving at the same result—an egoless involvement with the abyss inside the self—any fool can do it: the mechanism is external while the mind if left vacant; and vacancy is not the worst condition of the mind; the go, being non-existent, does not have to store, retrieve, catalogue, analyse or identify. But perhaps the last word can be left to Norman O. Brown,

speaking of the place (and need) for the 'transforming spirit of play' and of that great revolutionary intellectual of the twentieth century, James Joyce:

'who reduced all that solemn nonsense to nonsense leading us in the path to which Wittgenstein directed us from disguised nonsense to patent nonsense a transition that is accomplished not by linguistic analysis but by poetry.'

Leafless trees, the cold, clear air of winter; wide, snow-covered streets on which students wander about, whose physical appearance is different from when I was last here. Odd, really, how quickly the young respond to change. Whilst only seven or eight years ago the style was teeth-and-tweeds, button-down shirts and college ties, the mode of dress now veered on the far side of informality—jeans, denim shirts, cowboy boots and Afghan coats; and beards and long hair were everywhere prevalent. It was as if one psychic atmosphere had spread from California to Italy. Millions of similar people everywhere in the West. And their lifestyle was loose, unstructured; they seemed to roll on like the waves, whose movement is regulated by invisible forces emanating from the moon.

They were beings who were in possession of a secret which provided the impetus to their lives; their aims were more inward; they had a feeling for values; they had achieved a certain level of consciousness. Were they not somehow more open than in any age previously, which gave them this new amplitude and a sense of purpose? And if you were to ask them, 'What for the future?' it is to themselves they would point. What folly to believe in a Providence which guides life from the outside! This is the change in itself. Where growth is guided by conscious volition, development of the personality takes place; everyone progresses, marches onward, further and further, and no end is in sight. Here was a new generation for whom time is real before eternity.

How good for the mental health of modern youth to imbibe a little Eastern wisdom. Everybody who believes in himself, no matter who he is, stands on a higher level than the timorous—yes, the formative power of the Brahmanic and Buddhistic, but also the Islamic East, can help us achieve the ideal of universal brotherhood, whereas the received teachings of the West fail in spite of their ideals. For whatever power the spiritual message has exerted over the minds of men has surely come from the unique degree of involvement which it posits between the divine and the here and now.

As I wandered the Cambridge streets, I thought of my earlier days of largely harum-scarum activity and what had happened to us all across these random and haphazard years of pilgrimage. And sometimes, when I am in a reflective mood, I wonder if there is a secret connection between spiritual necessity and empirical accident? How is it that this strange drug LSD had such immense consequences, and was discovered seemingly by accident alone? For the revolution in sensibility produced results which the LSD-users did not—and perhaps could not—foresee. But this is true for all revolutionaries—revolutions have to be considered as very complex series of actions initiated in highly particular circumstances and at particular points in time. 'Each age gets the revolution it

deserves', is perhaps a truism, yet it is in fact that a small change of empirical circumstances, and the psychedelic revolution would not be the widespread manifestation which it is.

It was now possible to see that an acceleration in our brief new renaissance had turned the Leary-Alpert streams into a river and that the whole movement, first of Harvard 1960-61, then of the International Federation for Internal Freedom in 1963-64 and the Castalia Foundation of 1964-67 and the League for Spiritual Discovery of 1966-68, etc., etc., was the result of a series of accidental circumstances in which groups of LSD-users discovered a peculiar disposition in their thought which allowed them to transform a triviality into a profound spiritual belief and allowed them to appreciate individual human existence as the living expression of metaphysical reality, because the psychedelic experience signified the reality and the beauty of the flower of the spirit. And thus the Age of the Flower Children was born out of the individual experience of transcendence, just as, in an earlier age, the Vedic Soma brought the light of consciousness into the world.

What is the significance of the psychedelic movement? I do not know myself. I have struggled with the problem for years. But the facts are beyond question: the psychedelic renaissance, like all great periods of culture, cannot be explained altogether out of a demonstrable series of causes. If anything, they seem to owe their existence ultimately to a spiritual influx which bears the unmistakable stamp of divine grace, something given rather than made.

And once the source of inspiration has dried up, no effort and no talent is of any avail. Further, since the height of the psychedelic impetus, the insights have declined, in spite of all the psychedelic sessions which have occurred through these years, and today the LSD-user probably possesses less creative taste than any educated non-user, although they are still spiritually the most developed. What does this signify?—I know only that LSD has decorated the world of ideas. In what then lies LSD's unique quality, its appeal for the person who takes it? Perhaps it is the discovery of the existence of shades of inner meaning one would not normally credit with the capacity for signifying so much.

Let us transpose ever so slightly the elements of visionary knowledge, or change the varieties of the spiritual, or use a different method for gaining deeper insights; or place the individual, as he is, into another setting which is subject to different environmental conditions, such as, for instance, a damp, ill-lit and unheated cave somewhere high in the Himalayas: it would be the revelatory 'mystical' experience no longer.

I have seen such non-drug revelatory methods for getting westerners 'high' not fifty miles from Kathmandu: they lack the crystal-like clarity or immediacy of the psychedelic experience. The psychedelic experience makes particularly clear what the nature of individuality really is. It must seem a pity to some that anything could be metaphysically real which is manifestly so dependent upon empirical circumstances, in this instance, upon a psychedelic drug.

It illustrates, on the other hand, that the spiritual component in man can only become visible subject to special empiric conditions. It doesn't solve the riddle of man's spiritual nature, nor is it a key to a metaphysics of ecstasy (as some thinkers have claimed); no matter how many causes and relations we establish: the essential escapes us. This says little in favour of those who incline to the belief that the LSD-user may thus far participate of metaphysical reality. But the visionary experience is essentially brief; once achieved and expressed, it becomes subject, like everything else, to the merciless downward pull of gravity and the world of three dimensions, that non-miraculous world of appearances we call either prison or home, which is manifest everywhere around me even now as I type these lines.

But reality must still count for something, and this is perhaps more true in America (than in any other country I've ever lived in), where prosperity is regarded as normal; he who simply contents himself, i.e. turns himself on, is regarded as feeble. The idea that divine blessedness and prosperity are connected is still effective today: the man who discovers Christ within him will become rich, healthy, an accomplished individual in this lifetime; it is a religious belief that teaches the possibility of uniting one's struggle for the goods of this world with ideal aspirations. The man who is pleasing to God must become rich; the fruits, which hitherto have fallen only to the lot of him who renounces the world, can now be shared by him who affirms it. This is the teaching of 'a religion of democracy'; the materialism of our era is Hallowed in Thy name...

I am constantly relapsing into didactics, though no teacher I; on the contrary, I discourage any kind of followership, since my capacity for head-work is limited. I am also without the necessary information. So I drift; I am that aimless drifting man who, setting out in the first light of dawn like a ship to sea, never knows when or with what cargo he will return to port; and to invite anyone to follow me on such a reckless enterprise would be akin to negligence, if not actually actionable. One has a few friends, and of course they help sustain one through periods of change or difficulty, but in the final analysis, one must chart one's own drift course through the peculiarities of our modern kind of existence.

It is a situation I once discussed with Tim Leary—who confided in me his own strategies as a mentor of modern youth, which again confirmed my belief that he is one of the wisest, most illuminatory beings that the world has ever known.... The main theme of his philosophy, which he has dealt with in his book, *The Politics of Ecstasy* is the 'seven levels of consciousness—solar, cellular, somatic, sensual, symbolic, stupor (emotions) and sleep', what he calls 'the seven tongues of God'; 'seven dialects of energy, each triggered by the appropriate chemical—LSD, mescaline, hashish, grass, stimulants, booze, narcotics'.

Leary's message is that we die, creatively speaking, when we cling too fast to the definite, and that beyond the falsifications of egocentric consciousness lies the world of awareness which we must locate, pry out and finally weld to our being and in this way achieve affirmation of God, the world and the other people in it.

‘The yoga of drugs is of course a key method. The sexual yoga is also key—access to and control of sexual energy. Nothing can be renounced. All is God. Every energy is divine. All must be understood and controlled for spiritual purposes, including the yoga of power. All energy is available to him who accepts the basic energy formula; all energy is available to him who knows that it must not be grabbed, held, possessed or used for any other purpose except spiritual.’ (Private correspondence.)

It is a beautiful message and one that could become a proper matter of concern for a generation raised on Marx, Dulles, Thieuing gum and Coca-Cola. It is thus not without precedent that Leary, like Socrates before him, should be convicted by his peers of corrupting a nation’s youth, for history, like the big wheel in a cosmic funfair, spins slowly towards the final revolution... and mankind has not progressed even one iota. And, most tragic of all, the protoplasm seems happy.

Seeing how many of the original Harvard Psychedelic Project were working for the Corporation, it was not too difficult to persuade the university to have me back, this time, however, not as a four-hours-a-week instructor to third-year graduate students in psychology but as a trainee librarian at the Harvard University Library. The plan was that I should work as an assistant curator of Scandinavian Acquisitions, attend a two-year course in Library Science at Boston’s Sammer’s college, and then stay on as a full librarian, with faculty privileges; and perhaps teach one course after this probationary period. The authorities were nervous, perhaps understandably, but in their own way showed a remarkably liberal, open-minded attitude about having me back.

The first few weeks were spent learning how books were indexed and catalogued and how to find my way around the ‘stacks’ underneath the main library building, which is an art in itself, for the Harvard Library (second only to the Library of Congress in Washington) had been assembled through the years with stolid incompetence, and I dare say that no one is entirely sure where all the books are. Certainly in my section, the Scandinavian language collections were catalogued in such a manner that it could sometimes take a whole day to locate a particular book, even for an experienced librarian.

The reason given for this odd state of affairs was that until quite recently the Curators were usually eccentrics and not infrequently quite possessive about ‘their’ books, often devising an elaborate personal coding system to stop students borrowing them; that is, unless you asked the Curator himself to locate the particular book for you.

But times and people change. A new breed was taking over, as it were; soon only professional librarians would be in charge. No more muddling through. Efficiency was now the touchstone by which a librarian was to be judged. The library did not offer a complete life, as enclosed and dedicated as a monastery, but a career, like any other. Certainly, it helped if you had a taste for books or reading, but the main thing was knowing how to catalogue the stuff.

It was even envisaged that, in time, the entire library would be computerised,

though plans for this innovation had met with little response from the higher 'invisible' echelons who contemplated such suggestions in the cloistered calm of their private rooms. I was told about one Curator, in charge of Burmese Acquisitions, I think, who had been dead in his private room for nearly two months, and was only discovered when a student, due to some error in his walk, had accidentally opened the door and saw this decomposing figure huddled in a huge leather armchair. The story goes that the student, far from being surprised at the condition of the old man, actually asked him for directions to the Poetry Room.

The work was interesting enough, however, and I suppose I could have stuck it out through the two-year training period, but something happened to change my direction. Gunther and some other friends had obtained space in a huge loft-like building in Nutting Road near Harvard Square. It was called the 'Cambridge Readeasy'—a sort of free university-cum-workshop in 'Communication, Creativity and Awareness'. And they invited me to run a poetry workshop involving poets and students in the greater Boston area. This was fine as far as I was concerned for it gave a focus to my life and an excuse to meet and hear some of the younger poets, who I encouraged to drop around and take part in the experiment.

The Readeasy soon became quite popular with the local Underground, who kept us all well-supplied with grass and the occasional pipe of opium. But this was not the reason why I left Cambridge (in fact, it was probably the high quality of the grass that was keeping me there), but the arrival of Leary for a lecture series in Boston, when we met and he invited me to join him in Berkeley. I was a bit hesitant at first, perhaps because I felt more at home on the East Coast, but my curiosity got the better of me, and a few weeks later I resigned from the library and was jetting across America to San Francisco, where Tim picked me up at the airport; and the start of a new adventure.

California—land of the Brave or land of the Freaks? Tim had no doubts in his mind: 'California is at least one year ahead of the East Coast in Aquarian life-styles, sophistication, and enterprise. Here is where it is all happening.' I said the weather was nice. 'Yeah; warm, sunny and soft, just like a beautiful woman.'

Soon we were in the city and Tim said he'd give me a tour, starting on Fisherman's Wharf and home of some of the best seafood restaurants in America. From there we drove along Chinatown's Pacific Avenue and Grant Avenue, where the sole business seemed to be food. Chinese variety shops ran like a strip of tinsel through the heart of the city. From there we drove up to Nob Hill, home of the rich and the elegant, where tradition is slow to change and the residents carefully preserve an air of bygone days while sparing no modern convenience. Then back to Market Street where we dropped by a couple of bars before going on to the Haight and a Japanese restaurant for lunch.

Then in the afternoon we visited Eldridge Cleaver of the Black Panthers, a very impressive personality who was in the middle of his campaign to become the first coloured president of the United States. Basically, the line he presented was something like this:

'When you vote for me you are voting for this finger'. He would then hold up the index finger of his right hand. 'This finger. Because this finger is the finger that presses the button. And, man this finger ain't never going to push any button. Do you trust Nixon's finger anywhere near that red button? I don't. So when you vote, remember, you're voting for the finger that won't push the button', etc., etc. He'd been out campaigning most of the morning and seemed a bit tired when we met him, but he welcomed Tim warmly, like an old friend, joking and fooling, and every now and again telling Tim that the Black Panther Party was really getting it together. A very remarkable man, I thought.

And on to Menlo Park just south of the city to meet Ken Kesey, who I remembered from the early Harvard days, when he was then known as the author of *One Flew the Cuckoo's Nest*, a brilliant novel about the goings-on inside a mental hospital. Now he was into his political bag, and had hopes of uniting the various hippie factions in the Bay Area into a coordinated party, something similar to the Panther organisation, but looser, without too many rules.

Tim said that he was considering running against Reagan as Governor of California: 'I'd strip the cops of their guns, double their salaries and encourage them to smoke dope. I'd also introduce a "marijuana tax"—like the annual automobile tax, only much higher, say, one thousand bucks a year.

And then I'd distribute the revenue amongst the Californian middle-class. In that way, everyone would be happy.' There were immediate and voluble objections from Ken and the others in the apartment, 'Man, one thousand bucks to smoke weed? You'd never get any of the heads to vote for that. Fifty bucks, maybe. But one thousand... man, do you know how much weed you could buy for that? Enough to keep you stoned for months. Better think again "Uncle Tim" if you want to get my vote.'

An hour or so chewing the breeze, and back to San Francisco again, to a small building across from the Panhandle Park where 'The Messiah' lived with his commune of followers, and the headquarters of 'The Messiah's World Dope Crusade'. There was no reply when we knocked on the door, but it wasn't locked so we walked in. The house was silent. Tim then opened one of the doors leading into a huge living-room where a group of perhaps six beautiful girls were seated in a circle on the floor holding hands. They all seemed to be crying. No one looked up as we entered, and Tim immediately put on a serious expression and quietly joined this tearful circle.

After a few minutes had passed, Tim asked after The Messiah.

'He was busted this morning. The fuzz came round and busted him for ten keys (kilograms) of grass. Man, like we needed to raise bread on that for our new macro bakery.'

'Where is The Messiah now?' Tim gently asked.

'Down at the Precinct, I guess. They said they'd been watching him for weeks and that this time he'd go down for a long time.'

'Why didn't he pay them off?'

'Cos we'd spent all our bread on this new consignment and only had a couple of hundred bucks or so in the house.'

'Is there anything I can do?'

'Just pray. That's what we're doing.'

On the way to Berkeley mention of the raid was made on the FM news. It seemed that The Messiah had told the desk sergeant that unless he was released that afternoon he'd have to take 'drastic action'. He was reported as saying that he'd use his telepathic powers to cause a two-hour traffic jam on the Bay Bridge during the evening traffic rush. He was released on a nominal bail, a few hours later.

Soon we were in Berkeley and Tim's house in Queen's Road, high in the hills overlooking the campus and the Bay. We made it just before the curfew—the Free Speech Movement was rioting against the Vietnam war. There had been campus revolts every day for a week, and the police had introduced a curfew after nightfall.

Tim used to refer to his house as 'The Embassy'. There was a constant stream of visitors of all shapes, shades and sizes, each one involved at some level with the revolutionary Underground. And they would make their reports to Tim who'd then comment or make suggestions or give them some LSD. I was thus able to get a picture very quickly of what was happening in California, mainly talk actually, though sometimes you'd meet a veteran of some campus riot or other. I think the only really sensible and coherent person in the area was Jerry Garcia of 'The Grateful Dead'.

'Acid,' he used to say, 'has changed consciousness entirely. The US has changed in the last few years and it's because that whole first psychedelic thing meant "here's this new consciousness, this new freedom, and it's here in yourself".' He was later to develop his thesis in a Melody Maker interview...

'I think we're beginning to develop new capacities just in order to be able to save the world from our trips—you know, pollution, etc.—if for nothing else. Just for survival. The biological news is that in 100 years from now life on earth is finished, so what has to happen is this organism has to adapt real quick and develop new capacities to stem this flow, to maybe head it off somehow. In this scheme of things, politics and all those things belong to the past. They're meaningless, going down the drain.'

After a couple of months in Berkeley, we moved to Southern California, to a ranch in Idyllwild near the San Bernardino Forest and the headquarters of the Brotherhood of

Eternal Love, a former Los Angeles motor-cycle gang who had taken acid and dropped out of crime and into dope-dealing. And Tim it was who had become their leader/guru/teacher. The ranch was sited a couple of miles along a dirt road off the Palms-to-Pines Highway; the hills at the back overlooked Palm Springs and the desert. It was a beautiful place, and there were some thirty of us living there. Tim lived in a small bungalow with his wife, Rosemary, while I had a room in a smaller building adjacent. The Brothers either lived in the ranch house or in small outbuildings.

The ranch hadn't been lived in for over a year, so there was a lot of work to be done. For my part, I built a sauna hut, utilising a couple of old stoves for the purpose and insulating the walls with sand. There was room inside for perhaps half a dozen people, and we'd often retire there in the evenings with a couple of cherry pipes filled with hashish, and sweat and smoke until we'd either pass out or freak out in the heat. I also worked the huge caterpillar bulldozer in an attempt to smooth out some of the bumps in the earth road leading to the ranch, but it kept breaking down or, perhaps due to my inexperience with heavy-duty machinery, it would sometimes swivel off the road and into the ditch and it could take all of us a whole day to get it back on the road again.

The summer passed gloriously, and apart from the occasional police helicopter hovering overhead, we were not troubled much by contact with the outside world. There was also a lot of good acid available, and we would celebrate each Full Moon in the mountains, when the sessions would be run along the lines of the Indian Peyote ceremonies—that is, we'd all be seated in a circle around a blazing fire chanting or shaking an Indian rattle to ward off evil spirits. There would also be drums and guitars, and sometimes one of the Brothers would dance around the fire shouting incoherently as though touched with the 'gift of tongues', though you'd hardly call us Pentecostal. We also tried to communicate with flying-saucers of which many had been reported in the skies above the ranch.

However, by the Fall, I was again restless, this time for a more solitary refuge, somewhere where I could simply be, and preferably alone. I had met too many people in California, heard too many things, maybe even taken too much acid. Now I wanted out. And it was thus to Tonga in the South Pacific that I went...

Nine hours after leaving San Francisco, I caught my first glimpse of the tropical islands of the South Pacific as we flew low over Fiji. The richness of the landscape below was overwhelming everywhere. Perfect beauty abounded, in which meaning and expression are one. This peaceful island of lush jungle which blossoms like flowers was surrounded by dark green hills and encircled by a rich blue sea, as still and as peaceful as a lake.

And then Tonga! This Other Eden of palm trees shooting upwards to the sky, rich, luxuriant, yellow beaches and an exquisitely blue sea lapping against the shores. When I stepped off the plane I was so thrilled that I immediately set off on a long walk, and when I returned, feeling weary, I thought, as I reclined in a comfortable wicker chair on

the shaded balcony of my tiny hotel: thou art in paradise. Here should I be; and be free from myself.... And as I looked out across the garden over the tree tops, I saw hordes of monkeys who pursued, in a silent tight-rope dance, their fodder for the evening meal. How delightful it is to be in a world which was finally created on the fifth day! Here nothing has changed, here everything is simple and true. I was beginning to understand why most truly great minds prefer 'nature to human society'. The latter limits, the former liberates.

How harmonious the landscape in the light of the sunset. The sea reflects the last light of the sky. The screeching of the gulls high above the water and the shrill chirping of the cicadas fills my mind as no music ever could. In the narrow road opposite an old fisherman carries his nets; I can hear him singing to himself, softly, to the rhythm of the breaking waves. He is faithful to himself and to the spirit of nature; I could believe that this solitary wayfarer understands the doctrine of nirvana in the way in which an enlightened saint wishes to have it understood.

Here there is no striving, for everything happens of its own accord. One's volition wanes irresistibly. I feel in this hothouse air it is futile to work, to wish, to strive; it is not I who think, but nature thinks in me, it is not I who wish, but something wishes in me. For this native fisherman, Buddha's doctrine of cognition is a matter of course, the result not of self-determination but of his own psychic process developing at one with nature; its truth is something which the most cultured Westerner only very exceptionally perceives.

Here thought seems somehow superfluous; here nothingness is the background of semblance; the intellect turns away, as it were, from its possible content; it becomes more and more empty, till at last no thought remains. The mind is as bland and as blank as a bank of snow. Such simplicity of mind signifies a form of existence which proceeds without effort.

And everything happens naturally, without conscious effort and without the direction of the will; indeed, in the tropics the will is so small that the wish fails to become father to the thought. Life is thus essentially a mindless involvement with nature, with mediocrity as the purest form of normality. Here it is possible to achieve everything by doing nothing.

Tonga itself is a collection of perhaps 150 small islands, mostly uninhabited. It is Blessed, for it was dedicated to Heaven at Pouono by King George Tupou, and there is a strong sense of the religious amongst its peoples, their faith is firmly rooted in the worship of Christ. I spent the first week in Nukalofa, the capital, resembling in appearance a sort of shanty town you normally associate with the ghetto districts of Georgia or Alabama—lots of corrugated iron and shed-like dwellings, semi-derelict store fronts and flaked woodwork, but still charming for all that. But I longed for isolation, for I was impatient of humankind and wanted to live in the jungle where the only sounds would be natural ones.

After consulting a map I decided upon Vava'u, a tiny speck of an island some 150 miles distant from the main island, and a two-day sail by steamer. I telephoned the Governor to ask his permission to stay on the island, explaining that I was a writer and needed the peace and quiet in order to write a book.

He was most gracious and hospitable, and even offered to send his Land Rover to pick me up at the pier. Perfect. Now I could unwind; find there my final dwelling place, and forget all the despairs of consequence which had plagued my life in the West. Somehow, incredibly, I had escaped from the concrete jungles of London and New York and San Francisco, and in a tolerably good state. Now I could begin the slow work of salvage, become whole again, maybe even find that peace of head or heart I had sought through all these years of largely accidental activity. I had found an excuse for living. And I intended to plan my own death very, very, carefully, which alone can give the meaning to one's life.

Vava'u was all that I had anticipated; indeed more, since it manifested itself in the form of the most delicately sensuous natural beauty, especially in the morning, when the sea flows in golden waves towards the rising sun; the whole island seemed to be divinely transfused: one feels inclined, like the pilgrims on the Ganges, to sink down every morning before the beauty of the place in fervent gratitude. You can imagine my surprise, therefore, when, on my second morning—I had rented a bamboo and thatched hut a couple of miles from the tiny port on the edge of the bush—I was awakened by the sound of pop music.

Nothing could have been more incongruous or unexpected, and I feared at first it was an auditory hallucination. But the noise persisted, and, quickly dressing, I followed the sound into the bush until I came to a small hut. I knocked on the door. No answer. So I knocked again. This time a voice, an American, answered—'Who is it?' 'Friend,' I said. 'Enter, friend.'

pushed open the door and inside were three young men dressed in jeans and sweat shirts. The air was redolent of marijuana, and everyone appeared to be pretty stoned. I said I'd heard the music and, curious, had followed the sound. Did they mind if I sat down and joined them? 'Nope.'

It turned out that they were members of the Peace Corps, of which there were about 120 scattered about the islands, seven of whom were on Vava'u. The Tongalese called them 'voluntary workers'. Some taught English in the schools, some worked as medical assistants for the Medical Department, and some were working as farmers. These three seemed a nice bunch of guys. And the ice was quickly broken when I told them I was writing a book about psychedelics. 'Did you bring any acid with you?' one of them asked. 'I did as a matter of fact—about 100 trips of "sunshine", which is about as pure as you can get. Have any of you taken acid?' None of them had, but each said he'd like to try some. 'How about some grass? Do you have any?' I asked. 'Sure,' one of them said passing me the plastic bag filled with marijuana. 'Roll yourself a joint. It's great weed. We

grow it locally. It's dynamite. '

The effect was excellent, and soon I was as stoned as they were. Jefferson Airplane were playing on the Sony cassette, loud and energetic, playing tight and clean, blowing our minds. You didn't have to listen to it with great concentration. You can just sorta drift with it. Then followed some Grateful Dead—Anthem Of the Sun and Aoxomoxoa; very soulful and communicative, a liturgy of the hip.

The music was creating good vibes all around, with everything becoming one music; or rather, everything inside becoming all music, which is what true pop music is all about, the obliteration of thought for sensation.

One of the Peace Corps guys was really uptight about a recent debate in the Parliament. Apparently, a member of the Tongan Parliament had complained that they were starting their own private businesses by growing small gardens, selling the produce, and feeding chickens so as to sell the eggs. He said they were trying to change Tongan customs.

'Here, let me read you some of what this cat said—"Our women who used to wear a dress, the traditional tupenu and ta'ovala are now clothing themselves in one yard of cloth. Even the huge women use up only one yard, making it so tight that their sharp-shinned legs show and it makes them look thick on the right side and thin on the left." Crazy! Now dig this, "When they are walking in the streets, you can't tell if they are coming or going! This has come from the examples set by the voluntary workers.

All the spiritual feelings I experience when I am in the church vanish when these voluntary workers enter the church building with the clothes they wear. Very often I feel like getting up and throwing them out. Therefore I ask the Premier that if a copra boat should come, let us pack them all in it and send them back to America. Soon they will be wearing only underwear to church."

But he got no steam from the Premier, who also happens to be the king's brother, Prince Tu'ipelehake. He really took the wind out of the sails, telling this uptight cat, Tu'akoi' that instead of being critical he should be grateful.... "God made their visit possible. It is often a mystery that, without knowing or being acquainted with anyone, they are willing to sacrifice to give such help. The sacrifice and usefulness have been proved today not only to the Government, but also to the people, the country and the church. Love is repaid with love, and the understanding and the willingness to help is the most important of all. We should consider such gratitude and sacrifice. I believe that if they have sacrificed for Tonga, not one of us here in this house could do more for Tonga. We should be grateful and we have given an oath to be rightful and loving in our work for His Majesty King Tupou IV and the country".'

After a few days I had got to know the seven local Peace Corps quite well. We'd spend a lot of time rapping. And there was plenty of grass from their gardens. We also

discussed having a 'sunshine' session together, on one of the small uninhabited islands close by. We settled on one weekend, and taking supplies of food and water for two days, we took the motor-boat to a small island of palm trees and golden beaches about three miles from port. I had previously explained at some length what sort of reaction to expect and how to overcome any paranoia by fixing the mind on a natural object like a stone or a coconut, or by chanting the 'Vajra Guru Mantra'—OM AH HUM VAJRA GURU PADMA SIDDHI HUM—which represents the vital essence of the 84,000 sections of the Dharma, 'and in this way attain the siddhis of the wrathful deities'.

The session began shortly after we landed. It was a morning of bright golden sunlight and a clear blue sky and sea, no sound from anywhere; a perfect setting. Soon the 'sunshine' began to take effect, and again I was transported into the heart of my intra-atomic self, that place of reconciliation and bliss in which all life lives in the unity of the One. But I was unable to stay there for long; one of the group had begun to declare himself as Jesus Christ and insisted that we were his disciples.

And the force of his conviction, coupled with an increased rapidity and volume of his speech, began to take over our heads so that soon we were lost in a maze of contradictory thoughts and feelings, expressed variously in anger, laughter, dismay and fear. In vain I tried to get him to keep quiet, but he continued to expatiate on the evil he saw in life and insisted that we follow him on a crusade to save the world. Very soon the harmony of the session was lost, and people either wandered off by themselves or sat as if transfixed by this Christ figure, submerged under the non-stop repetitious flow of words.

As there was nothing now I could do to silence him, I too ambled off along the beach, just hopeful that our new Christ would talk himself into silence by the time I got back. OM AH HUM VAJRA GURU PADMA SIDDHI HUM I intoned as I slowly walked along the shoreline stopping every now and again to pick up a shell or observe the miracle of the sand turtle or the vigorous motion of tiny crabs....

When I got back several hours later, everyone was there and seated around a small fire. Jesus was curiously observing each face one after the other, as if seeking an answer to some private question, a sort of vacant look on his face, an expression of disbelief; but he was mercifully silent. We slept on the beach that night, gazing at the million sparkling stars, thinking, wondering, seeking answers to man's age-old question 'What is the secret of this universe in which we live?' until, exhausted, we finally fell asleep.

We returned to Vava'u the next day. The boy Jesus seemed a little embarrassed by what he had said and done, but soon we had him laughing at his own stupidity. He later told me he had been a divinity school student for two years before switching to social science, but after this 'trip' he wondered that perhaps he ought to have stayed on and become a minister. I told him that he could be anything he wanted, this time around. Besides, he was probably serving God better by helping teach Tongans how to run their social services than preaching his word each Sunday in church. I gave him my copy of

the New Jerusalem Bible.

But it was all too good to last. Already there was gossip on the main island about the Peace Corps growing pot on Vava'u, and now rumour had it that they were taking LSD. This was confirmed when I received a note from the British Consul saying that some questions were being asked about me and the purpose of my stay in Tonga. He was also in possession of a file from the Foreign Office, and the local CIA had filled in a few more details.

Would I care to visit him to discuss the matter? It was exactly one month since I first arrived in Tonga when the Minister of Police and about a dozen detectives arrived on Vava'u and started searching for the marijuana beds. The Peace Corps were clearly implicated, and a cable was sent to Washington to this effect. By return came a cable from the Peace Corps Director asking that they return to Washington immediately, when there would be a hearing before the committee. As for myself, I decided to leave before I was kicked out, and soon I was on the jet, this time for New York, where at least it was still possible to smoke pot without getting paranoid, as now even office girls were smoking the stuff, which meant nearly everyone in the city was.

And the fellows from the Peace Corps? It seemed that they had not returned to Washington as instructed but had decided to live in Fiji instead, turning on the local Peace Corps, as well as their former colleagues on holiday from Tonga. Again and again I am surprised at the effect that LSD has on people's lives, how it seems to change their directions or goals, making it somehow impossible for them to exist in the formal, structured world so favoured by the Establishment.

In this case what a few micrograms of LSD had done was to transform a bunch of ordinary, middle-class Americans with clear-cut expectations and achievement-motivations into missionaries of a new order, for they were now possessed of a self, or of a self-conscious similar to that of the mystics, rishis, and saints. How was such a change accomplished? Only by the realisation of the God within, and by the willingness to accept the validity of this vision, and moreover by the ability to re-create this insight as immediately in terms of a living manifestation: they have made of themselves whatever art it is in the life of each one of them, unconcerned with the trappings of outer forms or appearances: they live according to an inner rhythm, not that of the metronome but of music.

They had recognised the Atman within themselves, and now wanted to realise him in the world; they wanted to assist Brahma, whose partial expression they believed themselves to be.

PART TEN

1969

The antidiluvian DC-9 swam through a sea of milk all the way from Delhi. It was

only just before landing that the clouds cleared for an instant and I saw the magical city of Kathmandu cradled by the snowy ranges of the Himalaya—a non-euclidian landscape of terraced paddy fields surrounding a dream form of pagoda-like temples and golden palaces, rising into view and spinning from the horizon as the plane circled to land.

I was thirty-eight, on my first visit to Asia with New York left well behind, carrying a typewriter, some hand-baggage, a few hundred trips of Californian 'sunshine' acid which a friendly psychiatrist laid on me, and about \$1000 left from a colour video movie I made about tripping to the moon. It was July 16, 1969, and my pilgrimage was destined to begin at the precise moment of the Apollo 11 blast-off for man's first landing on the moon.

At a more ordinary level, it was, I gathered later, absolutely the wrong time to visit Kathmandu, as the monsoon was imminent; the air was stifling with humidity and the bumpy taxi ride from the airport made me sick; and I longed for some air-cooled Manhattan bar where a couple of iced lagers could revive a sorely tried spirit. Whatever expectations of romance I had nursed had been shrivelled in the heat by the time I reached my hotel. I had the insane urge at this point to drive straight back to the airport and continue to Bangkok, settle down to a routine English-teaching job, get rid of my beard and long hair, become super-straight, like my friends Al Cohen and Richard Alpert, and maybe continue to Australia ... but as the beauty of the valley began to exercise its subtle magic through the windows of my room, I just knew that this was indeed the one place in or out of this world where I wanted to be.

I took a bath, changed into a Tibetan shirt and Indian dhoti—a sort of bin cloth you wrap around yourself—smoked a couple of chillums of good Afghani dope; and nearly fainted in dream of dreams.

The view through my window was brilliant with the afternoon sun. Amazement was the first element of my muted delight at these bright green paddyfields between myself and the snowcapped ranges still visible through the shimmering heat; and mystery, of what lay beyond them, unseen—the distant half-chartered ranges of Tibet, home of the fable-seeking imagination. The spell of the Himalayas was upon me. The beauty of my surroundings began to penetrate a hardened carapace, for these mountains had begun to exercise a magic thralldom all their own.

And now I was part of it. In some way which I could not rationally explain, I just knew that I was gazing at the mysterious container of the history of the world, the magical amphitheatre in which Siva dances with Nataraja. I was a visitor in the ancient land of gods and abode of rishis, tapaswis, sadhakars, saints and philosophers who come to meditate in glacial deserts to make their beings as pure as the snow which covers the tops of their sacred mountains and their minds as clear and transparent as the water of the holy lakes... they offered their adherents a way of life, a path to happiness:

'In the body as it is in reality are contained all worlds, mountains, continents and

seas, the sun and the other constellations . . . ' says the Pretakalpa of Garuda-Purana. I also had a sense of what was meant in the passage from the Hindu epic Ramayana: 'He who but thinks of the Himalayas does greater things than he who is destined to tarry in Benares'. And, by implication, he who tarries in Canterbury, Rome, Salt Lake City, Belfast, and Jerusalem.

I realised with an immediacy akin if not identical with revelation that I had travelled halfway across the world to find in Kathmandu what I sought in vain throughout my wanderings in the West.

There were certain immediate needs, however, like scoring some local hashish, for which Nepal was rightly famed. And some more suitable clothes.

It was still early, and even if it was like a furnace outside, I decided to venture forth into the maze of dusty streets and alleyways, all somewhat reminiscent of the imaginary Baghdad of The Arabian Nights.

The city is not very large and within a matter of minutes I found myself in the central square. It was like something out of the Middle Ages, with street vendors sitting by their piles of cloth and vegetables and boxes of cheap ornamental beads, with enough activity going on to keep the eye fully occupied. A huge bull emerged suddenly from the crowd, sedate and reasonable, wandering with the scores of shoppers, even defecating without so much as a pause, unnoticed, except, that is, by myself.

The houses were of red brick, all built in a strange pagoda style which eliminated straight lines, with latticed windows and overhanging balconies, many with hanging potted plants. There were temples and delicate stupas, huge sculptured statues, beautifully proportioned by some anonymous race of master artists. The faces of these deities seem self-absorbed in contemplation; sharp cheeks and supple chins in the case of the male gods, and sweetly smiling lips, sensitively sloping fleshy cheeks with elegant curves in the case of the females.

Some of the faces had been almost worn away through the passage of time, which gave them a special mystery. Yet each one—and there were hundreds—was strangely complete in itself and fostered the message of the divine. But what was interesting was to see how they were still objects of veneration and worship by the people. There was one in particular that caught my eye, a sculpture of the god Vishnu, the divine ruler of the Hindu Triad; the face looked serious, with just the right degree of rectitude and probity as befitted his position.

He had ear ornaments hanging above his shoulders and had all the traditional attributes or ayudas—the crown, the necklace, the garland of flowers and the hip-belts, all exquisitely shaped; the upper garment, the sacred thread or yajnopavita, and the dhoti were emphasised with oblique lines through the chisel-marks. In front was a rounded platform, a stone, for rubbing and making chandana paste from sandalwood.

It was a glimpse of this Other World, of something that I had seen and read about but had never had direct experience of before. Here I could actually feel this something.

I still had to score some hash and get a Tibetan shirt or two and a dhoti. I also wanted to discard my shoes. I remembered that someone had told me that Rana's teashop was a good place to score so along I went. It was up a tiny alley, dustbin dirty and smelling of cow shit and urine. Outside sat a small boy, a beggar, and I gave him a handful of rupees before I went inside.

Rana's was an extraordinary place. There was pop music on twin speakers, very loud, and a few stone-topped tables at which were gathered a group of perhaps fifteen young Westerners, silent, smoking chillums, and oblivious. They were dressed in a gay medley of Indian, Tibetan and Nepalese costumes, bedecked with beads and beards. One of them looked up, smiled, and handed me a chillum, which I smoked. The effect was instantaneous—I almost passed out, and had to sit down.

I don't know how long I remained seated at the table, perhaps an hour, perhaps two. The hash was the strongest I'd ever had and completely immobilised me. Rana, the dapper young Nepalese owner of the place, would come over every now and then and ask if there was anything more I wanted. 'Tea?' or 'Porridge?' I merely shook my head and continued just sitting in my utter stupor.

Finally, I was able to stand up, and I indicated to Rana that I'd like to buy some of his hashish. He brought out a simple handheld set of scales and weighed a tola—about one-third of an ounce—which cost me about four shillings. Then I split.

I was still in somewhat of a daze when I got back to my hotel, and had to lie down again. It was dark when I awakened. I decided to undress and go to bed. It was only eight o'clock, but there was really nothing I could or wanted to do. I was completely stoned.

I awoke at daybreak. The bright yellow sun flooded through my windows and I felt wonderful. Today would be a good day. And, as things turned out, it was.

I made a telephone call to the Royal Palace to talk to Narayan Shresther, private secretary to the Crown Prince, who I had known in Cambridge, Massachusetts, about one year ago. He seemed pleased to hear that I was in Kathmandu, and said he'd drop by the hotel to see me.

Narayan dropped by for lunch. He showered me with smiles and greetings and love. And we had a great reunion, recalling our past meetings at Harvard and lots of questions about why I had come to Kathmandu. 'Why Kathmandu? Surely there must have been somewhere else?' was a characteristic question, for I'm sure his own dream fantasies of paradise cities were directed towards Paris or even San Francisco. I told him I'd come in order to sort out 'my priorities', to gain a new amplitude, to enjoy the experi-

ence of living in a foreign country, things like that. I told him that even in the short space of twenty-four hours I could not only see but actually feel that indigenous and elusive quality in Nepalese life. It was that quality, which hitherto I had only been told about but could never really experience, which indeed has yet to be expressed outside the occasional rare poem. He thought I should write a book about Nepal. Then we laughed.

During the lunch I brought up the matters of my visa. I had, I told him, about \$1000, and lots of enthusiasm about starting a poetry magazine in Kathmandu. I had even got the title—Flow. I reminded him that one of the things we had chatted about in America was the phenomenon of hippies and how I had taken him around the various colleges and to private homes so that he might better understand the new life-styles now emerging in America and in Europe—many tied into oriental religions.

Narayan—who has a degree in English from Leeds University had been tutor to the Crown Prince (now King Bihendra of Nepal), and I had been anxious for the Crown Prince to also appreciate that, if these developments were to continue, new possibilities for religious-minded Westerners would have to be developed in India and Nepal, the two Asian countries which had perhaps most to teach. Hippies were not long-haired layabouts in most instances, but had chosen to spend some time in the East living with and through the ordinary people, or in Ashrams or monasteries; they had come to learn, as seekers, not as tourists with lots of dollars to spend. And I was one of them.

He said that he'd discuss the matter of my stay with the Crown Prince, and that I would be hearing from him the next day. He envisaged no difficulty. As it turned out, I received a year's visa, extendable at any time should I wish to stay on in Nepal. It was something I had cause to be very, very grateful for indeed, as visa formalities can and usually do involve a certain amount of hassle with the authorities, with something like six weeks considered to be about the average length of stay permitted at that time. Narayan had a little Volkswagen and offered to drop me somewhere. I said I'd like to see one of the museums, so he drove me a mile or two outside the city to the National Museum near SwayambhuNath, one of the Holy Buddhist Centres of Nepal. He himself had to get back to the Palace. He had given up his job as English Lecturer at Tribhuvan University and was now private secretary to the Crown Prince—which meant he had to work that much harder!

The exterior of the museum was in the traditional Nepalese style of architecture and beautifully preserved. And as I walked around inside, gazing at the sculptured Hindu Gods, the bronze figures of the Goddess Curga, prayer necklaces of Rudraksa beads, incense burners shaped as the tree of life, and paintings, I was glimpsing into a past that was still very much a living present, for here was a highly developed, sophisticated art tradition that had reached perfection when Nepal had been the flower of a great Asian civilisation.

I looked at the statue of Vishnu, this one dating from the fifteenth or sixteenth century—it was very massive and majestic, standing completely erect on a bold-relief

lotus-flower, and flanked on either side by his two female consorts. The female deity at his right hand held a chalara or 'fly-whisk' (I suppose that even the most powerful of Gods were not totally immune to the ubiquitous valley mosquito) and a lotus flower.

The female at his left carried a lyre in her hands pressed closely against the breasts and the belly. But the real beauty was in the faces and forms of Vishnu's consorts—their slender waists and exceptionally beautiful and delicate breasts conveyed their profound feminine frailty...

At closing time I stepped out once more into a daytime present 'when the mountains were again the mountains; the clouds were again the clouds'. A car sped by on the tiny road in front of the museum. I suppose I could have been run over. For what I was still experiencing was this profound sense of somehow living the continuation of a glorious past in the present—which is something that no Western museum had ever done for me, being, for the most part, 'dead' places. I don't think I shall ever again experience anything more radiant than my visions of that afternoon in my life. I just knew that I should no longer feel 'alone', which is to live in my own naked spiritual reserves, that the body-mind was capable of being filled up again with the light through the simple process of looking. How easy it all seemed.

I ambled along the road like an old priest, stopping now and again to observe the view, the bloom of a wild rose, a particularly wondrous cloud structure. And since I was walking in the direction of the Buddhist temples of Swayambhu, I decided to proceed into the village.

But first a stop at the chi or teashop. There was a group of heads sitting on a bench outside, chewing the breeze, smoking the indigenous chillums, and several more inside, in the cavernous half-light.

No one was talking much; it was considered a 'downer'—bad form—to use words, but communication was no less intense for all that. The young Nepalese owner came outside with a mug of thick tea, dark brown and very sweet, and asked if I'd like anything. I shook my head. He smiled, and disappeared into the dark interior of his teashop. The fellow sitting next to me passed me a joint. His eyes stared at me widely, his mouth still hung open as if to keep the last word of his sentence in mid-air. Everyone here believes in all the magic, I thought.

I took a couple of deep tokes. 'Good grass,' I said, handing him back his huge seven-skin joint.

He looked at me. And I was reminded of a French poem I'd read somewhere ... 'in the depths of a dilated pupil shines the lamp of the poor'.

As I got up to leave, he asked whether I'd been to the Bakery Ashram yet, and he pointed to a small passageway between two buildings. 'Just follow the path and take a

left when you get to the temple. They've got a new sound system.'

Since I was stoned anyway, and since I had nothing particularly to do, I decided to follow the path to the Ashram.

I heard the electronic music quite clearly through the natural sound of Buddhist chanting outside the temple, and, following the path, came suddenly upon a compound garden filled with lots of young Western heads, all dressed in their dhotis and Tibetan shirts and Indian silks.

The Ashram comprised two principle buildings, one, a former factory of the now bankrupt SwayambhNath Bakery concern, and the other, a long shed. And it was from the shed that the sounds came.

Inside, seated quietly in a circle round a central fireplace, were about twenty people, mostly male. There were several chillums being passed around simultaneously. Room was quietly made for me to join this charmed circle.

The two five-foot Sony speakers made all verbal communication impossible. It was like sitting on stage with the Stones. The sound of the music eclipsed all cognitive function. It was like a river into which you had been plunged. And all you need do was float, float, F-l-o-a-t.

Hours—maybe even days—passed in an instant. Time ceased to exist for those of us who sat stoned in our mystical ring round the fire. And it was with this insight that I was born into a new world. A new form of consciousness had taken over, that we were somehow all together because in some strange way we had been brought here. It was as though a gust of wind had come from another existence, and had plucked us from the streets of Rome and London and Detroit, and propelled us to this Himalayan valley; our new myth-mother.

It had grown dark outside, and the people who had been in the garden, now crowded inside the Ashram. The smell of food from the far-end, invisible through the haze of wood-smoke and hashish reminded me that I had not eaten all afternoon. Soon there were people sitting around with plates on their laps eating rice and vegetables with chopsticks. I saw a line of people with empty plates in their hands, so I got up and joined them.

The Ashram provided one sensible meal a day, in the evening which cost one rupee to anyone who could afford it, otherwise it was free; tea was a few cents extra.

After we had eaten dinner, the poet Kristof walked across to the record player and switched it off. He returned to his place in the circle. There was a hush, a stillness, a sense of expectancy. Kristof announced that he was going to read a 'love poem', which he had just finished writing. Everyone looked up smiling when Kristof finished; he was

assuredly one of their verbal magicians.

It was a strange place this salamandrine Ashram of glassy eyes staring from fiery lake beside the sound of music through my leafy dreams ... but soon the speakers were back on again at full blast, so I decided to make my way back to the hotel.

It was dark when I stepped outside, and it was with great difficulty that I found my way down and on to the road again. Swayambhu is about two miles from the city, and I walked slowly, savouring the stillness; no sound from anywhere; even the dogs were quiet as I made my way through the maze of tiny streets and alleyways. The city was almost deserted, yet it could not have been much later than ten o'clock. It reminded me of the City of London at night or downtown New York, after the crowds of office workers had long since gone, the same sort of eerie stillness.

Back in my hotel room, I smoked a nocturnal chillum and then got into bed with a manuscript translation of some poems by the Nepalese master poet, Bhanubhaka Archarya, which Narayan had left with me. There was an interesting description of Kathmandu a century or so back which the poet compared with the Celestial City of Alaka (the god of wealth); he also noted its resemblance to Lhasa, Lucknow and London. And it was with these images in my mind that I fell asleep.

I was awakened in the morning by a knock at the door. I stumbled out of bed and opened the door, expecting to find a cleaning-woman. But, no, it was a young, handsome man who introduced himself in perfect English as Madhusudan Thakur from Northern India, a Brahmin, and former English lecturer at Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, and a Sanskrit scholar. He had been given my name by Narayan, who had suggested we might have much in common.

I apologised for the state of my book-strewn room and invited him in.

Madhu, as he called himself, began to tell me a bit about his life. He had studied English in Canada for three years, and was now into translating Nepalese poetry into English. He was also working on some Sanskrit translations. But what fascinated him most was the increasing number of young Westerners living in Kathmandu, and their impact on the cultural life of this city. For Kathmandu was the 'third eye' of Asia, and the eye that gets in when reality gets out. It had a special place and played a special role in Asia. In fact, he had written an article on young Western visitors for the leading intellectual monthly magazine *The Rising Nepal* and wanted me to look over the manuscript. It was entitled 'Kathmandu: A Coincidence'. Would I like to hear bits of it? Sure, I said He began to read:

'It happened only the other day by what is called in northeastern India a Samyoga, fair coincidence. At a public place in Kathmandu, two elderly gentlemen debated, and I overheard them in spite of myself. They were discussing whether the large group of young unkempt visitors from the West now in Kathmandu had any principles guiding

their visit to the East. The gentleman whose tone of voice caught my attention first was saying “Iniharuko kehi pani siddhanta chhai na”, meaning “These people have no principles at all, you know”.

He seemed to be informing his friend, who, however, paid little attention to his companion’s tone and presented his view of a whole ideology motivating and guiding these young people and their venture abroad. They were, he said, on a very important mission indeed. Life in the West had lost its meaning for them and they had come out here to seek and find new meanings, fresh perspectives, among the cultures of the East in art, religion, philosophy, in traditional, time-honoured ways of living, in forms of life and manner still untouched by the sick hurry and commercialism of modern Western civilisation: indeed, they were true seekers.

‘A cross-section of the people under discussion sat close by, blissfully unconscious of the conversation that went on around them. I sat between them and wondered.

‘In fact, I continue to wonder. Personally, my time in the West, my memories of looks and words after every talk I gave on religious texts, philosophical questions and so forth, convince me that the Western youth today is truly seeking.

‘The scene in Kathmandu, despite our cynical gentlemen, remains positive and exciting. Potentially, here is a situation which is a counterpart of a movement to preserve and promote our ancient heritage such as the ideal of a new Sanskrit University. The readiness with which Western youth is willing to accept and undergo, even though temporarily, extreme physical hardship is simply amazing if one considers the conditions in which they have grown up. Living in a world without plumbing and central heating can indeed be for the group under discussion a “spiritual experience” in itself.

It is hard to believe that the sacrifice this entails could be motivated simply by the desire for cheap travel around the world. The passionate interest in religious cultures not their own is a fact about young people today which should be given immediate recognition. A new faith is arising and demands, even in its present rudimentary forms, that we try and understand ourselves in terms of the traditions in which others have been nourished. The prejudices aroused by the long hair and beards notwithstanding, it is evident to those who look and listen that there are a certain number of genuine Sadhakas, seekers, among these people.

‘Even if life in the West has not lost its point for some, one can see and feel what some of the major political events of the past few years must have done to the more sensitive and intelligent youth of the countries involved and responsible for these events. No one who has observed for himself the mass madness let loose by alcoholism and sexual licence in Western cities, all part of the vast and complex money game, can help looking at the psychedelic movement in a new light.

‘I have no wish to saddle our friends with a “philosophy” not because I think there

is no philosophy motivating them, but because the quest is still very much on. The gains of the last few years are still in the process of being recorded, the story is yet to be told. We might indeed be living right in “the middle of things”, to use a Jamesian image, since Kathmandu promises to become, for some of the characters in the play, the capital of the new world.’

I was very impressed, and said so. I told Madhu that I thought we were all on some kind of sort of quest and had found in Kathmandu the perfect place to start. Kathmandu was a city of refugees, the new Jerusalem of the Sadhakas, who had come to savour of the fruits of Paradise.

We ordered dinner in our room, and were now perfectly relaxed in each other’s company. I liked him. He was open and honest and a man for whom the invisible world was obviously visible.

I told him that I was planning to bring out a poetry magazine, but needed more material, especially modern Nepalese poetry. I proposed to include material from the West dealing especially with the nature of the spiritual quest, including some essays by myself on the phenomenon LSD. I said it would serve a two-fold purpose. First, it would introduce Nepalese poetry to Western readers and second, it would enable Nepalese readers to orient themselves to the psychology and background of their young visitors. I had a little money, and since printing was cheap in Kathmandu, I already had enough to cover costs. Madhu said he’d be very interested indeed to help in any way, and that he was already working on the English translations of several poems. And thus began a partnership that resulted in the publication of Flow One several months later.

One thing led to another, and before long we had also agreed to start a centre for both Western and Eastern seekers, especially those who wanted to learn Sanskrit. Madhu emphasised the importance of Sanskrit amongst the intellectual artistic circles as well as in the higher levels of Government and at the Palace. Sanskrit played the same role here as Latin did in the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages, it was a sort of lingua franca of any philosophical discussions.

He said that Narayan would almost certainly be interested in hearing about such a project, and maybe could even get the Crown Prince as its patron. Could we draft an outline proposal, since he would be seeing Narayan for dinner later that evening, and would like to have him put it before the Crown Prince ? The sooner we acted, the sooner the project could get official sanction. I would also need permission from the Prime Minister to publish, but he didn’t foresee that there would be any problem.

Madhu went downstairs to make a few telephone calls, and I cleared the desk and prepared a chillum to facilitate the creative processes.

When Madhu returned, he looked very excited. Yes, Narayan would like to see the proposal this evening. And he had had some luck. He had called Balakrishna Sama,

the Vice-President of the Royal Nepalese Academy, who wanted us to come over to his house for afternoon tea and for a chat. Madhu said that Balakrishna was one of the truly great poets of Nepal, and certainly of international stature. The problem was that Balakrishna wrote his poetry in Nepalese or Sanskrit, though of course his English was perfect. As a result, he was virtually unknown outside his own country, a situation Madhu planned to rectify by translating into English all his work written over the past sixty years.

He brought up a chair to the desk, and we began to formulate the proposal. Madhu didn't smoke hash himself, but had no objection if anyone else did. After a couple of chillums and an hour's discussion, we had agreed upon the main details, and all that now remained was to write it. We addressed it to His Royal Highness, The Crown Prince of Nepal.

When we finished, Madhu suggested that we should go round to see Balakrishna Sama who lived at the other end of town, not far from the Chinese Embassy. We took a taxi and within ten minutes were walking up the drive of his house; with Hindu statues in the garden and a huge Garuda bird painted on the door. I was already impressed. The house itself was large, half-timbered like a medieval manor, two or three storeys high, and painted white.

A servant let us in and ushered us into one of the downstairs living rooms. He said his master would join us in a moment.

The room was like a miniature museum with statues of stone and bronze of the various Hindu pantheon, paintings and early Nepalese iconography; books in Nepalese, Sanskrit, English and French, and, nicely laid out on a silver-topped table, a Victorian tea-service.

We had to wait only a minute or two before the poet entered. He made a short bow and shook hands with us and apologised for keeping us waiting. His English, like so many of the cultured Nepalese, was almost entirely without accent, and he spoke it with feeling, spontaneously, and without affectation. He was perhaps seventy years of age, delicate and radiant with health, and had the face of a man who had obviously lived a life of the mind, very sensitive and aristocratic, as though his inner and outer worlds matched. He was dressed in shiny blue silk in the traditional Nepalese dress, and I felt that I was in the company of an exceptional, rare person, perhaps even a saint but certainly a wizard of some sort.

He seemed very pleased to see us, especially Madhu, whom he embraced warmly as he beckoned us to the tea-table. His servant appeared with a silver tea-pot, and a plate of cakes and toasted scones.

Madhu then started to talk about the Himal Centre project, and to read him bits of our afternoon's work. Balakrishna was most attentive and sympathetic and said that he would certainly encourage a centre such as we had outlined. The only problem he thought

was the financial one. He made a few calculations on a sheet of paper and said that for the scholarships alone we would need \$595,000.

Madhu said that although \$500,000 might sound a like a lot of money, in reality it was not too much if one considered the possibility of help from some of the larger American Foundations, who were used to giving away much larger sums for less realistic projects. I remained silent, though I nodded in agreement with Madhu's analysis.

We then began to discuss the envisaged poetry magazine, Flow, which Madhu briefly described. Nepal, being a country in which poetry was highly esteemed, had a lot to offer, and it would make sense to make available some of the best Nepalese poetry in English, as well as make available contemporary Western poetry to Nepalese poetry lovers. Balakrishna then turned to me and asked in his quiet, pleasant way, what the editorial policy might be and whether I thought Nepalese poetry was sufficiently good to warrant translation into an international language like English.

I was pretty stoned and my mind was already soaring into giddy heights of inspiration. 'Flow is essentially a magazine of poetry, art and religion, and we should dedicate it to the man of tomorrow who has understood the burden of his dim past, synthesised the heritage of his many cultures, solved the crises of the present age and lives according to his genius!'

Balakrishna smiled broadly, and said that Camus, the French Existentialist, had probably meant something similar when he had noted somewhere that 'Real generosity towards the future lies in giving all to the present'.

I then asked the poet whether he would read some of his poems, but he demurred, saying his English was not really good enough to express his meaning, though Madhu could read something if he wished.

Madhu pulled out a fistful of manuscripts from his briefcase.

'I think I'd like to read a verse from your most recent poem, which I have just finished translating—To Soma, which was, I believe, inspired by the recent Apollo 11 manned trip to the moon. But I think I ought to explain for the benefit of Michael here, that the word Soma in Sanskrit also means "moon" as it is also associated with the sacred elixir of the gods of Vedic times. It was the fruit from the mystical tree of knowledge which, when taken, loosened the "Tongue of the Way" and in this sense would correspond to the Greek ambrosia, the elixir of immortality from the stream of Castalia under the Temple of Diana. '

Madhu stood up, bowed graciously to the poet, who sat silent, his face grave and serious ...

'Sweetly, O Soma, do I remember you again today, Over the last half-century have

I been Drinking you in, drop by drop, unceasing, ecstatic! Once again, O Soma, I grind your vine, Grind it with my heart, filter it through my viens, Mingle it with my vision and my breath, To fill the amphora of my heart to the brim! O Soma, soaked am I to the very depths In the sweet shower of your beams Drawn deeply by your gravity, Exhilarated, breathless as I swing And go steadily gliding, gliding, I too fly upwards with Apollo Eleven! ...'

It was a long poem followed by a long silence, and we all looked as if something very special had happened, like the shock following upon a great discovery.

Impatient or unwilling to remain silent, I finally broke the spell by saying that it was one of the most incredible poems that I had ever heard, and that I wanted to put it into the magazine for the world to read. I also added, by way of a comment, that I had arrived in Kathmandu on the very same day that Apollo 11 had blasted off for the moon.

Balakrishna then said, looking at me straight in the eyes, though centred in the middle of my forehead: 'A most auspicious omen for you.'

It was time to go, and we stood up, bowed and took our leave. Madhu danced down the driveway, obviously pleased by our reception. There were no taxis in sight and I told Madhu that I'd really prefer to walk back to the hotel, which was fine with him.

The evening breeze made the walk bearable, and I felt very good indeed. We talked a lot on the way about the magazine, the shape it should take, who might be able to print it in English, things like that. But my mind was strangely elsewhere, as if the experience with Balakrishna Sama had been more than simply meeting a master poet. I felt very close to the man in some odd, unaccountable way. Perhaps in him I had at last found my 'guru'?

We soon reached the centre of the city, and taking Madhu back into my confidence, I asked him whether he could find me a house to rent, somewhere nice, perhaps on the edge of the city, and with many rooms. Madhu said he'd look into it immediately. We said goodbye at Kanti Path, and I cut across the park in the direction of my hotel.

It was a beautiful evening, cool and pleasant in the evening light, the mountains still visible as silhouettes in the far distance. I again experienced that expansion of feeling, a new mental amplitude, difficult to describe but quite intense. It was my own self reborn out of the vibrations of this holy city; it was my own self which warms in the sun, refreshes in the evening breeze, glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees.... In the distance I heard the sound of a temple flute and bell and the song of the cicada as it sung itself ... utterly ... a-w-a-y. Why grasp so earnestly after hallucinations and flowers in the air when it was all here, at one's feet? For as one's sense of reality deepens, which it does with age, one's need to integrate with the world is very great indeed. And I felt that at least here, in this Paradise city, I should make myself yet one more dwelling place.

Back in my hotel room, after a light dinner of rice and vegetables, contentedly I prepared a chillum, and poured out some fruit wine. How otherwise shall we take our pleasure here ... and if ever I am asked again 'What for the future?' it will be with a finger pointed to the moon that I shall reply.

Three months later ...

The monsoon was over. The air was as clear and fresh as Vichy water. I had rented the lower two floors of a large house called 'Shangri-La' in Bijuswari, a secluded suburb of Kathmandu close to Swayambhu. The house belonged to the Nepalese Director of Tourism, Tirtha Raj Tuladhar, a Buddhist and a man of great personal charm and sensitivity, who had translated many of King Mahendra's poems into English. And from my window I had a clear view across the valley to the distant snow-capped peaks of the high Himalayan range. The house stood by itself in a narrow lane which was really a cul-de-sac and was thus unvisited by motorised transport, except once in the morning and once in the evening when a chauffeur-driven car came to pick up and deliver the Tourist Director.

It was a haven of stillness, and the only sounds you heard were natural ones—of birds, or animals or passing people. There was a large meadow extending across the lane; and a large well-kept garden immediately in front of the house, which seemed forever ablaze with flowers, especially roses, which the tourist director would tend for hours at a time, removing by hand, bugs from the petals and leaves, one at a time, never killing them, but putting them on a sheet of paper and every now and then blowing them off into the winds of fate or fortune. A typically Buddhist gesture.

An orchard of pear and apple trees flanked either side of the house and at the very rear, beyond the back garden was a small stupa of exquisite design. It was an ideal place to be. This was my landscape, the one that absorbed me, with joy, into the hot blood of myths and gods, back into the roots of total being in which, at times I could truly believe that there was no longer any 'I' or 'me' but that I was somehow the All. And in the mornings, with my rooms filled with bright sunlight and the sound of temple bells opening the well of my ears, I could feel that inexpressible peace ... as:

Unseen today In brightest sunlight, and yet Today how beautiful, Mother Nepal.

I was learning that man is born in ignorance of his element, and must somehow find it, like the cygnet finds the water.

My mornings would usually start early, shortly after daybreak. I had a small paraffin burner on which I would make my breakfast, usually a plate of porridge made from water-buffalo milk, and several cups of tea, followed by a chillum. I usually took this in the garden. I'd then try to work a little on the magazine manuscripts before Madhu would arrive, usually at about ten o'clock. It was an idyllic existence.

Kris, the poet, would usually join us for lunch, and after lunch we would be joined by five or six other Westerners for some Sanskrit lessons, which Kris had arranged. He had a degree in Sanskrit from Oxford, and was a very patient, clever teacher, who used his skill to get us to learn this amazing language.

But mostly my time was taken up with the manifold problems of getting the magazine together. We had found three printers and had decided to parcel the material out as three separate sections, which we would then assemble into the final magazine. Already the shape of the magazine was discernible, if in silhouette only, but the energy was there—my slight paranoia was that with the unlimited amount of hashish and LSD we had, all this energy would dissipate before completion, for with psychedelics the impetus to ‘attend to business’ is not always present!

So it was something of an effort of will, for I was determined to get the damn thing published, even if it killed me, which, as it turned out, it very nearly did through what you would call over-indulgence in drugs (though other matters played their part, like rising costs and two of the printers refusing to print or return the manuscripts entrusted to them).

The least of my difficulties, surprisingly enough, was obtaining official permission from the Prime Minister to publish the magazine. I had been told by various people, including the French Ambassador, that no foreigner had ever received such permission, ‘not even the Americans’. And the British Embassy was equally sure that I would be refused, though in every other way they were most encouraging.

I needed, of course, someone who had access to the Prime Minister and who was also a poet. And I found my man in the person of Soorya Bahadur Singh. He was an extraordinary gentleman in his late thirties, who worked in the Singha Durba, the parliament building, and who wrote poetry in English. He came round to see me one day with a pile of poems about one foot deep, which he wanted me to publish.

Mr. Singh had connections inside the Parliament—his brother was private secretary to the King. So I asked him to arrange for me to see the Prime Minister. This he arranged in a matter of a few hours for the following day, which didn’t leave me much time to find something suitable to wear. My normal dress was a Tibetan shirt and dhoti, a piece of coloured Indian cloth wrapped around my waist, and my shoes had long since been given away to a Tibetan Buddhist priest, who had wanted them for his Rimpoche (a High Lama) as a gift.

Accordingly, as soon as Singh told me that I had to be at the Singha Durba at eleven o’clock the next morning, I went into town to buy an outfit. I settled for what I was told was a traditional Nepalese costume for formal occasions. It was made of silver cloth and the trousers were right up to the knees and opened up at the top like jodhpurs, together with a long jacket nearly down to the middle of the thigh. The collar was tied by means of ribbons. I also got a pair of cheap Indian sandals.

I spent most of the night preparing my brief, and felt able to answer any questions the Prime Minister might put to me. Mr. Singh came with a taxi at 10.30 to take me to the Singha Durba. He seemed to be almost as nervous as I was. I had difficulty getting dressed in my new Nepalese clothes—the legs were too tight, but I finally managed to get into them, and off we set.

The Singha Durba was an impressive building, huge and in the style of architecture of the British Raj. The taxi dropped us off at the main entrance. The entire building seemed to be a labyrinth of corridors, and we walked rapidly, moving through this maze, up stairways, down small corridors, along long ones until we stopped before two huge polished mahogany doors with a sparkling brass curved doorknob. Mr. Singh knocked, and we entered. This was the Secretary's office.

The secretary was a pleasant young man, who smiled broadly when he saw me, and said that the Prime Minister was expecting us. He disappeared for a moment through another set of huge doors, and then came out and indicated that we were to enter.

The Prime Minister sat at a desk at the far end of a palatial room. He was wearing a white open-necked shirt with the sleeves rolled up. When he stood up to greet us, I noticed that he was wearing ordinary Western-style navy blue trousers and a belt. It was quite a distance from the door to his desk, but already I sensed a faux pas on my part. The Prime Minister began to smile as we approached and the smile gradually broadened into a grin. By the time we reached his desk he was almost uncontrollably shaking with suppressed laughter.

Of course I didn't know it then, but the costume I had bought ready-made from one of the tourist shops was from a period around about 1890—as though in the West I had gone to meet an official dressed up in a Dickensian outfit.

But the broad grin was infectious, and I, too, was laughing when we shook hands. Tears streamed down the Prime Minister's face as he took the form that Singh handed him and which he had to sign before we could officially go ahead with the publication of Flow. He hardly glanced at it, and signing it with a flourish, managed to say between giggles, 'I hope you don't write anything bad about Nepal.'

Mr. Singh then bowed and said that was all and that we now had permission to print. I said I thought the Prime Minister was an exceptionally jolly fellow. And Singh merely nodded. He then asked me whether I'd like a tour of the building, to which I readily assented. We must have walked three or four miles through the endless lengths of corridors, and somehow ended up walking along a subterranean corridor, lit by light coming through tiny iron-barred windows. Singh said he had to see someone for a moment, and we went into an incredibly small room that seemed to be littered everywhere—on the shelves, on the floor, on the desks, with bundles of envelopes.

There was a very old man sitting at one of the desks, who barely glanced up as we

entered. 'This is the censor's office and this is the chief censor. I think I will show him the Prime Minister's signature on our document, just in case.' Singh said something to the Censor and gave him the signed piece of paper. The Censor removed the thin wire spectacles which he had been using to read the letters, and produced a magnifying glass, and read the paper Singh had handed him.

He nodded, dug out a stamp from a drawer, and after putting some ink on to the pad, stamped the document. 'Now it's completely official. We can publish anything we want.'

I was glad to get out of the building with its associations of prison and other large institutions, and I welcomed Singh's suggestion that we should go somewhere and celebrate, which for Singh meant getting very drunk. I called an American teacher friend and asked him if he could let me have a bottle of whisky, explaining the purpose, for it was still not yet noon.

No problem. And by mid-afternoon we were both reeling about the centre of Kathmandu singing songs and reciting poetry. Finally we got to Rana's teashop, and stumbled in. All the heads turned as we noisily entered. And on many of the bearded faces was a look of disapproval. Rana's was a place for chillums and pop music, not a bar. Singh insisted on having the music turned off, then climbed on to the top of a table and, with tears streaming down his face, said that never in his entire life had he met such a great poet as Michael Hollingshead, and that it was his wish that everyone in the teashop should stand up and sing 'God Save the Queen'. A few heads split immediately, sensing a scene. And Rana just stood there watching, not knowing quite what to do. Finally, I managed to pull Singh off the table and out from the teashop into the yard. I then carried him to a taxi and paid the driver to take him back to the Singha Durba to sleep it off.

And thus the days passed into weeks and then into months. By now we had a lot of material ready for the printers. I had also got a translation of one of the King's poems, which I decided to print in red. It was called A Self-Portrait ...

'Like the dark night I am Whose moon has strayed away;
Like the wild withered tree That all its leaves has lost.

With rotten, hollowed roots, Ready I am to fall;
A faded flower I With none to care for me.

A blind man I who gropes Fumbling the stark mid-path;
And such a burning fire That has no warmth to give.

Ever am I in the mid-stream About to sink beneath the waves;
I am a drowned soul, Whose shore lies far away.'

It was a very fine poem, and modest, considering that King Mahendra was the

supreme ruler of Nepal, and also recognised as an incarnation of the Hindu God Vishnu.

I had also had quite a few acid sessions during the time I had been there was a constant stream of visitors coming to 'Shangri-la' to score some 'sunshine'. There was quite a bit of acid in the city, mostly brought in by Californians or some of the bigger dealers, who would exchange acid for hashish. I believe LSD was known by the few Nepalese who used it as 'Western hash'.

It was traditional to take LSD at full moon, and people would congregate at the Bakery Ashram, and drop it in the late evening so that they could listen to music during the night, followed by a climb up to the Buddhist temples to join the monks for early morning service. It was very rare that anyone ever freaked out' or went berserk, though it could happen.

I remember a young Dutch boy who, when he got to the temple, took off all his clothes and began running amok, knocking over prayer bowls and trying to climb up on to the head of a huge bronze Buddha. There was nothing we could do to quieten him down, and we felt it had all gone a little too far. The monks, who had been chanting during all of this had seemingly not paid any attention, that is until the statue began to sway and it looked as if it would come crashing down. About six monks suddenly moved across to grab him, and gently they carried him back to the circle of other monks. They then tied him up and gagged him and placed him in the centre, and continued their mantras as if nothing had happened.

But perhaps the thing that disturbed local people the most was that, on average, one girl a month would flip out on acid and insist on walking through the centre of the city completely naked. I think the Nepalese were terribly shocked by this, for often the girl would be extremely beautiful. I think the syndrome, as far as one can say anything about human behaviour, is connected with the notion of total freedom, the freedom to walk naked being merely a manifestation of this wish. Throwing off your clothes is an act of liberation. Or so someone once told the young Californian girl whom I saw briefly just before she was put on the plane to India, having been found by a policeman wandering naked through the main street. I think there was also a great fear on the part of the authorities that one day King Mahendra might see such a spectacle, and that would create a major incident, for the king had a habit of cruising the streets at odd hours behind the wheel of his Ferrari.

In fact, although I was not held directly responsible in the case of the American girl, it had not escaped the notice of the authorities that I was somehow involved with the LSD-cult, as they called it. At first it had seemed innocent enough, merely another religious group, who used something similar if not identical to hashish, which had a place in certain forms of Eastern worship. But this thing about girls taking off their clothes every now and then had them worried. Consequently, I was approached by one of the editors of the English language daily, The Rising Nepal, who asked whether I would write an article for the paper about what young Westerners were doing in Kathmandu. 'It would

help relations with the public very much indeed; yes, really, very, very much. Thank you.'

I did so, and called the article 'The Divine Mutants' which was sufficiently obscure I thought, with still a slight religious or spiritual bias.

THE DIVINE MUTANTS

'The term, "hippy", if a recent journalist can be believed was invented by the media so that ordinary people would have something to pray for salvation from. If so, and if the phenomenon "hippy" is the unholy invention of sub-editors and people with mass circulation magazines to sell, we ought to be able to look at the matter more objectively and see what myths and legends have sprung up around this strange creature.

'One thing is certain, however, there is an increasing acceleration of young people "dropping out" of our Western sort of society, who prefer to "stand on their own two feet" rather than have their lives directed from without, by the system (economic-political-social). This group, variously estimated (Time magazine) to be between seven and ten million under the age of twenty-six, has claimed new areas for its own. It has developed a new life-style or an existential mode of being which, if still lacking proper articulation, seems nonetheless to be an attraction for some of the most gifted and sensitive minds of our modern generation; there is something vital and energetic and intelligent about what these young people are doing. In the words of their "High Priest", Timothy Leary, who also coined their slogan Turn On (to your own nervous system) Tune in (to the energy within your own mind) Drop out (of the socioeconomic system): "The generation born after 1945 is perhaps the wisest and holiest generation that the human race has ever seen ... and, by God, instead of lamenting derogating, and imprisoning them, we should support them, all turn on with them."

'Yet for those so identified by Leary, the "dropping out" foreshadows social developments which are bound to take place in Western society as a whole, for as automation increases and when only a small percentage of the people will do most of the work, leisure will be the problem or, rather, too much leisure, for the old ethic of work and salvation cannot survive in a society where perhaps only five per cent of the top executive and administration do all of the work- indeed, within the foreseeable future, the big reward in life will be to be allowed to work.

'Meanwhile, we are living in a strange confusing period of transition from one life-style to another quite different one. From the philosopher's point of view, I think, we are seeing a change in the nature of Western man due to a shift of emphasis away from a theological revelation to an ontologist mysticism, that is, authority of a Divine Person to the more individually "free" belief in absolute Nature. In either approach to God, we are reminded that we are summoned to a deeper spiritual awareness, far beyond the level of subject-object. One of the attractions of Central Asia for some of the young seekers is that the religions here see man's unity with God in an ontological and natural principle in

which all beings are metaphysically one. Here there is unity in Absolute Being (Atman) or in the Void (Sunyata).

'It is one way that still remains for Western man to save himself from becoming Reality's dupe, that is, the slave of some external control (which we see as an inevitable result of television, which keeps millions of minds literally imprisoned by invisible lines of pull and force, and soon there will be more sophisticated hardware, such as 3-D holography, where images will literally appear to be actually present within you inside your living-room. If you want to see an elephant, plug in the tape marked "elephant" and one will appear, hovering in your drawing-room and safe too. And it won't leave any mess to have to clear up afterwards. For such people, the cinematic world of labour-saving devices and the good health that goes with it is probably the best place to be.)

"A lifetime of freedom! Why, no man alive could stand it; it would turn his life on earth into a complete hell", says Bernard Shaw. And for the older, conservative members of society this is a fair observation. Freedom is too difficult for most people to bear, and for those who have lived a lifetime of conformity and spiritual neglect, freedom is impossible, that is, short of mystical revelation.

The young man or woman is aware that as the political inhumanity of this century increases (with a corresponding erosion of certain liberal and humanist values) so too will the illegality of our various legal actions that seek to keep bodies of men pressing down on other bodies of men, and all for so little reason. Society, to such a young educated thinking person seems to be growing infertile, devoid of a living culture, no longer productive of any personal form, abstract, lifeless in the face of machine-made interpretations about the self, the world, and the other people in it.

No wonder, then, if modern man sees himself as nothing but a cipher on the face of a moral and spiritual void. And as the knowledge of his own disorientation cannot be handled quantitatively, he turns more and more to his brave world of machines. And through the power of his machines he acts out the uncomprehended tragedy of his inner disruption. He is therefore cut off from any reality except that of his own processes, which he cannot understand, and his machines, which he can understand, but which cannot provide answers or even directions which would enable him to regain the former lost paradise of close contact with nature and the world of living things, including himself.

As the Ancient Chinese sage, Shuang Tzu, discovered some 2500 years ago, dependence even on a simple kind of machine causes man to become uncertain of his own inner impulses, and he may even forget how to master his own world. Naturally, the advance of science and technology during the past 150 years is irreversible, and modern man now has come to terms with himself in his new situation. Yet he cannot do so, it seems to many modern thinkers, if he builds an irrational and unscientific faith on the absolute and final objectivity of a scientific knowledge of nature. For the study of man is also concerned with the core of the unknowable at the heart of man which cannot by its nature become the subject of finite analysis like a plant or animal species but is an area

of human experience accessible through the intervention of a sacrament, which is whatever it is that helps make God present in man. (A sacrament is something that engenders in those who use it certain spiritual resonances which defy exact analysis and cannot be accurately described to one who does not experience authentically in himself.)

‘And perhaps the start of any process of the personality towards independence, self-direction, and control must start with question and the search for an answer; with the question which again and again implies a calling in question the destruction of accepted ideas and stereotyped world-pictures and rote-learning and imprints—in a word, revolution; the question that both cost Socrates his life and made it of such value.

‘So perhaps we ought to look more kindly on the youthful pioneers who see our future world as one in which there is none but one, and each person owns nothing but the whole. And the phenomenon of so many young people who think this way is all the more significant if you take Kathmandu as an allegory of the possibility of conformity, not merely of one young growing person to one particular communal place or social development, but of a whole generation to a complete, if at times imperfect, greater society.’

The editor seemed very pleased with the article and asked whether I’d like to write more for them. I then wrote a series on Tantra called ‘Old Art in the Hands of New Artists (Notes on the relevance of Tantra to Modern Western Art Movement)’ which they wanted to serialise over twelve issues.

Tantra, in fact, had interested me a lot during my stay in the East, and I had consulted both Lhasa-trained Buddhist tantrikas as well as Hindu masters. There was also a Western Hindu monk called Bhagawan Dass, from California, who practised Tibetan Tantra vitally and who had a lot to tell me about its left-handed aspect. It was also Bhagawan Dass who first took Richard Alpert to his guru in India, Neem Karolli Baba. Richard was converted into orthodox Hinduism and given the name Baba Ram Dass, or ‘servant of God’. He claims to be able to maintain a ‘forty per cent hashish high’ without the use of drugs or sex, which is admirable.

My talks with both Bhagawan Dass and Baba Ram Das confirmed that their guru had used LSD: in fact, the first time he did so was when Bhagawan introduced him to Ram Dass. The story of what happened is now part of LSD lore, but is worth repeating, even so. The guru asked about LSD, and Ram Dass said that it did something equivalent to what he had read about in the writings of the mystics, both Eastern and Western. The guru asked Richard, as he then was, if he had any.

Richard said he had six ‘whitelighting’ pills left, and that they were very powerful indeed. The guru asked Richard to give them to him. And promptly swallowed them. Richard sat silent watching for any sign. An hour passed. Finally, Richard asked the Baba what effects he was experiencing. ‘None’, exclaimed the guru. And Richard was immediately impressed and declared his allegiance to the guru, and gave him his Land Rover.

There was very little interest in LSD amongst the Nepalese, however, with one notable exception, Rama Prasad Manandhar, who had been the Nepalese Ambassador in London for seven years (he had once entertained Queen Elizabeth to dinner at his London Embassy). Rama Prasad was a tantrika, a poet, and a philosopher, a man of wide learning and culture, who lived in one of the oldest and most beautiful houses in the city.

He came round to visit me one day, and a friendship sprang up. One thing led to another and finally he asked me one day whether he could try some LSD. We arranged a session at 'Shangri-la', and I told him the strength or dosage, and he selected a dose of about 300 gamma, which was quite a lot for a first trip.

The session was very quiet, meditative, and serious. Rama Prasad did not talk very much. I remained totally silent. About midway through the session, Rama Prasad complained about being indoors, and said that he would like to go into the garden. We walked into the garden together. It was a beautiful afternoon of bright sunlight, and everything looked absolutely radiant and perfect. Rama walked over to one of the roses upon which a gorgeous butterfly had just alighted. And exclaimed: 'We must try to expand the "moment" into infinite duration!' He asked for a pen and paper and then wrote a poem, which I reproduce exactly as he wrote it and as I published it later in Flow One. It is called The Moment and The One-Ment.

'THE MOMENT' and 'THE ONE-MENT'

At the crest of Time I stood: On one side, as far as eye could reach
And beyond In the dim-most stretch of history
Was the Past— A never-ending chain of events. On the
other side, Looking towards things yet to come. Yet to become,
Creatures waiting to be born, Deeds waiting to be done,
History waiting to be made, Actions and reactions, Causations
and fruitions, Was the Future— A never-ceasing chain of events.

In between, I stood: At the summit of Time, At the MOMENT—
When the obverse and the reverse, The depths of the Past
And the obtrusions of the Future Were perfectly united in the Moment—
The Moment which knew no dimensions, But which contained all
the dimensions Of the Past as of the Future.

The Butterfly had just scarcely alighted On the tip of the rose-petal,
The rose a-bloom at the topmost zenith of its glory, Just the fraction of a second
before it would show The very first sign of wilting—all too soon;
In the perch of the butterfly There was still the heat of the coming,
Also already apparent was the rush of the going away; But at the
Moment, For a Moment, The coming and the going stood transfixed
in the hush of the stillness.

In the kiss of the lovers At the climax of the touch, There lay implicit
the fulfilments of the Past And the expectancies of the Future
Inextricably built together Into the one undivided jointure—
In the present Moment.

The deep-mouthed bay of the hound As it barked he the garden At the Moment, Oh! How exquisite it was! As if the whole of the world s past history Had been but a preparation for that perfect sound. The Present Moment— How beautiful, how sublime, how full! Full with the blending of all the joys of the Past and the Future— How ugly, how horrid, how full! Full with all the sorrows beaten, fused together Like an unsplit hair, Like the yang and the yin, The positive and the negative, The sweetness and the sourness, That champagne-most-ness, Indissolubly unified Like salt in the sea-water, Like the meaning to the word, Like Gouri to Shiva—

This is more than full: This is the Perfect, the Absolute. The undifferentiated, The uncreated, God without diffuseness, God, the All-Knowing, the All-Enjoying, Reality without name and form, Beyond duration and beyond occupation, The Real Permanent: The Real Truth, The Real Strength, The Real Bliss—THE 'ONE-MENT'.

It was shortly after the Ambassador's session that Rama Prasad came round to see me about arranging a meeting with the celebrated Buddhist monk and saint, His Holiness—Gyalwa Karmapa, who was visiting Kathmandu and staying with the monks at SwayambhNath. Rama knew Karmapa quite well, and had even entertained him once at a reception in his town house. I was naturally very interested in having an audience with Karmapa, for I had heard and read much about him. He was the head of the Kagyudpa Order of Tibetan Mahayana Buddhism, and recognised as the sixteenth Karmapa incarnation.

The audience was arranged for dawn on the following morning, and Rama Prasad said he'd pick me up at my house in his car.

I stayed up all that night, preparing myself for the temple meeting, and performing chillum and acid Sadhana. When Rama Prasad collected me, I was very stoned indeed, and could hardly find my way out of the garden into the Mercedes. Then we sped off into the blackness and reached the top of Swayambhu just as the first light of dawn appeared through the gaps between the surrounding mountains. It was a glorious sight. And I felt a very special sense of reverence; there was a holiness about the place, more intense than I had ever experienced there before; my head and heart were open to anything.

We were taken up some stairs to the top floor and shown into an antechamber where a monk tied a piece of orange cloth around my neck. He then indicated that I should follow him, and he led me from the chamber into a huge sal brilliant with tankas, and murals, and statues. At the far end, seated on a throne, sat Karmapa; and next to him, seated on a cushion in the full lotus position, was Rama Prasad.

I approached Karmapa slowly, my eyes to the floor, with short bows every few steps. When I reached the throne, I looked up and saw a beam of bright light issuing from the centre of his silver crown or it may have been a beam of sunlight catching a reflection through the lattice-work windows.

But the effect was quite startling. It really could seem that he was emitting light from his 'third eye' in the centre of his forehead. I recovered from this startling hallucination, sufficiently anyhow to hand him the white silk scarf I had brought as a present. Karmapa then spoke to me through an interpreter: 'According to the tradition since the Buddha, it has been customary to preserve the record of gifts, as a token of one's inner sense of benevolence. This is so that it may serve as a historical record of the Dharma too. Your name will therefore be added to the names of people contributing to this tradition.'

I was then asked to say anything I wished to Karmapa.

What I wished to say was for the future: to see many of the Lamas and families of the esoteric Dharma move to the West. And, how this work could be furthered by the lamas opening a dialogue with the Chiefs and Elders of the North American Indian Tribe called the Hopi whose villages I had once visited in Arizona. The lands of the North American Indians stretch from parts of Canada down to the Mexican border and comprise some of the most beautiful countryside in the world, parts of which are remarkably similar to Tibet, particularly in Colorado and New Mexico.

But these lands are now under siege again, for, as the indigenous Indian population is encouraged to leave the reservations and accept an alien white culture—which is happening in the case of the young Indians at a truly frightening rate—these holy lands will be taken over in a few years by the U.S. Government, and then by the builders. Yet potentially they could provide a sort of 'spiritual backbone' for a future, more spiritualized America.

Karmapa remained silent throughout all this. When I had finished, he beckoned me closer and, as I bent my head, his hands touched the centre of my head, and suddenly, unaccountably, like a bolt, I experienced Samadhi one of the most extraordinary moments of consciousness of which man is capable. And I felt utterly and completely cleansed, as though the divine thunderbolt had gone through me like a million volt charge. It was a feeling that was to remain with me for quite some days.

The memory of this great Initiation persists. I believe that on that special morning when I met Karmapa my life was changed and in ways that I am only now beginning to understand, which I have yet to assimilate, and, in time, express outwardly and through my being. For if ever there were a living god, Karmapa is it: of this I am utterly convinced.

Ninety-five per cent of all Buddhists, from Ladakh to NEFA (North Assam) belong to the Kargyudpa esoteric sect, of which Karmapa is the spiritual leader.

Like all the other Karmapa incarnations, His Holiness is famous for his erudite scholarship, integrity of character, and excellence in yogic practices. The embodiment of compassion, in human form, Karmapa cares for and loves all human beings, and takes

pains for their spiritual salvation.

He is equally well-honoured and followed by Kings, Lamas and laymen, in Tibet, China, Mongolia, India, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, as also throughout south-east Asia, Japan, Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, Canada, Great Britain, U.S.A., Sweden, Denmark, Spain, etc., etc.

And daily now Karmapa prays for the world ... 'May all spiritual leaders enjoy long lives and prosperity. May the Singha multiply and fulfill their duties. May the blessings of the Dharma liberate all departed souls. In the world may sickness, poverty, wars and all evil influences be cut at the root and destroyed. May all things of the Kali Yuga (Black Age) be dispersed.'

Finally, of course, the first number of Flow appeared, minus about half the material, which two of the printers had kept after I refused to pay increased printing costs, which I considered to be very unfair. And the dedication read:

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE CROWN PRINCE OF NEPAL AND HER ROYAL HIGHNESS ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR MARRIAGE KATHMANDU

FEBRUARY 27, 1970

The days drifted lazily. I had made a number of friends in Kathmandu, both Nepali and Western, and would often spend pleasant afternoons walking around the city, occasionally venturing forth to BoudhiNath, a small Tibetan settlement just outside Kathmandu, with a characteristic huge stupa or temple in the centre of the village, with three large eyes painted on the top, which were visible from afar—one of the silent sentinels of Kathmandu Valley.

It was a colourful place—the old Tibetan women slowly circumnavigating the temple, spinning the eternal prayer-wheels, the men hanging around in change shops, a few Easterners buying Tibetan ornaments and clothes in the inevitable string of tourist shops. One of the large houses around the stupa belonged to the Chini Lama, and, having heard that the stupa had been recently struck by lightning, I decided to pay him a visit one afternoon, for the Chini Lama was like the unofficial mayor of BoudhiNath and the guardian of the stupa, which he generously endowed.

According to local gossip the Chini Lama had been doing a good trade moving tankas, Tibetan rugs, and hashish and the lightning thunderbolt had struck the stupa as an obvious warning from above.

The Lama received me hospitably with the traditional salt-and-butter tea, brought in by a lovely girl. As we sat and talked, I was impressed by his incredible outfit, which included orange-red robes in various silks, a fur hat, from underneath which his smiling eyes looked at me with a penetrating curiosity. I finally asked him about the lightning

matter, whereupon he told me that it was indeed an auspicious omen as he had found a Garuda egg embedded in the stupa just afterwards.

I beheld in my stoned mind's eye a vision of a mythical bird, for the Garuda is a familiar creature to the readers of Hindu mythology, not unlike the phoenix in appearance, whose wings are made of gold studded with diamonds; so I suggested that I could arrange for an incubator to be sent out to the stupa, if there were any real possibility of hatching such an unusual bird as the Garuda. The Chini Lama looked at me wistfully for what seemed like a long time and finally said: 'I am afraid it is too late. I have already sold the egg to a Hong Kong businessman. The shell is famed throughout China as a great aphrodisiac.'

We parted on the best of terms and he suggested that I visit the monastery of Ogmin Chang Chub Choling, established by a former Miami beauty Queen, Princess Zinaide de Rachevski, who had been ordained into the Tantric Buddhist Order by His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, who had also shaved off her head of hair; and it was rumoured she was the first incarnation of Madame Blavatski...

It was a two-mile walk from the village, and I made the ascent of the hill with some difficulty; the path was fairly steep and narrow and I had to avoid occasional flocks of descending goats and the occasional water-buffalo led by tiny Nepalese children. The hill levelled out and soon I was inside the gates of the monastery. The Abbess was sitting on the lawn in a circle of beautiful girls with the occasional male sadhu seated quietly within their midst.

I sat down next to Zina, as she liked to be known by old friends (we had known each other briefly in New York, in the mid-sixties, during her time there as a stunning East Side socialite), and she told me many interesting things about the training people received at the monastery, the essence of transmission being telepathy or more exactly darshan—a kind of 'flash' or vibration that is transmitted in the guru-gela relationship.

One of the resident Lamas, who had received his training in Lhasa, now spoke a little English, and during the course of the conversation I asked him about the Chinese invasion into Tibet. The Lama gave me a curious answer: From one point of view the invasion had been an historical tragedy, certainly for the Tibetan people who were now scattered as refugees throughout the Indian continent. Yet from another vantage point, the 'cosmic' one, this was all somehow necessary in order to spread the dharma and make of this planet earth a Heaven for all living creatures. 'The seven seals of silence were broken and a new epoch would come.'

Now my time in this tiny Himalayan Kingdom had come to an end. I had lived in Kathmandu for one year and had seen and experienced many new things, and much had been given, more, indeed, than I could ever hope to repay. But some inner restlessness was calling me back to the West, and I decided to follow its prompting. Thus it was on one sun-drenched morning in August that I boarded the tiny DC-9 to Calcutta and thence

by connecting jet to London, arriving back in the metropolis the next day as though in a foreign city, lost, and not a little sad for what I saw... .

What had I really learned in my decade of bizarre psychedelic trips? That it takes a great deal of acid to produce even a little elevation of consciousness? That there are times we can know more than we can tell? That reality must still count for something? That it is impossible to become what one is never not? That the future lies in a Tantric vision of cosmic sexuality combined with a cult of ecstasy? That we can make of the planet earth a Holy Land yet? Or is it with a finger pointed to the moon that I should reply? But one thing is certain: that there is no need to mean by a 'culture of humanity' anything more than the liberation of the higher faculties. Whoever has any experience in this matter will know how right Cato was when he said: ... 'Never is he more active than when he does nothing, never is he less alone than when he is by himself.'

What at last is left for the psychedelic theorist? Must he honour the extreme doctrine of individualism and concede that, after the elimination of radical evil and the provision of material abundance, people must be left alone, simply to be and do what they want?

Our mind craves dreams, those magical realms, for ever present between somewhere and nowhere, which beguile us with a thralldom all their own and help keep our sense of wonder alive. And if the new 'matter-of-factness' encroaches on our brain to no other end than to make of our life a thing and not, as it longs to be, an instrument of self-transcendence, we feel distressed by our inability to dream as once we did; and all delight is gone, our life somehow diminished, which is the cause of most of the angst in the self- the knowledge that what is most human in our life is being determined not by our 'true' needs, which are divined from the centre of our being, opening like the petals of the lotus and are beyond thought, beyond intellect, 'beyond striving', but are on the contrary, determined entirely by external forces, through no choice of ours.

We are at once the victims and the beneficiaries of modern technological advances. Reality is now the new myth-making substance. We are manipulated by man-made dreams which develop artificial wants: frozen and tasteless foods, bland, homogenised lives; cliché-ridden beliefs and standardised rituals; conspicuous consumption; the 'pooled self-esteem' our Western forms of nationalism make possible; mechanical gadgets; devotion to science and the 'preality-principle'; and the abandonment of any religious revelation, so that even our religious leaders and intellectuals do not use words like 'spiritual' and 'idealistic' at all freely, for they are themselves quite happy with their material comforts and the labour-saving world of gadgets and good health that goes with them, and would consider those who preached that the happiness people want should be sought for in any kind of nirvana, mystic ecstasy, theoria, transcendence, as certainly other-worldly.

What the spread of technological culture has done is to push the boundaries of the literal miracle, the 'other-world', the magical far outside the range of ordinary everyday

human happiness. Miracles, our politicians tell us, do not originate in some supernatural religious state but must be realised in this world and have their basis in the familiar facts of technological progress, in communication, education, transportation, public health, etc., etc. But those who have found a source of happiness in a life of the spirit are of the opinion that there has been a retrogression in our aim for a true culture of humanity. While we are busily pouring ever-increasing intellectual efforts into improving our means, we have forgotten the ends they are intended to achieve. Do we really know what we want?

This question is more likely to be answered in the Alternative literature of protest, the theme of vagabondage, and the exploration of individual human consciousness via drugs, Zen Buddhism, Yoga, esotericism, Buddha, the Hermetic arts, alchemy, visionary experience, Tantra, hesychast methods, hypostatic union of Christ and man, and all the charismas of the spirit.

Those who affirm that the real truth and source of all human joy and happiness lies wholly 'within' must try, with whatever means they can get, to break the hold of that view of life which has replaced the potentialities of the human mind with the perspective of its mechanical extensions, the extensions of transportation and social planning and mass conditioning which are now turning on the body and strangling it as the serpents did at Laocoon.

Modern society is growing infertile, devoid of a living culture, no longer productive of any personal form, an abstract, lifeless, cinematic world of machine-made interpretations about the self. It is not surprising therefore if we tell ourselves that all revelatory experience is foolishness, so much so that man sees himself increasingly as nothing but an 'energy slave' or a cipher on the face of a moral and spiritual void. And as the knowledge of his own disorientation cannot be handled within the framework of so-called normality, he turns more and more to his brave world of machines.

And through the power of his machines he acts out the uncomprehended tragedy of man's inner disruption. Yet it was the Ancient Chinese Sage, Huang Tzu, who proposed some 2500 years ago that dependence even on a simple kind of machine causes man to become uncertain of his own inner impulses; and further, the result may lead him to forget how to master his own world.

So we have learned instead how to master our machines, because machines do not serve us unless we service them, but in the process we have had to adjust our human organization to our equipment. We tend to get what the machine can best give us rather than what is most desirable.

For the rest ... I have tried to write this book as an inwardly conceived and inwardly coherent work of fiction that isn't exactly fiction, and only those who read it as a novel will discover its real meaning. I hope that those who are prepared to read the book in this spirit will catch a glimpse, not so much of a utopia possible in theory, but

rather of an attitude of mind capable of attainment in practice, in which all problems of modern technological existence will appear to be solved, that irreconcilable contradictions will pass away, and a newer and fuller significance of individual human existence will be revealed. In this connection, I can do no better than to refer the reader to Aldous Huxley's last novel, *Island* (1962), which is a very imaginative effort to protect a way of life based in nature, that is lived organically as a flowing growing process.

According to his brother, Sir Julian Huxley, Aldous took LSD eleven times, gaining thereby 'new extensions of his perception of beauty and transcendence'. Huxley believed that from LSD the individual could achieve what the poet Cowper called 'a closer walk with God'.

For myself, I believe I have investigated the phenomenon LSD—these words!—as much towards this same spiritual end as my intelligence and faculties permitted me to go. And perhaps the long, arduous, oppressive decade I passed through came to benefit at least one creative effort.

And how do I now think of LSD et al.?—as certain truths about the nature of my inner self came to be manifest in my conscious mind, my interest in psychedelics began to wane proportionately, so that today I do not believe that LSD can help me towards self-realisation. It had never been more than preliminary, one may say, a pretext to me to explore inwardness and unfamiliar mental states for whatever they might reveal. But LSD has nothing more to give me.

And I am therefore determined to return to the world, and in time, to integrate myself with it. In relation to any religious beliefs I now hold, I am a confessed Franciscan, though I freely admit that I have a very long way to go before I shall be able to express this outwardly—with my entire being—the love Saint Francis of Assisi showed was for all living creatures, and in respect to love of this kind, I must to this extent be regarded as clumsy.

Yet in Saint Francis evolved Love of the very highest order for his delicate and feminine sensibility offered Love a unique possibility of manifestation. And thus, in the light of this knowledge, I can no longer take my psychedelic trips seriously. I know that many readers, and by no means the worst among them, would disapprove of such measures as taking LSD; one should be strong enough, they say, to exist by faith without the aid of drugs. Yes! One should be, but what if one is too weak?

And the impulse which now drives me back into the world is precisely the same as that which drives so many into monasteries or to keep the offices of prayer—the desire for self-realisation.

THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

At a party in Chicago, a young man under the influence of LSD seized a live kitten

and ate it. Later, in an effort to explain his action, he said he had felt an urgent need to experience everything.

The story is revolting, of course, and possibly apocryphal; but the incident is by no means improbable, and it does make the point—that LSD is powerful medicine, and that the consequences of its use are often bizarre and terrifying. While it now appears that health authorities have exaggerated the threat of self-destruction or mental breakdown, the fact remains that LSD is dangerous. The nature of the danger, however, may be other than is commonly supposed, and it is possible the alarmists are not nearly as alarmed as they should be.

Almost anything may happen when LSD produces the negative reaction that inner-space voyagers refer to as a “bad trip,” and such a reaction is by no means uncommon; but LSD also can result in a good trip, which is more to the point, and the good trip may in the long run have graver consequences than the bad. Indeed, there are implications in the use of LSD which are far more disturbing perhaps than an occasional suicide or psychosis.

Assume just for a moment that LSD’s cultists are actually doing what they suppose they are doing. If you can take their own word for it, they have been tinkering with the gears of the universe. They have rushed in where Sigmund Freud feared to tread, invading a region of the human psyche from which the father of psychoanalysis recoiled in horror. They have penetrated a realm of Egyptian darkness—courageously, perhaps, or recklessly it may be—and in doing so they have raised fundamental questions about man and God.

Whatever the answers, the questions are valid. They are not new questions but very old ones, and some have their roots in a philosophical tradition which predates Western civilization. LSD has merely given them a renewed emphasis.

Moreover, the LSD cults are not an isolated phenomenon. There is some evidence that they represent only one aspect of a psychic revolt whose manifestations can be detected today in the areas of theology, psychology, and ethics. For example, the cults appear to have a relationship to the radical New Theology, and especially to the ultra-radical Death of God theology. In essence, the LSD cultists are saying the same thing that some of the Death of God prophets have said.

From one point of view, LSD presents the orthodox church with a challenge more awesome than the Turk and the comet—from which, good Lord, deliver us. It casts doubt on the validity of religious experience as a whole, suggesting that the mystical awareness of God is nothing more than chemistry—and therefore a delusion. From another point of view, however, the drug raises just as many questions for the atheist as it does for the church. It challenges the scientist as well as the priest. And some of its more extravagant enthusiasts believe it will lead the way to a rebirth of the spirit—to a new Age of Faith in which man’s soul in the twentieth century will win an ultimate victory over

materialism and a skeptical science.

Its members in fact have described the drug movement as religious—if not a religion—and some groups already have incorporated as churches. But if there is to be a new age, there also will be a new faith, for the LSD cultists in many cases are promulgating concepts which basically are alien to popular Western theology. Perhaps the most striking aspect of the New Theology has been its reemphasis of the concept of immanence, or the indwelling nature of God—as opposed to transcendence, or the “otherness” of God.

While immanence as such is by no means heretical, in the drug movement and in Death of God theology immanence is carried all the way to its radical conclusion, where it becomes pantheism. Pantheism of course is an Eastern concept, and the West has regarded it as anathema, describing it invariably as “a vague pantheism”—as opposed presumably to such crystal-clear doctrines as transubstantiation and trinitarianism. But pantheism is not vague. Whatever the merits of the idea, it is perfectly clear-cut and straightforward in its assertion: God is Man. Or God is the Universe.

There is nothing very complicated about that, and that is pantheism. It is, by and large, the Eastern view of divinity. By and large, it represents the direction in which the drug movement appears to be headed. And, in so many words, it sums up the position of the theological school represented by Dr. Thomas J. J. Altizer.

When Altizer says God is Dead, he means simply that God is Man. Altizer is a pantheist, and he admits he is a pantheist. His pantheism is not quite the same as the Eastern version, as we shall see further on; but it is nonetheless pantheism and basically therefore an Oriental concept. In this respect, along with LSD, it hints at a development that could have considerable significance for Western society.

East is still East, and West is still West, but there is evidence now that the twain have started to meet, and at a point where one might least have expected it: the point of religious metaphysics. It appears that there is presently occurring, especially in America, a wholesale introduction of Asian theories regarding the nature of man and the cosmos.

This development began long ago, in a small way, in the New England of Emerson and Thoreau, but it seems to have accelerated tremendously since the Second World War. Sages throughout history have prophesied the day when the Wise Men of the Orient would join hands—or lock horns—with the Wise Men of the Occident, and signs abound that the day has arrived as a natural consequence of the shrinking of the globe. In a sense, the immanent God of the East has come knocking at the door of the transcendent God of the West, and it is possible that we are witnesses today to a kind of cosmic shoot-out at the O.K. Corral.

It would be premature to assess the full impact of the encounter or its likely denouement, but there seems to be little doubt that the encounter is taking place and that

certain fundamentals of Eastern thought are being integrated or assimilated into Western culture. In its initial stages the development preceded both radical theology and the drug movement; but it is obvious that these are related to the development, just as they are related to each other, and it would be worthwhile perhaps to judge them at least partially within this wider context.

Within such a context, LSD and the Death of God oppose orthodoxy in crucial areas of doctrine.

Not only do they dispute the idea of Theism, or a personal and transcendent deity, but they also question such concepts as pluralism, resurrection, personal immortality, grace, evil, and redemption or atonement through the intercession of some supernatural agency. In short, they leave man pretty much on his own, with nobody to turn to but himself and with no place to seek salvation except inwardly, in the recesses of his own inner Being. Putting these doctrinal concerns to one side, the drug movement challenges the church in its functional role as well.

According to the LSD cultists, men today are thirsting for the direct, personal experience of God—regardless of his actual nature. In other words, it matters not whether God lies within or without; in either case, men need and want a sense of direct communion with the ultimate source of their faith.

This divine-human encounter is not found in church, where little or nothing is done to promote it. But it is found in LSD, the cultists believe. Thus LSD challenges the church to do as well and offer as much.

The debate spills over into the province of psychology, where a related movement is under way to establish standards of behavior and adaptation based on universal truths rather than social norms. Mental health would be defined in terms of man's actual nature or Being, and LSD might prove a helpful tool in determining what that nature or Being really is. Such a program of course would introduce psychology to the field of values and ethics, which many have argued is a field that psychology should have occupied long before now.

And it might open the way to the development of a humanistic morality founded on man's true nature, replacing those legalistic moralities which are founded on cultural mores or instinctive but arbitrary notions of right and wrong. Coincidentally, this movement comes at a time when psychoanalysts are doing their best to repress a theory that schizophrenia is a physical disease, best treated by massive doses of Vitamin B-3. The theory reduces Freud more or less to the status of a witch doctor, and it raises the possibility at least of a common origin for insanity, religious mysticism, and LSD experience.

It may be that all of these movements are interrelated in still another fashion, reflecting a revived interest in the study of metaphysics—and especially that branch of metaphysics termed ontology, or the metaphysics of Being: the study of life's essential

nature. Academic philosophy had largely abandoned metaphysics in favor of an arcane linguistic analysis, and churchmen for the most part had turned their attention to such mundane considerations as ecumenicism, internal renewal, and civil rights. Now it appears that metaphysics has come into its own again—both inside the church and out of it, but mostly out of it, and not so much yet in the universities.

And this is just a fancy way of saying that people have started once more to ask ultimate questions. They are asking who they are, and who God is, and what is the relationship, if any, between them and him. Altizer is asking these questions, and so is the hipster who seeks cosmic fireworks in an LSD sugar cube. They are asking the questions that Gauguin asked on his canvas: “Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?”

It might be said that men have found themselves confronted by two kinds of questions, problems and mysteries. In recent years, men have dealt primarily with the problems; but the mysteries are now and always will be the source of the world’s essential anxieties and aspirations, and it appears that men are probing afresh into the mysteries, including the *mysterium tremendum*. They are seeking again the pearl of great price.

The asking of ultimate questions is significant in itself. It implies an assumption that there are ultimate answers, and that these answers moreover are accessible to men. In recent times, it seems fair to say, this assumption has not been widely held or widely expressed. Even proud science has gone mute on the subject, having painted itself into that corner known as Heisenberg’s Principle of Uncertainty. As a result, it has been said, the very best we can hope for apparently is that science one day will be able to describe everything—and explain nothing.

But the new search for answers is not predicated upon scientific principles, nor indeed is it predicated upon orthodox religious principles; it seems to reject both the Scribes and the Pharisees, the scientists and the formal religionists. If it does in fact constitute a religious revival, which is open to argument, it is one which is bypassing the church’s magisterium. It is eclectic, and it rejects all outward authority. On the other hand, it does accept the basic religious premise, as William James defined it: “the belief that there is an unseen order, and that our supreme good lies in harmoniously adjusting ourselves thereto.”

Fundamentally, today’s pearl seekers are following Plato’s injunction. They are striving for an explanation of Being, which all true lovers of knowledge must have as their final object, Plato said. They are inquiring into the nature of their own Being and into the nature of Being itself. And they are conducting the inquiry by turning inward upon themselves, like flowers closing their petals in the night of doubt. Like poppies, one might add, or possibly morning glories and lotuses. But that is another question.

All in all, the challenge appears to be directed toward the laboratory more than the pulpit. The implications of the drug movement are basically anti-science rather than

antichurch, and they offer grounds for some far-reaching speculation. We spoke earlier of a possible psychic revolt, and we might ask whether this is not in fact suggested now by the widespread interest in LSD and by related developments in radical theology and psychology. Are these perhaps omens of a counter-swing of the psychic pendulum?

Over the centuries, as the classical historian Edith Hamilton has observed, that pendulum has swung back and forth: from the rational to the intuitive, from the seen to the unseen, from the conscious to the unconscious. Whenever one alternative has failed to answer man's questions or to meet his needs, he has turned invariably to the other option; it follows, therefore, that the apparent challenge now is not merely to science but to rational thought as such. And this is necessarily so. It can be argued that the erosion of religious belief has not been caused so much by the specific revelations of science; rather, it is a result of the empirical method which science has utilized to obtain those revelations—of the introduction into the culture of a show-me frame of reference which might be characterized as the Missouri Syndrome.

If empiricism has proved a disappointment, as indeed it has, it is entirely possible that the instinctive and unconscious forces of the mind may be rising again now in opposition to the rational and the conscious; the spiritual element may be reasserting itself in an era when scientific rationalism had appeared to be solidly entrenched. An outburst of mysticism perhaps has been simmering on the rear burner for some time, in fact, and, if you care to, you might trace the possibility back to the anti-rational philosophy of Henri Bergson.

Now LSD has turned up the flame.

Of course, a revolt is not a revolution. The flame could die— from lack of oxygen—and empiricism may be just as impregnable as it thought it was. But the movements of the time deserve serious attention even if they do not, for the moment, seem to be leading anywhere or offering much substance. What men search for, after all, is just as significant in a sense as that which they find, providing some measure at least of their nature and their needs.

But suppose the revolt did ripen into a revolution. Would that necessarily be a bad thing? What, if any, are the dangers involved?

The main danger, already apparent, is the possibility that these various movements could lead to a sort of neo-Gnostic rejection of the world—a retreat from the concrete, as it were, resulting in the kind of pipe-dream lethargy which characterizes so much of India and the Middle East, and which is symbolized in turn by the Hindu contemplative and the Arab hashish-eater: the one held spellbound by an idea, the other by a drug.

And perhaps the gravest challenge is not after all to science, or to rationalism, but to the world as such. Not just the values of the world, not just social goals, but the world

itself, as earth and substance. The danger in this case arises from Oriental concepts of the world as some kind of illusion, trick, or snare for the senses. According to this point of view, the world does not really exist. It's all done with mirrors, and the purpose of life is to realize this fact, such realization bringing with it an immediate release from the world where man is held captive by his own ignorance. Upon such release the enlightened one attains the eternal bliss of nirvana, beyond appearances.

What we have called a danger—and the Hindu calls a blessing—is not a problem in so far as radical theology is concerned. New Theology is utterly committed to the world, having turned away from the heavens, and Death of God theology actually rejoices in the world, embraces it, cherishes it, and does all but make love to it. Contrary to their popular image, the Death of God people are by and large a jolly and optimistic lot. As the radical theologian William Hamilton expressed it, in so many words: Prufrock, no; Ringo, yes.

As far as he is concerned, the Wasteland has been transformed into a latter-day Canaan. Man is no longer alienated from the world, according to Hamilton. Man is “quite at home in this world.” And next to Altizer, Hamilton is a gloomy Gus. All this happy talk stems directly from the fact that God is no longer around to spoil the fun, so to speak.

The danger of world rejection exists within the drug movement, where one hears cultists referring to the Net of Illusion and the Quagmire of Phenomena. But even if you grant the basic validity of the drug experience, it does not necessarily follow that the world is a hoax. After all, there are Oriental philosophies and Oriental philosophies. The Hindu and the Zen Buddhist start from the same point of view; they share a common experience, and they argue from the same evidence. But they arrive at antipodal conclusions.

The Hindu appears at least to deny the world, while the Zen Buddhist affirms it. So it is possible for the drug movement to go either way: toward a total rejection of the world or a total commitment to the world. To help clarify the alternatives, we shall explore the conclusions of Zen and related concepts in some detail. To provide still another option, we shall look into the evolutionary-theological theories of Teilhard de Chardin, applying them to the questions raised by LSD and Asian metaphysics.

In sum, it is the argument of this book that a relationship exists between LSD cultism and radical theology; that both offer a legitimate challenge to orthodox theology; that both reflect an introduction into the West of Eastern religious ideas; that LSD may provide the basis for a humanistic ethics; that contemporary currents indicate a renewed interest in metaphysics in general, ontology in particular; that there is some evidence of a nascent revolt against science and rationalism; that all of these developments carry with them both dangers and promises. If the church is challenged, it has been challenged before. If men have lost their God before, they have always managed, somehow, to find him again. If legitimate questions are raised, there also are legitimate answers to those questions, and we shall suggest what some of them might be.

The drug movement has been characterized as a weak-kneed retreat from reality. In reply, the cultists assert that the truth is just the other way around: it is we who flee reality and they who accept it. They alone have faced the dreadful knowledge that comes when one encounters the Clear Light of the Void. Only they have dared to turn and see what makes those flickering shadows on the wall of the cave. Possibly the only way to settle the question is to follow these explorers all the way and enter with them into the secret inner world they say they have discovered. And if you do that . . . well, they are not cowards. They are very brave, perhaps, or very wise, or very dull and foolish. Craven they are not.

THROUGH PSYCHEDELIC EYES

On a good trip the LSD voyager may feel he has penetrated to the godhead itself. But is it really the godhead he sees? Or is it the Medusa?

Before we describe what LSD does, let us first ask what it is. That is a much easier question to handle, admittedly, and it is mildly ironic that this is so. Where the mysteries of nature are concerned, the situation is usually reversed, as Bertrand Russell has pointed out in the case of electricity. Science can describe very accurately what electricity does but hasn't the foggiest notion what it really is. As for LSD, it is a synthetic drug: d-lysergic acid diethylamide tartrate, compounded from a constituent of a rye fungus known as ergot. Its general history by now is a twice-told tale and then some, so we shall be brief about it.

LSD was first synthesized in 1938 by Dr. Albert Hofmann, a biochemist at the Sandoz pharmaceutical firm in Basel, Switzerland; but the scientist did not know what he had created until 1943, when he accidentally inhaled or otherwise absorbed a small amount of LSD and thus discovered the drug's curious properties. It produced uncanny distortions of space and time and hallucinations that were weird beyond belief. It also produced a state of mind in which the objective world appeared to take on a new and different meaning. These effects, and the agents which produce them, are now referred to as psychedelic—a generic term which means “mind manifesting,” which in turn means nothing.

The word has come into common usage simply because of its neutral connotation; due to the controversy involved, it is the only word so far that all sides have been willing to accept. It is used as both noun and adjective.

Unlike heroin, opium, and alcohol, LSD apparently is not addictive. This means simply that prolonged use of the drug, so far as we can tell at this time, does not create a physiological craving or dependency based on changes in a subject's body chemistry—changes that are produced by liquor and junk—and there are no physiological withdrawal symptoms when use of the drug is terminated. LSD on the other hand may be psychologically habituating; but this, after all, can also be said of chewing gum and television.

There are literally scores of psychedelic substances, natural and synthetic, and LSD is only one of many agents capable of producing a full-fledged psychedelic experience. Identical effects can be obtained from Indian hemp and its derivatives, including hashish; from the peyote cactus and its extract, mescaline; from a Mexican mushroom and its laboratory counterpart, psilocybin, which Dr. Hofmann synthesized in 1958.

Hemp and peyote have been used as psychedelics for centuries, and mescaline was on the market before the turn of the century. LSD's uniqueness lies in the fact that it is very easy to make—and mega-potent. According to the Food and Drug Administration, a single gram of LSD can provide up to ten thousand doses, each of them capable of producing an experience lasting up to twelve hours or longer.

Scientists seized upon the drug as a tool for research and therapy, and literally thousands of technical papers have been devoted to it. Since LSD appeared to mimic some symptoms of psychosis, it offered possible insights into the sufferings of mental patients—although psychotherapists later came to doubt that it produces what was first referred to as a model psychosis. Preliminary research indicated it might be useful in the treatment of alcoholism and neurosis, and it also served to ease the anguish of terminal patients. In small doses, in controlled situations, it appeared to enhance creativity and productivity.

But the public at large knew nothing of LSD until 1963, when two professors, Timothy Leary and Richard Alpert, lost their posts at Harvard University in the wake of charges that they had involved students in reckless experiments with the drug. Leary went on to become more or less the titular leader of the drug movement, in which capacity he soon ran afoul of the law, and the movement spread to campuses and cities across the country.

By and large, it seemed at first to develop as a middle-class phenomenon, attracting to its ranks mainly students and intellectuals, liberal ministers, artists and professional people, as well as bearded pariahs. Official panic provoked a wave of legislation which ended or seriously hindered almost all legitimate research programs; the legislation did little or nothing to discourage the drug movement, which received its supplies from black market sources.

Depending upon the point of view, Dr. Hofmann assumed the role of a Prometheus or Pandora. In correspondence I once asked him if he sometimes felt like the latter, to which he replied: "In my opinion, every discovery in the field of natural science is to be positively viewed, and thus also the discovery of LSD. If one wishes to deplore the discovery of LSD, then one must also view the discovery of morphine negatively, for morphine, one of the most valuable gifts of pharmacy, is just as dangerous and destructive as LSD when used improperly. There are no forces in the universe that are bad in themselves. It is always up to man whether he will make good or bad use of them." And if Dr. Hofmann's words have a familiar ring, perhaps they are reminiscent of the statements nuclear physicists were making in 1945.

LSD is a colorless, odorless, tasteless drug. It is taken orally for the most part, and the precise nature of its action upon the brain and nervous system has not been determined. It is believed, however, that only a minute portion of the tiny dose ever reaches the brain, and even this disappears in less than an hour. Possibly, then, LSD sets off a reaction which continues long after the drug itself has been dissipated. As Dr. Sidney Cohen, a leading medical authority on LSD, expressed it, "The drug acts to trigger a chain of metabolic processes which then proceed to exert an effect for many hours afterward." In hipsters' terminology, the subject is "turned on." And the experience begins.

The nature of the experience will depend on countless factors, which are commonly summed up as "set" and "setting": that is, the mood of the subject and the environment in which the drug is administered. The subject becomes highly suggestible, and the slightest false note can result in the nightmare of a bad trip. Most experiences will include a hallucinatory period, in which fantastic visions occur, and in some cases it is possible to see sounds and hear colors—the result of sensory short-circuiting, referred to in the literature as synesthesia. One subject reported that he could taste the categorical imperative (which he said was something like veal).

These very weird effects have received considerable publicity; when they are pleasurable, they—and sometimes sexual stimulation—constitute what may be regarded as the "kicks" aspect of LSD. But the drug movement cultists are not concerned with kicks in this sense. Skilled travelers say they can avoid the hallucinatory period altogether and thus are able to achieve and prolong the "central experience." There does appear to be such an experience, and this is what the cultists refer to when they speak of a good trip. It does not always occur, and some people may never achieve it; it must be sought after, perhaps, and expectation may be a significant factor in its production. But it does exist, and it is the very basis of the cult.

From various sources, then, let us see if we can construct a typology of this central or core experience. While the problems of description are notorious, in most cases the mind will appear to operate at a new level of consciousness in which:

1. The sense of self or personal ego is utterly lost. Awareness of individual identity evaporates. "I" and "me" are no more. Subject-object relationships dissolve, and the world no longer ends at one's fingertips: the world is simply an extension of the body, or the mind. The world shimmers, as if it were charged with a high-voltage current, and the subject feels he could melt into walls, trees, other persons. It is not that the world lacks substance; it is real, but one is somehow conterminous with it.

And it is fluid, shifting. One is keenly aware of the atomic substructure of reality; he can feel the spinning motion of the electrons in what he used to call his body, and he senses the incredible emptiness that lies within the atoms, where the electron planets circle their proton suns at distances which are comparably as vast as those in the solar system itself.

Thus it seems only natural that one could pass through a wall, if only it were possible to get all the atoms lined up properly for just one moment. In the vastness of outer space, is it not a fact that billion-starred galaxies are able to drift through each other like clouds of smoke or astral ghosts, without the single collision of one star with another?

As for identity, it is not really lost. On the contrary, it is found; it is expanded to include all that is seen and all that is not seen. What occurs is simply depersonalization. The subject looks back on his pre-drug existence as some sort of game or make-believe in which, for some reason, he had felt called upon to assume the reduced identity or smaller self called "I."

Being had concentrated its attention at a single point in order to create, and play, the game of writer, banker, cat burglar. Or so it now seems. If there is any analogy to this in normal existence, is it not perhaps the moment when one awakens from sleep? In that case, what is the first thing one asks oneself? "Where am I?" Or isn't it rather, "Who am I?"

And then, in an effort of will, attention is concentrated to recreate the role that was lost in sleep. Thus in the drug experience, as in sleep, the normal state of tension is relaxed. Home at last, after that dreadful party, Being slips out of her stays, so to speak, and breathes an ontological sigh of celestial relief. Consciousness is allowed to scatter, and the subject at last can be Himself again.

The subject is somehow united with the Ground of his Being, with the life force that has created the visible world. He remembers. And what he remembers is the true identity that underlies all the individual egos of the world. He is one again with the universe, the eternal, the Absolute.

He has found himself again. He is made whole again. That which he once knew, he has remembered.

(But when did he know it? And when did he forget?)

2. Time stops. Or, in any case, it ceases to be important. And perhaps it would be more accurate to say that memory and forethought stop. The subject is content to exist in the moment—in the here and now. And time has no meaning in the here and now. Bergson suggested that the sense of time consists simply of arrests of our attention.

Seconds and minutes do not really exist; they are artificially created "immobilities" dreamed up by science, which is unable to comprehend flux, mobility, or the dynamic character of life itself. Installed within true movement, said Bergson, the mind would lose its normal sense of time, since the normal function of the intellect is to foresee, so as to act upon things. "We must strive to see in order to see," he said, "and no longer to see in order to act."

This is precisely what happens in the psychedelic experience, where forethought is anesthetized. Without forethought there is no anticipation. Without anticipation there is no desire. And time stops.

3. Words lose all meaning. In the here and now there are no abstractions. An object represents only that which it is. It is perceived as a Ding-an-Sich, a thing-in-itself, and it matters not whether Kant said that sort of perception is impossible. Kant never took LSD. If he had, he would have known that rose is a rose is a rose is a rose.

The same feeling is captured in childhood perhaps. As Wordsworth wrote, recalling his boyish days when nature was all in all:

. . . I cannot paint.

What then I was. The sounding cataract

Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,

The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,

Their colours and their forms, were then to me

An appetite; a feeling and a love,

That had no need of a remoter charm,

By thought supplied, nor any interest

Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,

And all its aching joys are now no more,

And all its dizzy raptures.

The psychedelic experience is similar but multiplied at least a thousand times over. Coincidentally, Havelock Ellis wrote, after experimenting with mescaline in the 1890's: "If it should ever chance that the consumption of mescal becomes a habit, the favorite poet of the mescal drinker will certainly be Wordsworth."

But thing-in-itself perception is beyond all language. It is, in fact, the antithesis of language, which is the real cause of our normal inability to see the thing-in-itself. This is so because we think in words, and words are abstractions or symbols of things; as a result, we tend to think and perceive in symbols. Thus the American flag fluttering on the Fourth of July is seen in terms of Concord and Lexington. The flag-in-itself is never seen; we must always associate it with something else.

And so on. And the English language is especially crippling because of its painful stress on simile and metaphor. Thus a rose isn't a rose; it's what my love is like. Ruskin quite properly attacked the pathetic fallacy as evidence of a "morbid state of mind." But the psychedelic experience suggests that all figures of speech reflect the same unhealthy attitude—and that speech itself is a web of deceit. The Greek poets sensed this. For the Greeks, as Edith Hamilton pointed out, a thing of beauty was never a symbol of something else, but only itself.

A star was just a star, a primrose a primrose. "That a skylark was like a glowworm golden in a dell of dew, or like a poet hidden in the light of thought, would have been straight nonsense to them. A skylark was just a skylark. Birds were birds and nothing else, but how beautiful a thing was a bird, 'that flies over the foam of the wave with careless heart, sea-purple bird of spring.'"

And if symbols as such are deceptive, how much worse are the symbols of use. We look at a peach, and we see something to eat. We look at a field, and we wonder how many bushels of wheat it will yield. We meet somebody for the first time, and we ask ourselves what this new person can do for us. Can we play bridge with him? Sell him some insurance?

Worst of all, we look at our loved ones even in terms of our own needs, emotional and otherwise. In the terminology of Martin Buber, we live in the world of I-It. We associate things, and we use things, and we never look at the thing-in-itself in the here and now. Moreover, we cannot look upon an object without thinking the word which symbolizes it. Tree. Lamp. Table. But the psychedelic world is the world of pure experience and pure relation; it is the world of I-Thou. In this world, for example, a tree is not a source of timber or shade. A tree is to look at. And it is not a tree. It is that, there. Now. And that is a that is a that is a that.

4. There are no dualities. Sweet and sour, good and evil— these also are abstractions, inventions of the verbal mind, and they have no place in the ultimate reality of here and now. As a result, the world is just as it should be. It is perfect, beautiful. It is the same world that is seen without LSD, but it is seen in a different way. It is transfigured, and it requires no meaning beyond the astonishing fact of its own existence.

What does "meaning" mean anyhow?

Meaning is just one more abstraction, implying some future use or purpose; it has no place in the here and now of naked existence. And is this perhaps the significance of the Eden story? They ate of the tree in the midst of the garden, and their eyes were opened, and they became as gods, knowing good and evil. The first dualism, fundamental to all others. What does this story represent if not the introduction into the world of a new way of thinking and a new form of perception? What does it refer to if not the evolutionary product we describe so proudly as intellect, or the rational mind?

What does it signify if not that moment when man looked about him and said for the first time: "This is wrong." Not, "This hurts me," or "The tiger is chewing my leg, and I wish he wouldn't."

No. "This is wrong." What an idea! What a curious concept. No doubt it was the greatest, or worst, idea that man ever had. It marks that point in the process of becoming when life took charge of itself. Man had accepted the world; now he decided to judge it.

Thus Adam became the first existentialist, taking upon himself the nauseating responsibility that turned Sartre's stomach. In doing so he laid the basis for those existential anxieties which are nothing more or less than ontological anxieties. He estranged himself from his environment; worse yet, he alienated himself from the very Ground of his Being. In Eden he had lived in perfect I-Thou relation, neither judging things nor subsuming them with words. East of Eden lay the world of I-It, where the ground was cursed for his sake, and the Lord told him what he could expect from it.

Thorns and thistles he could expect from it. So Adam was cast out of the garden, his own mind the flaming sword that would prevent his return. He lived in the world of I-It, and he sought there for meaning. But he never found it, and none of those who came after him have found it.

Men are frustrated in the search by their I-It minds of use, which have made meaning synonymous with purpose. Nothing is meaningful unless it leads to something else, or produces some future effect. Thus a man smokes to enjoy himself—and that is a meaningless action. But he puts on his shoes so he can go to the store—and that by definition is meaningful.

But it is not meaningful enough, and man craves for an ultimate meaning. He wants his life to lead to something else, somewhere in the future. It doesn't, apparently, so he feels the anxiety of meaninglessness. Taking hope, however, he diagnoses his anxiety as a form of psychic pain. The sense of meaninglessness is meaningful in itself, he decides; it implies there is a meaning somewhere, and he is estranged from it. Which is so. But the ultimate meaning he seeks is in fact the absence of meaning—in the sense of purpose. Meaning is simple existence in the here and now.

And of course man already lives in the here and now. The trouble is, he doesn't know how to live in it. And this is what LSD seems to tell him. It tells him that he is still in Eden, if only he knew it. It is only necessary to spit out the apple and look at the world through psychedelic eyes. The apple is his intellect, or way of looking at things, and under LSD his intellect no longer functions. Forethought is put to sleep, and he opens his eyes upon Paradise regained. A voice whispers in his ear. It tells him: "Essence precedes existence."

5. The subject feels he knows, essentially, everything there is to know. He knows ultimate truth. And what's more, he knows that he knows it. Yet this sense of authority

cannot be verbalized (any more than the experience as a whole can be verbalized) because the experience is a whole which cannot be divided, and it transcends all partial abstractions. What is known is pure Being, which cannot be compared with anything else. The subject is identical with that which he knows and therefore is speechless. In any case, language can never describe that which language itself is responsible for negating. Finally, there is the problem raised by H. G. Wells in his tale of "The Richest Man in Bogota." To a race of eyeless men, how do you explain sight? What words do you use?

This describes the psychedelic experience, produced by a chemical. But it also describes something else. It describes religious mysticism.

It describes the experience of saints and prophets since the first tick of history's clock. And it describes as well those flashes of insight that sometimes come to humbler folk in moments of prayer, or of grace.

CHEMISTRY AND MYSTICISM

In its broadest sense, mysticism refers to direct communion with the divine; to intuitive knowledge of ultimate truth; to the soul's sense of union with the absolute reality that is the Ground, or the source, of its Being. And apparently it is impossible to distinguish this experience from the central experience produced by LSD and other psychedelic agents.

The classic accounts of mystical experience read like psychedelic Baedekers. In recent years, moreover, a number of studies have compared the two experiences, and the results have reinforced the idea that the experiences are in some way connected. The best known of these studies was undertaken by psychiatrist Walter Pahnke at Harvard University, where psilocybin was administered in a religious setting to ten theology students. Nine of the ten felt they had genuine religious experiences, and Pahnke concluded that the phenomena they reported were "indistinguishable from, if not identical with," a typology based on W. T. Stace's widely known summary of mystical experience.

At Princeton, students were shown accounts of a religious experience and a psychedelic experience, and two-thirds of the students identified the drug-induced experience as the religious one. In a book in which they summarize five separate studies, including Pahnke's, R. E. L. Masters and Jean Houston stated that "religious-type" experiences were reported by 32 to 75 per cent of subjects who received psychedelics in "supportive" settings, and by 75 to 90 per cent of those who received them in settings that included religious stimuli.

And so on. The consensus of research seems to be that the two experiences are at least phenomenologically the same. This is a way of saying: "Well, they certainly look the same, and beyond that I'm not going to stick my neck out." What this neatly avoids, of course, is the problem of comparing the sources of the experiences.

Significant parallels to psychedelic experience are to be found in William James's observations on religious conversion, the faith-state, and mystical experience. Conversion occurs, said James, when a formerly divided self becomes unified, and "a not infrequent consequence of the change operated in the subject is a transfiguration of the face of nature in his eyes. A new heaven seems to shine upon a new earth." James made the point that "self-surrender has been and always must be regarded as the vital turning-point of the religious life."

And the total abnegation of self or ego is without question the hallmark of psychedelic experience. "Only when I become as nothing," wrote James, "can God enter in and no difference between his life and mine remain outstanding." Discussing the faith-state, James observed that it too is characterized by an objective change in the appearance of the world, which takes on a sweet and beautiful newness. "It was dead and is alive again. It is like the difference between looking on a person without love, or upon the same person with love."

In addition, there is a loss of all worry: "the sense that all is ultimately well with one" and a "willingness to be." Finally, there is "the sense of perceiving truths not known before," and these "more or less unutterable in words." As for mysticism, James found that it also is marked by an ineffability requiring direct experience, as well as a noetic quality which carries with it "a curious sense of authority for aftertime." Still another aspect is passivity, in which "the mystic feels as if he were grasped and held by a superior power."

And a final factor is transiency. "Mystical states cannot be sustained for long. Except in rare instances, half an hour, or at most an hour or two, seems to be the limit."

One of those rare exceptions perhaps was Emanuel Swedenborg, the so-called Swedish Aristotle, who was said to have had a mystical experience which lasted, more or less continuously, for almost three decades. LSD cannot match that record, but it does seem to improve somewhat on the normal time limits indicated by James. Except for duration, however, there is obviously a remarkable similarity between James's typology and psychedelic experience.

And just incidentally, James noted that mystical states are often accompanied by various photisms, or luminous phenomena, which also are an aspect of psychedelic experience (for example, Paul's blinding vision and Constantine's cross in the sky). Finally, let us call attention to James's observation: "One may say truly, I think, that personal religious experience has its roots and centre in mystical states of consciousness." In other words, we are likening psychedelic experience not just to mysticism but to religious experience as a whole.

From this background, then, emerges LSD's first clear challenge to orthodox theology.

Did the saints owe their visions to some biological short-circuit which caused them to experience spontaneously what LSD cultists achieve with a chemical? Can their mystic raptures be traced to a malfunction of the adrenal glands? Does the faith-state have a neurological basis? Is the religious experience as such nothing more than a fluke of body chemistry?

The materialists would like to think so, and do. Dr. Sidney Cohen (who is no materialist) has suggested that religious experience may one day be redefined as “a dys-synchrony of the reticular formation of the brain.”

Some scholars have pushed even further. Not only do psychedelics appear to duplicate religious experience, they say. It is possible that religion itself is psychedelic in origin. One of the major spokesmen for this viewpoint has been Gordon Wasson, an authority on the psychedelic mushrooms of Mexico, who has suggested that primitive men may have stumbled many times upon innocent-looking plants which produce the same effects as LSD. These theobotanicals, possibly mushrooms, might well have been a “mighty springboard” which first put the idea of God into men’s heads. Wasson also has proposed a psychedelic explanation of the ancient Greek cult that produced the Eleusinian Mysteries, and he has advanced the idea that Plato’s pure Ideas might be the product of a psychedelic insight. (In other words, Plato was an acidhead.)

Following this line of reasoning, it might seem logical to conclude that the Eden story is actually a psychedelic parable—and we would be happy to propose that theory ourselves had we not already proposed another theory with an antithetical conclusion. In any case, Wasson goes on to suggest that psychedelic sacraments in the course of time may have been replaced by more innocuous hosts, and that they represent perhaps “the original element in all the Holy Suppers of the world.”

The whole idea, of course, is pure speculation, and necessarily so, but at the same time it is very interesting speculation and by no means implausible. It is particularly tempting to apply Wasson’s theory to the metaphysics of India; according to Masters and Houston, an estimated 90 per cent of the holy men in that country are currently on hemp and various other drugs.

The point often is made that religious ascetics traditionally have promoted their mystical states of consciousness by employing techniques that rival LSD in their probable impact on biochemical balance. These include fasting, yogic breathing exercises, sleep deprivation, dervish dances, self-flagellation, and monastic isolation. Even in the pews of the pious, religious contemplation may be supported by such trance-inducing aids as organ music, stained glass windows, repetitive chants and prayers, incense, and flickering candles.

The question of religious chemistry has been underscored recently by the wide attention given to the theories, already mentioned, of Dr. Abram Hoffer and Humphry Osmond. Their adrenochrome-adrenolutin hypothesis suggests that schizophrenia may

be caused at least in part by defective adrenal metabolism. Very briefly, the adrenal gland secretes the hormone adrenaline, which helps coordinate biological mechanisms in emergency situations—for example, a fist fight or a threatened traffic accident. Heart rate is increased, the blood is sugared up and pumped to the necessary muscles. Adrenaline also may affect the emotions, contributing to anxiety and depression. In the body it turns into a toxic hormone called adrenochrome, which in turn can be converted into either of two other compounds: dihydroxyindole or adrenolutin. It is possible that dihydroxyindole balances off adrenaline to reduce tension and irritability; in schizophrenics, however, adrenochrome is converted primarily into adrenolutin, which also is toxic, and the combination of adrenochrome-adrenolutin results in a poisonous disruption of the brain's chemical processes.

That is the theory. And the prescribed antidotes are nicotinic acid (niacin) or nicotinamide (Vitamin B-3). Discussing one of the villains in the piece, the scientists write: "There are few who doubt that adrenochrome is active in animals or in man, and it is now included among the family of compounds known as hallucinogens—compounds like mescaline and LSD-25 capable of producing psychological changes in man."

The Hoffer-Osmond studies are far from conclusive, and similar theories have been advanced in the past. But the studies hold promise, and they are receiving serious consideration—due in part, no doubt, to the significance they have in other areas of current debate, including religion. The line dividing insanity and mysticism has never been too sharply drawn, and the biochemical theory of schizophrenia makes it all the more tenuous. Vitamin B-3 actually has cured cases of schizophrenia, according to Dr. Hoffer and Osmond. But Vitamin B-3 also has proved effective in terminating LSD experiences, and the implications of this must be obvious. As we asked earlier: Are insanity, mysticism, and the psychedelic experience in some way related?

Aldous Huxley has suggested they are. The experience of absolute reality is awesome enough in small doses, and the schizophrenic, drugged by his own body chemistry, is like a man who is permanently under the influence of a psychedelic. He is "unable to shut off the experience of a reality which he is not holy enough to live with." He cannot take refuge, even for a moment, in "the homemade universe of common sense—the strictly human world of useful notions, shared symbols and socially acceptable conventions." The result is a bad trip which never ends.

But the psychedelic subject knows that he can and will return to that limited but comforting world, and he is therefore in a position to accept his experience: to enjoy it and to learn from it. This in fact appears to be the main basis for denying that psychedelics produce a model psychosis. As Dr. Cohen and parapsychologist Gardner Murphy expressed it: "When the dissolution of the reasoning self occurs in a chaotic manner, the result is called psychosis. When the state is not accompanied by panic or anxiety, it is perceived as mystical, and creative solutions of (or at least an armistice with) life problems could result."

Dr. Cohen has proposed that the difference here makes logical a distinction between insanity and unsanity, which he would place at polar ends of a continuum; in the middle, somewhere, would lie sanity. Nevertheless, it is a bit jarring to consider the possibility that religious experience is an end-product of adrenochrome, described as a dark crystalline material which can easily be made in a laboratory. "In its pure form," write Dr. Hoffer and Osmond, "it manifests itself as beautiful, sharp, needlelike crystals which have a brilliant sheen. When the crystals are powdered, it appears as a bright red powder, which dissolves quickly in water to form a blood-red solution."

It would be interesting to see if a shot of vitamins could terminate a spontaneous religious experience. But what if it did? And what if LSD does in fact initiate such an experience? Does this mean the experience is simply a manifestation of the drug?

THE SOUND OF ONE HAND CLAPPING

A spark touches off an explosion. But the explosion is not simply a product or property of the spark. If one opens a window and looks at the view, one does not equate the view with the window; one does not suppose that the window caused the view. In the same sense, LSD has been described as a chemical key which opens some window in the mind.

Similarly, electric shock may awaken a mental patient to the "reality" of the common-sense world, but nobody will say that the common-sense world is a product of the shock. By the same token, it could be argued that LSD awakens normal men to a still greater reality—and that it does so by means of a chemical shock which liberates the mind from ingrained thought patterns based on verbal abstractions and the memory-forethought habit.

Our normal mode of thinking can be described as survival-thinking. We see a traffic signal, and we think "stop" rather than "pretty red light." Furthermore, since our mind is designed to act upon things, we normally limit our perception to those things we wish to act upon. This is known as attention, a form of consciousness in which awareness is brought to a sharp but limited focus; we see what we have to see, and we see it the way we need to see it.

Both abstraction ("stop") and attention are designed for action, and so we view the world in terms of our action upon it. Along these same lines, Huxley described the brain and nervous system as a "reducing valve" which receives the flood of sensory input and filters out all that which is not necessary for action, and therefore for survival; were it not for this, we could not function in the world as we know it.

To function, we must deceive ourselves as to the actual nature of reality—a form of adaptation which LSD researcher Willis W. Harman has termed cultural hypnosis. "We are all hypnotized from infancy," wrote Harman, who went on to propose that this was just another way in which to describe enculturation. We accept suggestions from the

environment—from our parents and society—and these suggestions shape the manner of our perception; finally, we perceive things in a state of hypnosis: not as they are, but as we are told to see them.

Thus the child first sees the traffic signal as a pretty red light, which it is; but soon he learns to see it another way—as an abstraction—or else is run down by a truck. And so it must be.

Genius, however, has been defined as looking at things in just a slightly different way. Perhaps the truth of the matter is that genius looks at things more as they actually are: the genius is not completely hypnotized but only partly so. Reality is still reality, after all, and it does no harm perhaps to steal an occasional glance at it, if only to satisfy ourselves that it still exists.

LSD presumably allows us to do this by breaking the trance; it enables us, in Huxley's term, to become Mind at Large. The reducing valve is shut down, attention is scattered, and we are back again in the real world—happy and helpless. Comparing survival awareness and psychedelic awareness, Orientalist Alan W. Watts has suggested the analogy of a spotlight and a floodlight, and the analogy may be an apt one; it is true that the psychedelic subject often will focus his attention for long periods upon some object of delight—a flower, perhaps, or a crack in a wall—but as Watts put it, this is an unprogrammed mode of attention in which one looks at things rather than for things: the world is not chopped into pieces for purposes of action or cause-and-effect analysis.

In any case, LSD from this point of view is simply a trance-breaking snap of the fingers—and the same applies to any chemical agent which might be involved in ordinary religious experience. The chemical does not determine the experience, it merely permits it. In this connection, we may read a certain significance into one of the LSD cultist's familiar expressions, "turned on." We turn on a radio and hear an orchestra playing Vienna Bonbons, and of course the music was there in the room all the time, and the music would be there even if the radio were not; the radio simply allows us to hear the music.

The comparison is all the more valid if, as indicated earlier, LSD in fact does quit the brain after triggering its chain of metabolic processes, and it may be significant in this connection that some cultists say they have learned to turn on without drugs. And finally there is an interesting piece of evidence that has come to us all the way from Japan.

To produce the sudden insight called satori, many Zen Buddhists in Japan contemplate a "mind-murdering" form of riddle called the koan. (What is the sound of one hand clapping? What was your original face before you were born?) These riddles of course defy logic, and that is just what they are supposed to do; they are designed to break down the rational intellect, just as LSD does, and thus provide the student with a new viewpoint. If asked to explain ultimate reality, a Zen master might kick a ball—or

slap his pupil in the face.

And the idea is that ultimate reality has nothing to do with words or logic: it is raw existence in the here and now. Satori is in fact remarkably similar to psychedelic experience, if not indeed identical, and it is produced by a form of shock which is neither chemical nor electrical but intellectual—or at least mental.

Still, the nonphysical explanations of psychedelic experience raise many questions. If psychedelics simply awaken a subject to reality, why does the subject invariably return to his trance-state after a predictable interval? Why will another chemical terminate an experience? And what of psychosomatic medicine? Doesn't it suggest the possibility at least that Zen Buddhists and self-starting cultists have developed a capacity to influence their metabolism: that they somehow initiate a biochemical reaction which in turn initiates their experience?

The issue of chemistry cannot be avoided, it seems; psychedelic cultists and religionists alike should be prepared to face squarely the possibility or even probability that their metaphysical systems are in fact inexorably linked to biochemistry.

This is not a new question; it is one of those very old questions we referred to earlier. And it revolves around the musty dispute between the materialists, who say that the soul or psyche is just an aspect or property of the material body, nothing more, and the dualistic idealists, who make a clear distinction between spirit on the one hand and matter on the other. According to the idealists, the soul merely inhabits the body, and it survives the body after death.

William James met the problem head on more than six decades ago in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. He wrote sardonically: "Medical materialism finishes up Saint Paul by calling his vision on the road to Damascus a discharging lesion of the occipital cortex, he being an epileptic."

James himself had participated in experiments with nitrous oxide (laughing gas). This turn-of-the-century psychedelic produced what James referred to as the anesthetic revelation, and far from convincing him that religion was mere chemistry, it indicated to James that there were unfathomed realms of consciousness which "forbid a premature closing of our accounts with reality." James scoffed at "superficial medical talk" about hypnoid states, and he asserted that medical materialism was "altogether illogical and inconsistent."

Why?

If all states of mind are caused by some organic condition, then one "could as easily argue that the liver determines the dicta of the sturdy atheist as decisively as it does those of the Methodist."

The sturdy atheist has yet to answer that, but what about the Methodist? With its obvious capacity to alter states of consciousness, LSD might appear to make hash of dualistic idealism. Even if it does, however, materialism is by no means the only option that remains. An alternative can be found within orthodox tradition, and this is the alternative offered by Thomas Aquinas. One hesitates to speak for a saint, but it does seem entirely likely that Saint Thomas would have no trouble reconciling religious conviction with LSD or the adrenochrome-adrenolutin hypothesis.

Dualistic idealism derives from Plato and has been passed on to us by Saint Augustine and Descartes, among others. But Thomistic philosophy rejects it and proposes instead the unitary idealism of Aristotle. This affirms the reality of both the spiritual and the material, but it does not insist that they be viewed antagonistically—or indeed as separate entities. One might as easily distinguish the warmth of the sun from the sun. Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto in E Minor* is no less beautiful because it issues from catgut and horsehair.

One does not say, "It's merely catgut" or "It's simply horsehair." Nor does one listen to Fischer-Dieskau singing Schubert and say, "It's nothing more than epiglottis, after all." In the same sense, the human personality implied for Saint Thomas a combination of mind and matter, body and soul. He acknowledged a physiological factor in dreams, moods, insanity. He did believe that a certain spiritual element survives after bodily death; but he considered this soul without its body an insignificant phantom, and he held that human personality, as opposed to this phantom, is an indivisible union of spirit and matter. This view has serious implications for personal immortality, as we shall see later. But it also provides a framework for a religious interpretation of psychedelic phenomena.

The supposed necessity for religion to insist upon a soul-body dichotomy traces back to that original sin of the I-It mind, dualism. And it also reflects a primitive line of reasoning which Sir James Frazer described in *The Golden Bough*: "As the savage commonly explains the processes of inanimate nature by supposing that they are produced by living beings working in or behind the phenomena, so he explains the phenomena of life itself. If an animal lives and moves, it can only be, he thinks, because there is a little animal inside which moves it: if a man lives and moves, it can only be because he has a little man or animal inside who moves him. The animal inside the animal, the man inside the man, is the soul."

Thus the Huron Indians supposed the soul had a head and body, arms and legs; for the Nootka the soul was a little fellow who stood erect inside the head, and whenever he fell over, you lost your senses; for many primitives the soul was a manikin exactly resembling its possessor, and it was proper to speak of fat souls and thin souls, or long souls and short souls.

The soul could escape through the natural openings of the body; the Marquesans therefore would hold the mouth and nose of a dying person, and the Wakelbura of Aus-

tralia would stick hot coals in the ears of a corpse to allow themselves a running start before the dead man's ghost took after them.

The soul also could escape in sleep and wander about, so the children of Transylvania were instructed to sleep with their mouths shut, and it was bad form to awaken anybody suddenly—or worse yet, to move the body of a sleeper.

In Bombay it was tantamount to murder to alter the appearance of a sleeper, painting a man's face perhaps or adding mustaches to a slumbering woman. Such notions may well amuse us, but one might ask how they differ in essence from the basic assumption of dualistic idealism. That assumption has always been difficult to defend, and there is perhaps no compelling reason for us to defend it.

The proposition that spirit is a property of matter has assumed importance only because the dualists have been so outspoken in their insistence that spirit is not a property of matter. Once you grant the former proposition, it loses all its force as an antireligious argument. That chorus of "merely" and "simply" and "nothing more than" becomes about as meaningful as the "nevermore" which Poe's raven was trained to repeat. We do not even know, really, what matter actually is, and as far as Thomism is concerned, for example, LSD apparently does nothing to destroy the religious premise—as James defined it.

If anything, it strengthens the premise. From this point of view, it matters not that mystical experience has a chemical aspect. To say that it is physical as well as psychical is to say nothing at all. "Of course it is," Saint Thomas might well reply. "And what of that?"

In fact, some theologians and scientists alike regard LSD as a kind of telescope with which to scan the deep-space regions of the spirit: a discovery which will enable man to gain a far greater understanding of his religious instinct. Now mysticism can be produced in the laboratory. It can be analyzed under experimental conditions with proper controls.

And some have predicted this could lead to an eventual reconciliation of science and religion: to a science of religions if not a scientific religion or indeed a religious science.

That could be a bit optimistic, and it might appear to patronize religion. Considering their contrary viewpoints, it might be asked whether the rational is suited to study the instinctive any more than the instinctive is suited to study the rational.

But perhaps there is some hope for an accommodation. As religions professor G. Ray Jordan, Jr., put it, there is a chance at least that intensive research with LSD "might do much to provide empirical proof of a primary beingness in some sense conscious which is the mystical or intuitive base and perhaps goal of man's religious aspirations and be-

havior.”

That goes directly to the heart of the matter: the possibility that there is such a thing as absolute Being (not to be confused, by the way, with a Being) and that this gives life its direction and purpose. Absolute Being in this sense means an ultimate nature, either realized or potential—as an oak tree has the ultimate nature of an oak tree (realized), and an acorn has the ultimate nature of an oak tree (potential). If it could be demonstrated that absolute Being exists in the universe, this would of course knock the existentialist props from Sartre’s basic proposition. (Incidentally, it is interesting to note that Sartre once participated in a mescaline experiment under psychiatric supervision, and he did not like it at all, as Masters and Houston report the incident in their excellent study, *The Varieties of Psychedelic Experience*. When Simone de Beauvoir telephoned the hospital to ask how he was doing, Sartre told her unhappily he was fighting a losing battle with a devilfish.)

As for the common future of science and religion, there is another possibility, and it was suggested long ago in *The Golden Bough*. Sir James considered science a natural outgrowth of religion, and in fact he traced a line of development from magic to religion to science. As Sir James saw it, magic was actually a primitive form of science; it was based on the assumption that there were immutable laws to the universe and that man could control them.

Thus magicians fearlessly ordered the gods about, threatening to kill them or bash their heads if they did not obey. But there was a fatal flaw to magic, and this lay “not in its general assumption of a sequence of events, determined by law, but in its total misconception of the nature of the particular laws.”

In the course of time the wiser magicians realized their spells were not working, and they concluded the gods must be running the show after all. Thus the Age of Magic became the Age of Religion; the magicians became priests, and they prayed to the gods they had sought to command. The point is that magic preceded religion “and that man essayed to bend nature to his wishes by the sheer force of spells and enchantments before he strove to coax and mollify a coy, capricious, or irascible deity by the soft insinuation of prayer and sacrifice.”

But then man discovered new laws, and these truly seemed to work; the priests became proud magicians again, and the Age of Religion became the Age of Science. Sir James thought this was well and good, as it should be. But he added: “Yet the history of thought should warn us against concluding that because the scientific theory of the world is the best that has yet been formulated, it is necessarily complete and final.... In the last analysis magic, religion, and science are nothing but theories of thought; and as science has supplanted its predecessors, so it may hereafter be itself superseded by some more perfect hypothesis, perhaps by some totally different way of looking at the phenomena . . . of which we in this generation can form no idea.”

Today's magicians have found perhaps that their spells do not work quite as they had hoped. Members of the drug movement in turn may find Sir James's words prophetic, suggesting that psychedelic insight can supersede both science and religion as we presently understand them. Certainly the cultists imagine that they have just the thing Sir James indicated might be necessary: a totally different way of looking at phenomena.

Curiously perhaps, scientists have seemed somewhat more receptive to the idea than have religionists. Among the latter, there are those who deny that psychedelics offer any insight into the actual nature of deity or cosmos.

THE GOD OF THE EAST

Toward the middle of the last century the poet Charles Baudelaire became a member of the famed Club des Haschischins in Paris. He was initiated into the mysteries of hashish, one of the derivatives of psychedelic hemp, and he later wrote of the drug in something less than glowing terms. Baudelaire declared that the "accursed sweetmeat" resulted in "an appalling thing, the marriage of a man to himself." It led to "the individual's belief in his own god-head." In short, it made a man feel he was God.

A similar objection to the psychedelic experience was lodged more than a hundred years later by Professor R. C. Zaehner of Oxford, an authority on Eastern religions and a Roman Catholic. Zaehner set himself the task of replying to Huxley's enthusiastic claims for mescaline, and to play fair the professor took mescaline himself. "I disliked the experience," he reported, and what especially displeased him, as he put it, was the fact of losing control of oneself. "My conscious resistance to the drug was, indeed, very strong."

That was not a very propitious set, as the cultists say, and as a consequence no doubt Zaehner's experience was limited to a sort of silly jag which often occurs in the early stages of a complete experience. Everything seemed utterly ridiculous and totally funny, and Zaehner laughed himself to tears. He described *The Golden Bough* as one of the great comic classics, and he said the trouble with Jung was "he doesn't realize how dull his collective unconscious is."

Cultists believe this period of cosmic laughter reflects a first dawning of the awareness that words and normal perception patterns are both artificial and inadequate. In any case, Zaehner never went beyond it, and even in his most mirthful moments, he said, he managed to distinguish between funny and sacred objects. Shown a reproduction of a praying figure in a nativity scene by Piero della Francesca, he remarked that this was "a holy thing not to be looked at when you're drugged." Later he evaluated the experience as in a sense antireligious—not conformable with religious experience or in the same category—and he reported with some pride that his normal religious consciousness "was never completely swamped."

Zaehner's book, *Mysticism, Sacred and Profane*, is so far the most authoritative

attack upon psychedelics from the viewpoint of orthodox religion, and in it the professor denies the idea that drugs might give rise to a genuine state of mystical consciousness. Zaehner concedes that psychedelics might promote what he terms natural mysticism and monistic mysticism, in which the subject feels a sense of union either with nature or with some impersonal Absolute; but they do not promote Theistic mysticism, in which the subject encounters the transcendent, personal God of Judaism and Christianity.

That at least is Zaehner's opinion, to which he adds: "In the case of Huxley, as in that of the maniac, the personality seems to be dissipated into the objective world, while in the case of theistic mystics the human personality is wholly absorbed into the Deity, who is felt and experienced as being something totally distinct and other than the objective world."

In Theistic mysticism, Zaehner explains, the subject is conscious only of God and loses his awareness of all other things. In Huxley's brand of mysticism, one identifies himself with the external world—to the apparent exclusion of God.

From his own point of view, Zaehner may be right. But there is reason to dispute even his basic premise—that psychedelic drugs cannot promote Theistic mysticism—and his statements in any case are somewhat confusing if not confused. The Zaehner test for authenticity does not compare the psychedelic experience to mysticism as such. It compares it to Western mysticism. And that is just the point. There also is Eastern mysticism, which is older even than Western mysticism, and in fact it is just here that the drug movement offers its second major challenge to orthodox theology.

Zaehner to the contrary, Westerners under the influence of psychedelics very often have reported overwhelming awareness of a transcendent God; on the other hand, they also have reported the experience of alien concepts which frankly astonished—or even terrified—them, and these by and large have been the concepts of Eastern mysticism. Within the drug movement, moreover, it seems fair to say that the tendency has been toward the latter type of experience. There are subjective factors which may help to account for this tendency, and we shall discuss them later. But for the moment we can say that psychedelic experience on the whole frequently appears to validate Eastern ideas about God, man, and the universe.

This of course is a very broad statement and possibly a very hazardous one; it assumes that it is possible to speak of Eastern ideas as such, as if these constituted a monolithic system of belief. The fact is otherwise, it scarcely needs to be said, and in one sense it is just as misleading to speak of Eastern religion as it is to speak of Western religion, thus bedding down together the Unitarian, the Roman Catholic, and the Seventh-day Adventist.

It is not even proper to speak in general terms of Hinduism as such, or Buddhism as such, or even Hinyana Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism as such. Each is a major system which contains various levels of sophistication and paths to the truth; in India, for

example, you will find one Hindu worshipping a whole pantheon of Gods (330 million, according to one count, including the elephant-headed Ganesha), while another Hindu contemplates a metaphysical abstraction: you will find one Hindu who denies the world and another Hindu who is totally involved in the world.

As you delve into Eastern thought you reach a level of interpretation which seems to correspond with at least some elements in Western thought; at a still deeper level it becomes almost impossible to say anything positive at all. But we shall call attention to some of these finer points, and meanwhile the fact remains that there is something the Westerner refers to mentally when he uses that term, Eastern ideas. Perhaps in what follows it might be more correct to say that we are describing Eastern ideas as they are generally viewed in the West, from a more or less superficial point of view, and that for the most part (in this chapter) we are describing the ideas of India rather than those of China or Japan: that is to say, we are talking more about Hinduism than Buddhism, and a rather rudimentary Hinduism at that. Within such a context, then, riding roughshod over nuances, it might be said that psychedelic experience is Eastern in so far as it appears to validate immanence rather than transcendence, monism rather than pluralism, reincarnation rather than resurrection, nirvana rather than heaven, maya rather than hell, ignorance rather than evil, liberation rather than salvation, and self-knowledge rather than grace, redemption, or atonement.

As applied to the concept of God, transcendence refers to a form of deity whose nature is wholly different from man's. Theistic transcendence implies a wholly-other God who is some sort of supreme Person, in the sense at least that he can and does enter into a personal relationship with man. In strict transcendence, God and man are no more the same person than a master and his servant are the same person. In immanence, on the other hand, men partake of God's nature; God dwells in men, and they are in fact a part of God.

The concept of immanence as such is perfectly acceptable from the viewpoint of Western Theism, so long as it does not deny altogether the element of transcendence. Thus it is fine to say that in God we live and move and have our being, in the orthodox interpretation of that phrase, just so we do not develop some fancy notion that we are him.

The relationship in this case is crudely that of a father and son perhaps, as opposed to that of a master and his servant. But in pure immanence, or pantheism, God's nature and man's nature are identical. God is just another word for mankind as a whole, or the universe as a whole, or reality as a whole, or the life force as a whole. In pantheism it is neither insanity nor heresy to imagine you are God, because in fact you are God. Western theology on the whole has tended to emphasize the transcendent aspect of God—certainly so at least in comparison to Eastern theology, which has tended to emphasize the immanent aspect of God.

In Asia, moreover, the emphasis has been given to pure immanence or panthe-

ism, and God in any case is not conceived from a Theistic viewpoint as in any sense a person or being who dwells apart.

Consider next the doctrines of monism and pluralism. Pluralism insists upon the integrity of the individual soul, self, or ego. In monism, the individual personality has no lasting reality. It is a passing phenomenon, illusory in nature, and, in the end, all of the individual selves will be absorbed again into the godhead: into the One, the Whole, the Absolute, like drops of water in a termless sea.

The godhead perhaps has temporarily divided itself for some practical purpose, as the hand is divided into five fingers; or more likely the godhead is simply amusing itself, making all the world a stage on which it acts out the various roles—a method of killing eternity, as it were. In Hinduism, this monistic Absolute is known variously as Atman or Brahman, and all individual selves are but aspects of Atman or the supreme Self.

A Hindu holy man contemplates the sacred syllable OM, emblematic of the Atman godhead, and he asks, “What is that?” He is told, “Thou art that.” Thus the wise Hindu is never jealous, for of whom should he be jealous? He sees no other, hears no other, knows no other, for what other is there to see, hear, or know? He hates no living creature—not even the tiger—for he knows that all creatures are simply food: are born from food, live upon food, and then become food.

As the hissing Hamadryad in *Mary Poppins* put it: “It may be that to eat and be eaten are the same thing in the end.... Bird and beast and stone and star—we are all one, all one.”

As cream in butter, as salt in the sea, Atman is in everything and is everything. Atman is like a flame which assumes the shape of each object it consumes. As the air in a jar is nevertheless the same as the air outside the jar, although it takes the shape of the jar, so the Self in every self is nevertheless Atman. And the wise Hindu knows this. He knows that he himself is the youth, the maiden, the old man bent upon his staff, the dark butterfly, the green parrot with red eyes, the thundercloud, seasons, and seas.

Buddhists, in reverence, refuse to limit reality even to a universal Self, and thus they never speak of Atman. They speak instead of the Void or of the Clear Light of the Void. But the Void is not a void in the Western sense; the expression is a *via negativa* which seeks to avoid the trap of language, because there are no words—even Atman—to describe that which is beyond all words and beyond all determinations.

But call it Atman or call it the Void, enlightenment comes when the individual self realizes it has no separate identity beyond this Absolute. Such liberating awareness is referred to as *moksha* by Hindus and *satori* by Zen Buddhists, and with it comes that perfect peace in which the individual self achieves nirvana and is absorbed into the Absolute.

In the Theistic mysticism of the West, strictly speaking the soul is not absorbed by the Absolute, or by God. Rather, the soul and God retain their distinctive identities, and their relationship is one of love. Love is the key word that distinguishes Theistic mysticism from Eastern mysticism; it implies a relationship between two separate entities, and it therefore preserves both the transcendent nature of God and the everlasting integrity of the individual human soul. The soul is not sucked up by the Absolute as water is sucked up by a sponge; the soul relates to the godhead in an act of love, and the soul in fact may be referred to, in this relationship, as the Bride of Christ. As Buber expressed it in terms of his I-Thou relationship, I-Thou necessarily implies both an I and a Thou; I is not Thou and Thou is not I, but I and Thou are united in love: hence the significance of that hyphen.

In the Asian doctrine of absorption, of course, the achievement of nirvana can mean different things, depending upon the interpretation. It can mean an actual release from the world, physically and psychically, or simply a new state of consciousness in which one is no longer deceived by his intellect and therefore views the world as it actually is, beyond language and appearances. But nirvana commonly has been associated with the former interpretation, and this leads directly to the Asian concept of reincarnation—as opposed to resurrection.

Resurrection was an Egyptian idea; it supposes that man has but one life upon the earth and thus only one chance to win his just and lasting reward, whatever that might be. On the judgment day of Western theology, the soul will be reunited with its body to find eternal life in a pluralistic heaven. Saint Thomas among others found it necessary to insist upon resurrection; with his rejection of dualistic idealism, it seemed the only way to provide for the personal immortality of the individual soul, and this point was the main basis for Thomas' famous quarrel with Averroism.

Averroes had denied the possibility of personal immortality and had proposed instead the theory of monopsychism: the idea that mankind as a whole has a single mind in which all individuals participate. It is said that Thomas considered personal immortality the most important issue of the thirteenth century; he defended it vigorously, and Averroism was anathematized by the bishop of Paris in 1270.

But resurrection and the permanence of the individual soul also are denied by the East. In the alternative doctrine of reincarnation, the separate self does not really exist, and it is only the realization of this fact which permits the achievement of nirvana. But realization is difficult—far more difficult than good works or avoiding sin.

So a man is given not one life in which to achieve it, but many lives. The soul passes from body to body in a cycle of death and rebirth, as a leech proceeds from one blade of grass to the next, and each life offers a fresh opportunity to make the great discovery in which one recognizes at last the nature of the Grand Illusion. With the discovery comes the death of the individual personality, which never was, and absorption into the monistic Absolute or the everlasting peace of nirvana.

This doctrine also has been interpreted symbolically as a poetic expression of the many stages that one man passes through in one lifetime, just as nirvana has been interpreted to mean a state of awareness rather than literal absorption into nirvana which leaves the earth behind. But the goal in any case bears no similarity to the phenomenal heaven of the West. State of mind or state of Being, it is not a place, and the individual personality is not an aspect of it.

In the same sense, there is no Eastern equivalent to the Western hell. If there is a hell, it is the world itself, or at least the deceiving world of appearances—the phenomenal illusion which is known as maya or sangsara. A man lives in hell when he fails to recognize reality. He lives in hell when he denies his own true nature and is therefore tormented by lust and desire. It is his mistaken sense of individuality which causes all of his pleasure and all of his pain, and there is far more pain than pleasure. He is a victim of dualism, hopelessly enmeshed in meum et thrum.

Because he imagines that there is an other, he envies or desires the other. Because he imagines that his little self is his real Self, he weeps at the thought of his own mortality—for he knows full well that the little self is finite and that one day it must perish forever. But with enlightenment comes peace, serenity, and release from this hell. The wise man knows that there is no other, so he does not envy or desire the other; he is free from craving. The wise man knows that there is no little self, so he does not weep for his own mortality; he knows that there is only Atman or the Void, there is only the One, and he is that One, and therefore he is in fact immortal and can never perish.

It also follows, from the Eastern viewpoint, that evil deeds are a product of ignorance. Evil in the Western sense is just one more example of dualistic perception. It suggests there is a very real, if negative, force which causes man to sin against the light. But ask the Western moralist what would happen if a potential murderer were somehow spirited away to a tropical island and left there alone. This would-be killer would have nobody to kill, and so of course he would not kill anybody. On judgment day, shall he be judged a murderer or not?

The problem is easily resolved in the East, where all men in a manner of speaking are stranded upon that island. It is impossible to kill anybody else, because nowhere in the universe is there anybody else. There is no other, except as imagined. In doing harm to what he supposes is another person, therefore, a man does harm only to himself. Homicide is impossible; there can only be partial suicides. And so it is, according to the doctrine of maya, that men do wrong through ignorance.

They sin against others, and thereby against themselves, because they are deluded as to their true nature—because they fail to understand that they and their fellows are but elements of a monistic whole. Thus knowledge is the path to righteousness, and he who has knowledge will never sin. Thus the goal of wisdom is liberation from maya.

It follows that Eastern liberation is not the same as Western salvation. The West-

erner must work for his own salvation, but ultimately it comes to him only through the love and mercy of God. In an act of grace, the transcendent deity may bestow his gifts upon some erring soul. For Christians, man's redemption was secured by the sacrifice on the cross, a direct intervention of the supernatural power on behalf of mankind. But in the East there is no supernatural power to intervene. There is no forgiveness, for there is no God who is able to forgive.

The burden of liberation falls entirely upon the individual, who must lift that burden himself; he cannot pray that it be lifted from him. He must strive for liberation through self-knowledge, and in doing so he is helped or hindered by his karma—the sum total of a man's thoughts and actions during his lifetime or his lifetimes. He will be helped if it is good karma, hindered if it is bad karma.

Bad karma might seem at first to correspond with Western guilt, but it does not really. Guilt implies that sinful action is provoked by the active powers of darkness—by the force called evil—and that free-willed man has perversely chosen darkness over light.

A clear-cut choice and the freedom to choose are basic assumptions in the doctrine of guilt,—and the whole idea is foreign to Eastern thinking. There may be a choice, but there is nothing clear-cut about it. It is obscured by maya, which prevents a man from seeing it. If he could see it, there is no question what his action would be; he would do the right thing without a moment's hesitation, because the right thing is simply the logical thing: it is the selfish, or if you will the Selfish, course to follow. Bad karma arises from ignorance, not perversity. It has been equated with cause-and-effect and with heredity. One remains a prisoner in the Net of Illusion because one has not been thinking the right thoughts—has not gained the proper knowledge, in other words—and heredity is another way of saying that karma follows you from one generation to the next, or from one reincarnation to the next.

Evangelists such as Billy Graham have complained bitterly that people no longer believe in guilt, and Saint Augustine in his time felt called upon to condemn a similar trend. In the latter case, the false prophet was the astrologer, who suggested that a man's faults lay in his stars, while the tempter's voice today belongs to Freud. And perhaps America at least is moving toward an Eastern view of sin. It has been said that an American takes delight in his analysis, talks about it freely, and has a penchant even to boast about it, while a European is still ashamed of his libido and would not dream of discussing it in public.

But the world as illusion does not sit very well with traditional American concepts, and some would view this idea as a greater threat to our values than pantheism, monism, or any of the other Eastern isms. It seems to assert that life itself is a curse, and indeed the Hindu speaks of life as a terrible wheel of death and rebirth; reincarnation in his eyes is a curse, and a new birth is something to be avoided at any cost. This might be taken as a direct challenge to the Christian doctrine that being as being is good (*esse qua esse*

bottom est), and, as mentioned, some elements within the drug movement seem to have found it an attractive idea.

Moreover, it could be argued that modern physics supports the basic proposition with its formula that energy equals mass times the velocity of light squared ($E=MC^2$)—suggesting that matter after all is not the solid, substantial stuff we had supposed it to be. Nor is this just another idea of some woolly-headed philosopher; it is an idea that blew up Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

These various ideas represent the religious tradition of half the world. Insofar as it confirms them, therefore, the psychedelic experience cannot be dismissed as nonreligious on the grounds laid down by Zaehner and Baudelaire, who really meant that it is non-Western.

It seems fair to say, moreover, that most drug cultists do interpret the LSD experience as a confirmation of Eastern metaphysics.

Timothy Leary, the high priest of LSD, has often appeared a bit vague on this point in his public statements. While he expresses himself for the most part in Hindu and Buddhist terminology, he tends to speak of the experience simply as “religious” in nature—suggesting that the religions of the East and West are fundamentally the same. Shortly after he founded his League for Spiritual Discovery, however, I asked Leary if there are not in fact certain basic differences between the Eastern and Western views. He agreed that there certainly are.

I then asked him whether he thought LSD experience supports the pantheistic Eastern God or the transcendent Western God. And he told me there is no question about it—the experience supports the Eastern God, not the Western. Even so, is it necessary to regard Eastern thinking merely as threat and challenge? As we have already indicated, many of the Eastern concepts are subject to different levels of interpretation—and some of them at least, at certain levels, may be entirely compatible with Western trends of thought. Furthermore, we might demonstrate that these Eastern ideas are not so foreign to the West as they may seem.

THE DOME OF MANY-COLORED GLASS

“The Malay has been a fearful enemy for months,” Thomas De Quincey wrote in May 1818. “I have been every night, through his means, transported into Asiatic scenes.”

The entry is contained in the famous drug addict’s autobiographical account, *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*. The passage which follows describes the Eastern nightmares produced by the Eastern drug, and it is worth quoting at length:

I know not whether others share in my feelings on this point; but I have often thought that if I were compelled to forego England, and to live in China . . . I should go

mad. The causes of my horror lie deep; and some of them must be common to others. Southern Asia, in general, is the seat of awful images and associations. As the cradle of the human race, it would alone have a dim and reverential feeling connected with it.

But there are other reasons. No man can pretend that the wild, barbarous, and capricious superstitions of Africa, or of savage tribes elsewhere, affect him in the way that he is affected by the ancient, monumental, cruel and elaborate religions of Indostan, etc. The mere antiquity of Asiatic things, of their institutions, histories, modes of faith, etc., is so impressive, that to me the vast age of the race and name overpowers the sense of youth in the individual.

A young Chinese seems to me an antediluvian man renewed . . . nor can any man fail to be awed by the names of the Ganges, or the Euphrates. It contributes much to these feelings, that southern Asia is, and has been for thousands of years, the part of the earth most swarming with human life; the great officina gentian Man is a weed in these regions. The vast empires also, into which the enormous population of Asia has always been cast, give a further sublimity to the feelings associated with all Oriental names or images.

In China, over and above what it has in common with the rest of southern Asia, I am terrified by the modes of life, by the manners, and the barrier of utter abhorrence, and want of sympathy, placed between us by feelings deeper than I can analyze. I could sooner live with lunatics, or brute animals. All this, and much more than I can say, or have time to say, the reader must enter into, before he can comprehend the unimaginable horror which these dreams of Oriental imagery, and mythological tortures, impressed upon me.

Under the connecting feeling of tropical heat and vertical sunlights, I brought together all creatures, birds, beasts, reptiles, all trees and plants, usages and appearances, that are found in all tropical regions and assembled them together in China or Indostan. From kindred feelings, I soon brought Egypt and all her gods under the same law. I was stared at, hooted at, grinned at, chattered at, by monkeys, by paroquets, by cockatoos. I ran into pagodas: and was fixed, for centuries, at the summit, or in secret rooms.... I fled from the wrath of Brahma through all the forests of Asia.

Vishnu hated me: Seeva laid wait for me. I came suddenly upon Isis and Osiris: I had done a deed, they said, which the ibis and crocodile trembled at. I was buried, for a thousand years, in stone coffins, with mummies and sphinxes, in narrow chambers at the heart of eternal pyramids. I was kissed, with cancerous kisses, by crocodiles; and laid, confounded with all unutterable slimy things, amongst reeds and Nilotic mud. I thus give the reader some slight abstraction of my Oriental dreams, which always filled me with such amazement at the monstrous scenery, that horror seemed absorbed, for a while, in sheer astonishment. Sooner or later came a reflux of feeling that swallowed up the astonishment, and left me, not so much in terror, as in hatred and abomination of what I saw. Over every form, and threat, and punishment, and dim sightless incarceration, brooded

a sense of eternity and infinity that drove me into an oppression as of madness. . . . [And] many times the very same dream was broken up in the very same way: I heard gentle voices speaking to me . . . and instantly I awoke: it was broad noon; and my children were standing, hand in hand, at my bedside; come to show me their colored shoes, or new frocks, or to let me see them dressed for going out. I protest that so awful was the transition from the damned crocodile, and the other unutterable monsters and abortions of my dreams, to the sight of innocent human natures and of infancy, that, in the mighty and sudden revulsion of mind, I wept, and could not forbear it, as I kissed their faces.

De Quincey's attitude might well reflect English provincialism at its best, or worst, but surely he was correct in assuming that some of the causes of his horror are shared by others. Undoubtedly he has summed up very well the reaction of the average Westerner to that nebulous something we have referred to as Eastern ideas. A similar attitude was expressed, for example, by Grecophile Edith Hamilton in her comparison of Greek and Eastern art.

The Greeks, she wrote, were the first Westerners, introducing into the ancient world something completely new: the rule of reason and the supremacy of the rational intellect. The Greeks loved order, they loved life, and they embraced with joy the beauty of the visible world. They were the first people to play, and their games were conducted on a grand scale. But this point of view was unique; it did not belong "to the immense expanse and the multitudinous populations of the East." With its oppressed masses and its wretched conditions of life, the East was preoccupied with the unseen—and with death. So insecure and unbearable was the visible world that men could find hope only by rejecting outside fact and turning inward to the invisible world of spirit and intuition.

Thus a tomb in Egypt and a theater in Greece. "The one comes to the mind as naturally as the other." Thus a grotesquely stylized Hindu bronze of Shiva, its many arms and hands curving outward—and the Olympic Hermes, "a perfectly beautiful human being, no more, no less."

When Egypt ended, the East went on ever farther in the direction Egypt had pointed. The miseries of Asia are a fearful page in history. Her people found strength to endure by denying any meaning and any importance to what they could not escape. The Egyptian world where dead men walked and slept and feasted was transmuted into what had always been implicit in its symbolism, the world of the spirit. In India, for centuries the leader of thought to the East, ages long since, the world of the reason and the world of the spirit were divorced and the universe handed over to the latter.... The mystical artist always sees patterns. The symbol, never quite real, tends to be expressed less and less realistically, and as the reality becomes abstracted the pattern comes forward.

The wings on Blake's angels do not look like real wings, nor are they there because wings belong to angels. They have been flattened, stylized, to provide a curving pointed frame, the setting required by the pattern of the composition. In Hindoo art and its branches, stylization reaches its height. Human figures are stylized far beyond the

point of becoming a type; they too are made into patterns, schematic designs of the human body, an abstraction of humanity. In the case of an Eastern rug all desire to express any semblance of reality has gone. Such a work of art is pure decoration.

It is the expression of the artist's final withdrawal from the visible world, essentially his denial of the intellect.... Again, the gigantic temples of Egypt, those massive immensities of granite which look as if only the power that moves in the earthquake were mighty enough to bring them into existence, are something other than the creation of geometry balanced by beauty. The science and the spirit are there, but what is there most of all is force, inhuman force, calm but tremendous, overwhelming.

It reduces to nothingness all that belongs to man. He is annihilated.... The Greek temple [on the other hand] is the perfect expression of the pure intellect illumined by the spirit. No other great buildings anywhere approach its simplicity.... Majestic but human, truly Greek. No superhuman force as in Egypt; no strange supernatural shapes as in India; the Parthenon is the home of humanity at ease, calm, ordered, sure of itself and the world.

The Greeks flung a challenge to nature in the fullness of their joyous strength. They set their temples on the summit of a hill overlooking the wide sea, outlined against the circle of the sky.... To the Greek architect man was the master of the world.

In so far as it remains Greek, and therefore rational, the Western mind no doubt abhors Oriental images and the metaphysical concepts they might seem to imply. Indeed, many Occidentals have emerged from a psychedelic experience with the same sense of horror and relief De Quincey felt when he awakened from his opium-haunted dreams to find himself safe again in merry, common-sense England. As we have already suggested, however, those images and concepts are not as remote as they may appear. They are and always have been an aspect of Western tradition, as counterpoint if nothing more, and it would probably be possible to demonstrate their influence in almost every phase of Western history. We have no intention of doing so. The task is beyond us and would serve no useful purpose here; without any attempt at comprehensiveness, however, we shall try to show how this or that thread of Eastern thought has appeared from time to time in the Western fabric.

The earliest of the threads can be picked up in Greece itself. It was Heraclitus who observed that no man can step twice into the same stream. The phenomenal universe is not the secure and dependable piece of real estate our senses suggest; on the contrary, it is in a constant state of flux and chaos. Nothing stays the same. The only thing that never changes, said Heraclitus, is the fact that everything is changing.

Thus the visible world of the West was called into question from the very beginning, and philosophical attempts to refute Heraclitus led in turn to the hypothesis of an invisible realm beyond the senses. Parmenides, for example, proposed that reality consisted of pure Being: an eternal One, never changing, which had no describable quali-

ties whatever, except for the fact that it existed—and since existence in this sense did not change, what then of that phenomenal world where everything changed? Obviously, it did not really exist.

Then came Plato with his eternal Essences or Ideas, which Gordon Wasson has suggested were psychedelic in origin. “The eye and the ear and the other senses are full of deception,” said Plato. The soul is a helpless prisoner of the body. It is “simply fastened and glued to the body.” Or so it was until philosophy came to its rescue. Referring to the soul in the feminine gender, Plato said that philosophy advised her to abstain from all use of the senses “and be gathered up and collected into herself, bidding her trust in herself and her own pure apprehension of pure existence, and to mistrust whatever comes to her through other channels and is subject to variation; for such things are visible and tangible, but what she sees in her own nature is intelligible and invisible.” The soul is “dragged by the body into the region of the changeable, and wanders and is confused; the world spins round her, and she is like a drunkard, when she touches change.... But when returning into herself she reflects, then she passes into the other world, the region of purity, and eternity, and immortality, and unchangeableness, which are her kindred, and with them she ever lives.”

Platonism evolved into the Neo-Platonism expounded by Plotinus, who preached a doctrine of mystical union with the Absolute. Both Platonism and Neo-Platonism in turn were assimilated by Christianity, and in fact they provided the metaphysical roots of the early church. This was due largely to the enormous influence of Saint Augustine, who was a Neo-Platonist before he became a Christian. Plato’s pure Ideas were interpreted to be the thoughts of God, and as such Platonic philosophy continued as the mainstay of Roman Catholicism until the rediscovery of Aristotle in the thirteenth century. Saint Thomas became the most articulate spokesman for this revived school of thought, arguing the case for intellect, reason, and the interdependence of the spiritual and the material. And so it was that Platonism gave way at last to Aristotelianism, mysticism to empiricism, and Augustinianism to Thomism. Thomism in essence was officially adopted by the Roman Catholic Church. But the break really was not all that sharp, even within the church, and Platonism has continued to be a major influence in Western theology and philosophy. Today’s drug movement might even be described as a sort of Neo-Platonist revival.

The point is that Plato was talking Net of Illusion talk and that this so-called Eastern idea is entirely within the Western tradition—the idea that the phenomenal world does not really exist; or the idea that our truncated senses cannot perceive ultimate reality; or the idea that our intellect deceives us. Take Berkeley, take Hume. Take almost any Western philosopher you would care to name. Take modern physics, for that matter. It seems clear that the West mistrusts the visible world just as much as the East does, and always has. The only real issue has been, in James’s terminology: Does some unseen order lie beyond that visible world, and should we seek to adjust thereto?

Platonism also contains other Oriental threads. Plato, too, spoke of a morality based wholly on knowledge. He spoke of reincarnation and of concepts equivalent to nirvana

and karma. For example, Socrates in the *Phaedo* is discussing the fate of the soul after death:

That soul, I say, herself invisible, departs to the invisible world—to the divine and immortal and rational: thither arriving, she is secure of bliss and is released from the error and folly of men, their fears and wild passions and all other human ills, and forever dwells, as they say of the initiated, in company with the gods.... But the soul which has been polluted, and is impure at the time of her departure, and is the companion and servant of the body always, and is in love with and fascinated by the body . . . do you suppose that such a soul will depart pure and unalloyed?

Such souls are held fast by the corporeal. They haunt sepulchres and tombs. They... wander about such places in payment of the penalty of their former evil way of life; and they continue to wander until through the craving after the corporeal which never leaves them they are imprisoned finally in another body. And they may be supposed to find their prisons in the same natures which they have had in their former lives.... men who have followed after gluttony, and wantonness, and drunkenness, and have had no thought of avoiding them, would pass into asses and animals of that sort.... And those who have chosen the portion of injustice, and tyranny, and violence, will pass into wolves, or into hawks and kites.

If the Greeks worshipped Apollo, god of reason, they were devoted also to Dionysus, the wine-drunk god of instinct and mysticism. The cult of the Eleusinian Mysteries paid homage to Dionysus, and it is believed the Mysteries included a theory of reincarnation. The possibility that the cult utilized some sort of psychedelic host would appear to gain considerable support from a Plutarch fragment, quoted by Edith Hamilton, which is thought to describe the Eleusinian initiation rites: "When a man dies he is like those who are initiated into the Mysteries.

Our whole life is a journey by tortuous ways without outlet. At the moment of quitting it come terrors, shuddering fear, amazement. Then a light that moves to meet you, pure meadows that receive you, songs and dances and holy apparitions."

As we shall see later, this passage suggests a remarkable parallel between the Mysteries and the contemporary drug movement's esoteric interpretation of the Tibetan Book of the Dead.

Reincarnation also was entertained as a doctrine by some of those Gnostic sects that flourished during the first three centuries of Christianity. The sects were Platonist in that they took a very negative view of existence in the world of appearances, and they taught that release could be obtained through a secret gnosis or knowledge of the divine order. They also assumed Plato's concept of the Demiurge—an imperfect creator god who made the earth, as opposed to the supreme and perfect god who exists as pure Being. They made of the Demiurge an evil, fallen deity who was responsible for the creation of matter and hence for the curse of phenomenal existence, for the fall from pure

Being, for the Net of Illusion. The sects were a curious hodgepodge of Christian dogma, magic, and Eastern metaphysics.

Christianity had to absorb Gnosticism, just as it had to absorb Neo-Platonism, and the early church was plagued in addition by a whole spectrum of Asian-flavored heresies: for example, the Albigenses, the Bogomiles, the Paulicians. These sects adulterated their Christianity with strong doses of Eastern idealism, including the concept of the Demiurge and a hatred of matter. Similarly, Judaism had come under the dualistic influence of Zoroastrianism during the Babylonian Captivity. The precise extent of the East's impact upon the development of Judaism and Christianity is impossible to measure at this point in history; indeed, there is an equally frustrated body of scholarship which has attempted to demonstrate a Western impact upon Eastern religions during some period in the misty past. But there clearly was some East-to-West metaphysical commerce, and this has led to some rather airy speculation that the Bible contains an esoteric teaching along Eastern lines.

Much is made of the fact that Jesus spoke in parables, and it is suggested that these perhaps were Oriental abstractions presented in parabolic style for the benefit of his unsophisticated flock. The people were not ready for meat, so he fed them milk. "And with many such parables spoke he the word unto them [the multitudes], as they were able to hear it. But without a parable spoke he not to them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples."

Hidden meaning is thus read into many preachments. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." (The senses are trapped in the Net of Illusion.) "Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there? for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." (You are God.) "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (We are a monistic One.) "Love thy neighbor as thyself." (You and your neighbor are the same person.) "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?" (We are all the same person.) "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself... For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." (You must obliterate the ego to recognize your true Self.) "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." (God is immanent in matter.) "A good man out of the treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things." (Karma.) And so on. Small wonder, then, that no man dared ask Jesus any question after he declared, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." And the "I AM THAT I AM" of the Old Testament is obviously a Zen statement of pure experience. If nothing else, such conjecture indicates that truly great thoughts are like the commerce clause of the U.S. Constitution: they can be interpreted to meet any need in any period.

The thread of pantheism can be picked up again in the monopsychism of Averroes, the Great Commentator who was largely responsible for reintroducing Aristotle to the Western world. His theories fell short of pure pantheism, perhaps, for they included a remote First Cause; but they were both Eastern and heretical in their monistic denial of

personal immortality, and they had gained considerable popularity in thirteenth-century Europe before Saint Thomas managed to reclaim Aristotle for the faith. Pantheistic tendencies appeared in the medieval Jewish mysticism of the Cabala, and the latter movement did much to shape the thought of Spinoza in the seventeenth century.

The philosophy of the Jewish Dutchman was wholly pantheistic, equating God with creative Nature and creative Nature with God. Spinoza also denied the possibility of personal immortality. He did, however, speak of the immortality of the mind in language which might well set psychedelic bells to ringing: "Nevertheless we feel and know by experience that we are eternal.... Although, therefore, we do not recollect that we existed before the body, we feel that our mind, in so far as it involves the essence of the body under the form of eternity, is eternal, and that this existence of the mind cannot be limited by time nor manifested through duration." (A hundred micrograms of LSD will make that statement perfectly intelligible.)

For his intellectual pains, Spinoza was excommunicated by his temple in Amsterdam. But he had considerable influence on later philosophers, including Hegel. Hegel's system of absolute idealism proposed that the universe consists of a single absolute Mind or Spirit which is attempting to realize and comprehend its own nature through an evolutionary process. Hegel in turn influenced such disparate thinkers as Karl Marx, Teilhard de Chardin, and Thomas J. J. Altizer.

Some of the more fragile nuances of Eastern philosophy perhaps are best caught in poetry—and the poetry of the West abounds in Oriental themes or hints of them. We could quote countless examples but will limit ourselves to only a few, offering them in the hope they may serve to sharpen some of these ideas, and to show that the ideas as such have a definite place in Western literature as well as philosophy.

Shakespeare, to begin with, certainly lends himself to an esoteric interpretation.

The Delphic injunction, Know Thyself, is echoed in Polonius' fatherly advice to Laertes: "This above all: to thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man." That might easily be taken to reflect the Hindu idea that men abuse one another only through ignorance of their monistic continuity, and that knowledge of the true Self therefore will automatically result in a perfect morality. And Hamlet himself sums up that delusion of the rational intellect which gives rise to the dualistic concept of evil: "There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so." Shakespeare plainly is a commerce-clause bard par excellence, and nobody has described the Net of Illusion so well as his Prospero:

Our revels now are ended. These our actors, As I foretold you, were all spirits and Are melted into air, into thin air; And, like the baseless fabric of this vision, The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces, The solemn temples, the great globe itself, Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve, And, like this insubstantial pageant faded, Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff As dreams are made on, and our little life Is rounded with

a sleep.

We must of course include John Donne: "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friends or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

Blake's poetry can be taken as a whole. It rejects the rational intellect and its dualistic perceptions, and indeed it gives the Eden story an interpretation quite similar to that suggested in an earlier chapter:

Serpent Reasonings us entice Of Good & Evil, Virtue & Vice.... Two Horn'd Reasoning, Cloven Fiction, In Doubt, which is Self contradiction, A dark Hermaphrodite We stood, Rational Truth, Root of Evil & Good.

Blake had his own term for the Net of Illusion: "the mind-forg'd manacles." He rejected the intellect, the phenomenal world, the God of Theism. He rejected everything but man's eternal spirit, and he looked back with longing to the Universal Brotherhood of Eden, to the Universal Man, to the "Immortal Man that cannot Die." Blake in fact was a Gnostic, and his Prophetic Books revive the concept of the Demiurge. His Urizen ("your reason"?) is that sinister deity who was responsible for the fall from pure Being and the world of appearances.

Earth was not: nor globes of attraction; The will of the Immortal expanded Or contracted his all flexible senses; Death was not, but eternal life sprung.

Then came Urizen with his ten thousands of thunders, and a shadow of horror was risen in Eternity.

The Eternal mind, bounded, began to roll Eddies of wrath ceaseless round & round, And the sulphureous foam, surgeing thick, Settled, a lake, bright & shining clear, White as the snow on the mountains cold. Forgetfulness, dumbness, necessity, In chains of the mind locked up, Like fetters of ice shrinking together, Disorganiz'd, rent from Eternity .

..

That eternal life, the furnace of all creation, was the subject of Blake's best-known poem, which Alfred Kazin has aptly termed "a hymn to pure being." Pure Being, from which sprang the Tyger.

In what distant deeps or skies Burnt the fire of thine eyes? On what wings dare he aspire? What the hand dare seize the fire?

After Blake, as might be expected, the Romantic poets come to mind—and one of the best examples would naturally be Shelley, who abandoned rationalism and atheism

to become a full-blown Platonic idealist. As for the Passing Parade of Phenomena, compare that fragile speech of Prospero's and Shelley's stark:

"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings: Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!" Nothing beside remains. Round the decay Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare The lone and level sands stretch far away.

Just as our contemporary mystics are dismissed upon the grounds of biochemical imbalance, so too has the Romantic movement been supplied now with a medical interpretation. The poets did not know it, but the source of their inspiration was a bacillus, the mood of that period resulting from the prevalence of tuberculosis. Keats was a victim of the disease, although Shelley insisted the critics had done his friend in, and Shelley's Platonic philosophy finds full expression in his elegy to the dead poet:

The One remains, the many change and pass; Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly; Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass, Stains the white radiance of Eternity, Until Death tramples it to fragments.—Die, If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek! Follow where all is fled!—Rome's azure sky, Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are weak The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

Then to Wordsworth, poet of the mescal drinkers. His ode, "Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood," includes the provocative stanza:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting: The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star, Hath had elsewhere its setting, And cometh from afar: Not in entire forgetfulness, And not in utter nakedness, But trailing clouds of glory do we come From God, who is our home: Heaven lies about us in our infancy! Shades of the prison-house begin to close Upon the growing Boy, But He beholds the light, and whence it flows, He sees it in his joy; The Youth, who daily farther from the east Must travel, still is Nature's Priest, And by the vision splendid Is on his way attended; At length the Man perceives it die away, And fade into the light of common day.

The poem as a whole might appear to support the doctrine of pre-existence or reincarnation—an implication which Wordsworth later admitted "has given pain to some good and pious persons." He protested he had not intended "to inculcate such a belief." The poem was concerned with "that dream-like vividness and splendour which invest objects of sight in childhood," and Wordsworth had cast about in his mind for some device to express that vision, deciding finally to picture it as "presumptive evidence of a prior state of existence." He explained further: "I took hold of the notion of pre-existence as having sufficient foundation in humanity for authorizing me to make for my purpose the best use of it I could as a poet."

The argument about this stanza, and about Wordsworth's intentions, is extremely significant. It offers us a key. And that key fits many locks.

It may give us access to the real issues and deeper meanings that are still half-hidden below the surface of Eastern philosophy, the drug movement, and radical theology. Professor Arthur Beatty, a Wordsworth authority, suggested that the poet really meant to say: "It is as if our birth were but a sleep and a forgetting." And that is the key.

Consider, for example, a comment that Coleridge made about the poem:

But the ode was intended for such readers only as had been accustomed to watch the flux and reflux of their inmost nature, to venture at times into the twilight realms of consciousness, and to feel a deep interest in modes of inmost being, to which they know that the attributes of time and space are inapplicable and alien, but which yet can not be conveyed save in symbols of time and space. For such readers the sense is sufficiently plain, and they will be as little disposed to charge Mr. Wordsworth with believing the Platonic pre-existence in the ordinary interpretation of the words, as I am to believe that Plato himself ever meant or taught it.

The italics are ours. And the point is simply this: that poets are poets, and they express themselves in the language of poetry—saying "is" when they mean "as if." Prophets are poets as well, and so are the great philosophers. And all poets, of whatever kind, have found it necessary at times to express their ideas in terms of symbol; the tools of their trade are the simile, the metaphor, the poetic image, the myth. The Greeks indeed may have held themselves aloof from the formal figures of speech, but they could and did make ample use of myth. So, too, perhaps did Jesus, Buddha, and those faceless authors of the Hindu holy books and the Old Testament. They were poets all. And we can only guess how often their "is" really means "as if."

One is tempted to ask, of course, why they couldn't just come out with it—say what they meant and so have done with it—and the question is fair enough. In some cases, however, the people in fact may not have been ready for meat. In some cases it may be that the poet himself only half-knew what he meant—knew what he felt, all right, but could not quite put his finger upon it. In some cases he may have said what he meant and meant what he said, failing himself to apprehend the deeper meaning. And finally: he knew what he felt, and he knew what it meant; but what he felt and what he knew could not be expressed in conventional language.

Such language simply did not apply in those twilight realms of consciousness where the poet explored the modes of inmost Being.

This is not as fuzzy as it may sound. Many of the discoveries of modern physics cannot be expressed in conventional language either; the physicists have been forced to leave language behind altogether, resorting instead to a complex mathematical symbolism—a form of myth, if you will—which cannot be retranslated into words.

Many popular books have been written for the general public on the theory of relativity, for example; the fact remains that you cannot really understand the theory

unless you have the math. Or so at least the mathematicians tell us, and we are prepared to take their word for it, while we are by no means ready to take the mystics at their word for anything. But the relativity theory is no less valid because it is expressed symbolically, for in fact everything is expressed that way.

Expression as such is by definition symbolic: only the thing-in-itself is something more than a symbol of itself. Language and math, therefore, are equally symbolic; they are simply different kinds of symbolism. In any case, it follows that Plato did not necessarily mean that people really return to life as wolves, hawks, and kites; Blake did not necessarily mean that there really exists a deity comparable to Urizen; and “is” does not necessarily mean “is” every time it occurs in the various Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, and Jewish scriptures. It may in many cases mean “as if,” and, when so interpreted, these various scriptures perhaps are closer in meaning than they appear.

Using the key provided us, a case could be made that contemporary developments in theology and psychedelic experience can be explained essentially in terms of two basic myths and the conflict between them: the myth of the Demiurge and the myth of Ulysses.

Let us leave no doubt as to our own meaning. As we interpret it, the Demiurge is a symbol of the rational mind—of the cerebral cortex, which separates man from the beasts and (it may be) from much else besides. As for the Ulysses myth, we take it to suggest the presence of an evolutionary purpose in the cosmos: that is to say, an inherent state of Being as yet unrealized.

We shall return to these concepts later. Meanwhile, turning from Wordsworth, we skip ahead a few decades and look across the ocean from Europe to America.

YANKEE HINDOOS

The Orient’s first substantial impact upon America occurred in a rather indirect manner, in 1492. Or the actual date might be placed two centuries earlier: it could well be argued that America owes its discovery to the Great Khan Kublai, lord of the Tartars, for the hospitality he showed Marco Polo in the thirteenth century. Columbus of course discovered the new continent while searching for the fabulous Cathay about which Marco Polo had written—and there is some irony in the fact that Polo’s book contains one of the earliest accounts of the psychedelic experience.

Passing through Persia, the Venetian merchant learned the history of the Old Man of the Mountain, who lived in a castle which concealed a magnificent hidden valley. The Old Man invited youths to the castle, drugged them with hashish, and had them carried into the Valley of Delights, where they were wined and dined and entertained by dainty damsels. After four or five days the youths were carried back into the castle and told they had been in the Moslem Paradise.

The Old Man could send them there any time he wanted, he said, if they would carry out his wishes—which usually meant killing somebody. This band of happy cut-throats became known as “hashshashins,” from which we have derived the word assassin.

The barbarian invasions and the fall of Rome had cut the old Silk Road into Hither Asia, and later the Crusades served to divert Europe’s attention still further from the Orient. There had been virtually no contact whatever between East and West when Marco Polo arrived in Tartary with his father and uncle, and indeed the Polos were the first Westerners Kublai Khan had ever seen. The promise of a restored relationship was shattered when the Chinese overthrew the Tartars and slammed the door on foreigners; then the Turks spread across Central Asia, effectively padlocking the door—and just incidentally forcing Columbus to seek a sea route to Cathay. The English penetrated India by the late seventeenth century, following the Portuguese; but China kept all foreign devils out until the middle of the last century, and Japan was a terra incognita until Admiral Matthew Perry sailed into Tokyo Bay in 1853.

It is understandable, then, that America was a long time making its own discovery of the East. The young country’s first real introduction to Asian philosophy was provided by the New England Transcendentalists, whose writings were often a bewildering blend of Unitarianism and Orientalism, of Yankee self-reliance and Hindu self-abnegation. The influence of Romantic idealism and German philosophy also was evident. Thus readers of *The Dial* in 1841 found themselves asking, with Frederic Henry Hedge:

Hath this world, without me wrought, Other substance than my thought? Lives it by my sense alone, Or by essence of its own?

Margaret Fuller wrote of Man as a whole: “As this whole has one soul and one body, any injury or obstruction to a part, or to the meanest member, affects the whole. Man can never be perfectly happy or virtuous till all men are so.”

Thoreau wrote of his inspiration:

I hear beyond the range of sound,

I see beyond the range of sight,

New earths and skies and seas around,

And in my day the sun doth pale his light....

It speaks with such authority,

With so serene and lofty tone,

That idle Time runs gadding by,
And leaves me with Eternity alone....
Such fragrance round my couch it makes,
More rich than are Arabian drugs,
That my soul scents its life and wakes
The body up beneath its perfumed rugs.

As the last stanza suggests, Thoreau undoubtedly would have no part of LSD were he alive today. In *Walden* he observed, "I prefer the natural sky to an opium-eater's heaven." The point is, however, that Thoreau could turn himself on, needing only that natural sky for a psychedelic, and he was wholly preoccupied with the modes of inmost being. There was no object in going around the world to count the cats in Zanzibar, he said. "Be rather the Mungo Park, the Lewis and Clark and Frobisher, of your own streams and oceans.... Nay, be a Columbus to whole new continents and worlds within you, opening new channels, not of trade, but of thought. Every man is the lord of a realm beside which the earthly empire of the Czar is but a petty state, a hummock left by the ice.... it is easier to sail many thousand miles through cold and storm and cannibals, in a government ship, with five hundred men and boys to assist one, than it is to explore the private sea, the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean of one's being alone."

As for the dualism of good and evil: "I love to see that Nature is so rife with life that myriads can be afforded to be sacrificed and suffered to prey on one another.... The impression made on a wise man is that of universal innocence. Poison is not poisonous after all, nor are any wounds fatal." As for the verbal mind: "I know not the first letter of the alphabet. I have always been regretting that I was not as wise as the day I was born." As for the rational sense of time: "Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in. I drink at it; but while I drink I see the sandy bottom and detect how shallow it is. Its thin current slides away, but eternity remains. I would drink deeper; fish in the sky, whose bottom is pebbly with stars." And as for the comforts of formal religion: "I believe that men are generally still a little afraid of the dark, though the witches are all hung, and Christianity and candles have been introduced."

One passage in *Walden* strikes a particularly responsive chord for psychedelic cultists. Indeed, William James singled out the same passage as exemplifying those moments we all have "when the universal life seems to wrap us round with friendliness" and those hours "when the goodness and beauty of existence enfold us like a dry warm climate, or chime through us as if our inner ears were subtly ringing with the world's security."

The oft-quoted passage: I have never felt lonesome, or in the least oppressed by

a sense of solitude, but once, and that was a few weeks after I came to the woods, when, for an hour, I doubted if the near neighborhood of man was not essential to a serene and happy life. To be alone was something unpleasant. But I was at the same time conscious of a light insanity in my mood, and seemed to foresee my recovery. In the midst of a gentle rain while these thoughts prevailed, I was suddenly sensible of such sweet and beneficent society in Nature, in the very pattering of the drops, and in every sound and sight around my house, an infinite and unaccountable friendliness all at once like an atmosphere sustaining me, as made the fancied advantages of human neighborhood insignificant, and I have never thought of them since. Every little pine needle expanded and swelled with sympathy and befriended me. I was distinctly made aware of the presence of something kindred to me, even in scenes which we are accustomed to call wild and dreary, and also that the nearest of blood to me and humanest was not a person nor a villager, that I thought no place could ever be strange to me again.... "How vast and profound is the influence of the subtle powers of Heaven and of Earth! We seek to perceive them, and we do not see them; we seek to hear them, and we do not hear them; identified with the substance of things, they cannot be separated from them." . . . I only know myself as a human entity; the scene, so to speak, of thoughts and affections; and am sensible of a certain doubleness by which I can stand as remote from myself as from another. However intense my experience, I am conscious of the presence and criticism of a part of me, which, as it were, is not a part of me, but spectator, sharing no experience, but taking note of it, and that is no more I than it is you. When the play, it may be the tragedy, of life is over, the spectator goes his way. It was a kind of fiction, a work of the imagination only, so far as he was concerned.

One wonders whether Huxley's antagonist R. C. Zaehner would dismiss that as natural mysticism or as monistic mysticism, or possibly as both. Theistic it is not.

Emerson probably did more than anybody else in his time to translate Eastern ideas, as he understood them, into the American idiom. He informed his readers about a school of thought, across the sea, which held that "what we call Nature, the external world, has no real existence—is only phenomenal. Youth, age, property, conditions, events, persons—self, even—are successive maias (deceptions) through which Vishnu mocks and instructs the soul." He added his opinion: "I think Hindoo books the best gymnastics for the mind, as showing treatment. All European libraries might almost be read without the swing of this gigantic arm being suspected. But these Orientals deal with worlds and pebbles freely." Emerson's poetry is freighted with Eastern imagery, and his "Brahma," for example, is almost a literal rendering of a passage from the Katha Upanishad:

If the red slayer think he slays,

Or if the slain think he is slain,

They know not well the subtle ways

I keep, and pass, and turn again.

For Yankee monists, Transcendentalism had this to offer: I am the owner of the sphere, Of the seven stars and the solar year, Of Caesar's hand and Plato's brain, Of Lord Christ's heart and Shakespeare's strain.

As with Blake, Walt Whitman's poetry as a whole seems to reflect the viewpoint of Eastern mysticism. In his later years Whitman gives the impression of somehow being in a permanent state of satori, and James indeed suggested that Whitman probably had "a chronic mystical perception." Rather tempting bait for speculation is offered by the fact that Whitman for so many years was little more than a journalistic hack. What was the source, then, of the inspiration which gave us *Leaves of Grass*? Following Wasson, it might be asserted that the Good Gray Poet at some period in his life was introduced to hashish or peyote or some other psychedelic, perhaps on that trip he made to New Orleans. The idea is farfetched, and we shall not pursue it; the fact remains that, spontaneously or otherwise, Whitman suddenly began to write poetry which echoes and re-echoes with Oriental and psychedelic intuitions:

I celebrate myself, and sing myself, And what I assume you shall assume, For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.

Maybe it wasn't hashish; maybe it was Hegel. According to an 1882 entry in *Specimen Days*, the most profound theme to occupy the mind of man is the relation between the Me and the Not Me of the universe. And while Kant and Schelling perhaps had supplied us with partial answers, "G. F. Hegel's fuller statement of the matter probably remains the last best word that has been said upon it . . . illuminating the thought of the universe, and satisfying the mystery thereof to the human mind, with a more consoling scientific assurance than any yet." Long before that entry was made, however, Whitman had written in his journal of 1847: "I cannot understand the mystery, but I am always conscious of myself as two—as my soul and I." He was not contained between his hat and boots, he later wrote. There also was "the unseen soul of me." There also was the square deific, the One. There also was:

Santa Spirita, breather, life, Beyond the light, lighter than light . . . Ethereal, pervading all, (for without me what were all? what were God?) Essence of forms, life of the real identities, permanent, positive, (namely the unseen.) Life of the great round world, the sun and stars, and of man, I, the general soul . . .

And just in case anybody should have missed his meaning:

What do you suppose creation is? What do you suppose will satisfy the soul, except to walk free and own no superior? What do you suppose I would intimate to you in a hundred ways, but that man or woman is as good as God? And that there is no God any more divine than Yourself? And that that is what the oldest and newest myths finally mean?

For the general soul, read Brahman or pure Being; for Yourself, read Atman. Clearly, if Wordsworth speaks for the mescal drinkers, Whitman deserves consideration

as the poet laureate of LSD. He also hinted at an esoteric doctrine of reincarnation, especially in "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry," and, like Thoreau and the three monkeys, he heard, saw, and spoke no evil. As we shall see, the innocent denial of evil in the universe is the basis for one of the principal charges that would later be lodged against Whitman, just as it is lodged now against the psychedelic drug movement.

America was given another injection of Eastern metaphysics in 1875, when the Theosophical Society was founded in New York City by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and Henry Steele Olcott. Madame Blavatsky, a Russian, said that she had studied under an Eastern master in Tibet, and the Theosophists were effective in promoting many Hindu and Buddhist concepts including reincarnation, the monistic brotherhood of man, and the direct, mystical knowledge of a Universal Self.

At the turn of the century, James's classic study of religious experience had a profound and lasting influence on theology and psychology; it opened the eyes of scholars and laymen to whole new realms of consciousness, probing deeply into the mystical awareness of East and West alike. On a lesser scale, R. M. Bucke helped to lay the groundwork for future developments by popularizing the concept of "cosmic consciousness." Bucke, a Canadian psychiatrist and a contemporary of James, wrote in 1901:

The prime characteristic of cosmic consciousness is a consciousness of the cosmos, that is, of the life and order of the universe. Along with the consciousness of the cosmos there occurs an intellectual enlightenment which alone would place the individual on a new plane of existence— would make him almost a member of a new species. To this is added a state of moral exaltation, an indescribable feeling of elevation, elation, and joyousness, and a quickening of the moral sense, which is fully as striking, and more important than is the enhanced intellectual power. With these come what may be called a sense of immortality, a consciousness of eternal life, not a conviction that he shall have this, but the consciousness that he has it already.

Bucke might easily have been describing the deep-seated conviction of a psychedelic cultist—and in fact some of the cultists have begun now to speak of themselves as a new species: as the forerunners of an emerging race of psychic mutants who will transcend the world to attain the nirvana of pure Being. Even at the time Bucke wrote, experimentation was beginning with various psychedelic agents then available. As mentioned, James himself was exploring the implications of nitrous oxide intoxication. Have-lock Ellis had been dabbling with mescaline.

And during the latter part of the nineteenth century, American Indian tribes had begun to use peyote as a sacrament in their religious ceremonies, leading finally to the establishment of the psychedelic Native American Church, which now has an estimated quarter-million members.

The new century saw a proliferation of cults, sects, and societies whose teachings often were a combination of mumbo jumbo and Eastern philosophy (for example, the I

AM movement). Some of the issues at stake were translated to the secular and political level; the conflict between monism and pluralism reappeared in the antagonism between democratic individualism and the anthill conformity of fascism and communism: even the Rotary Club orator fulminating against creeping socialism and the Washington octopus was in a very real sense addressing himself to one of the most basic problems of metaphysics and East-West theology: the Many versus the One.

As far as the laying of a groundwork is concerned, significance must also be attached to the new respectability which parapsychology gained as a result of the studies inaugurated at Duke University in 1930 by J. B. Rhine. The painstaking research devoted to such phenomena as extrasensory perception and psychokinesis would lend its scientific aura to the astonishing statements which would later be made by the prophets of the drug movement, making those statements sound not quite so astonishing to an empirically minded generation. Indeed, it is possible that the Duke research has a direct bearing on the validity of psychedelic experience. As the ultra-cautious Rhine explained in 1947:

The research in parapsychology even now touches other great issues of religion. If the mind of man is nonphysical, it is possible to formulate a hypothetical picture of a nonphysical system or world made up of all such minds existing in some sort of relationship to each other. This leads to speculative views of a kind of psychical oversoul, or reservoir, or continuum, or universe, having its own system of laws and properties and potentialities. One can conceive of this great total pattern as having a transcendent uniqueness over and above the nature of its parts that some might call its divinity.

Eastern themes were everywhere. Even the schoolgirl was not immune as she turned the treasured pages of Kahlil Gibran's *The Prophet*. "Fare you well, people of Orphalese," said that chosen and beloved one, Almustafa. "A little while, and my longing shall gather dust and foam for another body. A little while, a moment of rest upon the wind, and another woman shall bear me."

The floodgates were opened by the outcome of the Second World War, of course, and one does well to remember that Zen was "camp" long before LSD. Buddhist study groups sprang up. American pupils and housewives could be found writing haiku poetry in grade-school classrooms and on the backs of grocery shopping lists. Bookstore racks gave prominent display to paperback editions of the Upanishads, the Bhagavad-Gita, the Tao Te Ching.

These developments perhaps were inevitable; nevertheless, it seems fair to say that the Eastern influx could not have attained its present magnitude had it not been for the conscious and dedicated efforts of five men: Carl Jung, Daisetz T. Suzuki, Alan W. Watts, W. Y. Evans-Wentz, and Aldous Huxley. Jung's concept of the collective unconscious has Oriental connotations, and Jung in addition had an abiding interest in Eastern metaphysics: he lent the authority of his name to works on Zen and related subjects, writing forewords and commentaries which expressed his enthusiasm, and he once af-

firmed that the Tibetan Book of the Dead had been a “constant companion” to which he owed “not only many stimulating ideas and discoveries, but also many fundamental insights.” Suzuki, a Japanese scholar who died only recently in Tokyo, wrote literally scores of books in which he sought to interpret Zen for Western readers, and he also lectured widely in American universities. Watts complemented Suzuki by examining Zen through Western eyes; a gifted interpreter and popularizer of complex ideas, he has made Eastern wisdom comprehensible to a vast audience through books, lectures, and television classes. Evans-Wentz introduced the West to the Tibetan Book of the Dead, a remarkable book which deserves our attention if only for the fact that it has since been adopted as the bible of the drug movement.

“It is a book which is sealed with the seven seals of silence,” we are told in a foreword by Lama Anagarika Govinda. “But the time has come to break the seals of silence . . .” And why? Because “the human race has come to the juncture where it must decide whether to be content with the subjugation of the material world, or to strive after the conquest of the spiritual world.” The origins of the book go back at least a thousand years. In the original Tibetan the work is known as the Bardo Thödol, which means “Liberation by Hearing on the After-Death Plane,” and the exoteric purpose of the book was emancipation from the reincarnational wheel of death and rebirth.

The book was read over the bodies of the recently deceased by those Sages of the Snowy Ranges, the Buddhist lamas of Tibet, and the idea was to talk a dead person out of seeking reincarnation in a new body. A dead man was believed to wander in the Bardo or After-Death Plane for forty-nine days (a symbolic number based on seven times seven), and during this period—in fact at the moment of death—he would encounter the Clear Light of the Void. If he had the understanding which comes with good karma, he would surrender his sense of individuality and would merge with that Void, thus ending the matter then and there. But the Void is terrible to behold if you lack understanding, and many reincarnations are normally required before one earns one’s karmic passport to nirvana. And so it was that most dead men would turn in terror from the Clear Light.

They would wander in the Bardo, their senses assaulted by visions both frightful and beatific—by the Wrathful Deities and the Peaceful Deities—and finally they would enter the womb to be born again. In hopes of preventing this, the lamas would therefore read aloud from the sacred book, a sort of Fielding’s guide to the Bardo region, and the dead men would thus receive detailed instructions for every stage of their journey. They would be told that their fear of the Clear Light resulted from their false sense of self, whose existence the Clear Light quite correctly appeared to threaten. They would be told that the visions they saw, apart from the Void, were nothing more than sangsara—projections of their own minds, which were still caught in the Net of Illusion. And finally they would be told that the womb was simply a doorway back to the world of appearances.

That was the exoteric teaching; but when Evans-Wentz first presented the book to the West, in 1927, the suggestion was made that it included or concealed an esoteric

interpretation. Jung, for example, contributed a psychological commentary in which he asserted that “it is an undeniable fact that the whole book is created out of the archetypal contents of the unconscious.” More to the point, Lama Govinda stated in his foreword that the book “was originally conceived to serve as a guide not only for the dying and the dead, but for the living as well.”

And that in any case is what it has since become, whatever the original intention might have been. More than a quarter-century after its initial publication, the Evans-Wentz edition came to prominence again in 1954, when Huxley made much of it in his very influential book, *The Doors of Perception*. In that book Huxley wrote of his first experience with mescaline, which he took in his home in California in the spring of 1953. Huxley reported that at one point he felt himself on the verge of panic, terrified by the prospect of ego disintegration, and he compared his dread with that of the Tibetan dead man who could not face the Clear Light, preferring rebirth and “the comforting darkness of selfhood.”

Thus the Tibetan Book of the Dead was inexorably linked to the psychedelic experience, and ten years later, in 1964, there appeared a volume titled *The Psychedelic Experience: A Manual Based on the Tibetan Book of the Dead*. The authors were LSD enthusiasts Timothy Leary, Ralph Metzner, and Richard Alpert, and they boldly offered their own interpretation of the ancient book: it had to do not with the death and rebirth of the body but rather with the death and rebirth of the ego in mystical states of mind. It was indeed a book for the living. More than that, it provided, in symbolic imagery, a precise account of the psychedelic experience.

Absorption in the Clear Light is nothing more than a good trip, in which the psychedelic subject feels himself united again with the Ground of his Being. It is the apprehension of pure Being, beyond the sangsaric deceptions of language and rational perception. And those Peaceful and Wrathful Deities represent the hallucinatory period which occurs when one fails to achieve the central experience. A bad trip results inevitably when the subject refuses to face the Clear Light—violently resists the disintegration of his ego—and rather than seek rebirth in another body, he pleads for a shot of Thorazine which will return him to his own body in the phenomenal world of ego and rational symbolism.

Huxley’s book has a certain historical significance; what we refer to today as the drug movement may be said to date from that book, although, as we have attempted to show, a substantial base for the movement had been in preparation long before 1954. In any case, the drug movement appeared to dovetail very neatly with what might be called the Eastern movement, and it might well be asked if this occurred naturally or under duress; that is, did the two really fit together, or were they made to fit? The latter possibility has been suggested by R. E. L. Masters and Jean Houston, who cite as evidence the phenomenon they refer to as “galloping agape.”

They assert that the supposed capacity of the psychedelics to promote feelings of

brotherly love was rarely detected during early research in the 1950's: it became manifest only with the appearance of love-oriented drug literature. By the same token, Huxley and other drug enthusiasts are accused of leading their readers down the lotus path. Masters and Houston criticize the emergence of a "quasi-Eastern mystique," of a "wholesale leap to the East" and a "nebulous chaos seen as Eastern 'truth.'" "These developments are all the more regrettable since the psychedelic drugs "may genuinely give some inkling of the complexity of Eastern consciousness."

Masters and Houston conclude: "To at least some extent the responsibility for this seduction of the innocent must lie with such authors as Huxley, Alan Watts, and others who in their various writings imposed upon the psychedelic experience essentially Eastern ideas and terminology which a great many persons then assumed to be the sole and accurate way of approaching and interpreting such experience."

The charge is serious, if it holds up in court. Does it?

THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN

Baudelaire complained in his time that ignorant persons thought of the hashish dream as a kind of magic theater where all sorts of miraculous things occur: wonders and marvels, all unexpected. But in fact, said the poet, hashish has no miracles to offer; all it does is exaggerate the natural, raising the same number to a higher power, and the hashish dream therefore will always be "the son of its father," reflecting the thoughts and impressions of the dreamer. Hashish is a mirror—"a magnifying mirror, it is true, but only a mirror"—and a man will see revealed in it "nothing except himself."

Evans-Wentz suggested that a wanderer on the Bardo plane would see the gods of his own pantheon: a Christian would see the Christian Heaven, a Moslem would see the Moslem Paradise, an American Indian would see the Happy Hunting Ground, and a materialist would experience after-death visions "as negative and as empty and as deityless as any he ever dreamt while in the human body." The Tibetans taught, said Evans-Wentz, that the after-death state is indeed very much like the ordinary dream state, and whatever visions a man might see on the Bardo are "due entirely to his own mental-content."

There is no question that a subject under psychedelic influence is extremely vulnerable to suggestion, including autosuggestion, and this might support the contention that the drug movement's Eastern orientation has been imposed upon it by an Eastern drug literature. One might also consider the fact that the drug experience historically has had Oriental connotations, for what could be a very prosaic reason. The hashish and opium of the nineteenth century came from the Orient, and the Eastern imagery which so haunted the European drug fiend might easily be explained as mental association. Even today the mere word "drug" may often serve to summon up visions of Fu Manchu and other sinister-looking Celestials.

The power-of-suggestion argument should not and cannot be lightly dismissed.

What can be dismissed, however, is the contention that the psychedelic mystique is “quasi-Eastern” or “nebulous.” Of course it is nebulous, as we suggested earlier, but that is neither here nor there; it is no more nebulous than any other metaphysical assertion which cannot be submitted to empirical demonstration. And it is not quasi-Eastern. It is Eastern.

If the problem was only one of imagery, suggestibility would no doubt be sufficient to account for it. There is no objective reason why LSD should evoke an image of a Chinese pagoda rather than a Western church, or Ishwara rather than Jehovah. As Evans-Wentz indicated, even the Eastern literature acknowledges the subjective factor as far as visual content is concerned—and it can afford to do so precisely because it regards the Bardo visions as delusional: the phenomenal gods and paradises and hells do not really exist except in the mind of the dreamer, and that is just the point the Eastern philosopher is trying to make. It is only the Clear Light which matters and is real.

Similarly, no particular importance is attached to the hallucinatory period in psychedelic sessions; all that matters is the central experience, which corresponds with the apprehension of the Clear Light. Nor is the terminology used of any significance. You can refer to the central experience as the Clear Light, or as God, or as anything you wish. The question which remains, then, is whether or not the central experience can be imposed by suggestion.

As for Baudelaire’s statement, a drug cultist could easily turn it around to suit his own purposes. The psychedelics do indeed offer us a mirror, and a very accurate one at that. When a man looks into it, he sees nothing except himself—and this is just as it should be. That is the whole idea, right there. There is nothing else to be revealed.

We should keep in mind that the Eastern movement did not grow out of the drug movement; if anything, it was the other way around. The Eastern movement was well established when Dr. Hofmann made his serendipitous discovery, and the factors behind that leap to the East had little or nothing to do with suggestion. The Eastern movement absorbed the drug movement, and it did so because the central experience seemed to lend itself very well to an Eastern interpretation. But why weren’t the Eastern implications obvious to begin with? Why did they have to be interpreted? Why didn’t psychedelic subjects know they were having Eastern experiences? Why did they have to be told?

A possible answer, of course, is that they did know—but did not know that they knew. They knew they were having some sort of an experience, but how were they to know it was an Eastern experience unless they had some knowledge of Eastern philosophy? If they did have the proper background, they might have recognized their experience as Eastern in nature—and certainly somebody must have done this at some point, or how else was the connection made in the first place? Huxley had a mescaline experience, and he decided it was Eastern; nobody had to tell him so: he told other people. But Huxley of course was Eastern-oriented; maybe it was autosuggestion. And so the circle

turns vicious.

Let us turn, then, to the people Huxley told, assuming they were not Eastern-oriented themselves, and let us ask why they believed him. They had an experience perhaps, and they did not know what to make of it; there was nothing they knew with which to compare it; they did not have the vocabulary to verbalize their intuitions or even to think them through; the concepts involved were new and startling, completely bewildering. Then Huxley and other Eastern enthusiasts provided a vocabulary and suggested various alternatives and possible conclusions which might be drawn from the experience. Somehow it seemed to fit, and people said, "Yes. That's it. That's exactly what it was."

An analogy might be a robbery victim who flips through the photographs in a police rogues' gallery and then declares, "There, that's the man." Such victims unfortunately have been notoriously poor witnesses, and even their certainty leaves a reasonable doubt that a reliable identification has been made. Still, could a full-scale movement be generated by suggestion alone, with nothing substantial to support the suggestion? Surely there is something in the drug experience which makes the Eastern interpretation at least appear tenable. Furthermore, supporting evidence is provided by related developments in radical theology, where a leap to the East also is occurring, and without benefit of LSD. Watts and Huxley cannot be blamed for that.

Nor can they be blamed for the results of those turn-of-the-century experiments with nitrous oxide. Significantly, James found that the anesthetic (psychedelic) revelation tended to suggest "a monistic insight, in which the other in its various forms appears absorbed into the One."

Even so, from either point of view, we still are left with a Scotch verdict: not proven. And there the matter might rest, were it not for a final factor which has to do with mysticism as such.

The fact is that Western church authorities have generally regarded spontaneous mysticism with a measure of distrust and sometimes with open hostility. There is first of all the obvious objection that the mystic in a sense eliminates the middleman: he deals directly with God and thereby undermines the church's assumed right to act as religious arbiter.

The second objection is less obvious but more important. It seems mysticism has shown a distressing tendency toward pantheism and monism, and the saintly mystic has often been a source of acute embarrassment to his church. We are talking now about Western mysticism. We are saying that Western mysticism has tended to be very much like Eastern mysticism; or, more accurately, all mysticism, Eastern and Western, has tended to be the same. James noted as a general trait of the mystic range of consciousness that it "is on the whole pantheistic and optimistic." He said further:

This overcoming of all the usual barriers between the individual and the Absolute is the great mystic achievement. In mystic states we become one with the Absolute and we become aware of our oneness. This is the everlasting and triumphant mystical tradition, hardly altered by differences of clime and creed. In Hinduism, in Neoplatonism, in Sufism, in Christian mysticism, in Whitmanism, we find the same recurring note, so that there is about mystical utterances an eternal unanimity which ought to make a critic stop and think . . .

Churchmen had stopped to think about it long before James made the suggestion, and they did not like what they were thinking. Mysticism too often had quite a lot to say about God's immanence and not very much to say about his transcendence; it had a lot to say about the divine encounter, but in many cases that seemed to imply a monistic absorption, not union through love.

Traditionally, the concern of the church has been in three areas: (1) the institutional, (2) the rational, and (3) the mystical. In the first, the church has sought to create a community of faithful with a heritage of common belief; in the second, it has sought to adduce logical proofs for the existence of God; in the third, it has sought to put church members in direct contact with the source of their faith. And every age has given these elements different emphasis.

Roman Catholicism has had its great mystic saints—Saint Theresa, Saint John of the Cross—but it also has had such thorns in the side as Master Eckhart, a Dominican, whose mystical utterances in fourteenth-century Germany sounded very much like pantheism. The rational Saint Thomas largely ignored mysticism, and Roman Catholicism took the position that God's existence could be proved intellectually. A severe reaction against mysticism occurred in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, led by the Jesuits and provoked in part by the excesses of the Quietists (Molinos, Madame Guyon, Fenelon).

Quietism was accused of perverting the contemplative aspect of mystical experience; it recommended total annihilation of the mind, of the self, of all desire, including even the desire for salvation; it blurred or erased altogether the distinction between evil and good, man and God; wholly passive, it eschewed all thoughts and acts of service or devotion; it sought divine inspiration in the "soft and savory sleep of nothingness"; in its extreme form it produced a state of "mystic death" which bordered on catatonia.

The practical and beloved Saint Theresa, reformer of the Carmelite Order, had combined the active and the contemplative life, as indeed had Jesus before her. By comparison, the Quietists appeared apathetic and amoral, if not immoral; they were charged with "idle basking in the divine presence," and their doctrines were condemned by Popes Innocent XI and Innocent XII.

Mysticism in all its manifestations came under suspicion, and Catholics were advised that the mystical experience was a gift from God, not to be sought after. While this

attitude was later softened, the Catholic reaction to Quietism quite likely has yet to run its course; nor can there be much doubt that the Vatican would tend to make a mental equation between the demand for a direct person-to-God relationship and the sort of thinking that resulted in the Reformation. Antagonism toward a mystical emphasis also was evident in Rome's dispute with the Catholic Modernists during the early years of the twentieth century. The Modernists could scarcely be accused of Quietism—they were in fact activists who believed in living their faith, and they strove for a liberal synthesis of the new science and orthodox belief.

But they also were at odds with their church's stress on the rational knowledge of God, and especially so with the revival of the Scholastic tradition which was implicit in the emergence of Neo-Thomism. Rejecting religious intellectualism, they called instead for a religion of the inner way: of the heart, not the mind. Pope Pius X described their synthesis as a "synthesis of all heresies." Their doctrines were condemned in 1907, and the Modernist movement was crushed by excommunication.

We have already mentioned the mysticism of the Jewish Cabala, and in the following chapter we shall discuss at some length the flowering of Hasidism in the philosophical thought of Martin Buber. Turning to Protestantism, we find, as might be expected, that the mystic at first met with a friendly reception: the desire for a personal intimacy with God was one of the root causes of the Christian schism. Luther himself was a mystic.

But even within Protestantism, restrictions were placed upon the complete freedom of intuitive experience—which led in turn to such developments as creedless Quakerism and the Quaker-meeting concept of personal communion with the indwelling Christ: the Inner Light. In the present century, Protestant mysticism came under fire from the heavy guns of Karl Barth and Emil Brunner.

The barrage was devastating (or seemed to be), and, outside the revivalist's tent, spontaneous inner experience gave way to a general emphasis upon creeds and community of worship. Maybe it was not so much Barth as it was the overall decline in religious conviction—and therefore also in religious awe. Maybe it was just an end-product of secularization. But in any case it occurred. Or such at least was the opinion of Carl Jung and others who warned that the churches to their peril were ignoring their fundamental mission and their basic source of strength.

As the church critics saw it, that fundamental mission was to put men in personal touch with their God—to encourage, in other words, the divine-human encounter. And that basic source of strength was the mystical perception of the nonrational mind.

Such an argument makes mystical perception the primary source of religious faith. To follow the argument, however, it is necessary first to define faith. A skeptic has defined faith as believing in something you know is not true. And many devout persons might actually agree with that. As Kierkegaard expressed the same idea, faith would not be faith if there were any rational basis for it. Faith and reason are mutually exclusive,

the one beginning where the other ends, and a faith based on reason would be a contradiction in terms; it would in fact be reason, not faith: just one more example of ratiocination and logical analysis.

Absolute faith recognizes the utter impossibility of its claim; to make the movement of absolute faith, you must first make the movement of absolute resignation—and then you believe anyway, “by virtue of the absurd.” And this is faith.

The knight of faith knows that “the only thing that can save him is the absurd, and this he grasps by faith.” He acknowledges the impossibility, “and that very instant he believes the absurd; for, if without recognizing the impossibility with all the passion of his soul and with all his heart, he should wish to imagine that he has faith, he deceives himself.” Paul Tillich expressed a similar view, insisting that absolute faith must be preceded by absolute doubt and despair. You confess that existence is meaningless, and then you accept your existence in spite of this—and this “courage to be” in the face of meaninglessness is in itself meaningful. Where does it come from, if not from Being itself? What does it represent, if not the power and the purpose of the godhead? “The act of accepting meaninglessness is in itself a meaningful act. It is an act of faith.” And so on. But it is possible to define faith in an entirely different way as well, and perhaps an inkling of this can be found in Hebrews: “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

John in his Epistle does not say that faith is based on the absurd; he says it is based on evidence. Science is based on the evidence of things seen. Faith is based on the evidence of things not seen. Both, then, are forms of deduction, and they differ only in the methods which they employ to gather their evidence: science relies upon the rational mind or the conscious; faith relies upon the intuitive mind or the unconscious. This is precisely what Jung was talking about: he said the churches were ignoring the vital role of the unconscious.

The churches perhaps were having enough trouble with science and so were in no mood to encourage a free-wheeling mysticism which might lead to a further erosion of orthodox dogma. But Jung and other critics believed that religion was making its stand on the weakest ground available. The logical proofs for God’s existence were not very convincing. Even if they were, the intellect would reject them if instinct said no. Nor did it do any good to urge more faith, because faith is not an effort of will but, rather, a conviction based upon the evidence of things not seen. And the ultimate and only source of this evidence is the unconscious.

“The unconscious,” said Zen scholar Suzuki, “is the matrix of all metaphysical assertions, of all mythology, of all philosophy.” Years before, James had suggested that the unconscious was man’s liaison to that unseen or mystical world for which the word God is “the natural appellation.” He proposed that the unconscious sends us whispers of that other world “even as the waters of the infinite ocean send their waves to break among the pebbles that lie upon our shores.”

He said that all of man's ideal impulses appear to originate in that other world; if there are spiritual agencies out there, he argued, it seems only logical that they should communicate with us through "the subconscious continuation of our conscious life." "If there be higher powers able to impress us," he said, "they may get access to us only through the subliminal door." And Jung agreed. But he charged that the churches were concerned only with creeds—with "traditional and collective convictions which in the case of many of their adherents are no longer based on their own inner experience." Unreflecting belief, he said, "is notoriously apt to disappear as soon as one begins to think about it," and in any case it is "no adequate substitute for inner experience."

The unconscious is "the only accessible source of religious experience." This does not mean the unconscious is God. It is, however, "the medium from which the religious experience seems to flow." It is not the role of the church, said Jung, to rope men into a social organization and reduce them to a condition of diminished responsibility. The care of the church should be the individual soul; the task of the church is "helping the individual to achieve a metanoia, or rebirth of the spirit."

From this point of view, the unconscious perhaps is comparable to a shortwave radio receiver. And the church has only one function: it should help men tune in on God's wavelength, so to speak, and after that it should drop out of the picture altogether, making no effort to interpret the transmissions—much less to jam them. The challenge to church authority becomes increasingly obvious, and indeed it has always been implicit not only in outright mysticism but in any form of devotion which emphasizes inner experience.

The challenge was there long before the word "unconscious" was introduced to the vocabulary—the Tibetans meant the unconscious when they spoke of the Knower—and the German theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher as far back as 1799 was calling for a religion based exclusively on *Ansokauung und Gefühl*, or intuition and emotion. A rejection of all creeds and dogma also was fundamental to the "spiritual Christianity" proposed four decades ago by the Russian philosopher Nicolas Berdyaev, and many other examples could be given. Huxley saw the urge for self-transcendence as "a principal appetite of the soul," and that appetite in our time has not been satisfied in church; today, "the sole religious experience is that state of uninhibited and belligerent euphoria which follows the ingestion of the third cocktail." Tillich pointed to the decline of religious awe: the question of our century perhaps was whether or not man could regain that sense of wonder he had once known in personal communion with the Ground of his Being.

Then came LSD.

With it has come a rebirth of awe. While some people might debate the assertion that this is religious awe, many members of the drug movement regard it as such—and the drug movement, as mentioned, has already produced a number of psychedelic churches, of which the Church of the Awakening may serve as an example. The church

was incorporated in 1963 under the laws of New Mexico by John and Louisa Aiken, retired osteopaths. In a statement of purpose the church defines religion in its internal aspect as "the search within one's own consciousness for the Self, which is Being, which is Life." And to help the search along the church administers "the psychedelic sacrament."

In a 1964 decision based on the First Amendment, the California Supreme Court ruled that Indian members of the Native American Church could not legally be deprived of the peyote used in their religious ceremonies. As a consequence of the widespread legislation against LSD, the Church of the Awakening and similar organizations such as the Neo-American Church and Timothy Leary's League for Spiritual Discovery have indicated they might seek a First Amendment court test to determine whether freedom of psychedelic religion applies also to the paleface, and the law's ultimate decision should prove to be of considerable interest, to say the least.

The drug cults make impressive claims. In the past, they say, religion probably had real depth for only a minority of churchgoers. Under the best of circumstances, a direct encounter with God was reserved for the special few; and even for them the experience was usually fleeting in nature. There are of course no statistics available on mystic percentiles, but it is just possible that psychologist Abraham H. Maslow offers us a rough clue with his concept of the "self-actualizing" person who is capable of achieving from time to time what Maslow has described as a "peak experience."

We shall have much more to say about Maslow's psychology in a later chapter; for the moment, we are concerned only with his conclusion that self-actualization is possible for less than 1 per cent of the adult population. If peak experience and mystical experience are similar, and if Maslow's figure is reasonably accurate, it is rather interesting to find at the other end of the mental spectrum that schizophrenia is also said to affect about 1 per cent of the population.

By comparison, the studies cited previously suggest that psychedelics can provide a mystical religious experience for up to 90 per cent of the population, which is certainly a considerable improvement. Now, say the cultists, with LSD it is possible for almost anybody to commune with God, any time he wants to, and for hours at a stretch. Now the common man can share the mystical visions of the saints themselves, and it is no longer necessary to spend ten or twenty years in a Zen monastery to achieve true satori.

The drug movement says to the churches: "Here, at last, this is what we were looking for, and never finding. This is what people really want. What do you have to offer in its place?" And so orthodoxy and the psychedelic experience arrive at their collision point.

The institutional challenge is serious, if you accept the premise that psychedelic experience is actually mystical experience. Obviously the churches cannot compete with the drugs in promoting that experience, even if they wished to. It remains to be asked

whether the experience should be promoted—whether in fact it threatens a jet-age Quietism—and there are arguments on both sides, to be discussed later. But what about the doctrinal challenge?

Is it really true that the central drug experience confirms the Eastern ideas we have mentioned? And why do these ideas have so much appeal for Westerners in this day and age? To begin with, psychedelic experience is closer to Zen than it is to anything else the East has to offer. And Zen is a unique religion, even in the East. It appears to be monistic and pantheistic, but actually it is not. Unlike Hinduism, it does not indulge in elaborate metaphysics; as far as possible it avoids words altogether, and the student is advised to let the mildew grow on his lips.

Basically anti-intellectual, Zen stresses intuition and the direct personal experience of reality. As Suzuki put it, Zen seeks only to grasp “the central fact of life,” which is found only in the here and now. It is aimed at those “who die of hunger while sitting beside the rice bag.” Unlike other schools of Buddhism, it does not regard the world as illusory, an epiphenomenon of the mind; like Saint Thomas, it rejects any dichotomy between body and spirit (as it rejects all other dualistic concepts): in essence it is a yes-saying to life and to the world. Suzuki was at pains to refute the idea that Zen is pantheistic.

Zen neither confirms nor denies a transcendent God—another dualism—and if Zen seems strangely silent about God, that is only because all statements are limiting. If asked what God is, however, a Zen master might say, “Three pounds of flax.”

And this sounds pantheistic. If a Hindu said it, it would be pantheistic. But the Zen master’s statement has nothing to do with such ideas; in calling attention to something quite prosaic, the Zen master is simply affirming the holiness of the commonplace in the moment being lived. He might just as easily have eaten a peach, gone for a walk—or slapped his pupil in the face again. Since satori can hardly be distinguished from the psychedelic experience, it is significant that Zen scholarship has not found in this insight any necessary implication of pantheism or monism; since Zen scholarship represents centuries of study devoted to the very subject which concerns them, immanence-minded drug cultists might find cause to re-examine their experience in the light of Zen.

Still, the sense of immanence under psychedelic influence is very pronounced. It is overwhelming. And after all, as we have already said, it is not necessary for an orthodox Westerner to reject the concept altogether: it is possible to conceive of God as both transcendent and immanent. To borrow an example which has been used before, Shakespeare is immanent in the characters of *The Tempest*. In him they live and move and have their Being.

But Shakespeare also transcends his characters, in the sense that they do not exhaust his Being; the characters are Shakespeare, but Shakespeare is something more than Prospero and Trinculo.

In the same sense, the indwelling God acts from within, “through the path of immanence.” He still transcends the world. But the world might fail to recognize this. The very fact of immanence could well blind men to God’s transcendent character: in the psychedelic state especially, the part could easily mistake itself for the whole. As Baudelaire saw it, the hashish eater imagines himself to be God—and never thinks to ask himself the haunting question, “Might there not be another God?” Or to put it another way, “Might there not be more God?” Thus the psychedelic experience neither absolutely confirms nor absolutely denies God’s transcendence. If it confirms anything, it confirms his immanence. And there is nothing in the experience which necessarily rules out an immanent God who is also transcendent.

Just as different ages have emphasized either the mystical or the rational aspect of religion, so too have immanence and transcendence been in and out of fashion. Saint Thomas, as might be expected, had attempted in his time to avoid either one extreme or the other, offering instead a synthesis of immanence and transcendence. Calvinism, on the other hand, insisted upon a majestic and omnipotent God who utterly transcended the pitiful race of man, and transcendence also was central to the Deism of Voltaire and others for whom God was the Great Watchmaker: having created the world and its laws, he had gone off to exist in complete isolation from his creation. The mystics for their part preached the immanence of God; throughout history, in fact, whenever orthodoxy has made God too remote and austere, the mystic prophets have appeared from the wilderness to reassert his immanence, and respect for immanence has gone hand in hand with an emphasis upon inner experience in religious devotion. Immanentist concepts were given powerful expression in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, both in literature and philosophy. But the first part of the twentieth century saw the emergence of a kind of neo-Calvinism, and Karl Barth again was in large part responsible for the development: his objection to mysticism necessarily included a concomitant objection to mysticism’s accent on immanence, and the result was a renewed appreciation of divine transcendence.

It is possible, however, that the neglect of immanence has been at least partly to blame for the decline of religious enthusiasm in this era of technology and secularization. A wholly transcendent God is probably least compatible with modern science and modern experience—he is the kind of God modern man finds hardest to accept—and it does the churches no good to argue that this kind of God is a caricature. It does no good to insist that the churches have not preached this kind of God, and it does no good to argue that theology perhaps has proposed an entirely different kind of God. Doubtless we give theology and philosophy much more credit than they deserve.

A great philosopher decides something, and we imagine that he has decided for his entire generation, if not for the century in which he lived; this school of opinion gives way to that school of opinion, and we suppose that mankind has been following the contest like a football match, with critical interest, and that everybody knows whether this side or that side has the ball at the moment. If the players would look around, however, they would find that the crowd is not paying much attention to the game, or does not

understand it, or finds it hard to keep an eye on the ball. Of course the wholly transcendent God is a caricature—but a caricature by definition is a distortion or exaggeration of an actual characteristic, and an emphasis on transcendence has been a characteristic of Western theology.

Indeed, this characteristic has mainly served to distinguish Western from Eastern religion, and it should hardly surprise us to find that a desire to preserve that distinction has led to an undue emphasis upon it in the public mind. “Do you believe in God?” Ask the common man that question, and he will assume you are referring to a transcendent figure of some sort. Ask the uncommon man the same question; he still will assume that you are referring to something along those lines. Of course he knows better, but he takes it for granted that you do not, when you ask the question. He may say, “Well, that depends what you mean by God.” The question itself has come to imply that caricature of caricatures, the bearded monarch on the marble throne—and that image is inferred even in those cases when it is not actually implied. Especially is it inferred when the word God is spoken from the pulpit of a church.

The idea is ridiculous, of course, and that is precisely the reason modern man no longer believes in it. Unfortunately, he still thinks he is being asked to believe in it, and that is the root of the problem. Eastern philosophy, on the other hand, does not ask him to believe in it, nor does the psychedelic experience ask him to believe in it, and the credit both give to immanence is without question responsible for much of the current interest in Eastern ideas and in LSD.

The churches had been complacent. Perhaps they imagined that the caricature no longer existed, and so they made no effort to correct it or to offer their parishioners a more plausible alternative. But the caricature did exist, although few people believed in it—or in anything else for that matter, as a direct consequence. The continued existence of the caricature resulted inevitably in a reaction against it, and necessarily in a drastic reaction. The idea was so deeply embedded in popular theology, and churchmen were so ignorant of this fact, that Altizer had to kill off the transcendent God altogether before the churchmen displayed any visible signs of alarm. Then LSD came along. If they now hope to preserve any vestige of transcendence, the churches might be well advised to take a fresh look at the weight of their teaching—and start talking immanence.

With the decline of Barthianism, this has already happened in radical theology. Basic to contemporary developments in this area have been the concept of immanence and the direct inner experience of that immanence. In Protestantism the reaction against stark transcendence can be traced progressively from Tillich to the New Theologians to the Death of God theologians. In Judaism the voice of Martin Buber has been heard. In Roman Catholicism immanence is the very heart of Teilhard de Chardin’s theology.

But immanence has always been a dangerous idea, as we have indicated. Open the door to immanence and pantheism tries to slip in with it. This too has been happening.

THE NEW THEOLOGY

A coffee shop in Indiana did not seem a very likely place in which to encounter the Anglican bishop of Woolwich, England, probably the best-known advocate of the radical New Theology. But that in fact is where I met him one dreary morning in 1966, on the Crawfordsville campus of Wabash College. Bishop John A. T. Robinson had come to Wabash from England to participate in the annual Lilly Lecture Series, and he looked a bit weary as he sat there in a corner booth discussing Dr. Thomas J. J. Altizer's announcement of God's demise.

He shook his head over the idea, wondering aloud how Altizer could justify his curious position on Judaism. Later we left the shop together, heading for Robinson's temporary digs at the Caleb Mills House, and the balding, pink-cheeked bishop seemed a lonely figure as he walked across the campus through a misty rainfall, his macintosh flapping in the wind. Some three years before, with the publication of a little book titled *Honest to God*, he had been attacked as a heretic, a traitor to the faith and a false prophet; now—bitter pill—there were some who regarded him as a theological square: in fact a real cube. For the moment at least, the Ground of Being was Out. The Death of God was In.

Honest to God had created a sensation when it first appeared in 1963. To the astonishment of the author and his publishers, no doubt, the book became an international best seller, and total sales had exceeded a million when I met the bishop. There are as many New Theologies as there are New Theologians, but Robinson's book has had a tremendous impact both in Europe and America, and it offers an excellent vantage point from which to explore the main trends in radical theology just prior to the emergence of the Death of God school. It is in a sense a compendium of the ideas that shaped those trends, and what it did basically was bring together a number of concepts developed by four contemporary giants of philosophy and theology: Rudolf Bultmann, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Paul Tillich, and Martin Buber.

But it brought them together in a new synthesis, the most important aspect of which was a new interpretation of divine transcendence, and it popularized them for a vast lay readership. In doing so, it gave expression to the spiritual unrest and dissatisfaction of laymen who had been theologically inarticulate, and it helped also to lay a popular groundwork for the still more radical ideas which were soon to follow in America.

From Rudolf Bultmann, to begin with, the bishop took the concept of "demythologizing" the Bible.

To demythologize does not mean to debunk. On the contrary. A myth may represent an eternal truth—intuitively grasped perhaps—but the mode of expression will be dictated always by the world-view of the men who lived in the age when the myth was promulgated, and it will reflect also that age's level of knowledge and sophistication. Its language is metaphorical and anthropomorphic.

The method of demythologizing probes for the deeper meaning hidden by the metaphor. "Its aim," said Bultmann, "is not to eliminate the mythological statements but to interpret them." In essence this is the same test we applied in an earlier chapter to Wordsworth's ode and to poetic symbolism in general: does the "is" really mean "is," or does it perhaps mean "as if"?

Suppose, then, said Bultmann, that the authors of the Bible wanted to convey the idea of God's transcendence. They could do so only by resorting to the crude category of space—resulting in a God who is "up there" in a place called heaven. According to Robinson, a more sophisticated age refined the veridical myth to connote a God who was not "up there" but "out there," somewhere beyond the flashing comets. But again this is a crude metaphor, and it no longer satisfies modern man, who is intruding upon outer space with radio telescopes and rocket probes. To remain relevant, the truth of God's transcendence must be demythologized or demetaphorized. It and other biblical truths must be retranslated in modern terms for men who are able to digest deeper levels of abstraction. But how? If God is not "up there" or "out there," where is he?

From Dietrick Bonhoeffer, the bishop took the concept of a Christianity "without religion." This is certainly an enigmatic idea, and Bonhoeffer never had an opportunity to elaborate upon it; it was merely suggested in letters and notes which he wrote in a Nazi prison before he was hanged in April 1945. But it has haunted many churchmen with a moth-to-flame fascination, and it would be difficult to exaggerate the fundamental influence it has had upon contemporary theology. For most New Theologians it has served as a sort of Rorschach ink blot, and each has brought to it his own interpretation. For Robinson it represented at one level a rejection of churchiness and otherworldliness. God is neither "up there" nor "out there." He is rather, in Bonhoeffer's words, "the 'beyond' in the midst of our life." And that is where we should seek him, in our midst.

Traditionally, said Robinson, religion has implied withdrawal from the world to a special compartment of life where, in a sort of spiritual vacuum, one prays and thinks holy thoughts. Too often, in Ronald Gregor Smith's phrase, it has implied "a kind of battle against the world on behalf of God." One seeks God only in the sanctuary, in the gaps of life. Inevitably, this attitude has made worship possible, or profitable, for only a comparatively small cadre of religiously minded people—for the praying type. And something else. If God is used simply as a *deus ex machina* to explain man's unanswered questions about life and the universe, what happens when these questions, one after one, are answered? God is pushed further and further back by the tidal advance of knowledge, said Bonhoeffer. Man has less and less need of him. "As in the scientific field," said Bonhoeffer, "so in human affairs generally, what we call 'God' is being more and more edged out of life, losing more and more ground. Catholic and Protestant historians are agreed that it is in this development that the great defection from God, from Christ, is to be discerned."

Indeed, Robinson agreed, Julian Huxley expressed the same idea or was thinking in the same vein when he observed that, operationally, God "is beginning to resemble

not a ruler but the last fading smile of a cosmic Cheshire Cat.” The world has come of age, said Bonhoeffer, and men in a world come of age should accept their adulthood; they should go about their business just as if God did not exist, not clinging to his hand every time there is a street to cross. “God allows himself to be edged out of the world, and that is exactly the way, the only way, in which he can be with us and help us.” Like a parent who wants his child to be self-reliant.

But how does one worship in a post-religious world? By accepting the world, said Robinson. By seeking the sacred in the secular, the holy in the common, the beyond in our midst. One should seek God “in the hungry, the naked, the homeless and the prisoner.” Prayer should not be a withdrawal from the world to God but a penetration through the world to God; for nothing, after all, is really secular: the whole world is holy.

From Paul Tillich, the bishop took the concept of defining God as the Ground of Being. Tillich rejected the view that God is in any sense a Being. This rejection applies of course to the God of Deism, who started the world ticking with mechanistic precision and then went off somewhere far away and remote, very much, as Robinson put it, “like a rich aunt in Australia.” But Tillich also rejected the more familiar God of Theism, in so far as that implies some kind of supernatural Person—a separate Being who exists in an intimate relationship with the world which he transcends.

Theism necessarily does imply this kind of God, said Tillich. It implies “a being beside others” who is simply a part of reality—the most important part, but still only a part; it implies that God “is a being, not being-itself.” Tillich proposed that theology replace this Being with the Ground of Being, and that a new dimension be adopted to conceptualize this reality. As a substitute for height (as in “up there”) or distance (as in “out there”), Tillich suggested that we think of God in terms of depth (as in “in our midst”).

Robinson took up the suggestion, defining God as “the ultimate depth of all our being, the creative ground and meaning of all our existence.”

The bishop wrote that traditional Christian theology has concerned itself with aducing proofs for the existence of God, and the psychological implication, at least, is that God might not exist.

Well, then, what happens if we speak of God simply as ultimate reality or the Ground of our Being—as opposed, for example, to a Being?

Then it is no longer necessary to debate the existence of God, since nobody doubts there is an ultimate reality. The whole problem is reduced to speculation about the nature of this ultimate reality, or God.

A lot of people didn’t like that. It seemed much too easy, for one thing. And perhaps there is a basic flaw in the argument, as we shall see later. In any case, the bishop also used the Ground of Being as a wedge for the most awesome effort of all —demy-

thologizing God himself. Behind the various mythological expressions, what is the ontology of God? What is the nature of ultimate reality, and what in truth is the real meaning of transcendence?

From Martin Buber, the bishop took the concept of the I-Thou relationship. We have already referred to this concept; let us examine it now in more detail. Buber was a mystic, and he began his argument with the proposition that all men are born with a sense of cosmic connection. The sense of "I" or individual self is not present at birth, and in fact the child at first does not distinguish between himself and the shining world which his eyes have opened upon. In the womb he had known a life "of purely natural combination, bodily interaction and flowing one to the other," and after birth he still rests for a time "in the womb of the great mother, the undivided primal world that precedes form."

Buber recalled the saying of the Jews: "In the mother's body man knows the universe, in birth he forgets it." But he does not forget it all at once, and he never forgets it completely. Before his sense of natural connection with the world fades gradually away, the child is given time to establish a sense of spiritual connection—which Buber referred to as relation. Gradually there develops a sense of "I" or self— "the separation of the body from the world round about it"—but the world nevertheless is still perceived as existing in relation to the self. It is perceived as Thou, and this is the I-Thou relationship. But the sense of "I" grows ever stronger, until at last it snaps the fragile bond of relation between subject and object, I and Thou. Thou becomes It (or He or She), and I-It is the primary word of separation.

The world perceived as It is something to be used and exploited, and it is perceived in space and time—whereas the world as Thou is not perceived in space and time. The world perceived as It is chopped into isolated segments, and the segments are ranked in an artificial order; they are organized for cause-and-effect analysis, so that man can "get his bearings." Man no longer looks at the world in relation: "instead of looking at it he observes it, instead of accepting it as it is, he turns it to his own account." And why? "Only as It can it enter the structure of knowledge."

This is necessary for survival, because man cannot live without It. "But he who lives with It alone is not a man," and the memory of Thou never dies altogether: there are "short, uncanny moments" when it reappears, "lyric and dramatic episodes, seductive and magical." The memory of that undivided primal world lingers as "a secret image of desire," and Buber implied that this is the real meaning of the Freudian wish to retreat to the womb. Not at all the sign of an unhealthy pathology, it represents a natural longing to re-establish the cosmic connection. Man of course cannot crawl back into the womb, in this life at least, but he can relate to the world; he can look for the thing-in-itself, seeing "each thing simply as being."

He can say "Thou" to the world, and the world in turn will say "Thou" back to him. In this relationship a man affirms the reality of the world—and he affirms also the reality of himself. For the "I" is very real. With the emergence of personal life, a man cannot

deny his "I," but he can choose what sort of "I" it will be—since the "I" of I-Thou is not the same as the "I" of I-It. A man can choose to be a person or an individual, and all men are either persons or individuals: the "I" of I-Thou is a person, and the "I" of I-It is an individual. In I-Thou a man does not and cannot surrender his personality, since the essence of I-Thou is personal relation: an "I" relating to the Thou.

A person does not lose "his special being, his being different." But he does not revel in his special being as the individual does; he simply accepts it as a necessary part of being in general. He seeks for the Thou, which he sees in the eyes of every man and every creature. He lives in the here and now, fully aware that "the one thing that matters is visible, full acceptance of the present."

He recognizes that true love is the "responsibility of an I for a Thou," and this leads him at last "to the dreadful point—to love all men." He hallows this life, and thus he meets the living God who is present in every relational event. In every finite Thou he catches a glimpse of the eternal Thou.

I-Thou was the final ingredient in Robinson's eclectic omelet; he was ready now to face the question of God—and the question of God, he acknowledged, was the question of transcendence. It was certainly the question as far as the Western God was concerned—no doubt about that—and the bishop therefore did his best to salvage the concept. That really was the whole point of his book, although many of his critics received just the opposite impression. The task, he said, was "to validate the idea of transcendence for modern man."

Robinson began with an all-out attack on Theistic transcendence, agreeing with Tillich that the atheists were quite correct in rejecting a transcendent Being or supreme Person. The bishop conceded the fact that classical Christian theology does not in fact picture God as a Person, and "the Church's best theologians have not laid themselves open to such attack." Nevertheless, he said, "popular Christianity has always posited such a supreme personality," and the question really was whether or not popular theology could afford to sacrifice the concept. To do so, R. W. Hepburn had written, "seems at once to take one quite outside Christianity." Robinson felt, however, that the concept could be abandoned—indeed it must be, since the average layman was finding it harder and harder to take seriously. People must be told, then, that there is no reason they should take it seriously. "If Christianity is to survive . . . there is no time to lose in detaching it from this scheme of thought."

But to what does one attach it? To what does transcendence refer, if not to a transcendent Being?

Robinson groped for an answer. And he found one, he thought, in man's divine attributes—love, wisdom, justice. Feuerbach was looking over his shoulder now, and the bishop knew he was treading "on very dangerous ground." One slip and he could easily plunge into the bottomless chasm of humanism or pantheism, making of man's

nature the ens rea lissimum.

The problem perhaps was to identify God as the source of our higher aspirations, without at the same time making us synonymous with the source—that is to say, without making man and God identical. In any case, the bishop pushed on with the idea of defining God as the Ground of our Being or as ultimate reality. If God is ultimate reality, what, then, is this ultimate reality? Tillich had proposed that we think of it in terms of depth, you will remember, and Robinson quoted Tillich's seminal passage:

The name of this infinite and inexhaustible depth and ground of all being is God. That depth is what the word God means. And if that word has not much meaning for you, translate it, and speak of the depths of your life, of the source of your being, of your ultimate concern, of what you take seriously without any reservation. Perhaps, in order to do so, you must forget everything traditional that you have learned about God, perhaps even that word itself. For if you know that God means depth, you know much about him. You cannot then call yourself an atheist or unbeliever. For you cannot think or say: Life has no depth! Life is shallow. [Furthermore] . . . speak of the depth of history, of the ground and aim of our social life, and of what you take seriously without reservation in your moral and political activities. Perhaps you should call this depth hope, simply hope.

One is reminded also of Tillich's "courage to be" as an argument for faith. Why this courage? Where does it come from? In the same sense, why do men hope—and where does their hope originate if not in the very depths of their Being? In the last analysis, depth meant for Tillich "those deep things for which religion stands: the feeling for the inexhaustible mystery of life, the grip of an ultimate meaning of existence." And this mystery—this ultimate meaning—is the source of the biblical intuition that there is something which transcends our everyday life and the world of appearances. There is, to use a cliché, more here than meets the eye. And this "more" is the transcendent—the not seen. It is that which we normally do not perceive or recognize, but which nevertheless makes such urgent demands upon us. It is the truth about ourselves and the truth about Being itself. "To call God transcendent in this sense," said Tillich, "does not mean that one must establish a 'superworld' of divine objects. It does mean that, within itself, the finite world points beyond itself. In other words, it is self-transcendent."

As Robinson expressed it: "The necessity for the name 'God' lies in the fact that our being has depths which naturalism, whether evolutionary, mechanistic, dialectical or humanistic, cannot or will not recognize." And in Tillich's words again: "We are always held and comprehended by something that is greater than we are, that has a claim upon us, and that demands response from us." This is the Ground of our Being, and we can no more escape it than Francis Thompson could escape the Hound of Heaven. A trumpet sounds from the hid battlements of Eternity, and a Voice declares: "All things betray thee, who betrayest Me . . . Naught shelters thee, who wilt not shelter Me . . . Lo! naught contents thee, who content'st not Me."

To thine own Self be true. Is that what this means? Is that what God means?

At Wabash I had a long talk with Robinson in the library of the Caleb Mills House, and I asked him, among other things, "However that word God is finally translated, do you believe that it transcends our Being?" He replied, "Yes. I believe, obviously, that God represents a reality which in a real sense encounters us as it were from without. It is not something that we think up for ourselves. In many ways I would find it much easier to invent a very different kind of God, far less uncomfortable to live with. There is this, I think, overmastering reality which challenges us, judges us, confronts us, questions our whole being. It is this element of otherness—of unconditional grace and demand—which it seems to me traditional Christianity has meant by transcendence. This is a dimension of experience in life which I've no desire whatever to deny. What I am concerned with is to try and find some way of expressing this dimension which doesn't put God right at the edge of our whole experience and world."

An unconditional demand would seem to imply a built-in demand which is forced upon us by the very nature of our Being. It would seem to imply that we are not completely free to choose our own destiny and to make of ourselves whatever we please. Or, to put it another way—and the distinction is important—we are free to choose, but our freedom is less than perfect: if we deny the unconditional demand, we will suffer for it. We will suffer the anguish of alienation from the Ground of our Being. To boil it down, Sartre was wrong. There is an essence (unconditional) which precedes our existence and which gives our existence its meaning and direction; it tells us what we should do and where we should go. Whether we heed it or not is up to us.

But what is this essence? What is the Ground of our Being? What is ultimate reality?

In three words, ***what is God?***

In his book, Robinson used three words to answer those questions. And he took the three words from another book. To understand his meaning, we must return for a moment to Buber, to whom the bishop owes a large debt, and we must ask what Buber meant by the eternal Thou, as opposed simply to Thou.

Buber had no objection to the word God. Anticipating what was to come, perhaps, he wrote in *I and Thou*, first published in 1923: "Many men wish to reject the word God as a legitimate usage, because it is so misused. It is indeed the most heavily laden of all the words used by men. For that very reason it is the most imperishable and most indispensable." Buber had no sympathy with the Eastern concept of absorption in the Absolute, in "the One thinking Essence." He spoke of relation, not absorption. He opposed the doctrine that "universal being and self-being are the same." He told of a Face that is sometimes seen, briefly, when one looks deep into the eyes of a finite Thou.

This is God, the eternal Thou. And this is transcendent. "Every sphere is compassed in the eternal Thou, but it is not compassed in them." "God comprises, but is not, the universe. So too, God comprises, but is not, my Self." Nor did Buber refrain from

speaking of God as a Person; in a 1957 postscript to his book, he wrote:

The description of God as a Person is indispensable for everyone who like myself means by "God" not a principle (although mystics like Eckhart sometimes identify him with "Being") and like myself means by "God" not an idea (although philosophers like Plato at times could hold that he was this): but who rather means by "God," as I do, him who—whatever else he may be—enters into a direct relation with us men in creative, revealing and redeeming acts, and thus makes it possible for us to enter into a direct relation with him. This ground and meaning of our existence constitutes a mutuality, arising again and again, such as can subsist only between persons.

The concept of personal being is indeed completely incapable of declaring what God's essential being is, but it is both permitted and necessary to say that God is also a Person.... From this attribute would stem my and all men's being as person . . . As a Person God gives personal life, he makes us as persons become capable of meeting with him and with one another. But no limitation can come upon him as the absolute Person, either from us or from our relations with one another; in fact we can dedicate to him not merely our persons but also our relations to one another.

Buber conceded that there was an apparent contradiction in the concept of God as an Absolute Person who cannot be limited and the assertion that his total Being is in fact limited "by the plurality of other independent entities" (namely, us). It is possible that Buber here was addressing himself to Tillich's criticism of the Theistic God who is only a part of reality, "a being beside others." Buber said, however, that this was not really a contradiction: it was a paradox. And he added the enigmatic statement: "It is as the absolute Person that God enters into direct relation with us. The contradiction yields to deeper insight."

Robinson in his book referred to Buber only in passing, as it were, and did not give him equal billing with Bultmann, Bonhoeffer, and Tillich as a major source of inspiration. Wedded as he was to Tillich's denial of Theism, the bishop certainly did not refer his readers to the passage we have cited on God as a Person. Nevertheless, his final conclusions about God or ultimate reality might very well appear to be a liberal interpretation of that passage, based perhaps on a "deeper insight."

At Wabash I mentioned to Robinson that his concept of transcendence seemed to have a strong streak of Buber in it, and the bishop agreed. "I think what Buber is saying is fundamental," he said. "And in fact this goes back a long way in my own theological experience, because I did my Ph.D. thesis on Martin Buber, which has never been published. This was twenty to twenty-five years ago. And therefore this represents a long-standing influence on my thinking. And I think the kind of thing Buber is trying to get at in this I-Thou relationship—the way he sees every finite Thou as a sort of glimpse through, a 'window through' into something which meets us in, with, and under every relationship of life—this is very near the heart of what I am trying to say."

Did Robinson in fact demythologize Buber? Was Buber in fact asking to be demythologized? What might it be, that “deeper insight”?

Although he rejected the idea that God is a Person, the bishop did affirm that God is personal. This may appear contradictory at first reading, but we must remember that Robinson was speaking of God as ultimate reality—as the truth about existence. “For this way of thinking,” he wrote, “to say that ‘God is personal’ is to say that ‘reality at its very deepest level is personal,’ that personality is of ultimate significance in the constitution of the universe, that in personal relationships we touch the final meaning of existence as nowhere else.” And he quoted Feuerbach: “To predicate personality of God is nothing else than to predicate personality as the absolute essence.”

But personality in itself is not yet the absolute essence. If it is only in personal relationships that we touch the final meaning of existence, what, then, is that final meaning? What, then, is God? The bishop now was prepared to answer the question.

God, he said, is love.

“To assert that ‘God is love’ is to believe that in love one comes into touch with the most fundamental reality in the universe, that Being itself ultimately has this character.”

This is the “more” which does not meet the eye. This is the truth about ourselves and the truth about Being itself. This is the unconditional demand that is made of us: that we love one another. And this truth, this ultimate reality, we have objectivized as God. But God as love does not imply “a super-Being beyond the world endowed with personal qualities.” No. “To believe in God as love means to believe that in pure personal relationship we encounter, not merely what ought to be, but what is, the deepest, veriest truth about the structure of reality.” It means to believe that love is the Ground of our Being. It means that “theological statements are not a description of ‘the highest Being’ but an analysis of the depths of personal relationships.”

The bishop continued: “A statement is ‘theological’ not because it relates to a particular Being called ‘God’ but because it asks ultimate questions about the meaning of existence: it asks what, at the level of theos, at the level of its deepest mystery, is the reality and significance of our life.” And this reality, this final truth, this God is love.

Who, then, was Jesus?—the son of God?

Robinson demythologized him, too. Jesus was not a God-man who came from “out there,” pretending to be a man. He was not a divine visitant who chose to live “like one of the natives.” According to the bishop, the traditional view of Jesus leaves one with the impression that “God took a space ship and arrived on this planet in the form of a man.” It leaves the impression that Jesus “was not really one of us . . . he came from outside.” And that word incarnation: in itself, it “conjures up the idea of a divine substance being plunged in flesh and coated with it like chocolate or silver plating.” But Jesus in fact was

a man; he was in fact one of us.

Nevertheless, Jesus also revealed to the world the Word of God. He was a man, yes—but a man who was completely united with the Ground of his Being. He made himself “utterly transparent” to the Ground of Being and thus offered his fellow-men a window through to ultimate reality. He did this by emptying himself of self; he was “the man for others,” and his whole life was a testimony to the fact that the Ground of all Being is love. I asked the bishop whether the I-Thou relation did not imply that all men are a window through to the eternal Thou—hadn’t Buber in fact said the same thing about a cat?— and Robinson answered:

“Can I just say two things? First, this window-through metaphor is obviously very inadequate and just suggests that God is there to be looked at, whereas the New Testament takes a far more dynamic view. I mean, here in a real sense is the activity and love and purpose of God being revealed and poured out and acting through this man’s life.

The second question relates to the uniqueness of Christ. I think I certainly would not want to say that he is unique in the sense that he is quite abnormal. I think that it’s worth asking: Is Christ unique because he is normal, or because he is abnormal? Now, I think a great many people would take from the Gospels as they read them today that he is unique because he is abnormal—in the sense that he did all kinds of things we couldn’t do, was born in an entirely different way, had all kinds of miraculous powers, and so on. Well now, if that is the picture of Christ, then he seems to me a man who has very little to do with our life at all. It seems to me what the New Testament fundamentally is saying is that here is someone who is uniquely normal, what all human life should be, what a genuinely human existence ought to be. And, on the whole, this is not true of any other man—we are in a real sense failing to be what we were meant to be. Now, in that sense I would certainly say that Christ is unique. But I don’t think he’s unique in a sense that cuts him off from the whole of the rest of humanity. And one of the troubles about so much of the mythological view of the New Testament is that, for man today, its effect is to sever this person from everybody else. After all, the New Testament itself talks about Christ as the firstborn of many brothers—meaning that there’s a real solidarity here with the whole of the rest of humanity—and I don’t want to draw his uniqueness in any sense which denies this solidarity, but rather to say that he is the uniquely normal human being.”

In his book Robinson ridiculed supernatural interpretations of the Atonement—the idea that a divine Person descended from heaven to save men from sin “in the way that a man might put his finger into a glass of water to rescue a struggling insect.” He suggested that sin and hell are metaphors for man’s estrangement from the Ground of his Being, while union with the Ground of Being “is the meaning of heaven,” and the experience of grace is the experience of being accepted in that heaven where, in Tillich’s words, “everything is transformed.” On the level of worship, the bishop called for a “worldly holiness” and a “sacred secularity” in which the beyond is sought at the center of life, “between man and man”—for God is discovered only in the here and now, in the concrete moment, in personal relationships: he is not discovered in some other world,

nor is he to be found in the self alone. Finally, the New Theologian proposed a New Morality—a modern ethic, based on the Ground of Being, which would take as its credo Saint Augustine’s injunction: “Love God, and do what you like.”

He even suggested that premarital sex might be wrong only in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, arguing that “the only intrinsic evil is lack of love.” In an age that was turning its back on supernatural legalism, he said, he was only trying to offer a reasonable system, founded on the absolute priority of love, which could answer that troublesome question, “Why not?” Thus a boy would not take liberties with a girl unless he loved her; and if he loved her, he would not take liberties with her. Or so it seemed to the bishop. (See his book *Christian Morals Today*.)

Robinson warned his readers not to equate the eternal Thou with the finite Thou, “nor God with man or nature.” This, he pointed out, would be pantheism or humanism, and “Christianity must challenge the assumption of naturalism that God is merely a redundant name for nature or for humanity.” With Tillich, he said, he wished instead to push beyond both supernaturalism and naturalism; it was not his intention, he said, “to substitute an immanent for a transcendent Deity,” but rather to reaffirm transcendence in a new translation. The bishop attempted to demonstrate, therefore, that his position was not the same as humanism on the one hand or pantheism on the other.

To rebut the charge of humanism, he returned to his statement that God is love; this could not be turned around, he said, to imply that love is God. In other words, divine love is not simply a projection of human love; on the contrary, human love is a projection of divine love: it occurs on this earth because love is the Ground of Being. We recognize human love as sacred because we see in it the ultimate truth about reality; we see in it “the divine agape of the universe.” We love because the Ground of our Being demands that we love. This demand upon us is unconditional—beyond our control as individuals—and therefore it transcends us. And this element of transcendence is what finally distinguishes the humanist from the radical Christian. The humanist says love ought to be the final truth about existence; the radical Christian says it is.

Furthermore, the radical Christian says that this final truth is revealed to us in Jesus Christ, and its validity “stands or falls” with that revelation. So this in turn is what finally distinguishes both radical and orthodox Christianity from all other theologies, Eastern and Western—and, we might add, from the psychedelic cults.

Turning to the next charge, the bishop conceded that his rejection of Theism might raise in some minds the specter of the Eastern God. He acknowledged that it was dangerous to abandon the concept of God as a separate Being. Indeed, he said, traditionalists might find it hard to believe that his position “must not result in a theology of mere immanence, not to say of pantheism.” But, he said, there was one element which ultimately distinguished his view from the pantheistic or immanentist position—and this was the element of personal freedom: the freedom of the individual person to accept or deny the Ground of his Being. Pantheism is purely mechanistic or deterministic; concern

for the other is as automatic as two plus two, since in fact there is no other but only the monistic One, and this concern cannot properly be described as love, which is a relationship between persons and not the Selfish awareness of an Absolute Identity. For example, you are concerned for the welfare of your arms and legs, but you would hardly refer to this concern as love. I am extrapolating now— trying to read the bishop's mind, as it were—but I trust this is close to his meaning.

The "I" is real, as is the Thou, but the two are bound together by God. And God is love. This is what it means to say that God is personal but not a Person. Love is the very Ground of our Being; but so too is independence an essential aspect of our Being: indeed it must be, if love is also, for the one implies the other.

Extrapolating again, it might be suggested that we worship not God—the word itself would seem to indicate a Person— but rather perhaps a symbolic X. Maybe we should offer up our prayers to Love, which in fact is what we do. All day long the radio blares the message, flooding our homes and our autos with songs of love and little else— news, sports, and love: that is the prescribed formula—and our literature, too, seems preoccupied with the theme. Some call it sex; but is it really God? What sends the unhappy young man wandering the lonely streets of night in search of Her? Is it God who sends him, the Ground of his Being? If God is love we are a pious nation.

We shall not belabor the possible parallels between Robinson's demythologized Christianity and many of the Eastern or psychedelic concepts we have already discussed. They should be obvious. What especially stands out, of course, is the idea of immanence, and the reader will decide for himself whether the bishop has managed to slam the door in time. Or has pantheism slipped in? To many it may appear that the bishop is hanging by his fingernails over those chasms we mentioned, as far as transcendence is concerned, and it would be worthwhile to take one last look at his definition of this term.

It seems fair to say that Robinson has made the term transcendent synonymous with the term unconditional. Love is a built-in aspect of existence; it is not ours to command; it is the essence which precedes our existence; it is the "more" which does not meet the eye and which does not yield itself to the scrutiny of an empirical science. As the bishop put it to me: "Here is something before which you say, yes, this is it. Here I stand, I can no other. I think this is something in a real sense that confronts one, engages one, from outside. It's not something one thinks up for oneself. It clearly, as I see it, is describing how things are. You say, well, here is something fundamentally true which I cannot escape." For example perhaps, one does not think up breathing for oneself.

But some critics might argue that an unconditional "more" is not really the same as a transcendent "other," and "in a real sense" is, after all, a deceptive phrase; it sounds positive, but actually it weakens and modifies more than it reinforces—that is to say, it implies "as if," not "is." It is significant that the bishop did not say simply: "This is something that confronts one from outside." Because he did not say this, and probably could not, it is debatable whether Robinson was successful in his effort to validate transcen-

dence for popular theology, since transcendence has always implied “outside,” “other,” or “separate,” and the bishop’s God displays none of these qualities. It is not enough to say this God transcends the individual, since transcendence has always implied something more than just this; it has implied a divinity that transcends mankind as a whole—and not in the sense of being unconditional, but rather in the sense of being separate and superior (at least partly separate, and wholly superior).

Robinson of course was well aware of this, and it was precisely this implication he was trying to combat with his new definition. It might be argued that Robinson did not actually redefine transcendence; it might be argued that he substituted an altogether different concept.

“Deep,” for example, is not a redefinition of “tall,” and unconditional, in this sense, is not a redefinition of transcendent. But this may be quibbling; substitution and redefinition shade into each other, and perhaps there is a sense in which the bishop’s God “as it were” transcends us. (“As it were” is another of the bishop’s favorite phrases.) If you think about it a long while, there will be moments when you say yes—and moments when you say no, or maybe. It is not an easy concept to get your mind around; it is, if you like, rather vague (or mysterious), and you will see perhaps why we objected to talk of a vague pantheism. Pantheism is very easy.

By comparison, one can well appreciate the frustration of the critic who described Robinson as a confused man who is confusing others. There are, however, a great many people who would say that the bishop has provided them with something other than confusion. From one point of view, he may have taken away their silver—but returned them gold. In an era of subjective chaos, he has made religion meaningful again for untold thousands. While he may well have scuttled transcendence in its traditional interpretation—may indeed have lost it altogether—his system does retain the Western concept of pluralism. And this in the final test could prove to have more significance even than transcendence.

Perhaps the bishop himself has acknowledged this. You will recall the argument, derived from Tillich, that atheism collapses if you define God simply as ultimate reality. Then it is necessary to debate only the nature of this ultimate reality, the bishop said. And he added this: “One can only ask what ultimate reality is like—whether, for instance, in the last analysis what lies at the heart of things and governs their working is to be described in personal or impersonal categories.” That perhaps is the real question, and not transcendence. That perhaps is the basis of the more fundamental challenge which is offered to the West by LSD and by Eastern metaphysics.

The bishop of course took the position that ultimate reality is personal, and this is another way of saying that it is pluralistic: “love,” “relation,” “personal”—all these are pluralistic words, opposed to monism. They preserve the integrity both of Thou and “I.” If God is love, he cannot be Atman. If God is personal, there is no One.

We have said, however, that the instant remedy for atheism contains within it a possible flaw. As Robinson saw it, "one cannot argue whether ultimate reality exists," and we have quoted Tillich's assertion: nobody can say or think that life has no depth, that life is shallow. But in fact men can and do assert that ultimate reality does not exist, that life is shallow and has no depth. Existence, some say, is absurd. Life is a joke—a rather ghastly one at that—and there is no ultimate reality in the sense of an unconditional purpose or meaning. For atheistic existentialists, such as Sartre, there is no Ground of Being, no unconditional, no primary state of Being in any sense; not only is there no God, there is no such thing even as a definite human nature, for existence precedes essence.

And what does this mean? "It means," said Sartre, "that, first of all, man exists, turns up, appears on the scene, and, only afterward, defines himself." In the beginning is subjectivity. In the beginning, man is nothing. "Only afterward will he be something, and he himself will have made what he will be.... Man is nothing else but what he makes of himself." He must choose what he will be, and that terrible responsibility is his alone. Man, to his horror, is born free. He is, indeed, "condemned to be free." He is "condemned every moment to invent man." There are no determinisms. There is, said Sartre, "no human nature for me to depend on."

"We are alone, with no excuses."

Robinson perhaps recognized his own error, for he also wrote: "The question of God is the question whether this depth of being is a reality or an illusion." And the next question, then, is obvious.

True or false—how does one decide? How does one determine whether the Ground of Being is real or not?

There is first of all the possibility of rational proof. But those who hold to this possibility have had many centuries in which to produce their evidence, and the evidence has not been universally convincing.

There is next the possibility of revelation—and especially, for the bishop, the possibility of revelation through Jesus Christ. I asked Robinson why the radical Christian says that love is the final truth, as opposed to the humanist who says it ought to be, and the bishop said: "I think that this is defined and vindicated in Christ. And personally, unless I saw this in Christ, and really felt that this was the clue, then there are so many things in our modern world which would suggest otherwise that I should find it very difficult to hang on to this.

But this is in a sense, I think, the sort of knot in the thread." But the knot was tied almost two thousand years ago, and there are signs today it is coming undone. The revelation existed when the modern world came into being, and men ever since have paid less and less heed to it. Today men have eyes to see, and they do not see; they have ears

to hear, and they do not hear. Or so it might appear to the church at least. "Often enough," said Buber, "we think there is nothing to hear, but long before we have ourselves put wax in our ears." So the problem perhaps is basic enough. How can men be made to look and see, listen and hear? How can the scales be removed from their eyes and the wax from their ears? Robinson's solution was to demythologize, or redefine, and this for many has been richly rewarding. But is it enough? In itself, after all, it is rational analysis again—and this alone has never been enough. It may serve to illuminate or to justify a truth that has been intuitively perceived, however vaguely. But what if that perception was lacking to begin with? Are we not thrown back once more on the primary necessity for a direct inner experience of the ultimate reality, which is God and the Ground of our Being?

This issue is implicit in the New Theology's response to secularization. Many New Theologians have taken Bonhoeffer to mean that the church should turn exclusively to this world, becoming secular itself—that religion should be made "relevant" by involving it full scale in social and political issues, and, in a more shallow sense, by adapting it to contemporary mores and the modern idiom (beat prayers, jam sessions at the altar). But is this what people really want from religion? Or do they seek instead that intimate, personal encounter which in turn is the ultimate basis for social action? Are the secularizers putting the cart before the horse? In their reaction against otherworldliness, do they threaten a further diminution of that mystical element for which LSD seems to demonstrate a widespread hunger? There is no simple answer, but the problem is there. And so LSD perhaps challenges not only orthodoxy but also one aspect at least of radical theology.

Robinson himself is not limited to this one aspect; he is not to be identified with the secularizers alone—although Altizer has so identified him. Certainly he has a good deal of sympathy for this school, which derives largely from Bonhoeffer. But, as he put it to me, "There is a whole other side which I took over from Tillich, and there is a whole lot for instance in Teilhard de Chardin, and others, which I think is equally important." This other side, of course, represents the mystical-philosophical approach to theology—or, in other words, the metaphysical school. "What I'm trying to do," Robinson said, "is to combine this with the sort of thing that the prophets of secularization are saying, and I don't want to have to choose between them."

The bishop indeed has shared Saint Thomas' penchant for synthesis—he has not been an either/or thinker, and this no doubt explains why some have thought him confused or confusing. While many of his basic viewpoints were drawn from mystical philosophy, however, and while mystics such as Tillich and Buber have been his own inspiration, the bishop in his book nevertheless took a dim view of mysticism for the average person, and of mysticism as a solution. He wrote:

Our contention has been that God is to be met not by a "religious" turning away from the world but in unconditional concern for "the other" seen through to its ultimate depths.... That there are veridical experiences of the type usually called "mystical" or

“religious” no one would be so foolish as to deny, and a man may thank God for them as St. Paul did for his visions.

But the capacity for religious or mystical awareness, as for aesthetic or psychic awareness, is largely a question of natural endowment. Women, for instance, appear to be naturally more religious—and more psychic—than men. To make the knowledge of God depend upon such experiences is like making it depend on an ear for music. There are those who are tone-deaf, and there are those who would not claim to have any clearly distinguishable “religious” experiences.

Again, in our own conversation, I asked Robinson if Bonhoeffer was not, among other things, rejecting what the bishop referred to as churchiness. “Yes,” said Robinson. “He’s also certainly rejecting any view of religion which sees it just as a compartment of life and sees the church as a sort of religious club for those who like that sort of thing—which indeed it very largely is. That is one of the troubles. It exists to meet the needs of religiously minded people—which seems to me a great distortion of the real function of the church, which is much more concerned with the making holy of the common, with the transformation of the whole of life, and not simply in providing the same sort of function that, say, a musical club does for those who like music.”

Obviously, as the bishop has interpreted it, Bonhoeffer’s rejection of “religion” is nothing more or less than a rejection of mysticism in the sense that we have defined it. The question remains, how does one manage to see the holy in the common, and how is the whole of life to be transformed unless there is, to begin with, some inner experience corresponding to a mystical awareness? You cannot simply tell people to see the holy, or point it out to them, and no New Theology, however radical, is going to transform the whole of life. If people cannot find ultimate reality in Jesus Christ, they are not going to find it in Tillich. It could be argued that more churchiness is just what is needed. Robinson of course had no intrinsic objection to mysticism; on the contrary, he was merely facing the fact that most people cannot achieve the state.

Or could not, the drug movement would say.

If everybody in the world would take LSD tonight, under the proper conditions, it is possible that tomorrow there would be millions more of the praying type.

Here, then, in its full scope, is LSD’s challenge to New Theology.

As for New Theology’s own challenge to orthodoxy, the traditionalists have taken comfort in the fact that Robinson since publication of his book has more or less dropped that phrase Ground of Being. The idea seems to be that this was some sort of capitulation, and a collective sigh of relief was heard. Robinson indicated to me, however, that he had tended to “shear off” the phrase simply because “it obviously seems to cause so much misunderstanding.”

A great many people, he said, “have assumed this is a purely impersonal phrase and is the enemy of belief in God as in any sense a personal reality.” That of course is not the way he interpreted it himself. I asked him if the book still stood, or if he had changed his viewpoint in any fundamental area. “I think basically it still stands,” he said. He had not in fact read the book since it was last in proof. “But I wouldn’t say that radically I have regretted anything I have written, or changed it.”

When they were not denouncing him for heresy, the bishop’s critics tried the opposite tack. After all, he was saying nothing more than the church itself had always said. It was old stuff. During a public debate at Wabash, for example, Professor J. V. Langmead Casserley of Seabury-Western Theological Seminary declared the bishop was “profoundly in harmony with the deepest theological opinions of the church.” The bishop was being honest to God perhaps, but dishonest to history. Well, the bishop never said his stuff was new. He did say it was not being communicated—a fact attested to, perhaps, by the incredible spark-to-tinder response his book produced in the pews. Robinson has been criticized for fogginess, as noted, and Casserley charged he had “befuddled the minds of men both inside and outside the church to a quite unprecedented degree.” But there was one man at least for whom the bishop’s meaning seemed perfectly clear. And that was Thomas J. J. Altizer.

In a talk I had with him, Altizer had no difficulty whatever in assessing the bishop—as an opponent. He identified Robinson as one who was trying desperately to salvage the core of traditional Christian theology, which Altizer rejected. It was rather astonishing to find the bishop emerging, from one point of view, as a kind of Red Cross Knight and defender of the faith. To mix the metaphor, and possibly to strain it, he might be described as a man trying to jettison excess cargo from an aircraft which was dropping perilously close to those peaks identified on theological charts as Altizer and Hamilton, Nietzsche and Sartre.

From another point of view, however, it might be said that Robinson opened the door—and Altizer slipped in.

THE DEATH OF GOD

Thomas J. J. Altizer, the Young Turk of Christian theology, had gee-whizzed to fame on the strength of a single four-letter word. He was holding on to that word for dear life. And then, for one breathless moment, it appeared as if he might let it dribble through his fingers.

The word was “dead.” As in “God is Dead.”

The occasion was a symposium at Northwestern University, in the Chicago suburb of Evanston, where Altizer appeared on a panel with Walter Kaufmann, the Princeton philosopher, and Harvey Cox, author of *The Secular City*. Altizer had become the most controversial spokesman for the ultra-radical Death of God theology. Again, this was in

1966, shortly before my meeting with Bishop Robinson at Wabash, and I attended the symposium in hopes of discovering just what it was that Altizer had been trying to say.

Nobody seemed certain. As it developed, nobody had really asked him before. After the symposium I did ask him, and later I had a lengthy interview with him following his return to Atlanta and his duties as associate professor of Bible and religion at Emory University. If nothing else, Altizer made it perfectly clear exactly what he meant.

He arrived at the Northwestern symposium in a canary-yellow sport coat, black slacks, ice-blue shirt, flame-red tie, baby-blue wool socks, and brown brogans. He had tousled black hair and looked a little like the movie actor Glenn Ford. When he addressed the audience, however, he no longer looked like Glenn Ford. He looked and sounded like one of Plato's divine madmen. He had charisma, and lots of it. And what he said was pure poetry. Everybody agreed it was poetry, because it was very beautiful, and nobody could understand it.

"I apologize for my presence," he said. "I'm incapable of speaking about man. I find myself almost speechless. Almost the only word that may be spoken about man in our time is a word that attempts to express the darkness of ourselves. And this darkness is the body of the dead God.... If faith can but whisper in our world, it can take a step toward life. And we can never take that step until we truly know that God is Dead. We can say with thanksgiving, 'God is Dead. Thank God.'"

It was not only what Altizer said; it was his tremulous, Margaret O'Brien way of saying it. A professor winced, turned and whispered, "How can he bear to do it—strip himself naked this way?" "He's sick," said one. "Inspired," said another.

Altizer had been described as speaking at times in mystical overtones, but that did not go far enough. Rather, he presented the image of a full-fledged, card-carrying visionary—a profane mystic haunted by an apocalyptic vision of cosmic dimensions. At one point, responding to a sharply worded question, he told the audience in Billy Budd-ish frustration: "Sometimes I feel like a man who stutters and can't speak. Sometimes I feel like a man in a room where a foreign and untranslatable language is being spoken—but he has to speak nevertheless."

As he did speak, his references to the dead God became even more enigmatic. They were voiced in the present and future tenses. "God is." "God will." As it turned out later, this was significant.

Before the audience, Altizer did tend to express himself in arcane symbolism. But later, at a student bull session, a different Altizer took the floor. This was Altizer the scholar, Altizer the theologian, Altizer the metaphysician. The vision was switched off, intellect was switched on, and Altizer himself was no longer obscure; he was instead a thoughtful man who was doing his best to express an obscure idea: like a mathematician who has

been asked to describe the taste of peppermint. He was friendly, amusing, intelligent, and eager to communicate. He knew what he meant; questioned carefully, he said what he meant—and he did not mean what most people had seemed to think he meant. Listening to him, it appeared increasingly ironic that Altizer had somehow come to be identified with that mainstream phenomenon known as the New Theology, in so far as that refers to the secularization of the church and a this-worldly involvement in social problems; it seemed even more ironic that the New Theology had come to be identified with Altizer. This was a gigantic error, Altizer agreed. Grinning, puffing on a fragrant pipe, he explained his vision.

What it boiled down to was a highly unorthodox interpretation of the Incarnation: of the Word becoming flesh in the person of Jesus Christ. What Altizer was talking about was transcendence, and immanence.

We have said it is possible to conceive of God as both transcendent and immanent, and we recalled the analogy to the relationship between Shakespeare and the characters in *The Tempest*. Shakespeare obviously is immanent in his characters, since they owe their existence to him; but he also transcends them, in the sense that they do not exhaust his being: he has a separate existence above and beyond them. Altizer began with a fairly traditional view of God somewhat along these lines, accepting the idea of a transcendent-immanent divinity. And he also accepted the Incarnation as a historic fact: God manifesting himself in the world in the flesh of Jesus.

For years, however, he brooded upon the full significance of this event. He immersed himself in a study of Eastern mysticism, Nietzsche, Hegel, William Blake—and he thought hard about the Incarnation. Then, one day while he was reading, it came to him. It all fell in place.

The Incarnation happened.

So did the Crucifixion.

But not the Resurrection!

This idea is the essence of Altizer's theology. God had incarnated himself in the body of Jesus; but when Jesus died, God did not "jump back up into heaven." He remained in the world. He is in the world now. What God did, said Altizer, was "empty himself of transcendence." He became totally immanent in the universe. He became part of the universe. But he did not, immediately, become all of the universe.

At first he was immanent only in Jesus. Since the death of Jesus he has continued to embed himself deeper and deeper into the fabric of the universe. No longer transcendent in any sense, he is in the process even now of becoming ever more immanent.

Jesus, to Altizer, was "the original Christ." Christ was that point where God en-

tered the world. And Altizer retains the word Christ to signify the God who remains in the world, becoming more and more a part of it. The word "spirit" might do just as well, said Altizer. But for various reasons he would prefer to "stick with the word Christ."

More often than not, however, Altizer in his conversation spoke neither of Christ nor of spirit. He kept right on speaking of "God." When this was called to his attention, he conceded: "In a certain sense I treat Christ as God. But the word bears an entirely different meaning from the dominant meaning of God. That's why I resist the word God." He resisted it all evening with little success.

Altizer described the movement toward greater immanence as an evolutionary, creative process; it is leading toward a final Christ: an apocalyptic new godhead in which God will be all there is. Altizer spoke of "a new world that will dawn at the end of the old world." He spoke of "a totally new creation—new man, new world, new life." When he speaks of the death of God, said Altizer, he is speaking of the passage from transcendence to immanence. Eventually the new and different godhead will be realized, he said. But even now, before it is realized, man can rejoice in a new sense of freedom.

Man finds himself in darkness, said Altizer. "And this darkness is the body of the dead God." But once the darkness is recognized for what it is, it can be accepted. "Only a rotting body in a tomb," said Altizer. "It can't bind us to it, once we have known it truly as an empty darkness. Then, at that moment, we can truly be liberated from it." The transcendent power has ended, and man is free.

Shakespeare has entered his own play, Altizer seemed to be saying. Eventually he will be the play—and then he will write a final act which incorporates the preceding five but is wholly different.

"I make the Incarnation everything," Altizer summed up, adding, necessarily, that he gives the rest of the Bible "only a very limited allegiance." His interpretation of the Incarnation was entirely consistent, he said. "Christ has come, and you hurl him back into heaven. This is a complete betrayal of Christ. Only by seeing God's death in Christ can we be true to Christ."

At the bull session, the Northwestern students fired questions at Altizer, and, as they did so, it was possible to trace many of his concepts back to their sources. A wholly immanent God, after all, is scarcely a new idea: it is the idea of Eastern pantheism, pure and simple, and Altizer conceded he was talking pantheism. The God of the East is "very real," he said, and "infinitely more realistic" than the traditional Western God. One could opt for this God, he said. But there is one important sense in which Altizer would distinguish his position from the Eastern view, and we shall return to this point in a later chapter. Briefly, for now, Altizer's theology suggests that the cosmic process is evolutionary—that it is leading up to something—while Eastern metaphysics supposedly rejects the evolutionary hypothesis. The East "looks backward to a primordial totality" (according to Altizer), and Altizer on the other hand "looks forward" to an eschatological totality

which is utterly transformed and aware of itself.

Altizer of course had taken his God-is-Dead tag from Nietzsche, and the new sense of freedom echoed Blake's mystical emphasis upon man: his delight in man's liberty and his rejection of any transcendent authority, his absorption with Jesus and his denial of God.

Altizer acknowledged his debt to Blake and Nietzsche.

There also seemed nothing new in the idea of an evolving spirit. That derived from Hegel, as Altizer was pleased to point out. But it also sounded very much like Henri Bergson's vital force. As a matter of fact, it sounded even more like Teilhard de Chardin's view of the universe. Again, we shall have more to say about this in another chapter, and we shall limit ourselves for the moment to only one aspect of Teilhard's metaphysics.

Teilhard, a Jesuit paleontologist, had proposed an evolutionary theory based upon the increasing complexification of inert matter. He proposed that mankind was moving toward the realization of a new godhead which Teilhard referred to as the Omega point. And he saw in this process the hand of God.

The key to it all: the Incarnation.

Teilhard described evolution as "a prodigious biological operation—that of the Redeeming Incarnation." He added: "As early as in St. Paul and St. John we read that to create, to fulfill and to purify the world is, for God, to unify it by uniting it organically with himself."

And how would God unify the world? Teilhard answered: "By partially immersing himself in things, by becoming 'element,' and then, from this point of vantage in the heart of matter, assuming the control and leadership of what we now call evolution." This immersion, said Teilhard, was through Christ—who "put himself in the position (maintained ever since) to subdue under himself . . . the general ascent of consciousness into which he inserted himself.... And when he has gathered everything together and transformed everything, he will close in upon himself and his conquests, thereby rejoining, in a final gesture, the divine focus he has never left. Then, as St. Paul tells us, God shall be all in all."

I asked Altizer about this, and Altizer acknowledged his IOU to Teilhard. (He suggested later that I may have overwritten the amount a bit, but I doubt it.) He largely accepted Teilhard's view, Altizer said. It represented "the most important theological work in a long time."

That seemed to leave Altizer with little to call his own, apart from his unique view of the Incarnation. Even there, he appeared to be separated from Teilhard by a single word: "partially."

The students jumped on what was left.

“That which was God,” said Altizer, “will finally be real and present again in a wholly new form—if you like, in Teilhard’s Omega point.”

Well, then, God wasn’t really dead, was he? Altizer more or less conceded that “transformed” might be more accurate—that the passage from transcendence to immanence meant “a totally new form of the godhead.” “So we shouldn’t panic?” asked a student.

“Well,” said Altizer, “the Christian church should. Because I’m saying that everything they stand for is dead.” Pressed again on his word choice, Altizer said of God: “I think he’s dead in a very crucial way . . . in his original divine form. Everything the Christian has called God is dead.” All this sounded remarkably close to the minimal concession that theologians had been trying to wring from Altizer for some time. God lives, but man’s concept of him is outdated. In my subsequent interview with him, after his return to Georgia, Altizer picked up his word and ran with it again: a less drastic word might fail to make the point, he said—and, as a newspaperman, I could certainly appreciate this. Suppose that first story coming out of Atlanta had begun: “A theologian here says God is immanent.” The story would never have come out of Atlanta in the first place; the complex and productive arguments behind the catchword might never have seen the light, and Altizer, at best, would be an obscure Dixie heretic.

The word was not important really. What seemed to upset the Northwestern students far more was Altizer’s fundamentally apocalyptic view of the world. Once understood, Altizer appeared to stand in direct contradiction to the radical theology his name had come to dominate—because the main thrust of that theology had probably been messianic and pragmatic.

Radical theology is a big tent, and it has sheltered other theologians who also have said that God is Dead. But these others have not meant that God is Dead in Altizer’s sense—nor indeed have they really meant that God is Dead in any sense. Some of the people who are associated with this phrase have meant to say simply that the word God is dead; they have abandoned the word as a semantic wreck which means all things to all men, and they have tried to clarify the concept through linguistic analysis. Others have studied God talk as a cultural phenomenon, asserting that man creates God in his own image, so to speak—that his idea of God is molded by his cultural prejudices—and they have tried to identify the real divinity which exists perhaps behind the man-made idols.

Still others have meant that God is hidden or mysterious, as Job found him to be, beyond the power of human comprehension, and they have called upon us to abandon the vain effort to understand God metaphysically, recommending instead that we do God’s work by seeking social justice here on earth.

Still another school appears to derive its inspiration largely from Bonhoeffer. Its

advocates speak of God as absent in the sense that modern man no longer is capable of experiencing God: the reality of God has somehow gone dead on him.

But absence is not the same as death, and Altizer's fellow radical William Hamilton, for example, has referred to "our waiting for God," implying that God perhaps will one day return: it may be that he has simply withdrawn for a time, in order that we may achieve our adulthood in Bonhoeffer's "world come of age." In one of his essays, Hamilton said he followed Bonhoeffer in rejecting religion—which is to say, "any system of thought or action in which God or the gods serve as fulfiller of needs or solver of problems." Hamilton described radical theology as a movement from the church to the world—a letting go of God's hand, as it were.

And he added: "This combination of a certain kind of God-rejection with a certain kind of world-affirmation is the point where I join the death of God movement.... If God is not needed, if it is to the world and not God that we repair for our needs and problems, then perhaps we may come to see that he is to be enjoyed and delighted in.... Our waiting for God, our godlessness, is partly a search for a language and a style by which we might be enabled to stand before him once again, delighting in his presence."

In other words, we won't come home again until we have made it all by ourselves in the big city, or rather the big cosmos—and then won't Father be proud of us? Then we can sit on the front-porch swing together and trade stories, man to man, and really get to know each other. No more of this writing home for money; enough of this juvenile dependency relationship: Andy Hardy is growing up. We are falling into parody here, but it is not our intention to poke fun; we are merely trying to communicate a rather difficult idea, somewhat in the manner of an editorial-page cartoonist. Hamilton, in any case, has probably been the best-known Death of God theologian next to Altizer, and Hamilton clearly has not been saying the same thing that Altizer has been saying.

Altizer really stands by himself. Only he has taken a position which might be construed to imply an actual Death of God, and even in his case a stretch of the imagination is required to justify that word Death. He is in fact talking about the Transformation of God. Nevertheless, Altizer has been the only Death of God theologian to propose a really radical metaphysics. He has been the only one to suggest that an actual change has occurred in the nature or ontology of God. The orthodox atheist says that God never existed in the first place. Bishop Robinson and the demythologizers say we ought to change our ideas about God. Altizer alone says that God himself has changed.

Altizer also rejects the idea that theology has anything to do with social action. In fact he scoffs at the idea, and he ridicules the secularizers who are trying to make the church "relevant." ("Suddenly the church had something to do.") He is not against good works, of course; but he feels that the secularizers are simply putting old wine into new bottles, and Altizer wants a new wine. He can argue, and does, that good works have nothing to do with the relevance of the church; he can argue, and does, that the business of theologians is theology; he can argue, and does, that only he and a few others have

been doing theology. Harvey Cox is a physician, Altizer is a metaphysician. Only Altizer has been asking ultimate questions about the nature of God and reality.

The secularizers have been responding to history and to social forces, and many people, missing his meaning, have supposed that Altizer is doing the same thing. They interpret his message as a kind of existential reaction to the modern world and the impact of technology; they think he is this-worldly, as the secularizers are. But that is wrong. Altizer did not start with the world, he said. He started with his vision. That is what he is talking about, and that is what concerns him: not the world as such, but a vision of the world.

Altizer at Northwestern fulminated against other-worldliness. He implied he was this-worldly, since after all he had equated God with this world. It seemed fair, however, to put him in his own category and describe him instead as inner-worldly.

He told the Northwestern students that civil rights was a “phony nineteenth-century issue” as far as church relevance was concerned. In fact, he said, since divine authority had collapsed (since the transcendent deity was dead), there was absolutely no basis left for moral decision-making. “A Christian can’t make decisions on Viet Nam,” he said. Nor had a Christian much to hope for at the moment. There was, said Altizer, no messianic hope for “this world, this history, this society.” There was only the apocalyptic hope for “the total transformation of all things.”

“Suppose I accept your dead God?” said a co-ed. “Where do I get my Brownie points?”

Altizer could offer her only Omega points—and a sense of freedom to do something or other. Whatever she wanted to, apparently. He did not offer the God-is-love message of Bishop Robinson and the secularizers. In several hours, in fact, the word love never came up. Just that other word.

Altizer returned to Atlanta, and we later had the following conversation:

Q. Let me see if I understand your viewpoint correctly, from what you said the other night. You believe, do you not, that there once was a transcendent God?

A. Yes.

Q. Was this God wholly transcendent, or was he also immanent in the world?

A. Both transcendent and immanent.

Q. Did he create the world?

A. This gets more difficult theologically. I do not believe in a literal creation or

creation story. Frankly, I haven't worked this out. It's merely tentative. But I think in terms of a kind of evolution of the cosmos. There was an original totality in which all things were one—no separation between nature, man, and God. And out of this totality there evolved the world or the cosmos as a distinct entity—and also God. I think in a certain sense God appears as creator in conjunction with the world's coming to exist apart from God.

Q. As I understand it, you believe God emptied himself of transcendence and became immanent in the world—that he incarnated himself in the person of Jesus. That sounds orthodox, to a point. But you stop with the Incarnation. You reject the Resurrection. You say, "God did not jump back up into heaven." You say he stayed right here in the world after the Crucifixion. Is that correct?

A. Correct. I believe the fullness, the totality of God passed into Christ, moving ever more deeply and fully and comprehensively into the world, flesh, consciousness, and experience.

Q. Why did God decide to do this?

A. He didn't decide. I understand the Incarnation as implicit and essential in the whole process of cosmic movement. There was no arbitrary point where a decision was reached.

Q. So God is no longer transcendent but is immanent right now in the world?

A. That's right....

Q. But in what is he immanent? In mankind?

A. I wouldn't say only mankind. As I told you at Northwestern, I reverence Teilhard's vision and largely accept it.

Q. By that, I take it you mean God is immanent in the cosmos as a whole?

A. Really yes, in the entire cosmos.

Q. You speak of Jesus as the original Christ. Do you mean by that there have been other, latter-day Christs?

A. Originally the Incarnation was in the man Jesus. And then, following the Crucifixion, Christ progressively enters the fullness of history and experience, ever more fully and comprehensively becoming actual in the world . . . a forward movement . . . Christ becoming ever more actual, ever more real, ever more incarnate.

Q. You mean this is an evolutionary process that isn't finished yet?

A. I like to think of this immanence itself as a gradual process. God once was real and actual as a transcendent lord. He negated himself. Nevertheless, his epiphany or manifestation as lord continues to linger in human experience, and it has a certain reality in that experience. I call this the dead body of God. It's real in human experience. And it will continue to be real until it is totally negated by the total dawning of the incarnate Christ.

Q. You mean there are parts of the cosmos in which Christ is not yet wholly incarnate?

A. Yes.

Q. All this sounds rather like pantheism. Is it?

A. I think it is . . . in the same sense that Teilhard's vision is. In the cosmic process, it's a kind of dynamic pantheism— God ever becoming other than he was in the past— but nevertheless pantheism in that God eventually will be all in all. Call it a dynamic-process pantheism.

Q. Could your immanent God in any sense be interpreted to mean the Holy Ghost?

A. Possibly. I'd almost be willing to use the word spirit. I'd be willing. In part I do. It's just that this word spirit is so kicked around these days. I'd rather stick with the word Christ.

Q. But doesn't all this say something entirely different from God is dead? You keep speaking of God in the present tense and the future tense. You agreed at Northwestern, I believe, that transformed—completely transformed—was perhaps more accurate than dead. That it was the church's concept of God that was utterly dead. Isn't that what you said at Northwestern?

A. Well, I also want to say the transcendent lord is dead. He's become totally immanent, totally flesh, totally world. If I just speak of transformation, I fear the whole point will be lost. I'm really saying that the God a Christian prays to and worships is dead.

Q. Dead? You start with a transcendent God and you end up with an immanent God. It seems to me you've killed the adjective, not the noun. The noun is God, and the noun remains.

A. Yes. All right. But it doesn't remain in the sense that it still is what it was before. That which God has become is wholly other. And there is, to my knowledge, no form of Christian doctrine that admits or asserts this—that God has decisively transformed himself. I think God as God has died, and God has passed into Christ. And he lives in Christ . . . but only lives in Christ himself. If you like, God the father is dead.

Q. Would you call yourself an atheist?

A. Yes. I do.

Q. The question arises, how do you know all this? I believe you have stated that it came to you one day while you were reading in the University of Chicago library. Could you describe the nature of your experience?

A. That must be about ten years ago now. It was the summer of 1955, I guess. I was reading Erich Heller's essay on Nietzsche and Rilke. It was a very intense personal experience. I'd been thinking about these things for years, of course. Suddenly I was overwhelmed.... I felt it. I sensed it. And once having sensed it, I've never been able to lose that sense.

Q. I assume this wasn't something you arrived at by a purely rational process, from empirical evidence. Would it be fair to call it a revelation?

A. I'm afraid that would mislead too many people. I think this theological position is simply a consistent consequence of thinking fully and radically about the meaning of the Incarnation. Once you grant that God fully and finally became man in Jesus Christ, you can largely think through this whole thing. Also, it's rooted in what I believe to be modern and contemporary Christian experience and thinking. And I employ people like Blake and Nietzsche as spokesmen for this radical Christian vision. I base my work on theirs.

Q. You often speak of your vision. Wasn't this really a personal vision you had?

A. Let's put it this way. I believe there does in fact exist a great body of materials of various kinds that reflect and embody a modern radical Christian vision. For example, the works of William Blake. I haven't had these visions. I'm no visionary. I seek to be an interpreter of them. Then there's also Hegel's logic as a conceptual expression of the same thing. You can build on the vision and think it through. Hegel allows you to see how Blake's vision is really a consistent resolution of the Christian faith.

Q. But you didn't start with Hegel. Wouldn't you say this understanding of yours came originally from a non-rational source?

A. Oh yes. Every kind of understanding comes originally from a source other than the empirical, the rational. I'd include Freud and Marx in that category.

Q. Would it be fair, then, to describe your vision as basically mystical in nature?

A. There is a higher vision; or, if you like, a radically profane mystical vision. There is such a thing as a modern mystical vision, yes. But it's not the same as traditional [otherworldly] mysticism. It's radically profane. It's directed to the here and now—to

life, flesh, energy.

Q. You told the students the other night you couldn't help them make up their minds on Viet Nam and other issues. You said your view provided no basis for moral decision-making. What did you mean?

A. Well, basically this. My view does not lead to an ethical system or set of moral laws. I don't think anyone can think responsibly about ethical problems today. Man has lost the ability.

Q. You said civil rights was a phony nineteenth-century issue. What did you mean by that?

A. The problem itself, it seems to me, is basically a matter of a group of people, Negroes, entering bourgeois, middle-class society. And that basically is an eighteenth- or nineteenth-century problem. It's an old problem, not a problem peculiar to the twentieth century. I think the church has falsely prided itself on being able to speak relevantly on this issue, when it's not really a contemporary issue at all. Further, we are now moving into a phase of the problem that's highly technical and modern. And as we do, the church will have increasingly less and less to say. It will have to be solved by technicians basically—by economists and sociologists.

Q. You mean the church shouldn't speak out on the issue?

A. No, that's not the point. The church should not pride itself on being relevant. These church people congratulate themselves. They say, "See how relevant the church is." And I think that's a great illusion.

Q. Are you saying there's no teleological or ultimate basis for any kind of a morality at all?

A. All I'm saying is, as far as I can see right now, there is no source of moral or human insight into contemporary human and social problems. This is a period of terrible darkness we're going through. Either there is no basis for morality or I just can't see it. Nobody else can see it either. But I think it will come. I hope it will.

Q. Shouldn't clergymen involve themselves in civil rights marches?

A. Oh sure, sure. But we've reached the point already where there aren't going to be any civil rights marches. There won't be any role for churchmen to play. Their basic job was to identify the problem, to attract public attention. And now they've done that.

Q. And now they have another job?

A. That's the great problem. What is that job? I think the church has to be totally

reformed.

Q. Until you came along, the mainstream of Christian upheaval seemed partly at least a reaction to social forces—Bonhoeffer reacting to the Nazis, Cox to urbanization, Robinson to secularization. The reformers seemed to be calling for social involvement and more or less suspending judgment on the fine points of theology. That is, they seemed to start with the world. But you seem to start with this inner vision of yours. Is that a fair statement?

A. Yes. It's fair to say I started with the vision rather than the world.

Q. And your vision should in no way be interpreted as a call to social action, to solve the problems of the world?

A. That's right. That's not for me. But I don't want to say it can't involve social action. Each one must find his own way. It's a new kind of freedom if you like. This is why the Death of God is pretty crucial. There's no longer any kind of divine law to follow. It's no longer there.

Q. How would you differentiate yourself from people like Harvey Cox and Bishop Robinson, who say Christians should seek God by involving themselves directly in the problems of the world?

A. The people I call secularists, they're basically church reformers. They're reacting to a form of Christian religiosity which has turned itself completely away from our world. They want basically to restructure the form of the church, to make the church relevant. They're not concerned with transforming the heart of the Christian gospel. They think that's the same, and that's given, always. I myself, and Hamilton and others, belong to a radical group who believe the very heart of the Christian center has got to be transformed. The transcendent God the church has worshiped is no more. One difference is, Cox is not really a theologian. He's not interested in constructing a theological vision or system. Robinson, too. I'm concerned with a full theological understanding of contemporary faith.

Q. In other words, you're more metaphysical?

A. Yes. Except that word is such a . . . it makes people see red. I'm not a Thomist or anything like that. But I am concerned with an ultimate vision, with a full understanding of faith in the world today. Teilhard was metaphysical in this sense.

Q. As one of the students asked the other night, "Where do I get my Brownie points?" What good does your vision do, and what's in it for me? Isn't it just morbid introspection, this naming of the darkness?

A. I think it's liberating to know God is Dead. Otherwise, inevitably, consciously

or unconsciously, we will look upon reality as being something alien. Something we can't really know. We'll be victims of it, slaves of it, because it's mysterious. To know God is Dead is to be liberated from the threat of an unknown world, the threat of mystery.

Q. What is the nature of the light you say you see burning beyond the darkness?

A. That dawns in accordance with the degree with which darkness is unveiled. And it's a light that makes possible freedom from oppression right now. To the extent that we're liberated from darkness, we are able to give ourselves to life. And life itself becomes light. Darkness becomes light.

Q. This ultimate consummation we're moving toward—is the nature of it predestined? Or is the evolutionary process creative, in the Bergsonian sense?

A. Something like the latter. Except that everything that happens in the world will be a part of that final Omega point.

Q. You said the other night that God in a certain sense remains transcendent. What did you mean?

A. We were speaking in the context of Judaism. I think the Jew can indeed know a transcendent God. The Jew lives in a kind of eternal covenant with God, and he can preserve this because he lives in exile—because he is not totally involved in our history.

Q. How can this be? Are you saying there are two Gods, a Jewish God who's alive and a Christian God who's Dead?

A. The Jew actually is in communion with that ancient epiphany of God—has preserved and perpetuated that moment in faith.

Q. But you said that was over. Are you saying Jews worship a God who isn't there—a false God?

A. It's a false God as far as the Christian is concerned. But I see no reason for the Christian to attack it as such. What must be attacked are the forms of Judaism that maintain themselves within Christianity. That's the real danger.

Q. But is it a false God as far as the Jew is concerned? Are you simply saying the Jew has a right to worship as he pleases?

A. No. I think It's possible for the Jew actually to be in communion with this God. Christians must be totally immersed in history. Jews don't have to be. They're in exile.

Q. I think there was another sense in which you said God remains transcendent. You were debating the point with a philosophy major, and finally you agreed with him.

A. Oh! The problem there was, he was using transcendent in a different sense—to refer to something beyond the given, beyond the brute actuality of experience. He was using it in terms of vision. That's in a sense transcendent. In that sense, everything I say is transcendental.

Altizer said he represents a far more basic challenge to orthodox Christianity than the secularizers do, and no doubt he does—for he represents that influx of Eastern ideas we talked about: he represents pantheism. And pantheism is in the air, no question about that. The doctrine of transcendence is challenged today as never before, and in Altizer's theology—as in LSD cultism—Eastern immanence is given full and final expression. In one of his articles, Altizer called upon the American theologian to “cast off his German tutors” and “open himself both to the religious world of the East and to the deeper sensibility of the Western present.” He added: “From the East we may once more learn the meaning of the sacred.... We can encounter in the East a form of the sacred which Christianity has never known, a form which is increasingly showing itself to be relevant to our situation.”

Obviously, the leap to the East is just as evident in radical theology as it is in the drug movement, at least in so far as this implies a leap from transcendence to immanence—and if Altizer has been the only important theologian so far to embrace pantheism without reservation, less radical radicals have been embracing it with reservations. On a superficial level at least, it is not much of a jump from Robinson's position to Altizer's (which is not to imply that Altizer derives from Robinson; in fact, Altizer was publishing his views for a non-popular reader ship several years before *Honest to God* saw print), and radical theology on the whole can be characterized essentially as a movement in the direction of immanence.

It is significant perhaps that Harvey Cox, that squarest of all the radicals, was able to defend transcendence at Northwestern only in a very limited way. He suggested it was “too early” to foreclose the possibility of a transcendent God; the discussion, he said, should “remain open.” It could be that man is simply incapable of answering the question one way or the other.

Once the shock effect has worn off, the Death of God slogan may lose much of its appeal, and Altizer perhaps will suffer an eclipse. Once understood, his apocalyptic message is not likely to capture the imagination of this messianic Peace Corps generation, and his unique view of the Incarnation is subject to considerable criticism. To some degree at least, Altizer has owed his success to the fact that few people have actually grasped his meaning—the attacks against him have not been well informed—and, from one point of view, the best way to attack him is to explain him fully.

But the loss of an unfortunate slogan will not put an end to the radical examination of transcendence, and Altizer's path to immanence is not the only one.

Altizer is both in and out of the radical mainstream. He is in it so far as he leans

toward immanence; he is out of it so far as he rejects the messianic hope for this world in the here and now. Particularly is he out of it in his apparent rejection (or neglect) of a primary essence or condition of Being which might provide the basis for an ethical system. This essence or condition has meanwhile been given its due by the drug movement and by the bishop of Woolwich—and it also is central to that emerging phenomenon which is sometimes described as humanistic psychology.

HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY

It is said that Freud had an almost pathologic fear of metaphysics. According to Jung, Freud was appalled by the “occult” implications he encountered in his exploration of the human psyche. Probing ever deeper into the mysteries of the unconscious region, he heard whispers perhaps from that unseen world William James talked about—and they frightened him.

Freud confessed to him, said Jung, “that it was necessary to make a dogma of his sexual theory because this was the sole bulwark of reason against a possible ‘outburst of the black flood of occultism.’” Consider, for example, the idea of intrauterine memories, or recollections of life in the womb. If carried further this might suggest the possibility at least of pre-uterine memories—which in turn might lend some support to the Eastern doctrine of reincarnation. Freud refused to consider such implications, and this necessarily resulted in his negative attitude toward the unconscious, which he regarded as a sort of garbage heap for man’s brute instincts. As a consequence, said Jung, psychology became for the most part “the science of conscious contents, measured as far as possible by collective standards.”

But suppose for a moment that the unconscious is something more than this. What if it is in fact man’s link to ultimate reality and the Ground of his Being?

Psychology has finally started to consider this possibility, urged on in part by psychedelic evidence. In a pioneering study, humanistic psychologist Abraham H. Maslow proposed that his fellow psychologists move Toward a Psychology of Being, and Maslow’s unorthodox theories have recently inspired something of a Freud is Dead movement. The development is comparable in many ways to the radical upheaval in theology, and Maslow might well be described as the Bonhoeffer or Robinson of psychology.

What does this mean, a psychology of Being?

Maslow began by agreeing in a sense with Robinson and disagreeing with Sartre. He began with the assertion that every man has “an essential biologically based inner nature.” This inner nature “is to some degree ‘natural,’ intrinsic, given, and, in a certain limited sense, unchangeable, or, at least, unchanging.” (That is to say, it is unconditional—from Robinson’s viewpoint, transcendent.) Moreover, it is not bad or evil: it is either neutral in character or positively good. Man therefore would do well to discover and develop it; rather than suppress it, he should follow it: he should live his life according to

its dictates. Psychology likewise should acknowledge it and seek to understand it.

Freudian psychology is preoccupied with pathology; it is primarily a sick psychology, or a psychology of sickness. But it fails to define health. Or rather it tends simply to equate healthy behavior with successful adjustment to the social environment, nothing more, and it regards conscience as a sort of learned response: an internalization of one's "shall" and "shall not" parents. It is situational and subjective. It does not suggest the existence of any values, goals, or ideals in any sense absolute, objective, or unconditional, and it does not provide for the possibility of an ultimate reality or ultimate state of Being.

On the other hand, Being psychology is a psychology of health. It defines healthy behavior in terms of successful adjustment to one's essential inner nature, and it regards conscience as the "unconscious or preconscious" perception of that nature. It affirms, of course, the existence (or potential existence) of an ultimate reality or state of Being, and it says, in effect, "to thine own Self be true." It does not ask what men do: it asks what they should do. It asks what men are, but it also asks what men might be and should become.

Being psychology indicates that man has a built-in potential, as it were, like the oak which is hidden in the acorn, and conscience is the intuitive awareness of that potential. The Freudian superego may also exist, but its demands are imposed from outside: from the society and the culture, transmitted by the parents. The conscience of Being, by comparison, is intrinsic; its demands are imposed from within, by the essential inner nature: it is an inner voice which insists that we be true to that nature, true to the future, true to the truth.

Being psychology, or B-psychology, is different from Deficiency psychology, or D-psychology. D-psychology studies sick people whose basic needs have not been satisfied—who are afflicted, so to speak, with psychic deficiency diseases. B-psychology studies healthy people whose basic needs have been satisfied—and who therefore can devote their energies to life, to the world, and to growth: to the actualization of their essential inner natures.

Maslow developed his theories in part by studying a class of healthy people he described variously as meta-motivated, growth-dominated, and self-actualizing. He also referred to this type as inner-determined rather than outer-determined, recalling the sociologist David Riesman's distinction between the inner-directed individualist and the other-directed conformist. He said further that self-actualizing people appear to be capable of a special kind of love and a special kind of cognition. These he termed B-love and B-cognition, as opposed to D-love and D-Cognition, the letters again standing for Being on the one hand and Deficiency on the other. What is more, he said, a capacity for B-love and B-cognition will sometimes enable a self-actualizer to achieve a special kind of experience—an intense, if fleeting, moment of utter joy and complete fulfillment. This Maslow called a "peak experience."

D-love is a selfish love in which the lover seeks primarily to satisfy his own needs; in short, it is I-It love. B-love is unselfish, non-possessive admiration for the Being of another person; in short, it is I-Thou love. Similarly, D-cognition can be summed up here as the I-It mode of perception and understanding, while B-cognition refers to an I-Thou view of the world.

In B-cognition during a peak experience, said Maslow, an object is not perceived in terms of use, purpose, or relation to anything else; it is perceived as a whole. "It is seen as if it were all there was in the universe, as if it were all of Being, synonymous with the universe." The B-cognizer becomes totally absorbed with the object to the exclusion of all else, and he admires it without comparing it, evaluating it, judging it, or desiring to possess it; above all, he does not rubricize the object, which means to say he does not attempt to classify it or put it in a category with other objects. The B-cognizer, moreover, is relatively "ego-transcending, self-forgetful, ego-less." He also is non-motivated in terms of future action; he regards the peak experience as a "self-validating" end in itself and not as the means to some future end.

A "very characteristic disorientation to time and space" occurs, and the B-cognizer finds himself, subjectively, outside of time and space. He is "most here-now, most free of the past and of the future." He is therefore "non-striving, non-needing, non-wishing." His perception is nondualistic, and he thus denies the existence of evil—or views it rather as "only a partial phenomenon, a product of not seeing the world whole and unified." Being as such is good, or neutral. And finally, the peak experience is beyond abstractions—including verbal abstractions. It cannot really be put into words, since it is after all a view of the whole, and words cannot express the whole.

B-psychology's description of a healthy person's peak experience sounds very much, of course, like James's description of mystical religious experience, Buber's description of I-Thou experience, the drug cultist's description of psychedelic experience, and the Zen Buddhist's description of satori. Maslow's essential inner nature, as we have already indicated, sounds very much like Tillich's Ground of Being and Bishop Robinson's transcendent or unconditional God. And the B-psychologist's attitude toward the unconscious would certainly appear to support the view of James and Jung. "Because the roots of ill health were found first in the unconscious," wrote Maslow, "it has been our tendency to think of the unconscious as bad, evil, crazy, dirty or dangerous, and to think of the primary processes as distorting the truth. But now that we have found these depths to be also the source of creativeness, of art, of love, of humor and play, and even of certain kinds of truth and knowledge, we can begin to speak of a healthy unconscious, of healthy regressions. . . . We can now go into primary process cognitions for certain kinds of knowledge, not only about the self but also about the world."

Maslow, unlike Robinson, did not attempt to say in so many words what man's essential inner nature might be. But a clue to his thought is provided perhaps by his expression of wonder at "the mystery of communication between alone-nesses via, e.g., intuition and empathy, love and altruism, identification with others, and homonymy in

general.” Maslow added: “We take these for granted. It would be better if we regarded them as miracles to be explained.”

The scientist Lecomte du Nouy expressed the same idea in his book *Human Destiny* when he pointed out that “the appearance of moral and spiritual ideas remains an absolute mystery.” How, then, are we to account for our “unaccountable aspirations”? The scientific unbeliever insists upon cause and effect—and then refuses to acknowledge any cause creating such effects as love, conscience, charity, and sacrifice. The cause is denied because it cannot be seen. Thus, as physicist David Bohm has noted, nineteenth-century positivists such as Mach held that the idea of atoms was meaningless and “nonsensical” because atoms could not then be observed. But even science will sometimes accept the evidence of things not seen, as in the case of the outer planets.

The existence of some unseen planet was first suspected because of perturbations in the orbit of Uranus; when a proper telescope was brought to bear, giant Neptune swam into view—and Pluto later was similarly discovered. So what would happen if we were to focus our attention on the phenomena of love and morality, searching in the same way for the source of these perturbations? What might swim into view in this case?

Evidence of an essential inner nature led Maslow to reconsider the possibility that mankind might be able to develop a humanistic morality or scientific ethic. As it is, Western morality tends to be legalistic and authoritarian; our basic rules of conduct are handed down from above, as it were, in the form of commandments, on tablets of stone, and we are expected to obey them without asking questions. Thou shalt not kill, for example. No doubt that is a very good law, and there is probably a very good reason for it—but we are not told what the reason is. Similarly, no particular reason is given for the less basic rules of conduct which are imposed upon us by mundane authority. As a general proposition, all in all, we are expected to behave this way or that way because God said so, or our parents said so, or Congress said so, or Emily Post said so.

The system does work, in a fashion, if we sense that the laws in question are for some reason good ones. Thus most of us feel intuitively that the law against killing is a good law, which explains why it has remained on the books for so many years in so many lands, and most of us therefore do not kill other people, unless of course we are told to by Congress or the President. But the system breaks down too, and especially so in an age of empiricism when people develop the disturbing habit of demanding a reason for everything. We are distressed, for example, when criminals and juvenile delinquents band together in gangs, make their own rules, and refuse to honor the laws of society. We wonder why it happens. But society itself is a gang—it is simply a very big gang—and its rules are no more sacrosanct than the Mafia’s unless some valid reason can be produced to recommend them: a reason, preferably, which will demonstrate that the rules as such are grounded in the very nature of things. This is why men have dreamed of discovering a “natural law” which is grounded in the nature of Being itself, demonstrably true and irrefutable: a law which no man could possibly deny, having once understood it.

Such a law indeed is central to the Tibetan concept of Dharmakaya. As the Evans-Wentz edition of the Tibetan Book of the Dead tells us: "Dharmakaya is the norm of all existence, the standard of truth, the measure of righteousness, the good law; it is that in the constitution of things which makes certain modes of conduct beneficial and certain other modes detrimental."

In the East, for instance, human compassion is a matter of elementary logic based upon the supposedly monistic character of mankind. "When you're cut, I bleed. Therefore, I had better see to it that you are not cut." In the West the idea of a natural law can be traced back to Plato's assertion that virtue and knowledge are the same thing: that all real virtue springs from knowledge alone. Saint Augustine perhaps was hinting at something of this sort when, addressing himself to God, he bemoaned the crimes of Sodom. "But how can men's insults touch you, who are undefiled? Or what injury can be committed against you, who cannot be hurt? But your vengeance is in that which men do against themselves, because when they sin against you, they are acting wickedly against their own souls, and iniquity gives itself the lie."

Robinson likewise in his New Morality was attempting to establish an ethic based on love, the Ground of Being, and he believed that this could be accomplished by de-mythologizing the legalistic Christian ethic. The West of course insists that the character of mankind is pluralistic and personal, not monistic and impersonal; in East and West alike, however, those who affirm the existence of a natural law are in fundamental agreement on one point: they all base their arguments on the existence of a primary state of Being. Natural morality is not possible unless Sartre was wrong and such a primary state of Being actually exists; it matters not in this case whether you refer to that state as Atman or as an essential inner nature. Here, then, we discover a critical point of convergence which brings together the drug movement, radical theology, B-psychology, and Eastern metaphysics.

Maslow, for his own part, conceded that all past attempts to realize a natural morality had failed. But he added that contemporary developments in psychology "make it possible for us for the first time to feel confident that this age-old hope may be fulfilled if only we work hard enough." If men knew what they really were like, and what they were meant to become, the very nature of their Being would emerge as "a court of ultimate appeal for the determination of good and bad." It would at last become possible to establish a system of "morals-from-within."

In the past, all efforts to establish such a system have been frustrated by man's apparent inability to determine what his essential inner nature actually is. It is all very well to say there is a primary state of Being—but how does one form any precise knowledge of it?

Maslow thought he now saw a way to solve this problem. The first step would be for psychology to abandon its exclusive interest in sickness. Let psychology turn its attention also to a study of health, and of ends and values as well. Specifically, let it study

the habits and attitudes of healthy, self-actualizing people: the growth-dominated B-cognizers and B-lovers who have peak experiences. Maslow said that “it looks as if there were a single ultimate value for mankind, a far goal toward which all men strive.”

All men to some degree are struggling to attain that goal, which is the realization of their essential inner nature; but the self-actualizers by comparison have the goal already in sight. Presumably, then, psychology could learn a good deal by keeping the self-actualizers under close observation—by examining, for example, the hedonic choices they make in the course of their daily lives: by taking careful note of the things that delight them. And why do this? Because, said Maslow, such people will automatically make the right choices. They will choose virtue just as we choose a dessert, because virtue delights them.

“They spontaneously tend to do right because that is what they want to do, what they need to do, what they enjoy . . .” To such self-disciplined people, said Maslow, we can safely say: “Do as you will, and it will probably be all right.” And if this sounds familiar, it may remind us of that Augustinian directive from which Robinson constructed his New Morality.

Through the self-actualizers, therefore, psychology can discover “which values men trend toward.” Indeed, said Maslow, “it is possible that we may soon even define therapy as a search for values.” This in turn calls to mind a cartoon which appeared in the *New Yorker*, I believe, quite a long time ago. A psychiatrist glares down at the free-associating patient on his couch and snarls, “You cur!” Or something to that effect. The idea seemed funny at the time, but in a sense it is just the sort of attitude Maslow has proposed. Psychology should start making value judgments. It should say: “Here is what it is like to be fully human.” “This is wrong.” “That is right.”

Maslow failed to dispose entirely of one problem: who decides what health is, and who chooses the self-actualizers? If such an all-wise person exists, then why bother with the self-actualizers? Why not study him instead? Again we meet one of those saber-toothed circles, and here again the matter might rest—if Maslow stood alone in the witness box. As we have already indicated, however, the case for a primary state of Being is bolstered by the supporting testimony of psychedelic experience, mystical experience, radical theology, and the Eastern movement as such. Coming together as they do, all of these give added weight to Maslow’s argument, just as Maslow’s argument gives added weight to them. Also, each of them provides as it were an additional laboratory tool with which to probe the unconscious—and thereby to test the assertions of B-psychology. It is not necessary to depend upon peak experience alone, or any one person’s definition of a peak experience.

The psychedelics would appear to be especially promising in this connection, and, in so far as it enables men to know themselves better, LSD makes a natural morality far more of a possibility than it has ever been before. There is some evidence that LSD in effect anesthetizes the Freudian superego—puts to sleep those internalized parents—

and thus allows the intrinsic conscience to take over.

If you grant the validity of a primary state of Being, what are the practical implications of this? What would a natural morality actually mean in terms of human conduct? The answer is obvious if you assume that the primary state is monistic in character—you're cut, I bleed—and this interpretation in fact suggests a possible distinction between law and justice. If mankind were a single man, and that man had a gangrenous arm, law would simply whack off the arm to save the man. Justice would first do all it could to save the arm. Justice would not be interested in punishing the arm, for the sake of punishment—and while justice itself might consent finally to radical surgery, it would do so only as a last resort. Law recognizes the integrity of the whole.

Justice recognizes the integrity of the whole, but it recognizes also the parts' participation in that whole. Monism therefore provides a firm basis for decision-making in interpersonal relationships. It is a question simply of how much you are willing to hurt yourself. Are the gains worth the pains—always remembering that the pains are really yours? (If Stalin had been a monist, for example, he might have hesitated over his decision to liquidate the kulaks.) Indeed, this does seem to be the direction in which our court system is presently moving, to the despair of many good citizens.

As a general observation, in fact, whatever our voiced convictions, it might be said that we act as if life were monistic. I am struck by this personally whenever I see a fire engine racing to a fire, or the United Nations in emergency session—whenever society mobilizes its resources in some dramatic fashion to protect the welfare of individuals or the common good. And what, for that matter, is the real meaning of our personal and social gregariousness?

But after all, it is possible to account for such phenomena without resorting to an unqualified monism. While it seeks to preserve the integrity of individual personality, Western religious tradition has been just as insistent that there are bonds which in some ineffable way unite us all. We are told this again now by radical theology, by B-psychology, and especially perhaps by the drug movement. Whether or not mankind is utterly monistic, psychedelic experience does seem to hint at a brotherhood which is something more than brotherhood—and to this extent it may help to provide a rationale for social action, including civil rights. As the LSD researcher Willis W. Harman has said in connection with those who somehow manage to break the spell of cultural hypnosis, whatever the means, a man who is privileged to look at ultimate reality will know thereafter from his own experience “that we are elements of a greater whole, and that what one does to another he does ineluctably to himself.”

A monistic awareness, qualified or not, might also explain why LSD has proved helpful in treating alcoholics, who say they no longer feel isolated from the rest of the world, and in easing the anguish of terminal patients, who have reported new insights into the real meaning of life, death, and immortality. In so far as it confirms an unconditional human nature, LSD might also be helpful in solving another philosophical prob-

lem. Implicit in the idea of a natural ethic based upon a primary state of Being is a possible validation of free will—as opposed to a mechanistic determinism. The modern argument for free will has been founded very often upon the science of quantum physics and Heisenberg’s famous Principle of Uncertainty or Indeterminacy.

Heisenberg said it is impossible for science to predict the behavior of an individual particle at the atomic level, since the very act of observation and measurement will influence the behavior of the particle. (This has been compared with the difficulty a blind man would encounter if he attempted to learn about a snowflake by touching one.)

But some physicists have gone even further; carrying uncertainty to the point of indeterminacy, they have asserted that individual particles actually behave in a chaotic, capricious, and lawless manner. You can never tell what a particular particle is going to do next, and thus there is no causality or determinism in the microcosmos. The laws of nature are derived only when you apply the theory of statistical probability to a vast number of particles; then individual capriciousness will cancel out, and it is possible to predict how matter will behave in the macrocosmos. Flip a coin once and it will come up either heads or tails. Flip it a million times and it will almost certainly come up heads a half-million times and tails a half-million times.

Some philosophers and theologians have seized upon this idea, finding in microcosmic anarchy a possible justification for the thesis that man himself has free will. This of course links free will inexorably to physics, and it is perhaps a rather dangerous position. In the first place, there are those who suggest that the lawlessness of the particles is only apparent; as Bohm has proposed, an explanation for microcosmic behavior may yet be discovered at some deeper level of causation below the atomic and subatomic.

And where would that leave free will, if not on a sawed-off limb? More to the point, as philosopher Ernst Cassirer has argued, ethics would surely be in a sorry position if it had to take refuge in the gaps of scientific knowledge—in a mere possibility which is, essentially, negative in nature. Should freedom be equated with causelessness? Is that the kind of ethic you would really prefer if you had your choice? Could you trust such an ethic, and could you trust any person whose actions were determined by a capricious whim? Or would you prefer instead an ethic which is grounded in reason, and would you rather do business with somebody whose conduct is determined by his essential inner nature? Describing Spinoza’s views on the subject, Cassirer wrote: “To act freely does not mean to act arbitrarily or without prior decision; it means rather to act in accordance with a decision which is in harmony with the essence of our reason. This essence and with it the specific priority of reason consists of the knowledge of the whole.” True ethical judgment, said Cassirer, does not put a high value on capricious behavior; rather, “it values a course of action that springs from the basic substratum of the personality and is firmly anchored in it.”

Natural morality is predicated of course on just such a substratum—on a primary state of Being—and it suggests in turn a kind of freedom we might describe as ontologi-

cal freedom. This has nothing to do with anarchy or lawlessness. It implies a freedom to be yourself—or more exactly, a freedom to become that which you were meant to be. In this sense, freedom for Beethoven would not mean a freedom to become a sailor or an architect or an outlaw: it would mean simply a freedom to become a composer of music. In the same sense, freedom for the acorn would be a freedom to become an oak tree—not a hibiscus or a sugar maple, but only an oak. Freedom, in other words, means the freedom to realize your essential inner nature, and Beethoven for example would be subject to a blind determinism only if his father, say, forced him to study medicine. Ontological freedom applies both to the individual and to the whole, and it is valid even if the whole should prove to be in fact monistic.

Here too Spinoza has spoken. If we are nothing more than parts of a whole which is in the process of realizing itself, we nevertheless contribute to that whole, each and every one of us. It is an expression of us, just as much as we are an expression of it. In so far as we partake of the whole, we each of us determine in part what the whole is and shall be. If we are cogs in a machine, we are not merely the servants of the machine: we each of us in part comprise the machine, and it is just as much subservient to us as we are subservient to it. In fact, we are the machine, and the machine is us. (What was it Bergson said? The universe is a machine for the making of God?) In so far as the whole is free, then we also are free—in so far as we partake of the whole.

The sense of a dictatorial determinism arises only when we fail to recognize our true identity or essential inner nature, and it matters not whether that identity is pluralistic or monistic. The sense of freedom arises with our awareness of our identity—of our destiny, if you will—and we recognize that we are free when we understand that we are responding either to our own inner nature or to the inner nature of a whole in which we partake. This perhaps is a deeper meaning of the saying “You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free.”

The truth is our essential inner nature, pluralistic or otherwise, and, to the extent that it provides us with a greater awareness of the truth, the psychedelic experience sets us free—as do also the peak and mystical experiences. Or so at least the argument might run.

In his important book *The Secular City*, Harvey Cox has asserted that “the era of metaphysics is dead” and that “politics replaces metaphysics as the language of theology.” Perhaps metaphysics is dead for Cox, who apparently subscribes to the doctrine of God’s hiddenness. But obviously it is very much alive for Altizer, for Bishop Robinson, for B-psychology, for the drug cults, for the Eastern movement. In this case Cox may have completely misread the signs of the times, for it appears far more likely that we are witnesses today to a significant rebirth of metaphysics.

As we have shown, even psychology is now asking ultimate ontological questions about the nature of Being. And perhaps it was inevitable that psychology should do this. As Tillich has indicated, there are two kinds of anxiety—neurotic and existential—and

only ontology can distinguish the one from the other. Neurotic anxiety is unreal, or rather has a misplaced object of attention, while existential anxiety is the result of a realistic analysis of the way things actually are. Clearly it is important to distinguish the two, and that is why Tillich complained about “the lack of an ontological analysis of anxiety and a sharp distinction between existential and pathological anxiety.”

Two decades ago, at the end of the war, Jacques Maritain wrote: “What is essentially needed is a renewal of metaphysics. . . . What is needed first and foremost is a rediscovery of Being, and by the same token a rediscovery of love. This means, axiomatically, a rediscovery of God. The existential philosophies which are today in fashion are but a sign of a certain deep want and desire to find again the sense of Being.”

He said further: “In perceiving Being Reason knows God.”

Those words have a prophetic ring now. A rediscovery of Being is central to the contemporary developments we have discussed, and from one point of view it might be said that man today is making another desperate effort to find his God again. But, as noted, the rediscovered God has seemed more often than not to be the Eastern God, and the new metaphysics has been deeply influenced by mysticism. Today’s radical ontology may therefore be subject to a Western-oriented criticism, including a major objection which was expressed some years ago, in another connection, by no one less than Tillich: “Mysticism,” said Tillich, “does not take seriously the concrete and the doubt concerning the concrete. It plunges directly into the ground of being and meaning, and leaves the concrete, the world of finite values and meanings, behind. Therefore it does not solve the problem of meaninglessness. In terms of the present religious situation this means that Eastern mysticism is not the solution of the problems of Western Existentialism, although many people attempt this solution.”

Buber raised the same point in rejecting the Eastern concept of a mystical union with the godhead: “What does it help my soul that it can be withdrawn anew from this world here into unity, when this world itself has of necessity no part in the unity—what does all ‘enjoyment of God’ profit a life that is rent in two? If that abundantly rich heavenly moment has nothing to do with my poor earthly moment—what has it then to do with me, who have still to live, in all seriousness still to live, on earth?”

This brings us back to questions we asked earlier. Are the East and the West diametrically opposed as they appear to be? Or are they both perhaps attempting to say the same thing, in different ways?

NATURE DOES NOT COUNT, SAID BERGSON. NEITHER DOES IT MEASURE.

The French philosopher, who died in 1941, has been harshly judged for his anti-intellectualism and for the essential role he assigned to intuition in man’s perception of ultimate reality. But his views on the limitations of the intellect have acquired a new significance today in light of the contemporary developments we have discussed in this

book, and they may help illuminate an important aspect of drug cultism and related movements. In Bergson, indeed, those movements may yet discover their metaphysician.

In criticizing intellect, and therefore science as well, Bergson asserted that intellect has its eyes turned always to the rear. By this he meant that the rational mind is concerned primarily with prediction based on past experience, or in other words with the anticipation that cause-and-effect events will repeat themselves in the future. And intellect favors this kind of perception because intellect is interested only in action, or in using things by acting upon them (I-It). Lecomte du Nouy made the same point, no doubt taking it from Bergson, when he commented, "The aim of science is to foresee, and not, as has often been said, to understand." Of course it does foresee. It is highly successful as far as its own limited goals are concerned, and the world's work could not be done without it.

But it does not understand, and philosophers delude themselves, said Bergson, "when they import into the domain of speculation a method of thinking made for action." Cause-and-effect prediction is valid enough in one sense, but the intellect in another sense has actually created cause and effect. It has done so by artificially dividing and, as it were, freezing in time a reality which in fact consists of a dynamic and indivisible Whole. The intellect cannot comprehend movement, and it cannot comprehend the Whole. In short, it cannot comprehend life.

Dividing? Freezing? What did Bergson mean? In the first instance, to borrow an example which Bergson used himself, suppose for a moment that reality consisted of a curved line. Science imagines it can grasp the ultimate truth about life by chopping the Whole into pieces—by reducing reality to ever smaller units of matter and energy. Science therefore would divide the curved line into individual points or segments, and it would then try to explain the Whole in terms of its parts. But each of the individual segments would, in itself, be almost a straight line—and the smaller the segment, the greater the illusion of straightness.

Thus, by restricting its vision, science quite likely would propose that reality consists of a straight line, or rather a series of straight lines. Following the same sort of logic, we can imagine science announcing the discovery that Wordsworth's ode is composed of twenty-six basic particles (the letters of the alphabet), and while this observation is perfectly correct, it hardly captures the meaning and significance of the poem as a Whole.

As for movement, Bergson likened the intellect to a motion picture camera. The intellect simulates movement by taking a series of snapshots, each one of which is frozen in time for purpose of analysis. Intellect studies these snapshots and thinks that in doing so it is studying true motion. But clearly it is not. This Bergson referred to as the cinematographical fallacy, which has its basis in "the absurd proposition that movement is made of immobilities." And thus Bergson explained the paradoxes of the ancient Greek philosopher Zeno, including the paradox of the arrow fired from a point A to a point B. According to Zeno, the flying arrow must successively occupy a series of lesser points

between A and B, and it must obviously be at rest at each such point, at least for a moment; therefore it is motionless during the entire course of its passage. Or again, the arrow in its flight must first cover half the distance from A to B. But before it can do that, it must first cover half the distance from A to the midpoint.

And half of that distance. And half of that distance. And so on, until at last we see that it is impossible for the arrow to get started at all. But we know that the arrow does travel from A to B, so there must be something wrong with Zeno's argument, and Bergson resolved the problem by suggesting that the flight is in fact "an indivisible movement." Once the flight is over, you can count as many imaginary points as you like along its trajectory. The fact remains that the flight itself was accomplished "in one stroke," from A to B, although a certain amount of time was required for this flight. Thus Bergson accused the intellect of neglecting time, or duration, as an actual factor in the mosaic of reality. Science deals with points of time, he said, but it does not deal with time itself or with motion as such.

On the other hand, said Bergson, instinct directly installs itself within movement and reality. It refuses to recognize those points of time and those snapshots of life which are nothing more than "arrests of our attention." Instinct thereby provides us with a form of knowledge which is "practically useless, except to increase pure understanding of reality."

Bergson did not advocate that we rely solely on instinct. Nor did he deny the necessary function of the intellect. But he did reject an utter reliance on intellect alone or instinct alone. The one is necessary for survival, the other for understanding. "There are things that intelligence alone is able to seek, but which, by itself, it will never find. These things instinct alone could find; but it will never seek them."

But intuition can both seek and find them. Intuition for Bergson was a combination of instinct and intelligence—it was instinct guided by intelligence—and the same happy marriage has been proposed by many others, including Gibran. Thus instinct is the wind which fills the sails of our little ship, as it skims over the waves of this earthly existence. And intellect is the rudder with which we steer the ship. Similarly, life is complicated only when we consider its parts rather than the Whole, and its apparent complexity increases in proportion with the number of parts which we synthetically ascribe to that Whole. And this perhaps is the basis of the Hindu teaching: "He who knows OM knows all." (He who knows the monistic One knows all.) If the consciousness that slumbers in instinct should awake, said Bergson, "it would give up to us the most intimate secrets of life."

It would do so by revealing to us the Whole, philosophy being nothing less than man's attempt to dissolve once more into that Whole from which he has estranged himself—that Whole where there are no measurements and no laws (only science has laws, not nature), where "there is nothing left but the reality that flows, together with the knowledge ever renewed that it impresses on us of its present state."

That, in brief, was Bergson's case against a slavish reliance on the rational intellect, and it would seem that his point of view today is reflected to a considerable extent in the assertions of radical theology, psychology, and pharmacology. Maslow, for example, has expressed his criticism of "the need-motivated kind of perception, which shapes things . . . in the manner of a butcher chopping apart a carcass." We must give up, he said, "our 3,000-year-old habit of dichotomizing, splitting and separating in the style of Aristotelian logic.... Difficult though it may be, we must learn to think holistically rather than atomistically." In the same sense, in the context of Zen, Suzuki stated that the central fact of life "cannot be brought to the dissecting table of the intellect," and he said further: "To stop the flow of life and to look into it is not the business of Zen."

Taking a metaphor from chess, Dr. Sidney Cohen described LSD perception as a kind of knight's-move thinking which leaps over logical premises and formal syllogisms. Huxley called for a recognition of the nonverbal humanities, or "the arts of being directly aware of the given facts of our existence." There is New Theology's emphasis upon "presentness" and here-now, derived especially from Bonhoeffer, Bultmann, and Buber. We could give many more examples, but perhaps we have made our point—that the psychic pendulum may be swinging again from the rational and the conscious to the intuitive and the unconscious, for better or for worse, resulting in a phenomenon which Maslow has termed "the current call back to raw experience as prior to any concepts or abstractions."

Our acceptance of the intellect's perceptions has always been tempered, to some degree at least, with doubt and uncertainty. Consider a nightmare. What does it represent, if not a temporary suspension of the natural order we normally perceive? And what does it express, if not a concealed fear that cause and effect are not wholly to be trusted or depended upon—that they may break down at any moment in waking life, leaving us naked and defenseless?

We sense perhaps that the ordered universe with its immutable laws is not real at all but our own invention, and there is no guarantee that those laws tomorrow may not be rescinded. In the nightmare they are rescinded, revealing to us our subliminal anxiety.

But anxiety can turn to joy—and does so in the mystical, peak, and psychedelic experiences. We are suggesting, then, that there is a common factor in all of these meta-experiences. The common factor is an apparent suspension of cause and effect—and this in turn is the result of a temporary paralysis of the intellect, as Bergson defined the intellect. Simply that and nothing more—or that and nothing less. We are suggesting also, as indicated earlier, that the intellect is the basis for the myth of the Demiurge, that imperfect deity who is the cause of the fall from pure Being, the creation of matter, our phenomenal existence, and the Net of Illusion. And such an interpretation might well enable us to accommodate within the radical Western framework many fundamental doctrines of Eastern metaphysics. After all, it is possible to demythologize the East as well as the West, and such an effort now could lead at last to that reconciliation which has long been predicted.

In the East, as also in Plato's philosophy, the Net of Illusion has commonly been blamed on the body, or more specifically the senses, with the assertion that the world perceived by the senses is not real. The Eastern viewpoint has therefore appeared to be world-denying, and as such it has found small favor in the West, where men for the most part have obeyed an impulse to affirm the world, sorry as it may seem. But there is an alternative theory, and the contemporary meta-experience might seem to confirm it. It is not the body which is at fault, but only a part of the body: namely, the noetic brain, or that prefrontal bulge, pronounced in man, which accounts for the rational process and the rational way of viewing the world.

Thus the world itself is real enough; it is only our way of looking at the world which is not real. It is our mode of perception that leads us astray, and it is not the senses which deceive us but rather the mind or intellect which receives and interprets the sensory input. That evolutionary gift, the cerebral cortex, has enabled us so far to survive and to prosper, but it also has distorted our vision of ultimate reality. It directs our vision in such a way that we can see the world now only in a symbolic fashion, in terms of use and action. We know what happens, for example, when a man puts on a pair of those inverting spectacles which cause all images to appear upside down; after a time the man will adjust to the situation, and the images will appear to him right side up again. In the same way, perhaps, there is something which determines that we shall always see things in a certain manner: a kind of internal processing center for the raw data from the senses. No doubt this is for our own good, just as the rigid rules and the white lies of the parent are no doubt intended for the welfare of the child. But it is nevertheless restrictive, and it is based in a sense on a form of deceit.

It might be argued, then, that Eastern wisdom conceals an esoteric teaching along the lines of this same proposition. The East, it may be, has also meant "as if." The Net of Illusion does not refer to the world at all; it refers to our perception of the world. By the same token, OM is not an immaterial abstraction which transcends the world of matter and earthly existence; it is the world we live in but do not see: it is here-now, I-Thou, and "the reality that flows." Nirvana therefore does not imply a release from the body which leaves the world behind; it implies a mental or spiritual awakening which allows us to look at the world as it actually is. It does not deny the world. It affirms the world but rejects all partial views of it. It rejects the intellect, and it rejects the supposed order which intellect imagines it perceives in cause-and-effect relationships. As Spinoza suggested, this order perhaps is self-realizing. It is what we look for, what we are used to, and what we expect. If the world tomorrow should fall into disorder, we should soon perceive this too as perfect order.

In Mahayana Buddhism, the East itself has appeared to move toward a similar interpretation—from a denial of the world to a more perfect affirmation of the world—and this movement, as we have seen, comes to full expression in the teachings of Japanese Zen Buddhism. The goal of Zen is satori. And satori is not a denial of the world, nor is it a form of release from the world. It is, said Suzuki, the acquiring of a new viewpoint. It is a new way of looking at things, and it is designed specifically to overcome the

intellect's way of looking at things. It is designed to destroy the intellect.

As Suzuki put it: "Satori may be defined as intuitive looking-into, in contradiction to intellectual and logical understanding." It is not interested in concepts, abstractions, and a limited perception; "it does not care so much for the elaboration of particulars as for a comprehensive grasp of the whole, and this intuitively." It is interested in the here and now, and it accepts the world. "What was up in the heavens, Zen has brought down to earth." It too proclaims the reality that flows. Thus the Zen master denies that reality is this, that, or the other thing; and when he is asked what is left, he slaps his pupil and declares, "You fool, what is this?" Satori, then, is a new kind of perception; but it is nevertheless a perception of this world. "It is not that something different is seen, but that one sees differently."

All this would seem to indicate that the radical West and the demythologized East are not so far apart concerning the Net of Illusion, and the worldly Westerner need not hesitate for this reason to join that so-called leap to the East. From Dietrich Bonhoeffer to James Bond, the contemporary emphasis upon this world and this time is wholly compatible with the esoteric interpretation of Eastern thought. In so far as they confirm the reality of this world, the new insights into the nature of meta-experiences challenge the orthodox Hindu as much as they do the orthodox Baptist, and we may be experiencing today not so much a leap to the East as the emergence at last of a possible East-West synthesis: a historic blending, as it were, of the waters of the Jordan and the Ganges.

If the East and West should agree that the world is real, however, where would this leave the question of immortality? And what of reincarnation?

Reincarnation has been represented as a cycle of death and rebirth, while nirvana has been represented as a release from this cycle—and a release thereby from the world. After a final death, according to the popular Western view, one merges with the Absolute and thus achieves immortality in a state of pure Being somewhere beyond the pitiful world of appearances and phenomena. We have said, however, that the world beyond the world of appearances is this world seen in a different way. We have said that nirvana is realized in this world by living men, not in some other world by dead men. Nirvana is the pure experience of the present moment in this world here and now.

That at least was the esoteric interpretation, and we might very well ask, then, what this interpretation has to say on the question of death and immortality. Does it not in fact neglect the question altogether, leaving unanswered the fate of man when life is ended and death occurs?

The esoteric reply might be that life never ends and that death is just one more delusion of the intellect. Immortal life is not experienced in some ethereal realm beyond this world; it is experienced in this world, here, and that was the deeper meaning of the statement that nirvana is realized in this world by living men. To see the world as it really is means to understand that life is immortal. And thus the myth of the terrible wheel of

death and rebirth. The wheel is caused by the intellect, and it is nothing more than the rational way of looking at things.

The wheel is the I-It mind. It does not mean that we are cursed to return again and again to this world, for there is no other place we could possibly go. There is only this world. There is nothing else. The myth means that we are compelled by the intellect to go on and on imagining there is something else, and also to go on and on imagining the world exists as the intellect portrays it.

To escape from the wheel means simply to become aware that the world it portrays is not the real world at all, or not the whole world. To escape from the wheel means to understand that death is false and that life is immortal. You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free, from death as well as mechanism. If the intellect by nature cannot understand life, it follows that the intellect by nature cannot understand death. Its view of death results from the fact that it looks only at the parts, not at the Whole. If it would once look at the Whole, it would see immediately that life is immortal.

This interpretation would seem to justify immortality on a strictly monistic basis, by sacrificing pluralism; it preserves the One only by denying the reality of the individual selves. And what of the Western emphasis on personal survival of the individual self or soul? The esoteric doctrine would be that it is precisely our insistence on personal immortality which makes us blind to our actual immortality. The individual ego or personality has no real significance, and therefore the death of this personality has no real significance and should not be regretted. It is only because we insist on the significance of the one that the fact of the other seems so terribly important to us.

And anyway, what do we really mean by personal? The truth is, the Western emphasis on this element has lately become at least somewhat less emphatic. In rejecting what he called the religious interpretation of Christianity, Bonhoeffer wrote from his prison in Berlin:

In my view, that means to speak on the one hand metaphysically and on the other hand individualistically. Neither of these is relevant to the Bible message or to the man of today. Is it not true to say that individualistic concern for personal salvation has almost completely left us all? Are we not really under the impression that there are more important things than bothering about such a matter? (Perhaps not more important than the matter itself, but more than bothering about it.) I know it sounds pretty monstrous to say that. But is it not, at bottom, even biblical? Is there any concern in the Old Testament about saving one's soul at all? Is not righteousness and the Kingdom of God on earth the focus of everything, and is not Romans 3.14 ff., too, the culmination of the view that in God alone is righteousness, and not in an individualistic doctrine of salvation? It is not with the next world that we are concerned, but with this world . . .

Tillich wrote:

Even if the so-called arguments for the “immortality of the soul” had argumentative power (which they do not have) they would not convince existentially. For existentially everybody is aware of the complete loss of self which biological extinction implies. The unsophisticated mind knows instinctively what sophisticated ontology formulates: that reality has the basic structure of self-world correlation and that with the disappearance of the one side, the world, the other side, the self, also disappears, and what remains is their common ground but not their structural correlation.

Again, what do we mean by personal—and by personal survival? The meta-experience suggests that we are all expressions or aspects of a primary state of Being. And this is immortal. Therefore, we too are immortal—for we are it. In each of us the primary state comes briefly to a sharp focus: we suddenly appear, like the dew that condenses from the still morning air, or a wave that lifts from the surface of the sea. The dew burns away, the wave drops, and we die.

But there is no real death. There is something elemental which survives and re-expresses itself. Thus a great actor might look back on the roles he has created and might also forget some of his lesser performances; but he does not imagine that he himself died with the closing of a play: he goes on, growing in talent, and even his failures may serve to instruct him. Similarly, what dies when a man dies is simply a role. What dies is merely a point of focus where Being had concentrated itself. What dies, in the last analysis, are only the particular memories which Being had accumulated at this point or that point, in this role or the other. And even the better of these are preserved by speech and by pen. What dies are only particular points of view. And the better of these are also preserved, for so long as they seem valid: until still better replace them.

All this is what the meta-experience seems to tell us, and no doubt it does not look very convincing or comforting on the printed page. Perhaps it appears to say only that life goes on—meaning that life goes on but you do not. But descriptions of the meta-experience are not the same as the experience, and the experience would seem to mean something more than life goes on: it would seem to mean that you go on too—although not in the traditional sense of reappearing somewhere after death with all of your thoughts, memories, and personal cachets intact. However desirable this latter kind of survival might normally appear to us, the fact remains that the meta-experiencer finds it neither desirable nor in any sense important. In a state of unsanity, it just doesn't matter.

Possibly the West could assimilate this interpretation of immortality, if it had to, since nobody really believes in personal survival anyway. We might be able to accept a monistic structure after death. What is far more difficult to accept is the thought that life has this character here upon the earth. The idea that other people do not really exist as separate entities can be a terrifying idea—pure hell, in fact—for it leaves you more alone even than Sartre would leave you. Not we are alone, with no excuses, but I am alone. There is an appalling difference between those two statements, and it is really the fundamental difference between the Western view and the Eastern.

If life after death can be purchased only by paying the price of earthly pluralism, there are many perhaps who would not care to pay that price—who would give up the former, if they could, to retain the latter. And obviously you cannot have both a monistic immortality and a pluralistic mortality, since monistic survival is predicated on the assumption that life itself is monistic. There may therefore be a deep and basic wisdom reflected in the West's instinctive rejection of this horror. On the other hand, however, it could be a matter not of wisdom but of courage, or the lack of it: to say that the idea is terrifying is not to say that it is not true. In any case, it is a question to be faced—posed again now by the meta-experience. And it is hard. Very hard. This is why we said earlier that the Eastern challenge to pluralism is more critical even than the challenge to transcendence.

Meta-experience does not really deny the possibility of some unseen dimension which transcends the experience; it simply fails to provide us with any evidence to support the possibility—and, further, it does not suggest any need for this hypothesis. If there is a transcendent power, well and good. If not, that is all right too. The reality suggested by the experience is reality enough, if that is all there is, and the experience therefore has nothing to do with the existence or non-existence of a separate God.

The experience tells us only that our normal perception of the world is limited and limiting: that we are deceived in our perception by a mental process, the seat of which can be anatomically localized in the human brain—which can even in fact be excised by surgery. The experience tells us to stop living only in the past and the future, or in a present moment which is perceived always in terms of the past and the future. It tells us that we need no longer be estranged from reality and from ourselves. The Eden story can now come to its inevitable and happy conclusion; the flaming sword has been extinguished, and we are free at last to re-enter the garden. It tells us this, and it does not tell us there is no transcendent God. After all, how could it? Negatives are hard to prove in any instance, and I cannot, for example, conclusively demonstrate that there is not at this moment a pink owl perched in a lime tree on the fifth moon of Jupiter. Nor do I especially care whether there is or isn't.

But only a fool would insist that his vision necessarily takes in the whole of reality, and one wonders if God himself could ever be sure there was not somewhere some other God who transcends him. Thus the meta-experience tells us only what it sees; it speaks to us of this world—and it may be that this esoteric interpretation at least partially answers the objection of Tillich and Buber that mysticism is world-denying and therefore an inadequate response to existential anxiety.

The meta-experience, then, is not directly concerned with the question of God; but it is not for this reason any the less fundamental in its assertions. As William James put it to us, quoting Leuba: "Does God really exist? How does he exist? What is he? are so many irrelevant questions. Not God, but life, more life, a larger, richer, more satisfying life, is, in the last analysis, the end of religion. The love of life, at any and every level of development, is the religious impulse."

Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that the meta-experience offers an accurate perception of ultimate reality. We still must ask whether it is wise or prudent to seek that experience and achieve that perception.

For one thing, the experience suggests that symbols serve only to distort our view of the actual world. But I can never forget Helen Keller's story of that day at the well house, at the age of seven, when she first learned the meaning of language. Before that, she said, she had been only a wild little animal lost in the dark, unable to give love or receive it. "Before that supreme event there was nothing in me except the instinct to eat and drink and sleep. My days were a blank, without past, present, or future, without hope or anticipation, without interest or joy." Then Anne Sullivan held one of her hands under the running pump, and into the other she spelled out "w-a-t-e-r." The meta-experiencer would say of course that "w-a-t-e-r" and water are two different things; but Miss Keller has given us her own reaction. "I knew then that 'w-a-t-e-r' meant the wonderful cool something that was flowing over my hand. That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, set it free!" Or again: "All at once there was a strange stir within me—a misty consciousness, a sense of something remembered.... Nothingness was blotted out.... That word 'water' dropped into my mind like the sun in a frozen winter world." And we might do well to remember this before we decide to blow out that sun.

An obvious objection to the meta-experience is that it denies or ignores the existence of evil—which it considers simply a dualistic deception. And this was the main objection James had to the optimistic mysticism of Whitman. You cannot ignore evil, said James, for "the skull will grin in at the banquet."

"Here on our very hearths and in our gardens," he said, "the infernal cat plays with the panting mouse, or holds the hot bird fluttering in her jaws. Crocodiles and rattlesnakes and pythons are at this moment vessels of life as real as we are; their loathsome existence fills every minute of every day that drags its length along." For his part, James preferred an optimism which first acknowledged evil and yet saw hope. Only this could we really trust.

There are the clear and present dangers which threaten the individual who is in the grips of a meta-experience: running in front of cars, leaping from windows with the expectation of flying, a generalized indifference to injury and death. But there is also a less clear and even more present danger which threatens the vitality and welfare of society itself, and this is the danger of a quietistic indifference to social goals and social rewards. Until very recently there was little cause for concern about this, and Maslow provides us with an excellent example. While he conceded there was a possible quietistic danger inherent in the peak experience, he added that the experience came rarely even to self-actualizing people, and as late as 1962 he wrote: "Therefore the problem posed here is more an ultimate than an immediate one, more a theoretical problem than a practical one." Now LSD has made the problem both immediate and practical, and the issue must be dealt with.

Prohibitive laws are one answer, and certainly there is little to be said for the so-called Gumball Machine theory that psychedelics should be freely dispensed to the general population, with no restrictions. We do after all have gun laws (though not very good ones); we have laws regarding the purchase and consumption of liquor; and there are regulations and licensing procedures for people who want to drive autos or fly airplanes. In view of the potential dangers of an immediate nature, it might seem fair to put psychedelics in the same category as alcohol, guns, planes, and cars. But in fact the governmental response has been to outlaw them almost altogether.

This apparently has succeeded only in frustrating some very important research by scientists, and it is doubtful in any case whether legal measures can resolve the more basic questions that are raised by the drug movement.

There is the other side of the Delphic coin. Know Thyself, yes. But also Nothing in Excess. As Suzuki put it: "There is also such a thing as too much attachment to the experience of satori, which is to be detested." This appears to be a very neat answer, but it is much too easy telling people to behave themselves, and urging moderation in this thing of all things is no solution. LSD may not be addictive, but truth is.

This brings us to the test James suggested for the revelations of drunkenness. "If merely 'feeling good' could decide," said James, "drunkenness would be the supremely valid human experience." The question is—does the experience work out when it is inserted into the environment? This is another way of asking whether the individual continues to function and survive, and whether or not the world's work still gets done.

But the psychedelic quietist would reply that none of these things matters. It is the environment that is out of joint, and the world's work is ridiculous. As for survival, life is eternal—especially so for a psychic mutant. And just by the way, there is nothing evil about pythons and rattlesnakes.

This is not to say that all drug cultists are quietists. In fact, there is a fundamental dichotomy within the drug movement, and this is reflected in the programs and philosophies of the two major psychedelic churches—the Church of the Awakening and the Neo-American Church—that existed before Timothy Leary's League for Spiritual Discovery was founded in 1966.

The Church of the Awakening, mentioned earlier, might be described as the middle-class right wing of the movement. Many of its members are businessmen or professional people, and the church insists that even psychedelic religion has both an internal and an external function—the latter to be expressed in terms of "love," "service," and "growth." In its statement of purpose, the church adds:

It is important to recognize and to understand the existence of these two functions, internal and external; to recognize that we have a basic need and urge to learn, and an equally basic one to serve, to share. Next, of course, there must be an aspiration

of the achievement of these objectives within the heart of each of us. And then, this knowledge and aspiration must be channeled into action. We must do something about it!

The Neo-American Church, on the other hand, represents more or less the bohemian left wing of the drug movement. It would seem to be dedicated only to “the appreciation of Transcendental Reality,” and, although the church officially advocates a kind of revolutionary nihilism, the membership in general appears to be more interested in withdrawal than revolt. The inclination is to “turn on and drop out.” There are individual exceptions, of course, but this is the overall impression one gets.

The Neo-American Church to date has received far more publicity than the Church of the Awakening has, and it has been more aggressive in recruiting new members—particularly among the young. While a cleavage does exist, then, it would seem nevertheless that there are now many more quietists than activists within the drug movement as a whole, and the problem grows more pressing with every day that passes.

The psychedelic quietist of course does not consider his attitude a problem—he considers it a solution—and in fact he might argue that there is precedent for his decision to withdraw from the mainstream, renouncing the goals and rewards of society. Would not identical consequences follow if Christians started to take the New Testament literally?

The quietist asserts that there is no destination ahead of us; we are already there. He announces, in effect, that he is getting off the bus.

It may be, then, that the question comes down to this: Is the cosmic bus going anywhere?

OM OR OMEGA?

There may often be good reasons for bad laws. The sexual act, for example, is condoned only if the partners involved are a male and a female who are married (to each other), and any deviation from that pattern is proscribed as sinful and evil. It is difficult to believe, however, that there is anything intrinsically wicked in the performance of a mechanical act engaged in by consenting partners. Young people especially are more and more inclined to ask, “Why not?” And the reasons offered are not very convincing.

But the reasons offered may not be the real reasons.

Human society is founded pragmatically on the family unit, and it has therefore been necessary to encourage matrimony and to challenge at once any conduct or philosophy which appears to threaten the stability of that institution. Thus the marriage relationship is represented as the only legitimate source of sexual gratification, and thus also the myth is promulgated that sex outside the marriage bed is a personal sin against your body and soul—a violation of heavenly law.

But the law is man-made, not celestial, and the sin in fact may be real enough—but it is social, not personal. It is a sin against the social structure and therefore a sin against the common good. Such an idea of course is hard to convey, and society (or life) has relied instead upon a necessary fiction. There are many today who recognize the fiction and who seek to destroy it; but they fail to recognize the reason for the fiction, or the purpose it has served, or the problems involved in replacing it. Their efforts therefore are met with a blind and instinctive resistance, which they assess as mere prudishness. But it is more than prudishness; it is life trying to protect itself, as best it can, in the only way it knows how. In the same sense, perhaps, there would appear to be an instinctive reaction against the drug movement's monistic pronouncements—as also its quietistic emphasis upon the pure experience of the here-now present moment. Assuming that life (or society) has some dumb understanding of its own welfare, or its own destiny, we might inquire into the source of this reaction.

As for monism, an analogy could be made to the human body and the cells which compose it. The body is a monistic whole in which the cells all partake, although the cells can have no notion of that fact: each is assigned its specialized function, thus enabling the body to go about its business. What would happen, then, if these dutiful cells or selves should somehow gain awareness of the greater Self in which they participate? What would happen if they ceased their functioning to contemplate the body? Most likely, the body would not like that very much and would order the cells to stop it at once. For the greater Self has its greater business to attend to. If the hand indeed is divided into five fingers, the better to do its work, this clearly implies, does it not, that there is work to be done? And it cannot be done if the fingers are curled inward in a self-admiring fist.

A similar interpretation is possible in the case of "presentness." As we have seen, a here-now rejection of the intellect's perception is a rejection in essence of the past and the future—especially the future—and this brings us again to another East-West dichotomy which seems at least to be basic in nature. It is said that the orthodox East looks backward to a primordial totality (and in this sense perhaps it acknowledges the past, but not in the sense of using the past to predict future action). The demythologized East does not look backward; but neither does it look forward: it is concerned alone with the here-now present moment. This is another way of saying that it accepts the status quo. The West on the other hand looks both backward and forward—but especially forward. It looks to the future. And it does so with the implication that there is unfinished business to be conducted there; otherwise its constant peering into the future is a matter simply of perceptual deception, as charged.

Thus the myth of the Demiurge comes into conflict with the myth of Ulysses.

The Ulysses myth is a Western myth. It does not accept the status quo of the present moment but suggests instead that life is evolving. This process in turn points toward a future purpose, and acceptance of the present moment would defeat that purpose. Darwin of course showed that life is constantly transforming itself—changing its forms, in the manner of Proteus—but he failed to show that it is truly evolving in the sense of hav-

ing a definite direction, purpose, and goal. Others in the West, however, have said that life is evolving in precisely this sense. Hegel has said it, Nietzsche has said it, Bergson has said it, Altizer has said it, Maslow has said it—and Teilhard de Chardin has said it.

Hegel depicted the universe as an absolute Mind which is seeking to fulfill itself and know itself. Nietzsche proclaimed the Overman and the will to power; man is but a bridge, he said, and life is that which must ever surpass itself. Bergson spoke of a vital force which advances, creatively, toward a distant future end which cannot be predicted because it is not predetermined. Altizer asserted that God himself is evolving, from transcendence to immanence, and he specifically rejected “the backward movement of Oriental mysticism.” He rejected the orthodox Eastern view of a “lost paradise” we can only regain through “a reversal of the cosmos.”

“Above all,” said Altizer, “a reborn and radical Christian faith must renounce every temptation to return to an original or primordial sacred, or to follow a backward path leading to an earlier and presumably purer form of the Word.” In the same context, Maslow has distinguished between Being and Becoming; between a “high Nirvana” and “low Nirvana”; between the “the Heaven ahead” (of growth) and “the Heaven behind” (of regression). Nowhere in recent times, however, has the concept of a goal-directed cosmos been given richer expression than is found in the metaphysical system of the scientist-priest Teilhard, who developed a profoundly unorthodox theory of universal evolution.

Teilhard, a Jesuit, had been forbidden to publish that theory during his lifetime; but his views have attracted widespread attention since his death in 1955, and respect for his system has continued to grow both inside and outside the Roman Catholic Church. For many of the faithful, with the passage of time, Teilhard’s ideas have appeared to be more and more profound and less and less unorthodox—which is hardly surprising, for they represent in fact an attempted reconciliation of scientific knowledge and religious tradition. It is difficult to say whether Teilhard was a mystical scientist or a scientific mystic, but he is worth listening to in either case.

He speaks to the contemporary situation. And what is more, he addresses himself directly to the issues raised by psychedelic quietism.

Teilhard proposed, to start, that evolution is not just willy-nilly Darwinian transformism. It has a definite direction.

In the beginning, in the primordial chaos, the individual particles of unorganized matter contained certain elementary “liberties,” but matter by and large was subject to the laws of chance and statistical determinism. After a time, however, the particles began to organize—first in simple forms, then in complex forms. As eons passed, the forms became increasingly complex. And this complexity resulted at last in a new phenomenon: it resulted in consciousness. For consciousness is a product of complexity.

At first there was a primitive animal consciousness. Then, further complexification produced the human brain—and rational consciousness. For the first time, evolution became aware of itself.

This, then, is evolution's direction: toward increasing complexity and (as a result) increasing consciousness. Thus, by tracing the pattern of psychical rather than physical development, Teilhard laid the basis for a neo-anthropocentricity which restores man to the center of things as the most complex and conscious creation. Man is not just a speck lost in a remote corner of infinite space. If the universe is a super-organism which is in the process now of realizing itself, then man is the "head" of that organism. But evolution did not stop with the emergence of the human brain. From that point on, complexification continued in the form of social organization and human technology.

Teilhard saw no reason to distinguish these from "natural" (biological) evolution; for there is nothing unnatural in nature, and the wireless is simply an extension of the evolving human mind. The computer and the space probe are similar extensions, Teilhard would have insisted, had he lived to see their era, for what do they represent if not an enlargement of our total awareness?

By the same logic, government at all levels is an expansion of overall consciousness, through complex-ification, which allows us to deal with an ever wider area of concern, and the United Nations may be the harbinger of a global mind with global awareness.

As we saw in an earlier chapter, Teilhard held that this process is directed from within by an indwelling Christ who took charge of evolution by partially inserting himself into matter. Teilhard stated further that the process will lead eventually to a final state of super-organization and super-awareness he referred to as the Omega point. At this stage, in a hyper-centration of cosmic matter, mankind will reflect upon itself at a single point—and will leave the earth behind to become pure spirit. Mankind will abandon this world to rejoin the godhead—not by space ship, but spiritually and inwardly.

Ideally, this should happen. But, said Teilhard, there is no predestined guarantee that this will happen. The Omega point must be attained by conscious effort. And already there are ominous portents. Even now, "a whirlpool is beginning to appear ahead of us, in the stream that carries us along."

In a magnificent construction, Teilhard divided the human race into two camps, the pessimists and the optimists, and the latter camp he divided into buddhists, pluralists, and monists.

Man must choose his evolutionary path, said Teilhard. And each of these divisions represents a potential choice or possible path.

1. The first choice is pessimism or optimism. The question in this case is funda-

mental, and it is simply Hamlet's question asked on a grand scale. To Be or not to Be? That is the question the whole universe must ask itself. Does it make any sense to exist, or would it be better perhaps if there was no life at all? In the early stages of evolution, the universe instinctively chooses life over non-life and Being over non-Being; it instinctively chooses to Be. But what happens when life becomes conscious and therefore aware of itself? Is it not possible that Being will reject its own existence, seeing no point to it all, and that thinking men will go on strike against an evolutionary course which seems to have no real meaning and no final purpose? Even now the world has split into two opposing factions, and those in one faction say that life is not worthwhile. Why bother, then, to go any further? These are the pessimists; let us leave them behind.

2. That leaves the optimists, and they must choose between the optimism of withdrawal and the optimism of evolution. The optimists of withdrawal are the buddhists, who wish to quit the world at once; they acknowledge that Being as Being is good, but they deny that the awareness of true Being can be found in the forward-looking world of appearances. There is nowhere to go, they say. We are already there. The idea of a goal ahead is delusional, they say, and we need only to realize this; the solution, it follows, is to "break away from the evolutionary determinism, break the spell, withdraw." Let them cut the threads, then, and let them retire to their future-denying nirvana.

3. That leaves the optimists of evolution: "the believers in some ultimate value in the tangible evolution of things." They are faithful to the future, "faithful to Earth." But they too have a decision to make, and their choice is between pluralism and monism. The pluralists are concerned primarily with their personal freedom and individual uniqueness, "in opposition to others." For the monists, "nothing exists or finally matters except the Whole." Which shall it be?

"This," said Teilhard, "is the ultimate choice, by way of which Mankind must finally be divided, knowing its own mind." And Teilhard, for his part, chose monism. Only in union, said Teilhard, can man ever hope to achieve his final destiny, and a separatist individualism is ultimately self-destructive: "the element burns up all its future in a flying spark." Let us plunge forward into monism, "even though something in us perish."

For it is written that he who loses his soul shall save it—and in true associations, as opposed to collective heaps, the combination of separate elements does not eliminate their differences. It exalts them. As in the specialized cells of the body, "true union differentiates." This is true even in the case of the anthill or beehive—the palace of honey—where specialization is based upon such biological functions as nutrition and reproduction. How much truer it must be, then, in the case of a spiritual association in which individual personalities will conspire together to create "a common consciousness."

In such a union "each element achieves completeness, not directly in a separate consummation, but by incorporation in a higher pole of consciousness in which alone it can enter into contact with all others." Tillich was expressing the same thought when he denied that union with the Ground of Being means a loss of self in a larger whole. "If the

self participates in the power of being-itself," said Tillich, "it receives itself back. For the power of being acts through the power of the individual selves. It does not swallow them as every limited whole, every collectivism, and every conformism does."

Teilhard died before psychedelic quietism became an issue, but his second set of alternatives—withdrawal or evolution—goes nevertheless to the heart of that issue. And Teilhard has not left us to wonder which of the two alternatives he would recommend as the proper and logical choice. This is implicit, he said, in the fact that life up to now has followed "a precise line of direction."

There has been an unmistakable progression toward an increase of consciousness and a greater awareness. What we must do, therefore, is select that path which points ahead in the same direction—"the one which seems best able to develop and preserve in us the highest degree of consciousness."

It might be argued that the meta-experience represents an advanced level of consciousness, as opposed to a regression, and it is possible even to interpret Eastern doctrine as evolutionary. There is, for example, the concept of "the days and nights of Brahma," contained in the Hindu holy book, the Bhagavad-Gita. This suggests the image mentioned earlier of a games-playing God who acts out the cosmic drama for his own amusement, pretending to be Many when actually he is One.

The drama continues for a thousand ages—until the Self-deception is at last revealed, and the One once more is aware of his Oneness. Whereupon the whole cycle is repeated, forever and ever. There is some support for this idea in the modern astrophysical theory of an "oscillating" universe, which holds that all of the galaxies comprising the universe were once contained in a primordial atom of incredible density. At some point in the past this atom exploded, sending all the raw material of the universe flying out into space—the galaxies evolving with the passage of time.

There is considerable evidence that this so-called expansion of the universe is still going on—in fact there seems little doubt of it—but recent observations indicate that the outward flight of the galaxies will one day slow to a stop, and the universe will then contract again into a new primordial atom. Indeed, the process may have occurred countless times already since the dawn of creation. Or so we are told. The theory is based, I believe, on the estimated force of the original impetus and the estimated amount of stellar material.

No doubt science has weighed and measured the universe very accurately and thus can predict what it will do some billions of years from now. But it might be easier to accept the idea of oscillation as final if science were just a trifle more accurate in predicting tomorrow's weather in Omaha. Will it rain there or won't it? However that may be, we have already seen the danger of marrying physics to metaphysics (in connection with free will), and it is doubtful in any case that Eastern evolution is anything like Western evolution. The Eastern future is not a creative future, in the Western sense, but rather an

eternal repetition of the past. This does not mean the East is wrong and the West is right, but it does mean there is an essential difference in their assertions on this point. The Western future is clearly denied both by Eastern metaphysics and by psychedelic quietism.

Shall we rest on our oars? Are we already there?

Addressing himself to the buddhists among us, Teilhard agreed that the concept of an ultimate withdrawal from the phenomenal rat race “fits in very well with the final demands of a world of evolutionary structure.” But he made one proviso: “that the world in question shall have reached a stage of development so advanced that its ‘soul’ can be detached without losing any of its completeness, as something wholly formed.” And to this he added:

But have we any reason to suppose that human consciousness today has achieved so high a degree of richness and perfection that it can derive nothing more from the sap of the earth? Again we may turn to history for an answer. Let us suppose, for example, that the strivings and the progress of civilization had come to an end at the time of Buddha, or in the first centuries of the Christian era. Can we believe that nothing essential, of vision and action and love, would have been lost to the Spirit of Earth? Clearly we cannot. And this simple observation alone suffices to guide our decision. So long as a fruit continues to grow and ripen we refrain from picking it. In the same way, so long as the world around us continues, even in suffering and disorder, to yield a harvest of problems, ideas and new forces, it is a sign that we must continue to press forward in the conquest of matter. Any immediate withdrawal . . . would certainly be premature.

He also said, elsewhere: “God creates and shapes us through the process of evolution.... God awaits us when the evolutionary process is complete; to rise above the world, therefore, does not mean to despise or reject it, but to pass through it and sublimine it.”

Teilhard may or may not have demonstrated that evolution has a goal or a purpose. It is possible, however, that he did show evolution to have at least a direction, and that alone would be no small gift in this age of uncertainty. Given a sense of direction, if nothing else, there are many perhaps who would be willing, in an act of faith, to accept the idea of an unguessed future purpose. And after all, at this stage in our development, who has the wisdom to deny that possibility? Is anyone so all-knowing, when all of us together would seem to know so little?

If we are estranged from one level of reality and locked in a world of action, it may be that we are estranged for a reason—and a reason, moreover, which we cannot yet foresee. If there is a Whole which is seeking to know itself, it may be that the Whole aspires to a more perfect knowledge of its parts as well as its Oneness—that the Whole demands of us that we first conquer the earth, moon, and stars before we turn inward. If there is a deeper level of reality, revealed by psychedelics, there could well be another

level still deeper than that. Anything and everything is possible, and nothing as yet is impossible. This is not to say that the psychedelic insight is not true; we are merely suggesting that it may not be the whole truth. If a little learning is a dangerous thing, there is danger indeed in any total commitment to a partial understanding, and some of the drug cultists might at least be a little less cavalier in their decision to reverse the apparent direction of the universal tides. Perhaps some knowledge comes to us too soon, before we know how to use it or what to make of it, as was certainly true with the atom. But it is too late for regrets, in the case of the atom or the case now at hand. A decision of some sort must obviously be made, and it is essentially a very simple decision—though by no means an easy one.

Backward to OM? Or forward to Omega?

Shall we accept the myth of the Demiurge, which suggests that our salvation lies in the simple acceptance of the here-now present moment—concealed by the intellect? Or shall we accept the myth of Ulysses, which suggests that life is a process of evolutionary growth toward some distant future goal we cannot as yet perceive? These are the central questions posed at this time by the mystical, peak, and LSD experiences.

Teilhard felt that mankind as a whole has reached its decision and has chosen its path. If that choice in fact has been made, as he supposed, then it is much easier to understand society's angry and dogmatic reaction to those uncompromising individuals who insist that the meta-experience points toward a total withdrawal and nowhere else.

When Ulysses found his men feeding upon the flowery food, in the land of the lotus eaters, he did not pause for thought. He asked them no questions, and he offered them no arguments. He laid hold of the men, and he led them, weeping and sore against their will, back to the swift ships.

He knew where he was going. He was going to Ithaca.

Postscript

"Four o'clock, and all's wrong."

So says the voice on the tape recorder as I listen to it now. My voice.

Having been reminded often enough of those schoolmen who would not look through Galileo's telescope, I participated in a psychedelic experiment on May 16, 1966, at the Ridgeway psychiatric hospital in Chicago.

Present were Dr. A. I. Jackman, a psychiatrist; Dr. Herbert Maltz, clinical director of the hospital, and a psychedelic guide I shall refer to here as Jim. We used Huxley's drug, mescaline, because LSD at that time had been taken off the legal market. The two produce identical effects, I was told, the only difference being that a much stronger dos-

age is required in the case of mescaline, which is administered in milligrams rather than micrograms.

I was first given a thorough medical examination, including an electrocardiogram, and we then retired to a small but pleasantly furnished consultation room on the second floor of the hospital, where the drapes were drawn against the afternoon sunlight. At 2 P.M. Dr. Jackman handed me a paper cup of water and five white capsules, each of them containing seventy milligrams of mescaline; a half-hour later I took two more capsules, for a total dose of 490 milligrams.

Nothing happened for more than an hour.

Before going further, I should speak very briefly about myself and various subjective factors which may have influenced my reaction to the drug. While I had always been interested in the implications of religious perception, I was not normally given to mystical states of mind; some slight significance might be attached here, however, to a phenomenon I had experienced occasionally since early childhood.

This would happen once or twice a year, I suppose, and would last ten or fifteen seconds at most. In moments of abstraction, my immediate environment would suddenly appear to take on a new and wordless meaning I could not define; time would stop, all objects would lose their names, and the world would seem somehow peaceful and perfect. The landscape would first appear to blur, as if the film in a movie projector had jumped its track, and then it would come clear again in a slightly different focus: it would look quite the same as before, but in some subtle way its meaning would have changed.

Just how is hard to say. I had always had vivid memories of my infancy, including a few sunlit memories of the cradle itself in the very first days of my life, and the experience often reminded me of those pristine recollections—of that holy time, at the dawn of life, when I lay innocent in sunbeams. Curiously, certain pieces of music would often serve to evoke the experience: Clair de lune, for one, which I always associated with sunlight, and “Zing Went the Strings of My Heart.” I never supposed that the experience was important, and I never mentioned it to anybody, although I did give it a name. I called it “the Shift.” I had never heard of a peak experience, of course, and maybe it was something of the sort; maybe it was a pint-size satori. In any case, it occurred less frequently as I grew older. I became a newspaperman, and newspapermen are not very mystical. I was taught to be critical and objective, and I was prepared to be both when I swallowed the seven capsules.

The atmosphere of a psychiatric hospital was far from ideal for a psychedelic setting, but I knew at least that I was in good hands should anything go wrong, and I felt no apprehension whatever about taking the drug. In fact, I had been looking forward to it. I had read many accounts of good trips and bad trips, and I fully expected to experience an ego loss, but that prospect didn't trouble me. Finally, I should point out that I had recently been reading a fair amount of Eastern literature, and indeed I had just reread

the Tibetan Book of the Dead.

After about seventy minutes, Jim told me, "You look different." I asked him in what way I looked different, and he said, "You're somehow younger." I smiled and pointed to a framed picture hanging on one wall. "That water stain on the left-hand side of the glass," I said. "Was that there before?"

"I think something is beginning to happen to you," said Dr. Jackman.

Twenty minutes later I felt a numbness creeping over my body, and I said that I seemed to be losing my muscular control. "But again, nothing special." I yawned and added: "That's interesting. The coffee in this cup looks green . . . sort of a greenish cast to it." I had been chain-smoking cigarettes, and I told Jim apologetically: "I don't want to put out the last cigarette. I'm such a smoker. I keep thinking just one more cigarette before . . ." Jim reached down and switched on a tape recorder, filling the room with symphonic music set at low volume. That annoyed me for some reason. It seemed prearranged. "Jim," I told him, "your whiskers have got a greenish tint to them."

I had been sitting on a long couch, my knees crossed, head nodding. I felt so weak and listless, as if I hadn't slept for days. "Jim," I said, "did you usually start with visual things? I've been waiting for colors."

I looked down at my tweed jacket and my green-and-white striped shirt, then farther down at my crossed legs. Black pants, black socks, black shoes. The only trouble was, the legs weren't mine. They looked alien and somehow sinister. I knew they were attached to my body, and I knew I could move them, but they weren't my legs. They weren't me. Or better yet, I wasn't them. It was just as if I were looking at the legs of some stranger sitting next to me in a bar, or on a train. So primly crossed. So black. And the silk-hosed ankles, so damned self-satisfied. I didn't like them at all. "I didn't think my legs looked like that," I said. "I thought they looked different . . . but the point is, I'm about one quarter-inch outside myself now. That's how I feel, I mean. I'm sitting here, but I've also moved about a quarter-inch outside my body, and that's why I can look at my body now and see it just the same way other people see it. Funny, too. I'd expected all these visual things first. Colors . . . jewels."

So tired. So numb. Just one more cigarette.

Jim helped me off with my jacket and shoes, and I stretched out on the couch. I complained again about my lack of motor control, and Dr. Maltz had me tug at his fingers and then press my open palm against his palm in an effort to resist it. "You have not actually lost any strength," he said. Then he tested me with a pin, jabbing at the back of my hand with the dull end and sharp end. I told him each time which end it was, and finally I said, "That hurt—but so what?" I felt the pain, but it didn't matter.

Jim had turned up the music. The whole long-playing tape seemed to be Beethoven,

and I didn't like it. The Eroica in particular sounded ponderous and threatening. Nothing human there; it was pure mathematics, written on Olympus. "Feel good," I said. "Feel different. It's like, ah . . ." I opened my eyes. "I feel like I got great big hands. You know? When I open my eyes, I'm back in the room. And everything looks normal. When I close them, though, I feel sort of disembodied. And I'm not sure yet which way I want to go. Maybe I'd rather stay here and watch it happen. I have the feeling I'd drift off if I closed my eyes. It's just a question of whether I want to get disembodied or not. I have the feeling that . . . I have the feeling that . . . It's very relaxing. Especially in the small of the back. It's like I'm floating in clouds without any body, and it's very nice to get rid of your body. I feel this loss of weight and loss of tension, like it all ran out of me. Especially in the small of the back. That's where I'd localize it. It's like I drank a hundred martinis without passing out. Still able to think and remember. It's like being drunk without being drunk. You know? But just the same, I don't feel all that great . . . feel different."

I rolled to one side and started to repeat the first-person pronoun, nominative case. "I, I, I . . . I, I, I . . . I, I, I . . . Ai, Ai, Ai . . . Yi, Yi, Yi . . . Ai-Yi-Yi-Yi . . . Yo, Yo, Yo . . . Yo, Yo, Yo . . . Spanish for I . . . Yo, Yo, Yo . . . Yo-Yo, Yo-Yo . . . capitalized trademark . . . Duncan Yo-Yo . . . That's it, we're all Duncan Yo-Yos. Spanish word for I, means we're all a bunch of Yo-Yos. Up and down on a string. Conclusive proof of Leary's Game Theory.... But not really, of course."

Struck by a sudden thought, I sat up in alarm.

"What happened?" I asked. "What happened to all the other people?"

I was still puzzling that over when my gaze fell again on the cold black dregs in my coffee cup. I stuck a finger in the coffee and became a continuum with it and the plastic cup. "Ah, it feels so good . . . so good. I feel real good. Dr. Jackman, you're a Yo-Yo." I knew I was being obnoxious, and I didn't like that, either. "When does everything start to get exquisite?" I asked. "Nothing I expected has happened yet. This is a bore, so far." I fell back helplessly on the couch, and Dr. Jackman told me, "You're just at the beginning."

"The beginning?"

I drifted off, mumbling incoherently, and the doctors left. I was alone now with Jim. "Poor little world," I said. "Poor little world . . . poor little world." Later I opened my eyes and found that Jim had gone, too. I sat up and looked around for him, rubbing my eyes with my fists. But the room was deserted.

"Jim? Did you go away, Jim, or are you really here? Maybe you're still here, and I just can't see you. Could it actually happen? Of course it couldn't. But then, how can I tell? I'm under the influence of a drug. Oh, you shouldn't have gone away, Jim. Did you go away, or didn't you? Are you there, Jim? Where are you?"

The door opened. Jim came in.

"I went to the washroom," he said. "Is something the matter?"

"No," I said. "Everything's fine."

A nurse brought us a meal, which we ate at the desk. Corned beef hash, apricots, sliced pickles, and another pot of coffee. I shoveled the food down impersonally, much as you would stoke a furnace, and the process of eating seemed highly humorous. Biting into the pickles, I could sense their molecular structure; I had a mouth full of cells and atoms, I thought, and I could feel my teeth grinding them about. How ridiculous chewing was. It would have been much easier, I thought, simply to slip the pickles in through my ribs. I knew it wouldn't work if I tried it, but I thought nevertheless that it should work. After all, there was no such thing as a solid; there were only those spinning atoms, which in turn were only sparks of energy (whatever that was), and the emptiness of the atomic inner space must surely be calculated in millions and billions of micromiles. I stuck my finger in the coffee again—it was hot this time, but that didn't matter—and I imagined that the end of my finger had disappeared. I laughed and said that Huxley hadn't turned into a coffee cup, had he? I, on the other hand, had just turned into a coffee cup. Which is to say, I and the coffee cup were the same thing, really; where the one ended, the other began. The coffee cup, you might say, had turned into me. Certainly the pickles and hash had turned into me, and those Hindus clearly had known what they were talking about: it was all a case of food living on food, and after that becoming food.

After the meal I lay down again and shut my eyes. In the darkness of my mind I saw a Technicolor display of weird-looking growths waving about, like plants in a current at the bottom of the sea. There were stalks and sponges and fan-shaped objects: pink and green and purple. I thought I might wander around down there for several centuries, and I wasn't at all sure that I wanted to. I thought about my family, and it didn't seem fair to go away so long and leave them behind—like Rip Van Winkle. What if they needed me for something, and what if they were all dead when I finally came back? "Those are organisms," I said, imagining now that I had recognized the growths. "I am looking inside my own eyeball. And those all are parts of my eyeball."

Then I lay still for a time, drifting, and Jim supposed that I was past the point of no return, comfortable and happy. Coming up quietly, he slipped a set of stereophonic earphones onto my head, the big foam-rubber phones snapping over my ears in a snug fit. A majestic Beethoven chord exploded inside my brain, and I instantly disappeared. My body no longer existed, and neither did the world. The world and I had been utterly annihilated. I could feel the pressure of the earphones; but in the space between the phones, where my head should have been, there was absolutely nothing . . . nothing!

I was Mind alone, lost in an icy blue grotto of sound. There was only the music, and then bright colors that turned out to be musical notes. The notes danced along a silver staff of music that stretched from one eternity to another, beyond the planets and

stars and space itself. Red notes. Blue notes. But they had no substance or dimension, and nothing was real in that empty cavern between the two earphones. That unbounded abyss. The music rolled on in orgiastic waves of sound and color, and then I myself was one of the notes. I was being swept along on the silver staff, at twice the speed of light, rushing farther and farther away from my home back there in the Milky Way. In desperation, at the last possible moment, I reached up with hands I did not own, and I tore off the earphones.

I was back in the room. But from that point on, it went wrong.

I sat in a chair, staring at the floor. Jim pulled back the drapes, filling the room with the last light of day. Outside in the streets I could hear auto horns honking, and once a fire engine went by. I felt a terrible depression rising slowly from the bottom of my soul.

“Even out here where I am,” I said, “I don’t know what’s going on.” Nobody knew what was going on. Nobody knew anything.

It seemed to me that my sense of self was completely gone now. It had been ripped away by the music, and I had come back without it. Although I knew nothing, I felt that some awful truth was about to be revealed to me. It was lurking somewhere just beyond the borders of my comprehension, and very soon now I should have to come face to face with it.

I studied the room, and I realized that I now formed a continuum with everything in sight. The room seemed to shimmer in the dying rays of sunlight, and I was aware once more of the atomic substructure that underlay the visible world of the senses. It struck me that the visible world was wholly real, and in no way a deception, but it nevertheless had this underlying structure which glowed and pulsed like a living force. And it all ran together in a single composition. This is hard to describe, and the only analogy I can think of is in painting—for example, Seurat’s huge pointillist canvas, “A Sunday Afternoon on the Grande Jatte.” The figures on the grass are real enough, and there is a logic to their placement and development; if you look closely, however, you will see that the figures and the grass and the sparkling water are all composed of tiny dots of color, and these dots all blend together to form a single scene and a single reality. The lady with her parasol looks out at the sailboats on the water, and she imagines perhaps that they are far away and separate; but everything on the canvas is inexorably locked together in one flowing creation, and the lady in fact is an extension of the parasol, water, and boats.

I thought of that canvas as I sat in the room, drugged out of my mind, and it seemed to me that I was locked into my scene just as inexorably as Seurat’s figures were locked into theirs. Dots of energy or dots of paint, it was all the same. But even this seemed unsatisfactory, the more I thought of it, and then I remembered those Van Gogh canvases in which sky and earth swirl together like magnetic force fields. “That’s it,” I thought. “The reality that flows . . . much better than dots.” And I pitied poor Van Gogh, if that was

his constant perception. Those raging cypress trees, like tongues of green flame licking at the heavens—those whirling suns. No wonder he cut off his ear.

I tried to explain it to Jim.

“Instead of trying to figure it out,” he said, “just try to feel what’s happening.”

But I didn’t like what was happening. I was starting to remember something, and it seemed to have some connection with sunlight and a cradle. But what could it be? Then it came to me that I was gradually remembering my own identity, like an amnesia victim who slowly recovers his past. Finally it all fell together, and I remembered who I was. And it was so simple, really. I was life. I was Being. I was the vibrant force that filled the room, and was the room. I was the world, the universe. I was everything. I was that which always was and always would be. I was Jim, and Jim was me, and we were everybody else; and everybody else was us, and all of us put together were the same thing, and that same thing was the only thing there was. We were not God. We were simply all that there was, and all that there was wasn’t God. It was us, alone. And we were each other, and nowhere anywhere was there anything else but us, and we were always the same, the one and only truth.

“Jim,” I said, “can you get me out of this?”

“Uh-huh. You want to try it another half-hour?”

“Yes,” I said. “Let’s try it another half-hour.”

Having been reunited with the Ground of my Being, I wanted urgently to be estranged from it again as quickly as possible. But I tried to hold on, at least for a while, and I tried to laugh at the terrifying idea that was building up in my mind. “I don’t want to be God,” I said. “I don’t even want to be city editor.”

But it did no good to laugh, and I stopped trying. Of course I wasn’t God, I knew that. But I was All That There Was, and I didn’t want to be that, either. It was dark now, and I could hear children playing somewhere outside the hospital— under a street lamp, no doubt—and their lonely voices filled me with sadness. The children, I thought. The children, and Jim, and me: we were all the God there was. And it was sad and awful, because I wanted there to be a God. For the children at least, if not for me. But the loss of God was not the worst of it; there was something far worse even than that. The loss of my little self was not the worst of it; nor indeed did I regret that at all. It was not what I had lost. It was what I had gained. I had gained the whole universe, it seemed, and that was more than I could cope with—more than I could bear.

I didn’t want it.

But who was I, who didn’t want it? I was Everybody, the Self. And now I knew what

the little selves were for, I thought. They were a fiction designed to protect the Self from the knowledge of its own Being—to keep the Self from going mad. For surely, without them, the Self might be driven to insanity by the thought of its own audacity, and the thought of its loneliness, and the thought as well of the danger it was in. And it was in danger, I knew that perfectly well.

Since it was *All That There Was*, there was nothing to assure it of its own immortality. And in fact, I could sense, there was that which resisted both its Being and Becoming. And this something was nothing more than Nothingness itself, against which the Self had exerted its will to Become. Thus the ontic anxiety, as Tillich expressed it: the ultimate fear of ultimate non-Being. Or so it seemed, as I struggled with my seven demons; and translating the Self into selves once more, I imagined that I now understood with perfect clarity the meaning of a passage that had always haunted me in Unamuno's story of the good priest Don Emmanuel. That saintly man had preached to his flock the word of God and the message of salvation, which gave them great joy. There were those, however, who perceived that Don Emmanuel himself was a tormented soul, and one day, while walking in the countryside, a villager named Lazarus begged the priest to tell him the truth—the truth above all! And all a-tremble, Don Emmanuel whispered into the ear of him who had asked: "The truth? The truth, Lazarus, is perhaps something so unbearable, so terrible, something so deadly, that simple people could not live with it!"

Now I thought that I knew this truth: the deadly and unbearable truth that nobody created us . . . we created ourselves. That was the horror that we could not live with, I thought—anything rather than that—and I raved to Jim: "Tell the truth now, Jim. There is no God, is there? Oh God. It's awfully hard. Why does life have to be so hard? Why can't everything be nice? Oh God . . . God. I don't want life to be this way. Oh God, I can't face this. I'm not ready. I'm not ready. I don't have what it takes. I don't have the courage to meet it."

Jim said: "It's an illusion we build up from the time we're little kids. We don't often encounter—"

Shut up! "It's too soon, too soon. Too soon, I tell you. Oh God, we're not supposed to look at this. Not now. Maybe in a million years, or a billion years, or ten billion years. But not now, not yet. It was wrong to do this. The drug . . . not right . . . we shouldn't be fooling with . . ." My voice trailed off, and I thought about Freud. I thought that Freud didn't know what he was talking about, and the unconscious was very simple, really: the unconscious was this knowledge I now had of ultimate Being, and our repressions of it had their roots in an existential terror, not neurosis. It was real, and it was horrifying. It was more than most of us could accept, and thus we took refuge in smaller identities and well-defined roles, creating a limited world we could comfortably live in, pretending all the time there was Something Else. But there was nothing else, and deep down inside us we knew it, and we suffered. It took courage to Be, just as Tillich said, and most of us didn't have that courage. So we rejected our Being—and not by killing ourselves, because death was impossible, but by denying our real identity. By refusing to face what

we actually were. “Jim,” I said, “we’re all there is.”

“That’s right, buddy boy.”

“God, you’re tough. You don’t look it, but you’re really tough. I just wish that I . . . Jim . . . Can you get me out of this?”

“Sure. Want to try another half-hour first?”

“All right. Another half-hour.”

All That There Was.

But even this—even this—was not the worst of it. I said that I was frightened by what I had gained, and this was true. But I had lost something, too, and it was more important to me than my wretched self, and more important even than God. For along with my own self I had lost all the other selves as well. I had lost other people. And I missed them very much.

I wanted there to be someone else. Anyone else. And if there had been just two of us—really two of us—and we two were All That There Was, that would not have been so hard. But there was no one else; there was only the One.

Sitting in that room, I could hear church bells ringing somewhere, a long way off, and I imagined that they were Christmas bells. I thought of the holiday season, and the crowds thronging the downtown streets in the winter night, and the stores all aglow like boxes of light. Snow falling, and carols playing on the loudspeakers. And everyone with a home to go to, and someone there to meet him, and maybe to love him. But someone else, in any case. I was not feeling sentimental about Christmas as such; I was thinking rather about the crowds of people—all of them real, all of them different. And I missed them so, the people. More than myself, more than God, more than anything.

It wasn’t right, I thought

“Jim,” I said, “get me out of this.”

So he got the Thorazine, and he got me out of it. And the doctors let me go home, where there was someone to meet me.

“I’m not going to hurt anybody,” I said. “I’m just going to hurt.”

I did, too, for several days. Then the mood wore off, and I went back to the world I knew, and I worked in it. Sometimes I would catch glimpses of that different world I had seen in the hospital room, and I would wonder if the experience was going to start all over again. But it never did. There was only one time, when I was flying alone in a little

airplane, high over the Illinois prairie. Shut up in the cabin, I felt suddenly trapped and afraid, and more alone than I cared to be. But I dropped down out of the clouds to a lower altitude, and I opened a window, and the feeling passed.

Looking back on the experience, I recall several things. For one, I never forgot that I was under the influence of a drug. For another, I was never wholly convinced that the drug's revelations were true; even during the best moments and worst moments, a part of me warned that the truth might lie elsewhere, and I suppose this was my reporter's instinct expressing itself. For example, the monistic phase might well have been initiated by my momentary panic when Jim left me alone in the room. And my pre-experience reading could perhaps explain my failure to detect any hint of a transcendent reality. Also, I remember a persistent conviction that the experience itself was wrong.

Not false, necessarily, but wrong. For some unguessed reason, I felt, it would be better for us not to seek the experience, at least at this time. And finally, whether my phantoms were real or unreal, I regret my cowardice in the face of them: I have the feeling somehow that they might have appeared much friendlier had it been in my power really to confront them.

I include this epilogue simply as an item of interest, if it is, and certainly not as a testament. Obviously there were too many unknown factors involved to draw any conclusions from the experience, and for my part I have not drawn any conclusions.

Nevertheless, and just the same, it is something to think about. I shall think about it for the rest of my life.

THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE

THE CIA AND MIND CONTROL

Note:

THIS SECTION has grown out of the 16,000 pages of documents that the CIA released to me under the Freedom of Information Act. Without these documents, the best investigative reporting in the world could not have produced a book, and the secrets of CIA mind-control work would have remained buried forever, as the men who knew them had always intended. From the documentary base, I was able to expand my knowledge through interviews and readings in the behavioral sciences. Nevertheless, the final result is not the whole story of the CIA's attack on the mind. Only a few insiders could have written that, and they choose to remain silent. I have done the best I can to make the book as accurate as possible, but I have been hampered by the refusal of most of the principal characters to be interviewed and by the CIA's destruction in 1973 of many of the key documents.

I want to extend special thanks to the congressional sponsors of the Freedom of

Information Act. I would like to think that they had my kind of research in mind when they passed into law the idea that information about the government belongs to the people, not to the bureaucrats. I am also grateful to the CIA officials who made what must have been a rather unpleasant decision to release the documents and to those in the Agency who worked on the actual mechanics of release. From my point of view, the system has worked extremely well.

I must acknowledge that the system worked almost not at all during the first six months of my three-year Freedom of Information struggle. Then in late 1975, Joseph Petrillo and Timothy Sullivan, two skilled and energetic lawyers with the firm of Fried, Frank, Shriver, Harris and Kampelman, entered the case. I had the distinct impression that the government attorneys took me much more seriously when my requests for documents started arriving on stationery with all those prominent partners at the top. An author should not need lawyers to write a book, but I would have had great difficulty without mine. I greatly appreciate their assistance.

What an author does need is editors, a publisher, researchers, consultants, and friends, and I have been particularly blessed with good ones. My very dear friend Taylor Branch edited the book, and I continue to be impressed with his great skill in making my ideas and language coherent. Taylor has also served as my agent, and in this capacity, too, he has done me great service.

I had a wonderful research team, without which I never could have sifted through the masses of material and run down leads in so many places. I thank them all, and I want to acknowledge their contributions. Diane St. Clair was the mainstay of the group. She put together a system for filing and cross-indexing that worked beyond all expectations. (Special thanks to Newsday's Bob Greene, whose suggestions for organizing a large investigation came to us through the auspices of Investigative Reporters and Editors, Inc.) Not until a week before the book was finally finished did I fail to find a document which I needed; naturally, it was something I had misfiled myself. Diane also contributed greatly to the Cold War chapter. Richard Sokolow made similar contributions to the Mushroom and Safehouse chapters. His work was solid, and his energy boundless. Jay Peterzell delved deeply into Dr. Cameron's "depatterning" work in Montreal and stayed with it when others might have quit. Jay also did first-rate studies of brainwashing and sensory deprivation. Jim Mintz and Ken Cummins provided excellent assistance in the early research stage.

The Center for National Security Studies, under my good friend Robert Borosage, provided physical support and research aid, and I would like to express my appreciation. My thanks also to Morton Halperin who continued the support when he became director of the Center. I also appreciated the help of Penny Bevis, Hannah Delaney, Florence Oliver, Aldora Whitman, Nick Fiore, and Monica Andres.

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I sent drafts of the first ten chapters to many of the people I interviewed (and several who refused to be interviewed). My aim was to have them correct any inaccuracies or point out material taken out of context. The comments of those who responded aided me considerably in preparing the final book. My thanks for their assistance to Albert Hofmann, Telford Taylor, Leo Alexander, Walter Langer, John Stockwell, William Hood, Samuel Thompson, Sidney Cohen, Milton Greenblatt, Gordon Wasson, James Moore, Laurence Hinkle, Charles Osgood, John Gittinger (for Chapter 10 only), and all the others who asked not to be identified.

Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to my publisher, Times Books, and especially to my editor John J. Simon. John, Tom Lipscomb, Roger Jellinek, Gyorgyi Voros, and John Gallagher all believed in this book from the beginning and provided outstanding support. Thanks also go to Judith H. McQuown, who copyedited the manuscript, and Rosalyn T. Badalamenti, Times Books' Production Editor, who oversaw the whole production process.

October 26, 1978

WORLD WAR II

On the outskirts of Basel, Switzerland, overlooking the Rhine, lies the worldwide headquarters of the Sandoz drug and chemical empire. There, on the afternoon of April 16, 1943, Dr. Albert Hofmann made an extraordinary discovery—by accident.

At 37, with close-cropped hair and rimless glasses, Hofmann headed the company's research program to develop marketable drugs out of natural products. He was hard at work in his laboratory that warm April day when a wave of dizziness suddenly overcame him. The strange sensation was not unpleasant, and Hofmann felt almost as though he were drunk.

But he became quite restless. His nerves seemed to run off in different directions. The inebriation was unlike anything he had ever known before. Leaving work early, Hofmann managed a wobbly bicycle-ride home. He lay down and closed his eyes, still unable to shake the dizziness. Now the light of day was disagreeably bright. With the external world shut out, his mind raced along. He experienced what he would later de-

scribe as “an uninterrupted stream of fantastic images of extraordinary plasticity and vividness.... accompanied by an intense, kaleidoscope-like play of colors.”

These visions subsided after a few hours, and Hofmann, ever the inquiring scientist, set out to find what caused them. He presumed he had somehow ingested one of the drugs with which he had been working that day, and his prime suspect was d-lysergic acid diethylamide, or LSD, a substance that he himself had first produced in the same lab five years earlier. As part of his search for a circulation stimulant, Hofmann had been examining derivatives of ergot, a fungus that attacks rye.

Ergot had a mysterious, contradictory reputation. In China and some Arab countries, it was thought to have medicinal powers, but in Europe it was associated with the horrible malady from the Middle Ages called St. Anthony’s Fire, which struck periodically like the plague. The disease turned fingers and toes into blackened stumps and led to madness and death.

Hofmann guessed that he had absorbed some ergot derivative through his skin, perhaps while changing the filter paper in a suction bottle. To test his theory, he spent three days making up a fresh batch of LSD. Cautiously he swallowed 250 micrograms (less than 1/100,000 of an ounce). Hofmann planned to take more gradually through the day to obtain a result, since no known drug had any effect on the human body in such infinitesimal amounts. He had no way of knowing that because of LSD’s potency, he had already taken several times what would later be termed an ordinary dose. Unexpectedly, this first speck of LSD took hold after about 40 minutes, and Hofmann was off on the first self-induced “trip” of modern times.[1]

Hofmann recalls he felt “horrific... I was afraid. I feared I was becoming crazy. I had the idea I was out of my body. I thought I had died. I did not know how it would finish. If you know you will come back from this very strange world, only then can you enjoy it.” Of course, Hofmann had no way of knowing that he would return. While he had quickly recovered from his accidental trip three days earlier, he did not know how much LSD had caused it or whether the present dose was more than his body could detoxify. His mind kept veering off into an unknown dimension, but he was unable to appreciate much beyond his own terror.

Less than 200 miles from Hofmann’s laboratory, doctors connected to the S.S. and Gestapo were doing experiments that led to the testing of mescaline (a drug which has many of the mind-changing qualities of LSD) on prisoners at Dachau. Germany’s secret policemen had the notion, completely alien to Hofmann, that they could use drugs like mescaline to bring unwilling people under their control. According to research team member Walter Neff, the goal of the Dachau experiments was “to eliminate the will of the person examined.”

At Dachau, Nazis took the search for scientific knowledge of military value to its most awful extreme. There, in a closely guarded, fenced-off part of the camp, S.S. doc-

tors studied such questions as the amount of time a downed airman could survive in the North Atlantic in February. Information of this sort was considered important to German security, since skilled pilots were in relatively short supply. So, at Heinrich Himmler's personal order, the doctors at Dachau simply sat by huge tubs of ice water with stopwatches and timed how long it took immersed prisoners to die. In other experiments, under the cover of "aviation medicine," inmates were crushed to death in high-altitude pressure chambers (to learn how high pilots could safely fly), and prisoners were shot, so that special blood coagulants could be tested on their wounds.

The mescaline tests at Dachau run by Dr. Kurt Plotner were not nearly so lethal as the others in the "aviation" series, but the drug could still cause grave damage, particularly to anyone who already had some degree of mental instability. The danger was increased by the fact that the mescaline was administered covertly by S.S. men who spiked the prisoners' drinks. Unlike Dr. Hofmann, the subjects had no idea that a drug was causing their extreme disorientation. Many must have feared they had gone stark mad all on their own. Always, the subjects of these experiments were Jews, gypsies, Russians, and other groups on whose lives the Nazis placed little or no value. In no way were any of them true volunteers, although some may have come forward under the delusion that they would receive better treatment.

After the war, Neff told American investigators that the subjects showed a wide variety of reactions. Some became furious; others were melancholy or gay, as if they were drunk. Not surprisingly, "sentiments of hatred and revenge were exposed in every case." Neff noted that the drug caused certain people to reveal their "most intimate secrets." Still, the Germans were not ready to accept mescaline as a substitute for their more physical methods of interrogation. They went on to try hypnosis in combination with the drug, but they apparently never felt confident that they had found a way to assume command of their victim's mind.

Even as the S.S. doctors were carrying on their experiments at Dachau, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), America's wartime intelligence agency, set up a "truth drug" committee under Dr. Winfred Overholser, head of St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington. The committee quickly tried and rejected mescaline, several barbiturates, and scopolamine. Then, during the spring of 1943, the committee decided that Cannabis indica—or marijuana—showed the most promise, and it started a testing program in cooperation with the Manhattan Project, the TOP SECRET effort to build an atomic bomb. It is not clear why OSS turned to the bomb makers for help, except that, as one former Project official puts it, "Our secret was so great, I guess we were safer than anyone else." Apparently, top Project leaders, who went to incredible lengths to preserve security, saw no danger in trying out drugs on their personnel.

The Manhattan Project supplied the first dozen test subjects, who were asked to swallow a concentrated, liquid form of marijuana that an American pharmaceutical company furnished in small glass vials. A Project man who was present recalls: "It didn't work the way we wanted. Apparently the human system would not take it all at once

orally. The subjects would lean over and vomit.” What is more, they disclosed no secrets, and one subject wound up in the hospital.

Back to the drawing board went the OSS experts. They decided that the best way to administer the marijuana was inhalation of its fumes. Attempts were made to pour the solution on burning charcoal, and an OSS officer named George White (who had already succeeded in knocking himself out with an overdose of the relatively potent substance) tried out the vapor, without sufficient effect, at St. Elizabeth’s. Finally, the OSS group discovered a delivery system which had been known for years to jazz musicians and other users: the cigarette. OSS documents reported that smoking a mix of tobacco and the marijuana essence brought on a “state of irresponsibility, causing the subject to be loquacious and free in his impartation of information.”

The first field test of these marijuana-laced cigarettes took place on May 27, 1943. The subject was one August Del Gracio, who was described in OSS documents as a “notorious New York gangster.”[2] George White, an Army captain who had come to OSS from the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, administered the drug by inviting Del Gracio up to his apartment for a smoke and a chat. White had been talking to Del Gracio earlier about securing the Mafia’s cooperation to keep Axis agents out of the New York waterfront and to prepare the way for the invasion of Sicily.[3]

Del Gracio had already made it clear to White that he personally had taken part in killing informers who had squealed to the Feds. The gangster was as tough as they came, and if he could be induced to talk under the influence of a truth drug, certainly German prisoners could—or so the reasoning went. White plied him with cigarettes until “subject became high and extremely garrulous.” Over the next two hours, Del Gracio told the Federal agent about the ins and outs of the drug trade (revealing information so sensitive that the CIA deleted it from the OSS documents it released 34 years later). At one point in the conversation, after Del Gracio had begun to talk, the gangster told White, “Whatever you do, don’t ever use any of the stuff I’m telling you.” In a subsequent session, White packed the cigarettes with so much marijuana that Del Gracio became unconscious for about an hour. Yet, on the whole the experiment was considered a success in “loosening the subject’s tongue.”

While members of the truth-drug committee never believed that the concentrated marijuana could compel a person to confess his deepest secrets, they authorized White to push ahead with the testing. On the next stage, he and a Manhattan Project counterintelligence man borrowed 15 to 18 thick dossiers from the FBI and went off to try the marijuana on suspected Communist soldiers stationed in military camps outside Atlanta, Memphis, and New Orleans. According to White’s Manhattan Project sidekick, a Harvard Law graduate and future judge, they worked out a standard interrogation technique:

Before we went in, George and I would buy cigarettes, remove them from the bottom of the pack, use a hypodermic needle to put in the fluid, and leave the cigarettes in a shot glass to dry. Then, we resealed the pack.... We sat down with a particular sol-

dier and tried to win his confidence. We would say something like “This is better than being overseas and getting shot at,” and we would try to break them. We started asking questions from their [FBI] folder, and we would let them see that we had the folder on them... We had a pitcher of ice water on the table, and we knew the drug had taken effect when they reached for a glass. The stuff actually worked.... Everyone but one—and he didn’t smoke—gave us more information than we had before.

The Manhattan Project lawyer remembers this swing through the South with George White as a “good time.” The two men ate in the best restaurants and took in all the sights. “George was quite a guy,” he says. “At the Roosevelt Hotel in New Orleans after we had interviewed our men, we were lying on the beds when George took out his pistol and shot his initials into the molding that ran along the ceiling. He used his .22 automatic, equipped with a silencer, and he emptied several clips.” Asked if he tried out the truth drug himself, the lawyer says, “Yes. The cigarettes gave you a feeling of walking a couple of feet off the floor. I had a pleasant sensation of well-being. ... The fellows from my office wouldn’t take a cigarette from me for the rest of the war.”

Since World War II, the United States government, led by the Central Intelligence Agency, has searched secretly for ways to control human behavior. This book is about that search, which had its origins in World War II. The CIA programs were not only an extension of the OSS quest for a truth drug, but they also echoed such events as the Nazi experiments at Dachau and Albert Hofmann’s discovery of LSD.

By probing the inner reaches of consciousness, Hofmann’s research took him to the very frontiers of knowledge. As never before in history, the warring powers sought ideas from scientists capable of reaching those frontiers—ideas that could make the difference between victory and defeat. While Hofmann himself remained aloof, in the Swiss tradition, other scientists, like Albert Einstein, helped turned the abstractions of the laboratory into incredibly destructive weapons. Jules Verne’s notions of spaceships touching the moon stopped being absurd when Wernher von Braun’s rockets started pounding London. With their creations, the scientists reached beyond the speculations of science fiction. Never before had their discoveries been so breathtaking and so frightening. Albert Hofmann’s work touched upon the fantasies of the mind—accessible, in ancient legends, to witches and wizards who used spells and potions to bring people under their sway. In the early scientific age, the dream of controlling the brain took on a modern form in Mary Shelley’s creation, Dr. Frankenstein’s monster. The dream would be updated again during the Cold War era to become the Manchurian Candidate, the assassin whose mind was controlled by a hostile government. [4]

Who could say for certain that such a fantasy would not be turned into a reality like Verne’s rocket stories or Einstein’s calculations? And who should be surprised to learn that government agencies—specifically the CIA—would swoop down on Albert Hofmann’s lab in an effort to harness the power over the mind that LSD seemed to hold?

From the Dachau experiments came the cruelty that man was capable of heaping upon his fellows in the name of advancing science and helping his country gain advantage in war. To say that the Dachau experiments are object lessons of how far people can stretch ends to justify means is to belittle by cliché what occurred in the concentration camps. Nothing the CIA ever did in its postwar search for mind-control technology came close to the callous killing of the Nazi “aviation research.” Nevertheless, in their attempts to find ways to manipulate people, Agency officials and their agents crossed many of the same ethical barriers. They experimented with dangerous and unknown techniques on people who had no idea what was happening. They systematically violated the free will and mental dignity of their subjects, and, like the Germans, they chose to victimize special groups of people whose existence they considered, out of prejudice and convenience, less worthy than their own. Wherever their extreme experiments went, the CIA sponsors picked for subjects their own equivalents of the Nazis’ Jews and gypsies: mental patients, prostitutes, foreigners, drug addicts, and prisoners, often from minority ethnic groups.

In the postwar era, American officials straddled the ethical and the cutthroat approaches to scientific research. After an Allied tribunal had convicted the first echelon of surviving Nazi war criminals—the Görings and Speers—American prosecutors charged the Dachau doctors with “crimes against humanity” at a second Nuremberg trial. None of the German scientists expressed remorse. Most claimed that someone else had carried out the vilest experiments. All said that issues of moral and personal responsibility are moot in state-sponsored research. What is critical, testified Dr. Karl Brandt, Hitler’s personal physician, is “whether the experiment is important or unimportant.” Asked his attitude toward killing human beings in the course of medical research, Brandt replied, “Do you think that one can obtain any worthwhile fundamental results without a definite toll of lives?” The judges at Nuremberg rejected such defenses and put forth what came to be known as the Nuremberg Code on scientific research.[5]

Its main points were simple: Researchers must obtain full voluntary consent from all subjects; experiments should yield fruitful results for the good of society that can be obtained in no other way; researchers should not conduct tests where death or serious injury might occur, “except, perhaps” when the supervising doctors also serve as subjects. The judges—all Americans—sentenced seven of the Germans, including Dr. Brandt, to death by hanging. Nine others received long prison sentences. Thus, the U.S. government put its full moral force behind the idea that there were limits on what scientists could do to human subjects, even when a country’s security was thought to hang in the balance.

The Nuremberg Code has remained official American policy ever since 1946, but, even before the verdicts were in, special U.S. investigating teams were sifting through the experimental records at Dachau for information of military value. The report of one such team found that while part of the data was “inaccurate,” some of the conclusions, if confirmed, would be “an important complement to existing knowledge.” Military authorities sent the records, including a description of the mescaline and hypnosis experi-

ments, back to the United States. None of the German mind-control research was ever made public.

Immediately after the war, large political currents began to shift in the world, as they always do. Allies became enemies and enemies became allies. Other changes were fresh and yet old. In the United States, the new Cold War against communism carried with it a piercing sense of fear and a sweeping sense of mission—at least as far as American leaders were concerned. Out of these feelings and out of that overriding American faith in advancing technology came the CIA's attempts to tame hostile minds and make spy fantasies real. Experiments went forward and the CIA's scientists—bitten, sometimes obsessed—kept going back to their laboratories for one last adjustment. Some theories were crushed, while others emerged in unexpected ways that would have a greater impact outside the CIA than in the world of covert operations. Only one aspect remained constant during the quarter-century of active research: The CIA's interest in controlling the human mind had to remain absolutely secret.

World War II provided more than the grand themes of the CIA's behavioral programs. It also became the formative life experience of the principal CIA officials, and, indeed, of the CIA itself as an institution. The secret derring-do of the OSS was new to the United States, and the ways of the OSS would grow into the ways of the CIA. OSS leaders would have their counterparts later in the Agency. CIA officials tended to have known the OSS men, to think like them, to copy their methods, and even, in some cases, to be the same people. When Agency officials wanted to launch their massive effort for mind control, for instance, they got out the old OSS documents and went about their goal in many of the same ways the OSS had. OSS leaders enlisted outside scientists; Agency officials also went to the most prestigious ones in academia and industry, soliciting aid for the good of the country. They even approached the same George White who had shot his initials in the hotel ceiling while on OSS assignment.

Years later, White's escapades with OSS and CIA would carry with them a humor clearly unintended at the time. To those directly involved, influencing human behavior was a deadly serious business, but qualities like bumbling and pure craziness shine through in hindsight. In the CIA's campaign, some of America's most distinguished behavioral scientists would stick all kinds of drugs and wires into their experimental subjects—often dismissing the obviously harmful effects with theories reminiscent of the learned nineteenth-century physicians who bled their patients with leeches and belittled the ignorance of anyone who questioned the technique. If the schemes of these scientists to control the mind had met with more success, they would be much less amusing. But so far, at least, the human spirit has apparently kept winning. That—if anything—is the saving grace of the mind-control campaign.

World War II signaled the end of American isolation and innocence, and the United States found it had a huge gap to close, with its enemies and allies alike, in applying underhanded tactics to war. Unlike Britain, which for hundreds of years had used covert operations to hold her empire together, the United States had no tradition of using

subversion as a secret instrument of government policy. The Germans, the French, the Russians, and nearly everyone else had long been involved in this game, although no one seemed as good at it as the British.

Clandestine lobbying by British agents in the United States led directly to President Franklin Roosevelt's creation of the organization that became OSS in 1942. This was the first American agency set up to wage secret, unlimited war. Roosevelt placed it under the command of a Wall Street lawyer and World War I military hero, General William "Wild Bill" Donovan. A burly, vigorous Republican millionaire with great intellectual curiosity, Donovan started as White House intelligence adviser even before Pearl Harbor, and he had direct access to the President.

Learning at the feet of the British who made available their expertise, if not all their secrets, Donovan put together an organization where nothing had existed before. A Columbia College and Columbia Law graduate himself, he tended to turn to the gentlemanly preserves of the Eastern establishment for recruits. (The initials OSS were said to stand for "Oh So Social.") Friends—or friends of friends—could be trusted. "Old boys" were the stalwarts of the British secret service, and, as with most other aspects of OSS, the Americans followed suit.

One of Donovan's new recruits was Richard Helms, a young newspaper executive then best known for having gained an interview with Adolf Hitler in 1936 while working for United Press. Having gone to Le Rosey, the same Swiss prep school as the Shah of Iran, and then on to clubby Williams College Helms moved easily among the young OSS men. He was already more taciturn than the jovial Donovan, but he was equally ambitious and skilled as a judge of character. For Helms, OSS spywork began a lifelong career. He would become the most important sponsor of mind-control research within the CIA, nurturing and promoting it throughout his steady climb to the top position in the Agency.

Like every major wartime official from President Roosevelt down, General Donovan believed that World War II was in large measure a battle of science and organization. The idea was to mobilize science for defense, and the Roosevelt administration set up a costly, intertwining network of research programs to deal with everything from splitting the atom to preventing mental breakdowns in combat. Donovan named Boston industrialist Stanley Lovell to head OSS Research and Development and to be the secret agency's liaison with the government scientific community.

A Cornell graduate and a self-described "saucepan chemist," Lovell was a confident energetic man with a particular knack for coming up with offbeat ideas and selling them to others. Like most of his generation, he was an outspoken patriot. He wrote in his diary shortly after Pearl Harbor: "As James Hilton said, 'Once at war, to reason is treason.' My job is clear—to do all that is in me to help America."

General Donovan minced no words in laying out what he expected of Lovell: "I

need every subtle device and every underhanded trick to use against the Germans and Japanese—by our own people—but especially by the underground resistance programs in all the occupied countries. You'll have to invent them all, Lovell, because you're going to be my man." Thus Lovell recalled his marching orders from Donovan, which he instantly received on being introduced to the blustery, hyperactive OSS chief. Lovell had never met anyone with Donovan's personal magnetism.

Lovell quickly turned to some of the leading lights in the academic and private sectors. A special group—called Division 19—within James Conant's National Defense Research Committee was set up to produce "miscellaneous weapons" for OSS and British intelligence. Lovell's strategy, he later wrote, was "to stimulate the Peck's Bad Boy beneath the surface of every American scientist and to say to him, 'Throw all your normal law-abiding concepts out the window. Here's a chance to raise merry hell.'"

Dr. George Kistiakowsky, the Harvard chemist who worked on explosives research during the war (and who became science adviser to Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy) remembers Stanley Lovell well: "Stan came to us and asked us to develop ways for camouflaging explosives which could be smuggled into enemy countries." Kistiakowsky and an associate came up with a substance which was dubbed "Aunt Jemima" because it looked and tasted like pancake mix. Says Kistiakowsky: "You could bake bread or other things out of it. I personally took it to a high-level meeting at the War Department and ate cookies in front of all those characters to show them what a wonderful invention it was. All you had to do was attach a powerful detonator, and it exploded with the force of dynamite." Thus disguised, "Aunt Jemima" could be slipped into occupied lands. It was credited with blowing up at least one major bridge in China.

Lovell encouraged OSS behavioral scientists to find something that would offend Japanese cultural sensibilities. His staff anthropologists reported back that nothing was so shameful to the Japanese soldier as his bowel movements. Lovell then had the chemists work up a skatole compound which duplicated the odor of diarrhea. It was loaded into collapsible tubes, flown to China, and distributed to children in enemy-occupied cities. When a Japanese officer appeared on a crowded street, the kids were encouraged to slip up behind him and squirt the liquid on the seat of his pants. Lovell named the product "Who? Me?" and he credited it with costing the Japanese "face."

Unlike most weapons, "Who? Me?" was not designed to kill or maim. It was a "harassment substance" designed to lower the morale of individual Japanese. The inspiration came from academicians who tried to make a science of human behavior. During World War II, the behavioral sciences were still very much in their infancy, but OSS—well before most of the outside world—recognized their potential in warfare. Psychology and psychiatry, sociology, and anthropology all seemed to offer insights that could be exploited to manipulate the enemy.

General Donovan himself believed that the techniques of psychoanalysis might be turned on Adolf Hitler to get a better idea of "the things that made him tick," as Donovan

put it. Donovan gave the job of being the Fuhrer's analyst to Walter Langer, a Cambridge, Massachusetts psychoanalyst whose older brother William had taken leave from a chair of history at Harvard to head OSS Research and Analysis.[6]

Langer protested that a study of Hitler based on available data would be highly uncertain and that conventional psychiatric and psychoanalytic methods could not be used without direct access to the patient. Donovan was not the sort to be deterred by such details. He told Langer to go ahead anyway.

With the help of a small research staff, Langer looked through everything he could find on Hitler and interviewed a number of people who had know the German leader. Aware of the severe limitations on his information, but left no choice by General Donovan, Langer plowed ahead and wrote up a final study. It pegged Hitler as a "neurotic psychopath" and proceeded to pick apart the Führer's psyche. Langer, since retired to Florida, believes he came "pretty close" to describing the real Adolf Hitler. He is particularly proud of his predictions that the Nazi leader would become increasingly disturbed as Germany suffered more and more defeats and that he would commit suicide rather than face capture.

One reason for psychoanalyzing Hitler was to uncover vulnerabilities that could be covertly exploited. Stanley Lovell seized upon one of Langer's ideas—that Hitler might have feminine tendencies—and got permission from the OSS hierarchy to see if he could push the Führer over the gender line.[7] "The hope was that his moustache would fall off and his voice become soprano," Lovell wrote. Lovell used OSS's agent network to try to slip female sex hormones into Hitler's food, but nothing apparently came of it. Nor was there ever any payoff to other Lovell schemes to blind Hitler permanently with mustard gas or to use a drug to exacerbate his suspected epilepsy. The main problem in these operations—all of which were tried—was to get Hitler to take the medicine. Failure of the delivery schemes also kept Hitler alive—OSS was simultaneously trying to poison him.[8]

Without question, murdering a man was a decisive way to influence his behavior, and OSS scientists developed an arsenal of chemical and biological poisons that included the incredibly potent botulinus toxin, whose delivery system was a gelatin capsule smaller than the head of a pin. Lovell and his associates also realized there were less drastic ways to manipulate an enemy's behavior, and they came up with a line of products to cause sickness, itching, baldness, diarrhea, and/or the odor thereof. They had less success finding a drug to compel truth-telling, but it was not for lack of trying.

Chemical and biological substances had been used in wartime long before OSS came on the scene. Both sides had used poison gas in World War I; during the early part of World War II, the Japanese had dropped deadly germs on China and caused epidemics; and throughout the war, the Allies and Axis powers alike had built up chemical and biological warfare (CBW) stockpiles, whose main function turned out, in the end, to be deterring the other side. Military men tended to look on CBW as a way of destroying

whole armies and even populations. Like the world's other secret services, OSS individualized CBW and made it into a way of selectively but secretly embarrassing, disorienting, incapacitating, injuring, or killing an enemy.

As diversified as were Lovell's scientific duties for OSS, they were narrow in comparison with those of his main counterpart in the CIA's postwar mind-control program, Dr. Sidney Gottlieb. Gottlieb would preside over investigations that ranged from advanced research in amnesia by electroshock to dragnet searches through the jungles of Latin America for toxic leaves and barks. Fully in the tradition of making Hitler moustacheless, Gottlieb's office would devise a scheme to make Fidel Castro's beard fall out; like Lovell, Gottlieb would personally provide operators with deadly poisons to assassinate foreign leaders like the Congo's Patrice Lumumba, and he would be equally at ease discussing possible applications of new research in neurology. On a much greater scale than Lovell's, Gottlieb would track down every conceivable gimmick that might give one person leverage over another's mind. Gottlieb would preside over arcane fields from handwriting analysis to stress creation, and he would rise through the Agency along with his bureaucratic patron, Richard Helms.

Early in the war, General Donovan got another idea from the British, whose psychologists and psychiatrists had devised a testing program to predict the performance of military officers. Donovan thought such a program might help OSS sort through the masses of recruits who were being rushed through training. To create an assessment system for Americans, Donovan called in Harvard psychology professor Henry "Harry" Murray. In 1938 Murray had written *Explorations of Personality*, a notable book which laid out a whole battery of tests that could be used to size up the personalities of individuals. "Spying is attractive to loonies," states Murray. "Psychopaths, who are people who spend their lives making up stories, revel in the field." The program's prime objective, according to Murray, was keeping out the crazies, as well as the "sloths, irritants, bad actors, and free talkers."

Always in a hurry, Donovan gave Murray and a distinguished group of colleagues only 15 days until the first candidates arrived to be assessed. In the interim, they took over a spacious estate outside Washington as their headquarters. In a series of hurried meetings, they put together an assessment system that combined German and British methods with Murray's earlier research. It tested a recruit's ability to stand up under pressure, to be a leader, to hold liquor, to lie skillfully, and to read a person's character by the nature of his clothing.

More than 30 years after the war, Murray remains modest in his claims for the assessment system, saying that it was only an aid in weeding out the "horrors" among OSS candidates. Nevertheless, the secret agency's leaders believed in its results, and Murray's system became a fixture in OSS, testing Americans and foreign agents alike. Some of Murray's young behavioral scientists, like John Gardner,^[9] would go on to become prominent in public affairs, and, more importantly, the OSS assessment program would be recognized as a milestone in American psychology. It was the first systematic

effort to evaluate an individual's personality in order to predict his future behavior. After the war, personality assessment would become a new field in itself, and some of Murray's assistants would go on to establish OSS-like systems at large corporations, starting with AT&T. They also would set up study programs at universities, beginning with the University of California at Berkeley.[10]

As would happen repeatedly with the CIA's mind-control research, OSS was years ahead of public developments in behavioral theory and application.

In the postwar years, Murray would be superseded by a young Oklahoma psychologist John Gittinger, who would rise in the CIA on the strength of his ideas about how to make a hard science out of personality assessment and how to use it to manipulate people. Gittinger would build an office within CIA that refined both Murray's assessment function and Walter Langer's indirect analysis of foreign leaders. Gittinger's methods would become an integral part of everyday Agency operations, and he would become Sid Gottlieb's protégé.

Stanley Lovell reasoned that a good way to kill Hitler—and the OSS man was always looking for ideas—would be to hypnotically control a German prisoner to hate the Gestapo and the Nazi regime and then to give the subject a hypnotic suggestion to assassinate the Führer. The OSS candidate would be let loose in Germany where he would take the desired action, “being under a compulsion that might not be denied,” as Lovell wrote. Lovell sought advice on whether this scheme would work from New York psychiatrist Lawrence Kubie and from the famed Menninger brothers, Karl and William. The Menningers reported that the weight of the evidence showed hypnotism to be incapable of making people do anything that they would not otherwise do. Equally negative, Dr. Kubie added that if a German prisoner had a logical reason to kill Hitler or anyone else, he would not need hypnotism to motivate him.

Lovell and his coworkers apparently accepted this skeptical view of hypnosis, as did the overwhelming majority of psychologists and psychiatrists in the country. At the time, hypnosis was considered a fringe activity, and there was little recognition of either its validity or its usefulness for any purpose—let alone covert operations. Yet there were a handful of serious experimenters in the field who believed in its military potential. The most vocal partisan of this view was the head of the Psychology Department at Colgate University, George “Esty” Estabrooks. Since the early 1930s, Estabrooks had periodically ventured out from his sleepy upstate campus to advise the military on applications of hypnotism.

Estabrooks acknowledged that hypnosis did not work on everyone and that only one person in five made a good enough subject to be placed in a deep trance, or state of somnambulism. He believed that only these subjects could be induced to such things against their apparent will as reveal secrets or commit crimes. He had watched respected members of the community make fools of themselves in the hands of stage hypnotists, and he had compelled his own students to reveal fraternity secrets and the details of

private love affairs—all of which the subjects presumably did not want to do.

Still his experience was limited. Estabrooks realized that the only certain way to know whether a person would commit a crime like murder under hypnosis was to have the person kill someone. Unwilling to settle the issue on his own by trying the experiment, he felt that government sanction of the process would relieve the hypnotist of personal responsibility. “Any ‘accidents’ that might occur during the experiments will simply be charged to profit and loss,” he wrote, “a very trifling portion of that enormous wastage in human life which is part and parcel of war.”

After Pearl Harbor, Estabrooks offered his ideas to OSS, but they were not accepted by anyone in government willing to carry them to their logical conclusion. He was reduced to writing books about the potential use of hypnotism in warfare. Cassandra-like, he tried to warn America of the perils posed by hypnotic control. His 1945 novel, *Death in the Mind*, concerned a series of seemingly treasonable acts committed by Allied personnel: an American submarine captain torpedoes one of our own battleships, and the beautiful heroine starts acting in an irrational way which serves the enemy. After a perilous investigation, secret agent Johnny Evans learns that the Germans have been hypnotizing Allied personnel and conditioning them to obey Nazi commands. Evans and his cohorts, shaken by the many ways hypnotism can be used against them, set up elaborate countermeasures and then cannot resist going on the offensive. Objections are heard from the heroine, who by this time has been brutally and rather graphically tortured. She complains that “doing things to people’s minds” is “a loathsome way to fight.” Her qualms are brushed aside by Johnny Evans, her lover and boss. He sets off after the Germans—“to tamper with their minds; Make them traitors; Make them work for us.”

In the aftermath of the war, as the U.S. national security apparatus was being constructed, the leaders of the Central Intelligence Agency would adopt Johnny Evans’ mission—almost in those very words. Richard Helms, Sid Gottlieb, John Gittinger, George White, and many others would undertake a far-flung and complicated assault on the human mind. In hypnosis and many other fields, scientists even more eager than George Estabrooks would seek CIA approval for the kinds of experiments they would not dare perform on their own. Sometimes the Agency men concurred; on other occasions, they reserved such experiments for themselves. They would tamper with many minds and inevitably cause some to be damaged. In the end, they would minimize and hide their deeds, and they would live to see doubts raised about the health of their own minds.

Notes

The information on Albert Hofmann’s first LSD trip and background on LSD came from an interview by the author with Hofmann, a paper by Hofmann called “The Discovery of LSD and Subsequent Investigations on Naturally Occurring Hallucinogens,” another interview with Hofmann by Michael Horowitz printed in the June 1976 *High Times* magazine, and from a CIA document on LSD produced by the Office of Scientific Intelligence, August 30, 1955, titled “The Strategic Medical Significance of LSD-25.”

Information on the German mescaline and hypnosis experiments at Dachau came from "Technical Report no. 331-45, German Aviation Research at the Dachau Concentration Camp," October, 1945, US Naval Technical Mission in Europe, found in the papers of Dr. Henry Beecher. Additional information came from *Trials of War Criminals Before the Nuremberg Tribunal*, the book *Doctors of Infamy* by Alexander Mitscherlich and Fred Mielke (New York: H. Schuman, 1949), interviews with prosecution team members Telford Taylor, Leo Alexander, and James McHaney, and an article by Dr. Leo Alexander, "Sociopsychologic Structure of the SS," *Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry*, May, 1948, Vol. 59, pp. 622-34.

The OSS experience in testing marijuana was described in interviews with several former Manhattan Project counterintelligence men, an OSS document dated June 21, 1943, Subject: Development of "truth drug," given the CIA identification number A/B, I, 12/1; from document A/B, I, 64/34, undated, Subject: Memorandum Relative to the use of truth drug in interrogation; document dated June 2, 1943, Subject: Memorandum on T. D. A "confidential memorandum," dated April 4, 1954, found in the papers of George White, also was helpful. The quote on US prisoners passing through Manchuria came from document 19, 18 June 1953, Subject: ARTICHOKE Conference.

The information on Stanley Lovell came from his book, *Of Spies and Strategems* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963), from interviews with his son Richard, a perusal of his remaining papers, interviews with George Kistiakowsky and several OSS veterans, and from "Science in World War II, the Office of Scientific Research and Development" in *Chemistry: A History of the Chemistry Components of the National Defense Research Committee*, edited by W. A. Noyes, Jr. (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1948).

Dr. Walter Langer provided information about his psychoanalytic portrait of Hitler, as did his book, *The Mind of Adolf Hitler* (New York: Basic Books, 1972). Dr. Henry Murray also gave an interview, as did several OSS men who had been through his assessment course. Murray's work is described at length in a book published after the war by the OSS Assessment staff, *Assessment of Men* (New York: Rinehart & Company, 1948).

Material on George Estabrooks came from his books, *Hypnotism* (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1945) and *Death in the Mind*, co-authored with Richard Lockridge (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1945), and interviews with his daughter, Doreen Estabrooks Michl, former colleagues, and Dr. Milton Kline.

Footnotes

1. While Hofmann specifically used the word "trip" in a 1977 interview to describe his consciousness-altering experience, the word obviously had no such meaning in 1943 and is used here anachronistically.

2. Del Gracio's name was deleted by the CIA from the OSS document that described the incident, but his identity was learned from the papers of George White, whose

widow donated them to Foothills College in Los Altos, California. CIA officials cut virtually all the names from the roughly 16,000 pages of its own papers and the few score pages from OSS that it released to me under the Freedom of Information Act. However, as in this case, many of the names could be found through collateral sources.

3. Naval intelligence officers eventually made a deal in which mob leaders promised to cooperate, and as a direct result, New York Governor Thomas Dewey ordered Del Gracio's chief, boss of bosses, Charles "Lucky" Luciano freed from jail in 1946.

4. The term "Manchurian Candidate" came into the language in 1959 when author Richard Condon made it the title of his best-selling novel that later became a popular movie starring Laurence Harvey and Frank Sinatra. The story was about a joint Soviet-Chinese plot to take an American soldier captured in Korea, condition him at a special brainwashing center located in Manchuria, and create a remote-controlled assassin who was supposed to kill the President of the United States. Condon consulted with a wide variety of experts while researching the book, and some inside sources may well have filled him in on the gist of a discussion that took place at a 1953 meeting at the CIA on behavior control. Said one participant, "... individuals who had come out of North Korea across the Soviet Union to freedom recently apparently had a blank period of disorientation while passing through a special zone in Manchuria." The CIA and military men at this session promised to seek more information, but the matter never came up again in either the documents released by the Agency or in the interviews done for this book.

5. The Code was suggested in essentially its final form by prosecution team consultant, Dr. Leo Alexander, a Boston psychiatrist.

6. Four months before Pearl Harbor, Donovan had enlisted Walter Langer to put together a nationwide network of analysts to study the morale of the country's young men, who, it was widely feared, were not enthusiastic about fighting a foreign war. Pearl Harbor seemed to solve this morale problem, but Langer stayed with Donovan as a part-time psychoanalytic consultant.

7. Langer wrote that Hitler was "masochistic in the extreme inasmuch as he derives sexual pleasure from punishment inflicted on his own body. There is every reason to suppose that during his early years, instead of identifying himself with his father as most boys do, he identified with his mother. This was perhaps easier for him than for most boys since, as we have seen, there is a large feminine component in his physical makeup.... His extreme sentimentality, his emotionality, his occasional softness, and his weeping, even after he became Chancellor, may be regarded as manifestations of a fundamental pattern that undoubtedly had its origin in his relationship to his mother."

8. Although historians have long known that OSS men had been in touch with the German officers who tried to assassinate Hitler in 1944, the fact that OSS independently was trying to murder him has eluded scholars of the period. Stanley Lovell gave away the secret in his 1963 book, *Of Spies and Strategems*, but he used such casual and ob-

scure words that the researchers apparently did not notice. Lovell wrote: "I supplied now and then a carbamate or other quietus medication, all to be injected into der Führer's carrots, beets, or whatever." A "quietus medicine" is a generic term for a lethal poison, of which carbamates are one type.

9. Gardner, a psychologist teaching at Mount Holyoke College, helped Murray set up the original program and went on to open the West Coast OSS assessment site at a converted beach club in San Juan Capistrano. After the war, he would become Secretary of HEW in the Johnson administration and founder of Common Cause.

10. Murray is not at all enthusiastic with the spinoffs. "Some of the things done with it turn your stomach," he declares.

COLD WAR ON THE MIND

CIA officials started preliminary work on drugs and hypnosis shortly after the Agency's creation in 1947, but the behavior-control program did not really get going until the Hungarian government put Josef Cardinal Mindszenty on trial in 1949. With a glazed look in his eyes, Mindszenty confessed to crimes of treason he apparently did not commit. His performance recalled the Moscow purge trials of 1937 and 1938 at which tough and dedicated party apparatchiks had meekly pleaded guilty to long series of improbable offenses. These and a string of postwar trials in other Eastern European countries seemed staged, eerie, and unreal. CIA men felt they had to know how the Communists had rendered the defendants zombielike. In the Mindszenty case, a CIA Security Memorandum declared that "some unknown force" had controlled the Cardinal, and the memo speculated that the communist authorities had used hypnosis on him.

In the summer of 1949, the Agency's head of Scientific Intelligence made a special trip to Western Europe to find out more about what the Soviets were doing and "to apply special methods of interrogation for the purpose of evaluation of Russian practices." In other words, fearful that the communists might have used drugs and hypnosis on prisoners, a senior CIA official used exactly the same techniques on refugees and returned prisoners from Eastern Europe. On returning to the United States, this official recommended two courses of action: first, that the Agency consider setting up an escape operation to free Mindszenty; and second, that the CIA train and send to Europe a team skilled in "special" interrogation methods of the type he had tried out in Europe.

By the spring of 1950, several other CIA branches were contemplating the operational use of hypnosis. The Office of Security, whose main job was to protect Agency personnel and facilities from enemy penetration, moved to centralize all activity in this and other behavioral fields. The Security chief, Sheffield Edwards, a former Army colonel who a decade later would personally handle joint CIA-Mafia operations, took the initiative by calling a meeting of all interested Agency parties and proposing that interrogation teams be formed under Security's command. Security would use the teams to check out agents and defectors for the whole CIA. Each team would consist of a psychia-

trist, a polygraph (lie detector) expert trained in hypnosis, and a technician. Edwards agreed not to use the teams operationally without the permission of a high-level committee. He called the project BLUEBIRD, a code name which, like all Agency names, had no significance except perhaps to the person who chose it. Edwards classified the program TOP SECRET and stressed the extraordinary need for secrecy. On April 20, 1950, CIA Director Roscoe Hillenkoetter approved BLUEBIRD and authorized the use of unvouchered funds to pay for its most sensitive areas. The CIA's behavior-control program now had a bureaucratic structure.

The chief of Scientific Intelligence attended the original BLUEBIRD meeting in Sheffield Edwards' office and assured those present that his office would keep trying to gather all possible data on foreign—particularly Russian—efforts in the behavioral field. Not long afterward, his representative arranged to inspect the Nuremberg Tribunal records to see if they contained anything useful to BLUEBIRD. According to a CIA psychologist who looked over the German research, the Agency did not find much of specific help. "It was a real horror story, but we learned what human beings were capable of," he recalls. "There were some experiments on pain, but they were so mixed up with sadism as not to be useful... How the victim coped was very interesting."

At the beginning, at least, there was cooperation between the scientists and the interrogators in the CIA. Researchers from Security (who had no special expertise but who were experienced in police work) and researchers from Scientific Intelligence (who lacked operational background but who had academic training) pored jointly over all the open literature and secret reports. They quickly realized that the only way to build an effective defense against mind control was to understand its offensive possibilities. The line between offense and defense—if it ever existed—soon became so blurred as to be meaningless. Nearly every Agency document stressed goals like "controlling an individual to the point where he will do our bidding against his will and even against such fundamental laws of nature as self-preservation." On reading one such memo, an Agency officer wrote to his boss: "If this is supposed to be covered up as a defensive feasibility study, it's pretty damn transparent."

Three months after the Director approved BLUEBIRD, the first team traveled to Japan to try out behavioral techniques on human subjects—probably suspected double agents. The three men arrived in Tokyo in July 1950, about a month after the start of the Korean War. No one needed to impress upon them the importance of their mission. The Security Office ordered them to conceal their true purpose from even the U.S. military authorities with whom they worked in Japan, using the cover that they would be performing "intensive polygraph" work. In stifling, debilitating heat and humidity, they tried out combinations of the depressant sodium amytal with the stimulant benzedrine on each of four subjects, the last two of whom also received a second stimulant, picrotoxin. They also tried to induce amnesia. The team considered the tests successful, but the CIA documents available on the trip give only the sketchiest outline of what happened.^[1] Then around October 1950, the BLUEBIRD team used "advanced" techniques on 25 subjects, apparently North Korean prisoners of war.

By the end of that year, a Security operator, Morse Allen, had become the head of the BLUEBIRD program. Forty years old at the time, Allen had spent most of his earlier career rooting out the domestic communist threat, starting in the late 1930s when he had joined the Civil Service Commission and set up its first security files on communists. (“He knows their methods,” wrote a CIA colleague.) During World War II, Allen had served with Naval intelligence, first pursuing leftists in New York and then landing with the Marines on Okinawa. After the war, he went to the State Department, only to leave in the late 1940s because he felt the Department was whitewashing certain communist cases. He soon joined the CIA’s Office of Security. A suspicious man by inclination and training, Allen took nothing at face value. Like all counterintelligence or security operators, his job was to show why things are not what they seem to be. He was always thinking ahead and behind, punching holes in surface realities. Allen had no academic training for behavioral research (although he did take a short course in hypnotism, a subject that fascinated him). He saw the BLUEBIRD job as one that called for studying every last method the communists might use against the United States and figuring out ways to counter them.

The CIA had schooled Morse Allen in one field which in the CIA’s early days became an important part of covert operations: the use of the polygraph. Probably more than any intelligence service in the world, the Agency developed the habit of strapping its foreign agents—and eventually, its own employees—into the “box.” The polygraph measures physiological changes that might show lying—heartbeat, blood pressure, perspiration, and the like. It has never been foolproof. In 1949 the Office of Security estimated that it worked successfully on seven out of eight cases, a very high fraction but not one high enough for those in search of certainty. A psychopathic liar, a hypnotized person, or a specially trained professional can “beat” the machine. Moreover, the skill of the person running the polygraph and asking the questions determines how well the device will work. “A good operator can make brilliant use of the polygraph without plugging it in,” claims one veteran CIA case officer. Others maintain only somewhat less extravagantly that its chief value is to deter agents tempted to switch loyalties or reveal secrets. The power of the machine—real and imagined—to detect infidelity and dishonesty can be an intimidating factor.^[2] Nevertheless, the polygraph cannot compel truth. Like Pinocchio’s nose, it only indicates lying. In addition, the machine requires enough physical control over the subject to strap him in. For years, the CIA tried to overcome this limitation by developing a “super” polygraph that could be aimed from afar or concealed in a chair. In this field, as in many others, no behavior control scheme was too farfetched to investigate, and Agency scientists did make some progress.

In December 1950, Morse Allen told his boss, Paul Gaynor, a retired brigadier general with a long background in counterintelligence and interrogation, that he had heard of experiments with an “electro-sleep” machine in a Richmond, Virginia hospital. Such an invention appealed to Allen because it supposedly put people to sleep without shock or convulsions. The BLUEBIRD team had been using drugs to bring on a state similar to a hypnotic trance, and Allen hoped this machine would allow an operator to put people into deep sleep without having to resort to chemicals. In theory, all an operator

had to do was to attach the electrode-tipped wires to the subject's head and let the machine do the rest. It cost about \$250 and was about twice the size of a table-model dictating machine. "Although it would not be feasible to use it on any of our own people because there is at least a theoretical danger of temporary brain damage," Morse Allen wrote, "it would possibly be of value in certain areas in connection with POW interrogation or on individuals of interest to this Agency." The machine never worked well enough to get into the testing stage for the CIA.

At the end of 1951, Allen talked to a famed psychiatrist (whose name, like most of the others, the CIA has deleted from the documents released) about a gruesome but more practical technique. This psychiatrist, a cleared Agency consultant, reported that electroshock treatments could produce amnesia for varying lengths of time and that he had been able to obtain information from patients as they came out of the stupor that followed shock treatments. He also reported that a lower setting of the Reiter electroshock machine produced an "excruciating pain" that, while nontherapeutic, could be effective as "a third degree method" to make someone talk. Morse Allen asked if the psychiatrist had ever taken advantage of the "groggy" period that followed normal electroshock to gain hypnotic control of his patients. No, replied the psychiatrist, but he would try it in the near future and report back to the Agency. The psychiatrist also mentioned that continued electroshock treatments could gradually reduce a subject to the "vegetable level," and that these treatments could not be detected unless the subject was given EEG tests within two weeks. At the end of a memo laying out this information, Allen noted that portable, battery-driven electroshock machines had come on the market.

Shortly after this Morse Allen report, the Office of Scientific Intelligence recommended that this same psychiatrist be given \$100,000 in research funds "to develop electric shock and hypnotic techniques." While Allen thought this subject worth pursuing, he had some qualms about the ultimate application of the shock treatments: "The objections would, of course, apply to the use of electroshock if the end result was creation of a 'vegetable.' [I] believe that these techniques should not be considered except in gravest emergencies, and neutralization by confinement and/or removal from the area would be far more appropriate and certainly safer."

In 1952 the Office of Scientific Intelligence proposed giving another private doctor \$100,000 to develop BLUEBIRD-related "neurosurgical techniques"—presumably lobotomy-connected.[3] Similarly, the Security office planned to use outside consultants to find out about such techniques as ultrasonics, vibrations, concussions, high and low pressure, the uses of various gases in airtight chambers, diet variations, caffeine, fatigue, radiation, heat and cold, and changing light. Agency officials looked into all these areas and many others. Some they studied intensively; others they merely discussed with consultants.

The BLUEBIRD mind-control program began when Stalin was still alive, when the memory of Hitler was fresh, and the terrifying prospect of global nuclear war was just sinking into popular consciousness. The Soviet Union had subjugated most of Eastern

Europe, and a Communist party had taken control over the world's most populous nation, China. War had broken out in Korea, and Senator Joseph McCarthy's anti-Communist crusade was on the rise in the United States. In both foreign and domestic politics, the prevailing mood was one of fear even paranoia.

American officials have pointed to the Cold War atmosphere ever since as an excuse for crimes and excesses committed then and afterward. One recurring litany in national security investigations has been the testimony of the exposed official citing Cold War hysteria to justify an act that he or she would not otherwise defend. The apprehensions of the Cold War do not provide a moral or legal shield for such acts, but they do help explain them. Even when the apprehensions were not well founded, they were no less real to the people involved.

It was also a time when the United States had achieved a new preeminence in the world. After World War II, American officials wielded the kind of power that diplomats frequently dream of. They established new alliances, new rulers, and even new nations to suit their purposes. They dispensed guns, favors, and aid to scores of nations. Consequently, American officials were noticed, respected, and pampered wherever they went—as never before. Their new sense of importance and their Cold War fears often made a dangerous combination—it is a fact of human nature that anyone who is both puffed up and afraid is someone to watch out for.

In 1947 the National Security Act created not only the CIA but also the National Security Council—in sum, the command structure for the Cold War. Wartime OSS leaders like William Donovan and Allen Dulles lobbied feverishly for the Act. Officials within the new command structure soon put their fear and their grandiose notions to work. Reacting to the perceived threat, they adopted a ruthless and warlike posture toward anyone they considered an enemy—most especially the Soviet Union. They took it upon themselves to fight communism and things that might lead to communism everywhere in the world. Few citizens disagreed with them; they appeared to express the sentiments of most Americans in that era, but national security officials still preferred to act in secrecy. A secret study commission under former President Hoover captured the spirit of their call to clandestine warfare:

It is now clear we are facing an implacable enemy whose avowed objective is world domination by whatever means and at whatever cost. There are no rules in such a game. Hitherto acceptable long-standing American concepts of "fair play" must be reconsidered. We must develop effective espionage and counterespionage services and must learn to subvert, sabotage, and destroy our enemies by more clever, more sophisticated, and more effective methods than those used against us.

The men in the new CIA took this job quite seriously. "We felt we were the first line of defense in the anti-Communist crusade," recalls Harry Rositzke, an early head of the Agency's Soviet Division. "There was a clear and heady sense of mission—a sense of what a huge job this was." Michael Burke, who was chief of CIA covert operations in

Germany before going on to head the New York Yankees and Madison Square Garden, agrees: "It was riveting.... One was totally absorbed in something that has become misunderstood now, but the Cold War in those days was a very real thing with hundreds of thousands of Soviet troops, tanks, and planes poised on the East German border, capable of moving to the English Channel in forty-eight hours." Hugh Cunningham, an Agency official who stayed on for many years, remembers that survival itself was at stake, "What you were made to feel was that the country was in desperate peril and we had to do whatever it took to save it."

BLUEBIRD and the CIA's later mind-control programs sprang from such alarm. As a matter of course, the CIA was also required to learn the methods and intentions of all possible foes. "If the CIA had not tried to find out what the Russians were doing with mind-altering drugs in the early 1950s, I think the then-Director should have been fired," says Ray Cline, a former Deputy Director of the Agency.

High Agency officials felt they had to know what the Russians were up to. Nevertheless, a careful reading of the contemporaneous CIA documents almost three decades later indicates that if the Russians were scoring breakthroughs in the behavior-control field—whose author they almost certainly were not—the CIA lacked intelligence to prove that. For example, a 1952 Security document, which admittedly had an ax to grind with the Office of Scientific Intelligence, called the data gathered on the Soviet programs "extremely poor." The author noted that the Agency's information was based on "second- or third-hand rumors, unsupported statements and non-factual data." [4] Apparently, the fears and fantasies aroused by the Mindszenty trial and the subsequent Korean War "brainwashing" furor outstripped the facts on hand. The prevalent CIA notion of a "mind-control gap" was as much of a myth as the later bomber and missile "gaps." In any case, beyond the defensive curiosity, mind control took on a momentum of its own.

As unique and frightening as the Cold War was, it did not cause people working for the government to react much differently to each other or power than at other times in American history. Bureaucratic squabbling went on right through the most chilling years of the behavior-control program. No matter how alarmed CIA officials became over the Russian peril, they still managed to quarrel with their internal rivals over control of Agency funds and manpower. Between 1950 and 1952, responsibility for mind control went from the Office of Security to the Scientific Intelligence unit back to Security again. In the process, BLUEBIRD was rechristened ARTICHOKE. The bureaucratic wars were drawn-out affairs, baffling to outsiders; yet many of the crucial turns in behavioral research came out of essentially bureaucratic considerations on the part of the contending officials. In general, the Office of Security was full of pragmatists who were anxious to weed out communists (and homosexuals) everywhere. They believed the intellectuals from Scientific Intelligence had failed to produce "one new, usable paper, suggestion, drug, instrument, name of an individual, etc., etc.," as one document puts it. The learned gentlemen from Scientific Intelligence felt that the former cops, military men, and investigators in Security lacked the technical background to handle so awesome a task as controlling the human mind.

“Jurisdictional conflict was constant in this area,” a Senate committee would state in 1976. A 1952 report to the chief of the CIA’s Medical Staff (itself a participant in the infighting) drew a harsher conclusion: “There exists a glaring lack of cooperation among the various intra-Agency groups fostered by petty jealousies and personality differences that result in the retardation of the enhancing and advancing of the Agency as a body.” When Security took ARTICHOKE back from Scientific Intelligence in 1952, the victory lasted only two and one-half years before most of the behavioral work went to yet another CIA outfit, full of Ph.D.s with operational experience—the Technical Services Staff (TSS).[5]

There was bureaucratic warfare outside the CIA as well, although there were early gestures toward interagency cooperation. In April 1951 the CIA Director approved liaison with Army, Navy, and Air Force intelligence to avoid duplication of effort. The Army and Navy were both looking for truth drugs, while the prime concern of the Air Force was interrogation techniques used on downed pilots. Representatives of each service attended regular meetings to discuss ARTICHOKE matters. The Agency also invited the FBI, but J. Edgar Hoover’s men stayed away.

During their brief period of cooperation, the military and the CIA also exchanged information with the British and Canadian governments. At the first session in June 1951, the British representative announced at the outset that there had been nothing new in the interrogation business since the days of the Inquisition and that there was little hope of achieving valuable results through research. He wanted to concentrate on propaganda and political warfare as they applied to such threats as communist penetration of trade unions. The CIA’s minutes of the session record that this skeptical Englishman finally agreed to the importance of behavioral research, but one doubts the sincerity of this conversion. The minutes also record a consensus of “no conclusive evidence” that either Western countries or the Soviets had made any “revolutionary progress” in the field, and describe Soviet methods as “remarkably similar . . . to the age-old methods.” Nonetheless, the representatives of the three countries agreed to continue investigating behavior-control methods because of their importance to “cold war operations.” To what extent the British and Canadians continued cannot be told. The CIA did not stop until the 1970s.

Bureaucratic conflict was not the only aspect of ordinary government life that persisted through the Cold War. Officials also maintained their normal awareness of the ethical and legal consequences of their decisions. Often they went through contorted rationalizations and took steps to protect themselves, but at least they recognized and paused over the various ethical lines before crossing them. It would be unfair to say that all moral awareness evaporated. Officials agonized over the consequences of their acts, and much of the bureaucratic record of behavior control is the history of officials dealing with moral conflicts as they arose.

The Security office barely managed to recruit the team psychiatrist in time for the first mission to Japan, and for years, Agency officials had trouble attracting qualified

medical men to the project. Speculating why, one Agency memo listed such reasons as the CIA's comparatively low salaries for doctors and ARTICHOKE's narrow professional scope, adding that a candidate's "ethics might be such that he might not care to cooperate in certain more revolutionary phases of our project." This consideration became explicit in Agency recruiting. During the talent search, another CIA memo stated why another doctor seemed suitable: "His ethics are such that he would be completely cooperative in any phase of our program, regardless of how revolutionary it may be."

The matter was even more troublesome in the task of obtaining guinea pigs for mind-control experiments. "Our biggest current problem," noted one CIA memo, "is to find suitable subjects." The men from ARTICHOKE found their most convenient source among the flotsam and jetsam of the international spy trade: "individuals of dubious loyalty, suspected agents or plants, subjects having known reason for deception, etc." as one Agency document described them. ARTICHOKE officials looked on these people as "unique research material," from whom meaningful secrets might be extracted while the experiments went on.

It is fair to say that the CIA operators tended to put less value on the lives of these subjects than they did on those of American college students, upon whom preliminary, more benign testing was done. They tailored the subjects to suit the ethical sensitivity of the experiment. A psychiatrist who worked on an ARTICHOKE team stresses that no one from the Agency wanted subjects to be hurt. Yet he and his colleagues were willing to treat dubious defectors and agents in a way which not only would be professionally unethical in the United States but also an indictable crime. In short, these subjects were, if not expendable, at least not particularly prized as human beings. As a CIA psychologist who worked for a decade in the behavior-control program, puts it, "One did not put a high premium on the civil rights of a person who was treasonable to his own country or who was operating effectively to destroy us." Another ex-Agency psychologist observes that CIA operators did not have "a universal concept of mankind" and thus were willing to do things to foreigners that they would have been reluctant to try on Americans. "It was strictly a patriotic vision," he says.

ARTICHOKE officials never seemed to be able to find enough subjects. The professional operators—particularly the traditionalists—were reluctant to turn over agents to the Security men with their unproved methods. The field men did not particularly want outsiders, such as the ARTICHOKE crew, getting mixed up in their operations. In the spy business, agents are very valuable property indeed, and operators tend to be very protective of them. Thus the ARTICHOKE teams were given mostly the dregs of the clandestine underworld to work on.

Inexorably, the ARTICHOKE men crossed the clear ethical lines. Morse Allen believed it proved little or nothing to experiment on volunteers who gave their informed consent. For all their efforts to act naturally, volunteers still knew they were playing in a make-believe game. Consciously or intuitively, they understood that no one would allow them to be harmed. Allen felt that only by testing subjects "for whom much is at

stake (perhaps life and death),” as he wrote, could he get reliable results relevant to operations. In documents and conversation, Allen and his coworkers called such realistic tests “terminal experiments”—terminal in the sense that the experiment would be carried through to completion. It would not end when the subject felt like going home or when he or his best interest was about to be harmed. Indeed, the subject usually had no idea that he had ever been part of an experiment.

In every field of behavior control, academic researchers took the work only so far. From Morse Allen’s perspective, somebody then had to do the terminal experiment to find out how well the technique worked in the real world: how drugs affected unwitting subjects, how massive electroshock influenced memory, how prolonged sensory deprivation disturbed the mind. By definition, terminal experiments went beyond conventional ethical and legal limits. The ultimate terminal experiments caused death, but ARTICHOKE sources state that those were forbidden.

For career CIA officials, exceeding these limits in the name of national security became part of the job, although individual operators usually had personal lines they would not cross. Most academics wanted no part of the game at this stage—nor did Agency men always like having these outsiders around. If academic and medical consultants were brought along for the terminal phase, they usually did the work overseas, in secret. As Cornell Medical School’s famed neurologist Harold Wolff explained in a research proposal he made to the CIA, when any of the tests involved doing harm to the subjects, “We expect the Agency to make available suitable subjects and a proper place for the performance of the necessary experiments.” Any professional caught trying the kinds of things the Agency came to sponsor—holding subjects prisoner, shooting them full of unwanted drugs—probably would have been arrested for kidnapping or aggravated assault. Certainly such a researcher would have been disgraced among his peers. Yet, by performing the same experiment under the CIA’s banner, he had no worry from the law. His colleagues could not censure him because they had no idea what he was doing. And he could take pride in helping his country.

Without having been there in person, no one can know exactly what it felt like to take part in a terminal experiment. In any case, the subjects probably do not have fond memories of the experience. While the researchers sometimes resembled Alphonse and Gastone, they took themselves and their work very seriously. Now they are either dead, or, for their own reasons, they do not want to talk about the tests. Only in the following case have I been able to piece together anything approaching a firsthand account of a terminal experiment, and this one is quite mild compared to the others the ARTICHOKE men planned.

Notes

The origins of the CIA’s ARTICHOKE program and accounts of the early testing came from the following Agency Documents # 192, 15 January 1953; #3,17 May 1949; A/B, I,8/1,24 February 1949; February 10, 1951 memo on Special Interrogations (no document

#); A/B, II, 30/2, 28 September 1949; #5, 15 August 1949; #8, 27 September 1949; #6, 23 August 1949; #13, 5 April 1950; #18, 9 May 1950; #142 (transmittal slip), 19 May 1952; #124, 25 January 1952; A/B, IV, 23/32, 3 March 1952; #23, 21 June 1950; #10, 27 February 1950; #37, 27 October 1950; A/B, I, 39/1, 12 December 1950; A/B, II, 2/2, 5 March 1952; A/B, II, 2/1, 15 February 1952; A/B, V, 134/3, 3 December 1951; A/B, I, 38/5, 1 June 1951; and #400, undated, "Specific Cases of Overseas Testing and Applications of Behavioral Drugs."

The documents were supplemented by interviews with Ray Cline, Harry Rositzke, Michael Burke, Hugh Cunningham, and several other ex-CIA men who asked to remain anonymous. The Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence (henceforth called the Church Committee Report) provided useful background.

Documents giving background on terminal experiments include #A/B, II, 10/57; #A/B, II, 10/58, 31 August, 1954; #A/B, II, 10/17, 27 September 1954; and #A/B, I, 76/4, 21 March 1955.

Footnotes

1. For a better-documented case of narcotherapy and narcohypnosis, see Chapter 3.

2. While the regular polygraphing of CIA career employees apparently never has turned up a penetration agent in the ranks, it almost certainly has a deterrent effect on those considering coming out of the homosexual closet or on those considering dipping into the large sums of cash dispensed from proverbial black bags.

3. Whether the Agency ultimately funded this or the electric-shock proposal cited above cannot be determined from the documents.

4. The CIA refused to supply either a briefing or additional material when I asked for more background on Soviet behavior-control programs.

5. This Agency component, responsible for providing the supporting gadgets disguises, forgeries, secret writing, and weapons, has been called during its history the Technical Services Division and the Office of Technical Services as well as TSS, the name which will be used throughout this book.

THE PROFESSOR AND THE "A" TREATMENT

The three men were all part of the same Navy team, traveling together to Germany. Their trip was so sensitive that they had been ordered to ignore each other, even as they waited in the terminal at Andrews Air Force Base outside Washington on a sweltering August morning in 1952. Just the month before, Gary Cooper had opened in High

Noon, and the notion of showdown—whether with outlaws or communists—was in the air. With war still raging in Korea, security consciousness was high. Even so, the secrecy surrounding this Navy mission went well beyond ordinary TOP SECRET restrictions, for the team was slated to link up in Frankfurt with a contingent from the most hush-hush agency of all, the CIA. Then the combined group was going to perform dangerous experiments on human subjects. Both Navy and CIA officials believed that any disclosure about these tests would cause grave harm to the American national interest.

The Navy team sweated out a two-hour delay at Andrews before the four-engine military transport finally took off. Not until the plane touched down at the American field in the Azores did one of the group, a representative of Naval intelligence, flash a prearranged signal indicating that they were not being watched and they could talk. “It was all this cloak-and-dagger crap,” recalls another participant, Dr. Samuel Thompson, a psychiatrist, physiologist, and pharmacologist who was also a Navy commander.

The third man in the party was G. Richard Wendt, chairman of the Psychology Department at the University of Rochester and a part-time Navy contractor. A small 46-year-old man with graying blond hair and a fair-sized paunch, Wendt had been the only one with companionship during the hours of decreed silence. He had brought along his attractive young assistant, ostensibly to help him with the experiments. She was not well received by the Navy men, nor would she be appreciated by the CIA operators in Frankfurt. The behavior-control field was very much a man’s world, except when women subjects were used. The professor’s relationship with this particular lady was destined to become a source of friction with his fellow experimenters, and, eventually, a topic of official CIA reporting.

In theory, Professor Wendt worked under Dr. Thompson’s supervision in a highly classified Navy program called Project CHATTER, but the strong-minded psychologist did not take anyone’s orders easily. Very much an independent spirit, Wendt ironically, had accepted CHATTER’s goal of weakening, if not eliminating, free will in others. The Navy program, which had started in 1947, was aimed at developing a truth drug that would force people to reveal their innermost secrets.

Thompson, who inherited Wendt and CHATTER in 1951 when he became head of psychiatric research at the Naval Medical Research Institute, remembers Naval intelligence telling him of the need for a truth drug in case “someone planted an A-bomb in one of our cities and we had twelve hours to find out from a person where it was. What could we do to make him talk?” Thompson concedes he was always “negative” about the possibility that such a drug could ever exist, but he cites the fear that the Russians might develop their own miracle potion as reason enough to justify the program. Also, Thompson and the other U.S. officials could not resist looking for a pill or panacea that would somehow make their side all-knowing or all-powerful.

Professor Wendt had experimented with drugs for the Navy before he became involved in the search for a truth serum. His earlier work had been on the use of

Dramamine and other methods to prevent motion sickness, and now that he was doing more sensitive research, the Navy hid it under the cover of continuing his “motion sickness” study. At the end of 1950, the Navy gave Wendt a \$300,000 contract to study such substances as barbiturates, amphetamines, alcohol, and heroin. To preserve secrecy, which often reached fetish proportions in mind-control research, the money flowed to him not through Navy channels but out of the Secretary of Defense’s contingency fund. For those drugs that were not available from pharmaceutical companies, Navy officials went to the Federal Bureau of Narcotics. The Commissioner of Narcotics personally signed the papers, and special couriers carried pouches of illegal drugs through Washington streets and then up to the professor at Rochester. Receipts show that the Bureau sent the Navy 30 grams of pure heroin and 11 pounds of “Mexican grown” marijuana, among other drugs.

Like most serious drug researchers, Wendt sampled everything first before testing on assistants and students. The drug that took up the most space in his first progress report was heroin. He had become his own prime subject. At weekly intervals, he told the Navy, the psychologist gave himself heroin injections and then wrote down his reactions as he moved through the “full range” of his life: driving, shopping, recreation, manual work, family relations, and sexual activity. He noted in himself “slight euphoria . . . heightened aesthetic appreciation . . . absentminded behavior . . . lack of desire to operate at full speed . . . lack of desire for alcohol . . . possibly reduced sex interest . . . feeling of physical well-being.” He concluded in his report that heroin could have “some, but slight value for interrogation” if used on someone “worked on for a long period of time.”[1]

Wendt never had any trouble getting student volunteers. He simply posted a notice on a campus bulletin board, and he wound up with a long waiting list. He chose only men subjects over 21, and he paid everyone accepted after a long interview \$1.00 an hour. With so much government money to spend, he hired over 20 staff assistants, and he built a whole new testing facility in the attic of the school library. Wendt was cautious with his students, and he apparently did not share the hard drugs with them. He usually tested subjects in small groups—four to eight at a time. He and his associates watched through a two-way mirror and wrote down the subjects’ reactions. He always used both placebos (inert substances) and drugs; the students never knew what—if anything—they were taking. According to Dr. Thompson, to have alerted them in advance and thus given themselves a chance to steel themselves up “would have spoiled the experiment.”

Nonetheless, Wendt’s procedure was a far cry from true unwitting testing. Any drug that was powerful enough to break through an enemy’s resistance could have a traumatic effect on the person taking it—particularly if the subject was totally unaware of what was happening. The Navy research plan was to do preliminary studies on subjects like Wendt’s students, and then, as soon as the drug showed promise, to try it under field conditions. Under normal scientific research, the operational tests would not have been run before the basic work was finished. But the Navy could not wait. The drugs were to be tested on involuntary subjects. Thompson readily admits that this procedure was “unethical,” but he says, “We felt we had to do it for the good of country.”

During the summer of 1952, Professor Wendt announced that he had found a concoction “so special” that it would be “the answer” to the truth-drug problem, as Thompson recalls it. “I thought it would be a good idea to call the Agency,” says Thompson. “I thought they might have someone with something to spill.” Wendt was adamant on one point: He would not tell anyone in the Navy or the CIA what his potion contained. He would only demonstrate. Neither the CHATTER nor ARTICHOKE teams could resist the bait. The Navy had no source of subjects for terminal experiments, but the CIA men agreed to furnish the human beings—in Germany—even though they had no idea what Wendt had in store for his guinea pigs. The CIA named the operation CASTIGATE.

After settling into a Frankfurt hotel, Wendt, Thompson, and the Naval Intelligence man set out to meet the ARTICHOKE crew at the local CIA headquarters. It was located in the huge, elongated building that had housed the I. G. Farben industrial complex until the end of the war. The frantic bustle of a U.S. military installation provided ideal cover for this CIA base, and the arrival of a few new Americans attracted no special attention. The Navy group passed quickly through the lobby and rode up the elevator. At the CIA outer office, the team members had to show identification, and Thompson says they were frisked. The Naval Intelligence man had to check his revolver.

A secretary ushered the Navy group in to meet the ARTICHOKE contingent, which had arrived earlier from Washington. The party included team leader Morse Allen, his boss in the Office of Security, Paul Gaynor, and a prominent Washington psychiatrist who regularly left his private practice to fly off on special missions for the Agency. Also present were case officers from the CIA’s Frankfurt base who had taken care of the support arrangements—the most important of which was supplying the subjects.

Everyone at the meeting wanted to know what drugs Wendt was going to use on the five selected subjects, who included one known double agent, one suspected double, and the three defectors. The professor still was not talking. Dr. Thompson asked what would happen if something went wrong and the subject died. He recalls one of the Frankfurt CIA men replying, “Disposal of the body would be no problem.”

After the session ended, Thompson took Wendt aside and pointed out that since the professor, unlike Thompson, was neither a psychiatrist nor a pharmacologist, he was acting irresponsibly in not having a qualified physician standing by with antidotes in case of trouble. Wendt finally relented and confided in Thompson that he was going to slip the subjects a combination of the depressant Seconal, the stimulant Dexedrine, and tetrahydrocannabinol, the active ingredient in marijuana. Thompson was dumbfounded. He remembers wanting to shoot Wendt on the spot. These were all well-known drugs that had been thoroughly tested. Indeed, even the idea of mixing Seconal and Dexedrine was not original: The combined drug already had its own brand name—Dexamyl (and it would eventually have a street name, “the goofball”). Thompson quickly passed on to the CIA men what Wendt had in mind.^[2] They, too, were more than a little disappointed.

Nevertheless, there was never any thought of stopping the experiments. The AR-

TICHOKE team had its own methods to try, even if Wendt's proved a failure, and the whole affair had developed its own momentum. Since this was one of the early ARTICHOKE trips into the field, the team was still working to perfect the logistics of testing. It had reserved two CIA "safehouses" in the countryside not far from Frankfurt, and Americans had been assigned to guard the experimental sites. Agency managers had already completed the paperwork for the installation of hidden microphones and two-way mirrors, so all the team members could monitor the interrogations.

The first safehouse proved to be a solid old farmhouse set picturesquely in the middle of green fields, far from the nearest dwelling. The ARTICHOKE and CHATTER groups drove up just as the CIA's carpenters were cleaning up the mess they had made in ripping a hole through the building's thick walls. The house had existed for several hundred years without an observation glass peering in on the sitting room, and it had put up some structural resistance to the workmen.

Subject #1 arrived in the early afternoon, delivered in a CIA sedan by armed operators, who had handcuffed him, shackled his feet, and made him lie down on the floor of the back seat. Agency officials described him as a suspected Russian agent, about 40 years old, who had a "Don Juan complex." One can only imagine how the subject must have reacted to these rather inconsistent Americans who only a few hours earlier had literally grabbed him out of confinement, harshly bound him, and sat more or less on top of him as they wandered through idyllic German farm country, and who now were telling him to relax as they engaged him in friendly conversation and offered him a beer. He had no way of knowing that it would be the last unspiked drink he would have for quite some time.

On the following morning, the testing started in earnest. Wendt put 20 mg. of Seconal in the subject's breakfast and then followed up with 50 mg. of Dexedrine in each of his two morning cups of coffee. Wendt gave him a second dose of Seconal in his luncheon beer. The subject was obviously not his normal self—whatever that was. What was clear was that Wendt was in way over his head, and even the little professor seemed to realize it. "I don't know how to deal with these people," he told the CIA psychiatric consultant. Wendt flatly refused to examine the subject, leaving the interrogation to the consultant. For his part, the consultant had little success in extracting information not already known to the CIA.

The third day was more of the same: Seconal with breakfast, Dexedrine and marijuana in a glass of water afterwards. The only break from the previous day's routine came at 10:10 A.M. when the subject was allowed to play a short poker game. Then he was given more of Wendt's drugs in two red capsules that were, he was told, "a prescription for his nerves." By 2:40 P.M., Wendt declared that this subject was not the right personality type for his treatment. He explained to his disgusted colleagues that if someone is determined to lie, these drugs will only make him a better liar. He said that the marijuana extract produced a feeling of not wanting to hold anything back and that it worked best on people who wanted to tell the truth but were afraid to. OSS had discovered the

same thing almost a decade earlier.

Wendt retired temporarily from the scene, and the others concluded it would be a shame to waste a good subject. They decided to give him the “A” (for ARTICHOKE) treatment. This, too, was not very original. It had been used during the war to interrogate prisoners and treat shell-shocked soldiers. As practiced on the suspected Russian agent, it consisted of injecting enough sodium pentothal into the vein of his arm to knock him out and then, twenty minutes later, stimulating him back to semiconsciousness with a shot of Benzedrine. In this case, the benzedrine did not revive the subject enough to suit the psychiatric consultant and he told Dr. Thompson to give the subject another 10 mg. ten minutes later. This put the subject into a state somewhere between waking and sleeping—almost comatose and yet bug-eyed. In hypnotic tones that had to be translated into Russian by an interpreter, the consultant used the technique of “regression” to convince the subject he was talking to his wife Eva at some earlier time in his life. This was no easy trick, since a male interpreter was playing Eva. Nevertheless, the consultant states he could “create any fantasy” with 60 to 70 percent of his patients, using narcotherapy (as in this case) or hypnosis. For roughly an hour, the subject seemed to have no idea he was not speaking with his wife but with CIA operatives trying to find out about his relationship with Soviet intelligence. When the subject started to doze, the consultant had Thompson give him a doubled jolt of Benzedrine. A half hour later, the subject began to weep violently. The consultant decided to end the session, and in his most soothing voice, he urged the subject to fall asleep. As the subject calmed down, the consultant suggested, with friendly and soothing words, that the subject would remember nothing of the experience when he woke up.

Inducing amnesia was an important Agency goal. “From the ARTICHOKE point of view,” states a 1952 document, “the greater the amnesia produced, the more effective the results.” Obviously if a victim remembered the “A” treatment, it would stop being a closely guarded ARTICHOKE secret. Presumably, some subject who really did work for the Russians would tell them how the Americans had worked him over. This reality made “disposal” of ARTICHOKE subjects a particular problem. Killing them seems to have been ruled out, but Agency officials made sure that some stayed in foreign prisons for long periods of time. While in numerous specific cases, ARTICHOKE team members claimed success in making their subjects forget, their outside consultants had told them “that short of cutting a subject’s throat, a true amnesia cannot be guaranteed.” As early as 1950, the Agency had put out a contract to a private researcher to find a memory-destroying drug, but to no apparent avail. [3] In any case, it would be unreasonable to assume that over the years at least one ARTICHOKE subject did not shake off the amnesic commands and tell the Russians what happened to him. As was so often the case with CIA operations, the enemy probably had a much better idea of the Agency’s activities than the folks back home.

Back at the safehouse, Wendt was far from through. Four more subjects would be brought to him. The next one was an alleged double agent whom the CIA had code-named EXPLOSIVE. Agency documents describe him as a Russian “professional agent

type” and “a hard-boiled individual who apparently has the ability to lie consistently but not very effectively.” He was no stranger to ARTICHOKE team members who, a few months before, had plied him with a mixture of drugs and hypnosis under the cover of a “psychiatric-medical” exam. At that time, a professional hypnotist had accompanied the team, and he had given his commands through an elaborate intercom system to an interpreter who, in turn, was apparently able to put EXPLOSIVE under.[4] Afterward, the team reported to the CIA’s Director that EXPLOSIVE had revealed “extremely valuable” information and that he had been made to forget his interrogation through a hypnotically induced amnesia. Since that time EXPLOSIVE had been kept in custody. Now he was being brought out to give Professor Wendt a crack at him with the Seconal-Dexedrine-marijuana combination.

This time, Wendt gave the subject all three drugs together in one beer, delivered at the cocktail hour. Next came Seconal in a dinner beer and then all three once more in a postprandial beer. There were little, if any, positive results. Wendt ended the session after midnight and commented, “At least we learned one thing from this experiment. The people you have to deal with here are different from American college students.”

During the next week, the CIA men brought Wendt three more subjects, with little success. The general attitude toward Wendt became, in Thompson’s words, “hostile as all hell.” Both the Agency and the Navy groups questioned his competence. With one subject, the professor declared he had given too strong a dose; with the next, too weak. While he had advertised his drugs as tasteless, the subjects realized they had swallowed something. As one subject in the next room was being interrogated in Russian that no one was bothering to translate, Wendt took to playing the same pattern on the piano over and over for a half hour. While the final subject was being questioned, Wendt and his female assistant got a little tipsy on beer. Wendt became so distracted during this experiment that he finally admitted, “My thoughts are elsewhere.” His assistant began to giggle. Her presence had become like an open sore—which was made more painful when Mrs. Wendt showed up in Frankfurt and the professor threatened to jump off a church tower, Thompson recalls.

Wendt is not alive to give his version of what happened, but both CIA and Navy sources are consistent in their description of him. ARTICHOKE team leader Morse Allen felt he had been the victim of “a fraud or at least a gross misinterpretation,” and he described the trip as “a waste of time and money.” A man who usually hid his feelings, Allen became livid when Wendt’s assistant measured drugs out with a penknife. He recommended in his final report that those who develop drugs not be allowed to participate in future field testing. “This, of course, does not mean that experimental work is condemned by the ARTICHOKE team,” he wrote, “but a common sense approach in this direction will preclude arguments, alibis, and complaints as in the recent situation.” In keeping with this “common sense approach,” he also recommended that as “an absolute rule,” no women be allowed on ARTICHOKE missions—because of the possible danger and because “personal convenience, toilet facilities, etc., are complicated by the presence of women.”

Morse Allen and his ARTICHOKE mates returned to the States still convinced that they could find ways to control human behavior, but the Navy men were shaken. Their primary contractor had turned out to be a tremendous embarrassment. Dr. Thompson stated he could never work with Wendt again. Navy officials soon summoned Wendt to Bethesda and told him they were canceling their support for his research. Adding insult to injury, they told him they expected refund of all unspent money. While the Navy managers made some effort to continue CHATTER at other institutions, the program never recovered from the Wendt fiasco. By the end of the next year, 1953, the Korean War had ended and the Navy abandoned CHATTER altogether.

Over the next two decades, the Navy would still sponsor large amounts of specialized behavioral research, and the Army would invest huge sums in schemes to incapacitate whole armies with powerful drugs. But the CIA clearly pulled far into the lead in mind control. In those areas in which military research continued, the Agency stayed way ahead. The CIA consistently was out on what was called the “cutting edge” of the research, sponsoring the lion’s share of the most harrowing experiments. ARTICHOKE and its successor CIA programs became an enormous effort that harnessed the energies of hundreds of scientists.

The experience of the CIA psychiatric consultant provides a small personal glimpse of how it felt to be a soldier in the mind-control campaign. This psychiatrist, who insists on anonymity, estimates that he made between 125 and 150 trips overseas on Agency operations from 1952 through his retirement in 1966. “To be a psychiatrist chas-ing off to Europe instead of just seeing the same patients year after year, that was ex-traordinary,” he reminisces. “I wish I was back in those days. I never got tired of it.” He says his assignments called for “practicing psychiatry in an ideal way, which meant you didn’t become involved with your patients. You weren’t supposed to.” Asked how he felt about using drugs on unwitting foreigners, he snaps, “Depends which side you were on. I never hurt anyone. . . . We were at war.”

For the most part, the psychiatrist stopped giving the “A” treatment after the mid-1950s but he continued to use his professional skills to assess and manipulate agents and defectors. His job was to help find out if a subject was under another country’s control and to recommend how the person could be switched to the CIA’s. In this work, he was contributing to the mainstream of CIA activity that permeates its institutional existence from its operations to its internal politics to its social life: the notion of controlling people. Finding reliable ways to do that is a primary CIA goal, and the business is often a brutal one. As former CIA Director Richard Helms stated in Senate testimony, “The clandestine operator . . . is trained to believe you can’t count on the honesty of your agent to do exactly what you want or to report accurately unless you own him body and soul.”

Like all the world’s secret services, the CIA sought to find the best methods of owning people and making sure they stayed owned. How could an operator be sure of an agent’s loyalties? Refugees and defectors were flooding Western Europe, and the CIA wanted to exploit them. Which ones were telling the truth? Who was a deception

agent or a provocateur. The Anglo-American secret invasion of Albania had failed miserably. Had they been betrayed?[5] Whom could the CIA trust?

One way to try to answer these questions is to use physical duress—or torture. Aside from its ethical drawbacks, however, physical brutality simply does not work very well. As a senior counterintelligence official explains, “If you have a blowtorch up someone’s ass, he’ll give you tactical information.” Yet he will not be willing or able to play the modern espionage game on the level desired by the CIA. One Agency document excludes the use of torture “because such inhuman treatment is not only out of keeping with the traditions of this country, but of dubious effectiveness as compared with various supplemental psychoanalytical techniques.”

The second and most popular method to get answers is traditional spy tradecraft. Given enough time, a good interrogator can very often find out a person’s secrets. He applies persuasion and mental seduction, mixed with psychological pressures of every description—emotional carrots and sticks. A successful covert operator uses the same sorts of techniques in recruiting agents and making sure they stay in line. While the rest of the population may dabble in this sort of manipulation, the professional operator does it for a living, and he operates mostly outside the system of restraints that normally govern personal relationships. “I never gave a thought to legality or morality,” states a retired and quite cynical Agency case officer with over 20 years’ experience. “Frankly, I did what worked.”

The operator pursues people he can turn into “controlled sources”—agents willing to do his bidding either in supplying intelligence or taking covert action. He seeks people in a position to do something useful for the Agency—or who someday might be in such a position, perhaps with CIA aid. Once he picks his target, he usually looks for a weakness or vulnerability he can play on. Like a good fisherman, the clever operator knows that the way to hook his prey is to choose an appropriate bait, which the target will think he is seizing because he wants to. The hook has to be firmly implanted; the agent sometimes tries to escape once he understands the implications of betraying his country. While the case officer might try to convince him he is acting for the good of his homeland, the agent must still face up to being branded a traitor.

Does every man have his price? Not exactly, states the senior counterintelligence man, but he believes a shrewd operator can usually find a way to reach anyone, particularly through his family. In developing countries, the Agency has caused family members to be arrested and mistreated by the local police, given or withheld medical care for a sick child, and, more prosaically, provided scholarships for a relative to study abroad. This kind of tactic does not work as well on a Russian or Western European, who does not live in a society where the CIA can exert pressure so easily.

Like a doctor’s bedside manner or a lawyer’s courtroom style, spy tradecraft is highly personalized. Different case officers swear by different approaches, and successful methods are carefully observed and copied. Most CIA operators seem to prefer using

an ideological lure if they can. John Stockwell, who left the Agency in 1977 to write a book about CIA operations in Angola, believes his best agents were “people convinced they were doing the right thing . . . who disliked communists and felt the CIA was the right organization.” Stockwell recalls his Agency instructors “hammering away at the positive aspect of recruitment. This was where they established the myth of CIA case officers being good guys. They said we didn’t use negative control, and we always made the relationship so that both parties were better off for having worked together.” More cynical operators, like the one quoted above, take a different view: “You can’t create real motivation in a person by waving the flag or by saying this is for the future good of democracy. You’ve got to have a firmer hold than that.... His opinions can change.” This ex-operator favors approaches based either on revenge or helping the agent advance his career:

Those are good motives because they can be created with the individual.... Maybe you start with a Communist party cell member and you help him become a district committee member by eliminating his competition, or you help him get a position where he can get even with someone. At the same time, he’s giving you more and more information as he moves forward, and if you ever surface his reports, he’s out of business. You’ve really got him wrapped up. You don’t even have to tell him. He realizes it himself.

No matter what the approach to the prospective agent, the case officer tries to make money a factor in the relationship. Sometimes the whole recruiting pitch revolves around enrichment. In other instances, the case officer allows the target the illusion that he has sold out for higher motives. Always, however, the operator tries to use money to make the agent dependent. The situation can become sticky with money-minded agents when the case officer insists that part or all of the payments be placed in escrow, to prevent attracting undue attention. But even cash does not create control in the spy business. As the cynical case officer puts it, “Money is tenuous because somebody can always offer more.”

Surprisingly, each of the CIA operators sampled agrees that overt blackmail is a highly overrated form of control. The senior counterintelligence man notes that while the Russians frequently use some variety of entrapment—sexual or otherwise—the CIA rarely did. “Very few [Agency] case officers were tough enough” to pull it off and sustain it, he says. “Anytime an agent has been forced to cooperate, you can take it for granted that he has two things on his mind: he is looking for a way out and for revenge. Given the slightest opportunity, he will hit you right between the eyes.” Blackmail could backfire in unexpected ways. John Stockwell remembers an agent in Southeast Asia who wanted to quit: “The case officer leaned on the guy and said, ‘Look, friend, we still need your intelligence, and we have receipts you signed which we can turn over to the local police.’ The agent blew his brains out, leaving a suicide note regretting his cooperation with the CIA and telling how the Agency had tried to blackmail him. It caused some problems with the local government.”

The case officer always tries to weave an ever-tightening web of control around

his agent. His methods of doing so are so personal and so basic that they often reveal more about the case officer himself than the agent, reflecting his outlook and his personal philosophy. The cynical operator describes his usual technique, which turns out to be a form of false idealism: “You’ve got to treat a man as an equal and convince him you’re partners in this thing. Even if he’s a communist party member, you can’t deal with him like a crumb. You sit down with him and ask how are the kids, and you remember that he told you last time that his son was having trouble in school. You build personal rapport. If you treat him like dirt or an object of use, eventually he’ll turn on you or drop off the bandwagon.”

John Stockwell’s approach relies on the power of imagination in a humdrum world: “I always felt the real key was that you were offering something special—a real secret life—something that he and you only knew made him different from all the pedestrian paper shufflers in a government office or a boring party cell meeting. Everybody has a little of Walter Mitty in him—what a relief to know you really do work for the CIA in your spare time.”

Sometimes a case officer wants to get the agent to do something he does not think he wants to do. One former CIA operator uses a highly charged metaphor to describe how he did it: “Sometimes one partner in a relationship wants to get into deviations from standard sex. If you have some control, you might be able to force your partner to try different things, but it’s much better to lead her down the road a step at a time, to discuss it and fantasize until eventually she’s saying, ‘Let’s try this thing.’ If her inhibitions and moral reservations are eroded and she is turned on, it’s much more fun and there’s less chance of blowback [exposure, in spy talk].... It’s the same with an agent.”

All case officers—and particularly counterintelligence men—harbor recurring fears that their agents will betray them. The suspicious professional looks for telltale signs like lateness, nervousness, or inconsistency. He relies on his intuition. “The more you’ve been around agents, the more likely you are to sense that something isn’t what it should be,” comments the senior counterintelligence man. “It’s like with children.”

No matter how skillfully practiced, traditional spycraft provides only incomplete answers to the nagging question of how much the Agency can really trust an agent. All the sixth sense, digging, and deductive reasoning in the world do not produce certainty in a field that is based on deception and lies. Whereas the British, who invented the game, have historically understood the need for patience and a stiff upper lip, Americans tend to look for quick answers, often by using the latest technology. “We were very gimmick-prone,” says the senior counterintelligence official. Gimmicks—machines, drugs, technical tricks—comprise the third method of behavior control, after torture and tradecraft. Like safecrackers who swear by the skill in their fingertips, most of the Agency’s mainstream operators disparage newfangled gadgets. Many now claim that drugs, hypnosis, and other exotic methods actually detract from good tradecraft because they make operators careless and lazy.

Nevertheless, the operators and their high-level sponsors, like Allen Dulles and Richard Helms, consistently pushed for the magic technique—the deus ex machina—that would solve their problems. Caught in the muck and frustration of ordinary spywork, operators hoped for a miracle tool. Faced with liars and deceivers, they longed for a truth drug. Surrounded by people who knew too much, they sought a way to create amnesia. They dreamed of finding means to make unwilling people carry out specific tasks, such as stealing documents, provoking a fight, killing someone, or otherwise committing an antisocial act. Secret agents recruited by more traditional appeals to idealism, greed, ambition, or fear had always done such deeds, but they usually gave their spymasters headaches in the process. Sometimes they balked. Moreover, first they had to agree to serve the CIA. The best tradecraft in the world seldom works against a well-motivated target. (The cynical operator recalls offering the head of Cuban intelligence \$1,000,000 in 1966 at a Madrid hotel—only to receive a flat rejection.) Plagued by the unsureness, Agency officials hoped to take the randomness—indeed, the free will—out of agent handling. As one psychologist who worked on behavior control describes it, “The problem of every intelligence operation is how do you remove the human element? The operators would come to us and ask for the human element to be removed.” Thus the impetus toward mind-control research came not only from the lure of science and the fantasies of science fiction, it also came from the heart of the spy business.

Notes

The primary sources for the material on Professor Wendt’s trip to Frankfurt were Dr. Samuel V. Thompson then of the Navy, the CIA psychiatric consultant, several of Wendt’s former associates, as well as three CIA documents that described the testing: Document # 168, 19 September 1952, Subject: “Project LGQ”; Document # 168, 18 September 1952, Subject: Field Trip of ARTICHOKE team, 20 August-September 1952; and #A/B, II, 33/21, undated, Subject: Special Comments.

Information on the Navy’s Project CHATTER came from the Church Committee Report, Book I, pp. 337-38. Declassified Navy Documents N-23, February 13, 1951, Subject: Procurement of Certain Drugs; N-27, undated, Subject: Project CHATTER; N-29, undated, Subject: Status Report: Studies of Motion Sickness, Vestibular Function, and Effects of Drugs; N-35, October 27, 1951, Interim Report; N-38, 30 September, 1952, Memorandum for File; and N-39, 28 October, 1952, Memorandum for File.

The information on the heroin found in Wendt’s safe comes from the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, October 2, 1977 and considerable background on Wendt’s Rochester testing program was found in the Rochester Times-Union, January 28, 1955. The CIA quote on heroin came from May 15, 1952 OSI Memorandum to the Deputy Director, CIA, Subject: Special Interrogation.

Information on the Agency’s interest in amnesia came from 14 January 1952 memo, Subject: BLUEBIRD/ARTICHOKE, Proposed Research; 7 March 1951, Subject: Informal Discussion with Chief [deleted] Regarding “Disposal”; 1 May 1951, Subject: Recommen-

dation for Disposal of Maximum Custody Defectors; and #A/B, I, 75/13, undated, Subject: Amnesia.

The quote from Homer on nepenthe was found in Sidney Cohen's *The Beyond Within: The LSD Story* (New York: Atheneum, 1972).

The section on control came from interviews with John Stockwell and several other former CIA men.

Footnotes

1. What Wendt appears to have been getting at—namely, that repeated shots of heroin might have an effect on interrogation—was stated explicitly in a 1952 CIA document which declared the drug “can be useful in reverse because of the stresses produced when . . . withdrawn from those addicted.” Wendt's interest in heroin seems to have lasted to his death in 1977, long after his experiments had stopped. The woman who cleaned out his safe at that time told the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle she found a quantity of the white powder, along with syringes and a good many other drugs.

2. Being good undercover operators, the CIA men never let on to Wendt that they knew his secret, and Wendt was not about to give it away. Toward the end of the trip, he told the consultant he would feel “unpatriotic” if he were to share his secret because the ARTICHOKE team was “not competent” to use the drugs.

3. Homer reported the ancient Greeks had such a substance—nepenthe—“a drug to lull all pain and anger, and bring forgetfulness of every sorrow.”

4. Neither Morse Allen nor anyone else on the ARTICHOKE teams spoke any foreign languages. Allen believed that the difficulty in communicating with the guinea pigs hampered ARTICHOKE research.

5. The answer was yes, in the sense that Soviet agent Harold “Kim” Philby, working as British intelligence's liaison with the CIA apparently informed his spymasters of specific plans to set up anticommunist resistance movements in Albania and all over Eastern Europe. The Russians almost certainly learned about CIA plans to overthrow communist rule in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union itself. Knowing of such operations presumably increased Soviet hostility.

LSD

Albert Hofmann's discovery of LSD in 1943 may have begun a new age in the exploration of the human mind, but it took six years for word to reach America. Even after Hofmann and his coworkers in Switzerland published their work in a 1947 article, no one in the United States seemed to notice. Then in 1949, a famous Viennese doctor named Otto Kauders traveled to the United States in search of research funds. He gave a confer-

ence at Boston Psychopathic Hospital,[1] a pioneering mental-health institution affiliated with Harvard Medical School, and he spoke about a new experimental drug called d-lysergic acid diethylamide. Milton Greenblatt, the hospital's research director, vividly recalls Kauders' description of how an infinitesimally small dose had rendered Dr. Hofmann temporarily "crazy." "We were very interested in anything that could make someone schizophrenic," says Greenblatt. If the drug really did induce psychosis for a short time, the Boston doctors reasoned, an antidote—which they hoped to find—might cure schizophrenia. It would take many years of research to show that LSD did not, in fact, produce a "model psychosis," but to the Boston doctors in 1949, the drug showed incredible promise. Max Rinkel, a neuropsychiatrist and refugee from Hitler's Germany, was so intrigued by Kauders' presentation that he quickly contacted Sandoz, the huge Swiss pharmaceutical firm where Albert Hofmann worked. Sandoz officials arranged to ship some LSD across the Atlantic.

The first American trip followed. The subject was Robert Hyde, a Vermont-born psychiatrist who was Boston Psychopathic's number-two man. A bold, innovative sort, Hyde took it for granted that there would be no testing program until he tried the drug. With Rinkel and the hospital's senior physician, H. Jackson DeShon looking on, Hyde drank a glass of water with 100 micrograms of LSD in it—less than half Hofmann's dose, but still a hefty jolt. DeShon describes Hyde's reaction as "nothing very startling." The perpetually active Hyde insisted on making his normal hospital rounds while his colleagues tagged along. Rinkel later told a scientific conference that Hyde became "quite paranoiac, saying that we had not given him anything. He also berated us and said the company had cheated us, given us plain water. That was not Dr. Hyde's normal behavior; he is a very pleasant man." Hyde's first experience was hardly as dramatic as Albert Hofmann's, but then the Boston psychiatrist had not, like Hofmann, set off on a voyage into the complete unknown. For better or worse, LSD had come to America in 1949 and had embarked on a strange trip of its own. Academic researchers would study it in search of knowledge that would benefit all mankind. Intelligence agencies, particularly the CIA, would subsidize and shape the form of much of this work to learn how the drug could be used to break the will of enemy agents, unlock secrets in the minds of trained spies, and otherwise manipulate human behavior. These two strains—of helping people and of controlling them—would coexist rather comfortably through the 1950s. Then, in the 1960s, LSD would escape from the closed world of scholar and spy, and it would play a major role in causing a cultural upheaval that would have an impact both on global politics and on intimate personal beliefs. The trip would wind up—to borrow some hyperbole from the musical *Hair*—with "the youth of America on LSD."

The counterculture generation was not yet out of the nursery, however, when Bob Hyde went tripping: Hyde himself would not become a secret CIA consultant for several years. The CIA and the military intelligence agencies were just setting out on their quest for drugs and other exotic methods to take possession of people's minds. The ancient desire to control enemies through magical spells and potions had come alive again, and several offices within the CIA competed to become the head controllers. Men from the Office of Security's ARTICHOKE program were struggling—as had OSS before them—to

find a truth drug or hypnotic method that would aid in interrogation. Concurrently, the Technical Services Staff (TSS) was investigating in much greater depth the whole area of applying chemical and biological warfare (CBW) to covert operations. TSS was the lineal descendent of Stanley Lovell's Research and Development unit in OSS, and its officials kept alive much of the excitement and urgency of the World War II days when Lovell had tried to bring out the Peck's Bad Boy in American scientists. Specialists from TSS furnished backup equipment for secret operations: false papers, bugs, taps, suicide pills, explosive seashells, transmitters hidden in false teeth, cameras in tobacco pouches, invisible inks, and the like. In later years, these gadget wizards from TSS would become known for supplying some of history's more ludicrous landmarks, such as Howard Hunt's ill-fitting red wig; but in the early days of the CIA, they gave promise of transforming the spy world.

Within TSS, there existed a Chemical Division with functions that few others—even in TSS—knew about. These had to do with using chemicals (and germs) against specific people. From 1951 to 1956, the years when the CIA's interest in LSD peaked, Sidney Gottlieb, a native of the Bronx with a Ph.D. in chemistry from Cal Tech, headed this division. (And for most of the years until 1973, he would oversee TSS's behavioral programs from one job or another.) Only 33 years old when he took over the Chemical Division, Gottlieb had managed to overcome a pronounced stammer and a clubfoot to rise through Agency ranks. Described by several acquaintances as a "compensator," Gottlieb prided himself on his ability, despite his obvious handicaps, to pursue his cherished hobby, folk dancing. On returning from secret missions overseas, he invariably brought back a new step that he would dance with surprising grace. He could call out instructions for the most complicated dances without a break in his voice, infecting others with enthusiasm.

A man of unorthodox tastes, Gottlieb lived in a former slave cabin that he had remodeled himself—with his wife, the daughter of Presbyterian missionaries in India, and his four children. Each morning, he rose at 5:30 to milk the goats he kept on his 15 acres outside Washington. The Gottliebs drank only goat's milk, and they made their own cheese. They also raised Christmas trees which they sold to the outside world. Greatly respected by his former colleagues, Gottlieb, who refused to be interviewed for this book, is described as a humanist, a man of intellectual humility and strength, willing to carry out, as one ex-associate puts it, "the tough things that had to be done." This associate fondly recalls, "When you watched him, you gained more and more respect because he was willing to work so hard to get an idea across. He left himself totally exposed. It was more important for us to get the idea than for him not to stutter." One idea he got across was that the Agency should investigate the potential use of the obscure new drug, LSD, as a spy weapon.

At the top ranks of the Clandestine Services (officially called the Directorate of Operations but popularly known as the "dirty tricks department"), Sid Gottlieb had a champion who appreciated his qualities, Richard Helms. For two decades, Gottlieb would move into progressively higher positions in the wake of Helms' climb to the highest position in the Agency. Helms, the tall, smooth "preppie," apparently liked the way the

Jewish chemist, who had started out at Manhattan's City College, could thread his way through complicated technical problems and make them understandable to nonscientists. Gottlieb was loyal and he followed orders. Although many people lay in the chain of command between the two men, Helms preferred to avoid bureaucratic niceties by dealing directly with Gottlieb.

On April 3, 1953, Helms proposed to Director Allen Dulles that the CIA set up a program under Gottlieb for "covert use of biological and chemical materials." Helms made clear that the Agency could use these methods in "present and future clandestine operations" and then added, "Aside from the offensive potential, the development of a comprehensive capability in this field . . . gives us a thorough knowledge of the enemy's theoretical potential, thus enabling us to defend ourselves against a foe who might not be as restrained in the use of these techniques as we are." Once again, as it would throughout the history of the behavioral programs, defense justified offense. Ray Cline, often a bureaucratic rival of Helms, notes the spirit in which the future Director pushed this program: "Helms fancied himself a pretty tough cookie. It was fashionable among that group to fancy they were rather impersonal about dangers, risks, and human life. Helms would think it sentimental and foolish to be against something like this."

On April 13, 1953—the same day that the Pentagon announced that any U.S. prisoner refusing repatriation in Korea would be listed as a deserter and shot if caught—Allen Dulles approved the program, essentially as put forth by Helms. Dulles took note of the "ultra-sensitive work" involved and agreed that the project would be called MKULTRA.^[2] He approved an initial budget of \$300,000, exempted the program from normal CIA financial controls, and allowed TSS to start up research projects "without the signing of the usual contracts or other written agreements." Dulles ordered the Agency's bookkeepers to pay the costs blindly on the signatures of Sid Gottlieb and Willis Gibbons, a former U.S. Rubber executive who headed TSS.

As is so often the case in government, the activity that Allen Dulles approved with MKULTRA was already under way, even before he gave it a bureaucratic structure. Under the code name MKDELTA, the Clandestine Services had set up procedures the year before to govern the use of CBW products. (MKDELTA now became the operational side of MKULTRA.) Also in 1952, TSS had made an agreement with the Special Operations Division (SOD) of the Army's biological research center at Fort Detrick, Maryland whereby SOD would produce germ weapons for the CIA's use (with the program called MKNAOMI). Sid Gottlieb later testified that the purpose of these programs was "to investigate whether and how it was possible to modify an individual's behavior by covert means. The context in which this investigation was started was that of the height of the Cold War with the Korean War just winding down; with the CIA organizing its resources to liberate Eastern Europe by paramilitary means; and with the threat of Soviet aggression very real and tangible, as exemplified by the recent Berlin airlift" (which occurred in 1948).

In the early days of MKULTRA, the roughly six TSS professionals who worked on

the program spent a good deal of their time considering the possibilities of LSD. [3] “The most fascinating thing about it,” says one of them, “was that such minute quantities had such a terrific effect.” Albert Hofmann had gone off into another world after swallowing less than 1/100,000 of an ounce. Scientists had known about the mind-altering qualities of drugs like mescaline since the late nineteenth century, but LSD was several thousand times more potent. Hashish had been around for millennia, but LSD was roughly a million times stronger (by weight). A two-suiter suitcase could hold enough LSD to turn on every man, woman, and child in the United States. “We thought about the possibility of putting some in a city water supply and having the citizens wander around in a more or less happy state, not terribly interested in defending themselves,” recalls the TSS man.

But incapacitating such large numbers of people fell to the Army Chemical Corps, which also tested LSD and even stronger hallucinogens. The CIA was concentrating on individuals. TSS officials understood that LSD distorted a person’s sense of reality, and they felt compelled to learn whether it could alter someone’s basic loyalties. Could the CIA make spies out of tripping Russians—or vice versa? In the early 1950s, when the Agency developed an almost desperate need to know more about LSD, almost no outside information existed on the subject. Sandoz had done some clinical studies, as had a few other places, including Boston Psychopathic, but the work generally had not moved much beyond the horse-and-buggy stage. The MKULTRA team had literally hundreds of questions about LSD’s physiological, psychological, chemical, and social effects. Did it have any antidotes? What happened if it were combined with other drugs? Did it affect everyone the same way? What was the effect of doubling the dose? And so on.

TSS first sought answers from academic researchers, who, on the whole, gladly cooperated and let the Agency pick their brains. But CIA officials realized that no one would undertake a quick and systematic study of the drug unless the Agency itself paid the bill. Almost no government or private money was then available for what had been dubbed “experimental psychiatry.” Sandoz wanted the drug tested, for its own commercial reasons, but beyond supplying it free to researchers, it would not assume the costs. The National Institutes of Mental Health had an interest in LSD’s relationship to mental illness, but CIA officials wanted to know how the drug affected normal people, not sick ones. Only the military services, essentially for the same reasons as the CIA, were willing to sink much money into LSD, and the Agency men were not about to defer to them. They chose instead to take the lead—in effect to create a whole new field of research.

Suddenly there was a huge new market for grants in academia, as Sid Gottlieb and his aides began to fund LSD projects at prestigious institutions. The Agency’s LSD pathfinders can be identified: Bob Hyde’s group at Boston Psychopathic, Harold Abramson at Mt. Sinai Hospital and Columbia University in New York, Carl Pfeiffer at the University of Illinois Medical School, Harris Isbell of the NIMH-sponsored Addiction Research Center in Lexington, Kentucky, Louis Jolyon West at the University of Oklahoma, and Harold Hodge’s group at the University of Rochester. The Agency disguised its involvement by passing the money through two conduits: the Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation, a rich establishment institution which served as a cutout (intermediary) only for a year

or two, and the Geschickter Fund for Medical Research, a Washington, D.C. family foundation, whose head, Dr. Charles Geschickter, provided the Agency with a variety of services for more than a decade. Reflexively, TSS officials felt they had to keep the CIA connection secret. They could only “assume,” according to a 1955 study, that Soviet scientists understood the drug’s “strategic importance” and were capable of making it themselves. They did not want to spur the Russians into starting their own LSD program or into devising countermeasures.

The CIA’s secrecy was also clearly aimed at the folks back home. As a 1963 Inspector General’s report stated, “Research in the manipulation of human behavior is considered by many authorities in medicine and related fields to be professionally unethical”; therefore, openness would put “in jeopardy” the reputations of the outside researchers. Moreover, the CIA Inspector General declared that disclosure of certain MKULTRA activities could result in “serious adverse reaction” among the American public. At Boston Psychopathic, there were various levels of concealment. Only Bob Hyde and his boss, the hospital superintendent, knew officially that the CIA was funding the hospital’s LSD program from 1952 on, to the tune of about \$40,000 a year. Yet, according to another member of the Hyde group, Dr. DeShon, all senior staff understood where the money really came from.

“We agreed not to discuss it,” says DeShon. “I don’t see any objection to this. We never gave it to anyone without his consent and without explaining it in detail.” Hospital officials told the volunteer subjects something about the nature of the experiments but nothing about their origins or purpose. None of the subjects had any idea that the CIA was paying for the probing of their minds and would use the results for its own purposes; most of the staff was similarly ignorant.

Like Hyde, almost all the researchers tried LSD on themselves. Indeed, many believed they gained real insight into what it felt like to be mentally ill, useful knowledge for health professionals who spent their lives treating people supposedly sick in the head. Hyde set up a multidisciplinary program—virtually unheard of at the time—that brought together psychiatrists, psychologists, and physiologists. As subjects, they used each other, hospital patients, and volunteers—mostly students—from the Boston area. They worked through a long sequence of experiments that served to isolate variable after variable. Palming themselves off as foundation officials, the men from MKULTRA frequently visited to observe and suggest areas of future research.

One Agency man, who himself tripped several times under Hyde’s general supervision, remembers that he and his colleagues would pass on a nugget that another contractor like Harold Abramson had gleaned and ask Hyde to perform a follow-up test that might answer a question of interest to the Agency. Despite these tangents, the main body of research proceeded in a planned and orderly fashion. The researchers learned that while some subjects seemed to become schizophrenic, many others did not. Surprisingly, true schizophrenics showed little reaction at all to LSD, unless given massive doses. The Hyde group found out that the quality of a person’s reaction was determined

mainly by the person's basic personality structure (set) and the environment (setting) in which he or she took the drug. The subject's expectation of what would happen also played a major part. More than anything else, LSD tended to intensify the subject's existing characteristics—often to extremes. A little suspicion could grow into major paranoia, particularly in the company of people perceived as threatening.

Unbeknownst to his fellow researchers, the energetic Dr. Hyde also advised the CIA on using LSD in covert operations. A CIA officer who worked with him recalls: "The idea would be to give him the details of what had happened [with a case], and he would speculate. As a sharp M.D. in the old-school sense, he would look at things in ways that a lot of recent bright lights couldn't get.... He had a good sense of make-do." The Agency paid Hyde for his time as a consultant, and TSS officials eventually set aside a special MKULTRA subproject as Hyde's private funding mechanism. Hyde received funds from yet another MKULTRA subproject that TSS men created for him in 1954, so he could serve as a cutout for Agency purchases of rare chemicals. His first buy was to be \$32,000 worth of corynanthine, a possible antidote to LSD, that would not be traced to the CIA.

Bob Hyde died in 1976 at the age of 66, widely hailed as a pacesetter in mental health. His medical and intelligence colleagues speak highly of him both personally and professionally. Like most of his generation, he apparently considered helping the CIA a patriotic duty. An Agency officer states that Hyde never raised doubts about his covert work. "He wouldn't moralize. He had a lot of trust in the people he was dealing with [from the CIA]. He had pretty well reached the conclusion that if they decided to do something [operationally], they had tried whatever else there was and were willing to risk it."

Most of the CIA's academic researchers published articles on their work in professional journals, but those long, scholarly reports often gave an incomplete picture of the research. In effect, the scientists would write openly about how LSD affects a patient's pulse rate, but they would tell only the CIA how the drug could be used to ruin that patient's marriage or memory. Those researchers who were aware of the Agency's sponsorship seldom published anything remotely connected to the instrumental and rather unpleasant questions the MKULTRA men posed for investigation. That was true of Hyde and of Harold Abramson, the New York allergist who became one of the first Johnny Appleseeds of LSD by giving it to a number of his distinguished colleagues.

Abramson documented all sorts of experiments on topics like the effects of LSD on Siamese fighting fish and snails,^[4] but he never wrote a word about one of his early LSD assignments from the Agency. In a 1953 document, Sid Gottlieb listed subjects he expected Abramson to investigate with the \$85,000 the Agency was furnishing him. Gottlieb wanted "operationally pertinent materials along the following lines: a. Disturbance of Memory; b. Discrediting by Aberrant Behavior; c. Alteration of Sex Patterns; d. Eliciting of Information; e. Suggestibility; f. Creation of Dependence."

Dr. Harris Isbell, whose work the CIA funded through Navy cover with the ap-

proval of the Director of the National Institutes of Health, published his principal findings, but he did not mention how he obtained his subjects. As Director of the Addiction Research Center at the huge Federal drug hospital in Lexington, Kentucky, he had access to a literally captive population. Inmates heard on the grapevine that if they volunteered for Isbell's program, they would be rewarded either in the drug of their choice or in time off from their sentences. Most of the addicts chose drugs—usually heroin or morphine of a purity seldom seen on the street. The subjects signed an approval form, but they were not told the names of the experimental drugs or the probable effects. This mattered little, since the “volunteers” probably would have granted their informed consent to virtually anything to get hard drugs.

Given Isbell's almost unlimited supply of subjects, TSS officials used the Lexington facility as a place to make quick tests of promising but untried drugs and to perform specialized experiments they could not easily duplicate elsewhere. For instance, Isbell did one study for which it would have been impossible to attract student volunteers. He kept seven men on LSD for 77 straight days. [5] Such an experiment is as chilling as it is astonishing—both to lovers and haters of LSD.

Nearly 20 years after Dr. Isbell's early work, counterculture journalist Hunter S. Thompson delighted and frightened his readers with accounts of drug binges lasting a few days, during which Thompson felt his brain boiling away in the sun, his nerves wrapping around enormous barbed wire forts, and his remaining faculties reduced to their reptilian antecedents. Even Thompson would shudder at the thought of 77 days straight on LSD, and it is doubtful he would joke about the idea. To Dr. Isbell, it was just another experiment. “I have had seven patients who have now been taking the drug for more than 42 days,” he wrote in the middle of the test, which he called “the most amazing demonstration of drug tolerance I have ever seen.” Isbell tried to “break through this tolerance” by giving triple and quadruple doses of LSD to the inmates.

Filled with intense curiosity, Isbell tried out a wide variety of unproven drugs on his subjects. Just as soon as a new batch of scopolamine, rivea seeds, or bufotenine arrived from the CIA or NIMH, he would start testing. His relish for the task occasionally shone through the dull scientific reports. “I will write you a letter as soon as I can get the stuff into a man or two,” he informed his Agency contact.

No corresponding feeling shone through for the inmates, however. In his few recorded personal comments, he complained that his subjects tended to be afraid of the doctors and were not as open in describing their experiences as the experimenters would have wished. Although Isbell made an effort to “break through the barriers” with the subjects, who were nearly all black drug addicts, Isbell finally decided “in all probability, this type of behavior is to be expected with patients of this type.” The subjects have long since scattered, and no one apparently has measured the aftereffects of the more extreme experiments on them.

One subject who could be found spent only a brief time with Dr. Isbell. Eddie

Flowers was 19 years old and had been in Lexington for about a year when he signed up for Isbell's program. He lied about his age to get in, claiming he was 21. All he cared about was getting some drugs. He moved into the experimental wing of the hospital where the food was better and he could listen to music. He loved his heroin but knew nothing about drugs like LSD. One day he took something in a graham cracker. No one ever told him the name, but his description sounds like it made him trip—badly, to be sure. "It was the worst shit I ever had," he says.

He hallucinated and suffered for 16 or 17 hours. "I was frightened. I wouldn't take it again." Still, Flowers earned enough "points" in the experiment to qualify for his "pay-off in heroin. All he had to do was knock on a little window down the hall. This was the drug bank. The man in charge kept a list of the amount of the hard drug each inmate had in his account. Flowers just had to say how much he wanted to withdraw and note the method of payment. "If you wanted it in the vein, you got it there," recalls Flowers who now works in a Washington, D.C. drug rehabilitation center.

Dr. Isbell refuses all request for interviews. He did tell a Senate subcommittee in 1975 that he inherited the drug payoff system when he came to Lexington and that "it was the custom in those days.... The ethical codes were not so highly developed, and there was a great need to know in order to protect the public in assessing the potential use of narcotics.... I personally think we did a very excellent job."

For every Isbell, Hyde, or Abramson who did TSS contract work, there were dozens of others who simply served as casual CIA informants, some witting and some not. Each TSS project officer had a skull session with dozens of recognized experts several times a year. "That was the only way a tiny staff like Sid Gottlieb's could possibly keep on top of the burgeoning behavioral sciences," says an ex-CIA official. "There would be no way you could do it by library research or the Ph.D. dissertation approach." The TSS men always asked their contacts for the names of others they could talk to, and the contacts would pass them on to other interesting scientists.

In LSD research, TSS officers benefited from the energetic intelligence gathering of their contractors, particularly Harold Abramson. Abramson talked regularly to virtually everyone interested in the drug, including the few early researchers not funded by the Agency or the military, and he reported his findings to TSS. In addition, he served as reporting secretary of two conference series sponsored by the Agency's sometime conduit, the Macy Foundation. These series each lasted over five year periods in the 1950s; one dealt with "Problems of Consciousness" and the other with "Neuropharmacology." Held once a year in the genteel surroundings of the Princeton Inn, the Macy Foundation conferences brought together TSS's (and the military's) leading contractors, as part of a group of roughly 25 with the multidisciplinary background that TSS officials so loved. The participants came from all over the social sciences and included such luminaries as Margaret Mead and Jean Piaget. The topics discussed usually mirrored TSS's interests at the time, and the conferences served as a spawning ground for ideas that allowed researchers to engage in some healthy cross-fertilization.

Beyond the academic world, TSS looked to the pharmaceutical companies as another source on drugs—and for a continuing supply of new products to test. TSS's Ray Treichler handled the liaison function, and this secretive little man built up close relationships with many of the industry's key executives. He had a particular knack for convincing them he would not reveal their trade secrets. Sometimes claiming to be from the Army Chemical Corps and sometimes admitting his CIA connection, Treichler would ask for samples of drugs that were either highly poisonous, or, in the words of the one-time director of research of a large company, "caused hypertension, increased blood pressure, or led to other odd physiological activity."

Dealing with American drug companies posed no particular problems for TSS. Most cooperated in any way they could. But relations with Sandoz were more complicated. The giant Swiss firm had a monopoly on the Western world's production of LSD until 1953. Agency officials feared that Sandoz would somehow allow large quantities to reach the Russians. Since information on LSD's chemical structure and effects was publicly available from 1947 on, the Russians could have produced it any time they felt it worthwhile. Thus, the Agency's phobia about Sandoz seems rather irrational, but it unquestionably did exist.

On two occasions early in the Cold War, the entire CIA hierarchy went into a dither over reports that Sandoz might allow large amounts of LSD to reach Communist countries. In 1951 reports came in through military channels that the Russians had obtained some 50 million doses from Sandoz. Horrendous visions of what the Russians might do with such a stockpile circulated in the CIA, where officials did not find out the intelligence was false for several years. There was an even greater uproar in 1953 when more reports came in, again through military intelligence, that Sandoz wanted to sell the astounding quantity of 10 kilos (22 pounds) of LSD enough for about 100 million doses—on the open market.

A top-level coordinating committee which included CIA and Pentagon representatives unanimously recommended that the Agency put up \$240,000 to buy it all. Allen Dulles gave his approval, and off went two CIA representatives to Switzerland, presumably with a black bag full of cash. They met with the president of Sandoz and other top executives. The Sandoz men stated that the company had never made anything approaching 10 kilos of LSD and that, in fact, since the discovery of the drug 10 years before, its total production had been only 40 grams (about 1 1/2 ounces).^[6]

The manufacturing process moved quite slowly at that time because Sandoz used real ergot, which could not be grown in large quantities. Nevertheless, Sandoz executives, being good Swiss businessmen, offered to supply the U.S. Government with 100 grams weekly for an indefinite period, if the Americans would pay a fair price. Twice the Sandoz president thanked the CIA men for being willing to take the nonexistent 10 kilos off the market. While he said the company now regretted it had ever discovered LSD in the first place, he promised that Sandoz would not let the drug fall into communist hands. The Sandoz president mentioned that various Americans had in the past made "covert

and sideways” approaches to Sandoz to find out about LSD, and he agreed to keep the U.S. Government informed of all future production and shipping of the drug. He also agreed to pass on any intelligence about Eastern European interest in LSD. The Sandoz executives asked only that their arrangement with the CIA be kept “in the very strictest confidence.”

All around the world, the CIA tried to stay on top of the LSD supply. Back home in Indianapolis, Eli Lilly & Company was even then working on a process to synthesize LSD. Agency officials felt uncomfortable having to rely on a foreign company for their supply, and in 1953 they asked Lilly executives to make them up a batch, which the company subsequently donated to the government. Then, in 1954, Lilly scored a major breakthrough when its researchers worked out a complicated 12- to 15-step process to manufacture first lysergic acid (the basic building block) and then LSD itself from chemicals available on the open market. Given a relatively sophisticated lab, a competent chemist could now make LSD without a supply of the hard-to-grow ergot fungus. Lilly officers confidentially informed the government of their triumph. They also held an unprecedented press conference to trumpet their synthesis of lysergic acid, but they did not publish for another five years their success with the closely related LSD.

TSS officials soon sent a memo to Allen Dulles, explaining that the Lilly discovery was important because the government henceforth could buy LSD in “tonnage quantities,” which made it a potential chemical-warfare agent. The memo writer pointed out, however, that from the MKULTRA point of view, the discovery made no difference since TSS was working on ways to use the drug only in small-scale covert operations, and the Agency had no trouble getting the limited amounts it needed. But now the Army Chemical Corps and the Air Force could get their collective hands on enough LSD to turn on the world.

Sharing the drug with the Army here, setting up research programs there, keeping track of it everywhere, the CIA generally presided over the LSD scene during the 1950s. To be sure, the military services played a part and funded their own research programs. [7] So did the National Institutes of Health, to a lesser extent. Yet both the military services and the NIH allowed themselves to be co-opted by the CIA—as funding conduits and intelligence sources. The Food and Drug Administration also supplied the Agency with confidential information on drug testing. Of the Western world’s two LSD manufacturers, one—Eli Lilly—gave its entire (small) supply to the CIA and the military. The other—Sandoz—informed Agency representatives every time it shipped the drug. If somehow the CIA missed anything with all these sources, the Agency still had its own network of scholar-spies, the most active of whom was Harold Abramson who kept it informed of all new developments in the LSD field. While the CIA may not have totally cornered the LSD market in the 1950s, it certainly had a good measure of control—the very power it sought over human behavior.

Sid Gottlieb and his colleagues at MKULTRA soaked up pools of information about LSD and other drugs from all outside sources, but they saved for themselves the

research they really cared about: operational testing. Trained in both science and espionage, they believed they could bridge the huge gap between experimenting in the laboratory and using drugs to outsmart the enemy. Therefore the leaders of MKULTRA initiated their own series of drug experiments that paralleled and drew information from the external research. As practical men of action, unlimited by restrictive academic standards, they did not feel the need to keep their tests in strict scientific sequence. They wanted results now—not next year. If a drug showed promise, they felt no qualms about trying it out operationally before all the test results came in. As early as 1953, for instance, Sid Gottlieb went overseas with a supply of a hallucinogenic drug—almost certainly LSD. With unknown results, he arranged for it to be slipped to a speaker at a political rally, presumably to see if it would make a fool of him.

These were freewheeling days within the CIA—then a young agency whose bureaucratic arteries had not started to harden. The leaders of MKULTRA had high hopes for LSD. It appeared to be an awesome substance, whose advent, like the ancient discovery of fire, would bring out primitive responses of fear and worship in people. Only a speck of LSD could take a strongwilled man and turn his most basic perceptions into willowy shadows. Time, space, right, wrong, order, and the notion of what was possible all took on new faces. LSD was a frightening weapon, and it took a swashbuckling boldness for the leaders of MKULTRA to prepare for operational testing the way they first did: by taking it themselves.

They tripped at the office. They tripped at safehouses, and sometimes they traveled to Boston to trip under Bob Hyde's penetrating gaze. Always they observed, questioned, and analyzed each other. LSD seemed to remove inhibitions, and they thought they could use it to find out what went on in the mind underneath all the outside acts and pretensions. If they could get at the inner self, they reasoned, they could better manipulate a person—or keep him from being manipulated.

The men from MKULTRA were trying LSD in the early 1950s—when Stalin lived and Joe McCarthy raged. It was a foreboding time, even for those not professionally responsible for doomsday poisons. Not surprisingly, Sid Gottlieb and colleagues who tried LSD did not think of the drug as something that might enhance creativity or cause transcendental experiences. Those notions would not come along for years. By and large, there was thought to be only one prevailing and hardheaded version of reality, which was “normal,” and everything else was “crazy.” An LSD trip made people temporarily crazy, which meant potentially vulnerable to the CIA men (and mentally ill, to the doctors). The CIA experimenters did not trip for the experience itself, or to get high, or to sample new realities. They were testing a weapon; for their purposes, they might as well have been in a ballistics lab.

Despite this prevailing attitude in the Agency, at least one MKULTRA pioneer recalls that his first trip expanded his conception of reality: “I was shaky at first, but then I just experienced it and had a high. I felt that everything was working right. I was like a locomotive going at top efficiency. Sure there was stress, but not in a debilitating way. It

was like the stress of an engine pulling the longest train it's ever pulled." This CIA veteran describes seeing all the colors of the rainbow growing out of cracks in the sidewalk. He had always disliked cracks as signs of imperfection, but suddenly the cracks became natural stress lines that measured the vibrations of the universe. He saw people with blemished faces, which he had previously found slightly repulsive. "I had a change of values about faces," he says. "Hooked noses or crooked teeth would become beautiful for that person. Something had turned loose in me, and all I had done was shift my attitude. Reality hadn't changed, but I had. That was all the difference in the world between seeing something ugly and seeing truth and beauty."

At the end of this day of his first trip, the CIA man and his colleagues had an alcohol party to help come down. "I had a lump in my throat," he recalls wistfully. Although he had never done such a thing before, he wept in front of his coworkers. "I didn't want to leave it. I felt I would be going back to a place where I wouldn't be able to hold on to this kind of beauty. I felt very unhappy. The people who wrote the report on me said I had experienced depression, but they didn't understand why I felt so bad. They thought I had had a bad trip."

This CIA man says that others with his general personality tended to enjoy themselves on LSD, but that the stereotypical CIA operator (particularly the extreme counter-intelligence type who mistrusts everyone and everything) usually had negative reactions. The drug simply exaggerated his paranoia. For these operators, the official notes, "dark evil things would begin to lurk around," and they would decide the experimenters were plotting against them.

The TSS team understood it would be next to impossible to allay the fears of this ever-vigilant, suspicious sort, although they might use LSD to disorient or generally confuse such a person. However, they toyed with the idea that LSD could be applied to better advantage on more trusting types.

Could a clever foe "re-educate" such a person with a skillful application of LSD? Speculating on this question, the CIA official states that while under the influence of the drug, "you tend to have a more global view of things. I found it awfully hard when stoned to maintain the notion: I am a U.S. citizen—my country right or wrong.... You tend to have these good higher feelings. You are more open to the brotherhood-of-man idea and more susceptible to the seamy sides of your own society.... I think this is exactly what happened during the 1960s, but it didn't make people more communist. It just made them less inclined to identify with the U.S. They took a plague-on-both-your-houses position."

As to whether his former colleagues in TSS had the same perception of the LSD experience, the man replies, "I think everybody understood that if you had a good trip, you had a kind of above-it-all look into reality. What we subsequently found was that when you came down, you remembered the experience, but you didn't switch identities. You really didn't have that kind of feeling. You weren't as suspicious of people. You listened to them, but you also saw through them more easily and clearly."

We decided that this wasn't the kind of thing that was going to make a guy into a turncoat to his own country. The more we worked with it, the less we became convinced this was what the communists were using for brainwashing." The early LSD tests—both outside and inside the Agency—had gone well enough that the MKULTRA scientists moved forward to the next stage on the road to "field" use: They tried the drug out on people by surprise. This, after all, would be the way an operator would give—or get—the drug. First they decided to spring it on each other without warning. They agreed among themselves that a coworker might slip it to them at any time. (In what may be an apocryphal story, a TSS staff man says that one of his former colleagues always brought his own bottle of wine to office parties and carried it with him at all times.) Unwitting doses became an occupational hazard.

MKULTRA men usually took these unplanned trips in stride, but occasionally they turned nasty. Two TSS veterans tell the story of a coworker who drank some LSD-laced coffee during his morning break. Within an hour, states one veteran, "he sort of knew he had it, but he couldn't pull himself together. Sometimes you take it, and you start the process of maintaining your composure. But this grabbed him before he was aware, and it got away from him." Filled with fear, the CIA man fled the building that then housed TSS, located on the edge of the Mall near Washington's great monuments.

Having lost sight of him, his colleagues searched frantically, but he managed to escape. The hallucinating Agency man worked his way across one of the Potomac bridges and apparently cut his last links with rationality. "He reported afterwards that every automobile that came by was a terrible monster with fantastic eyes, out to get him personally," says the veteran. "Each time a car passed, he would huddle down against the parapet, terribly frightened. It was a real horror trip for him. I mean, it was hours of agony. It was like a dream that never stops—with someone chasing you."

After about an hour and a half, the victim's coworkers found him on the Virginia side of the Potomac, crouched under a fountain, trembling. "It was awfully hard to persuade him that his friends were his friends at that point," recalls the colleague. "He was alone in the world, and everyone was hostile. He'd become a full-blown paranoid. If it had lasted for two weeks, we'd have plunked him in a mental hospital." Fortunately for him, the CIA man came down by the end of the day. This was not the first, last, or most tragic bad trip in the Agency's testing program.[8]

By late 1953, only six months after Allen Dulles had formally created MKULTRA, TSS officials were already well into the last stage of their research: systematic use of LSD on "outsiders" who had no idea they had received the drug. These victims simply felt their moorings slip away in the midst of an ordinary day, for no apparent reason, and no one really knew how they would react.

Sid Gottlieb was ready for the operational experiments. He considered LSD to be such a secret substance that he gave it a private code name ("serunim") by which he and his colleagues often referred to the drug, even behind the CIA's heavily guarded doors.

In retrospect, it seems more than bizarre that CIA officials—men responsible for the nation's intelligence and alertness when the hot and cold wars against the communists were at their peak—would be sneaking LSD into each other's coffee cups and thereby subjecting themselves to the unknown frontiers of experimental drugs. But these side trips did not seem to change the sense of reality of Gottlieb or of high CIA officials, who took LSD on several occasions. The drug did not transform Gottlieb out of the mind set of a master scientist-spy, a protégé of Richard Helms in the CIA's inner circle. He never stopped milking his goats at 5:30 every morning.

The CIA leaders' early achievements with LSD were impressive. They had not invented the drug, but they had gotten in on the American ground floor and done nearly everything else. They were years ahead of the scientific literature—let alone the public—and spies win by being ahead. They had monopolized the supply of LSD and dominated the research by creating much of it themselves. They had used money and other blandishments to build a network of scientists and doctors whose work they could direct and turn to their own use. All that remained between them and major espionage successes was the performance of the drug in the field.

That, however, turned out to be a considerable stumbling block. LSD had an incredibly powerful effect on people, but not in ways the CIA could predict or control.

Notes

The description of Robert Hyde's first trip came from interviews with Dr. Milton Greenblatt, Dr. J. Herbert DeShon, and a talk by Max Rinkel at the 2nd Macy Conference on Neuropharmacology, pp. 235-36, edited by Harold A. Abramson, 1955: Madison Printing Company.

The descriptions of TSS and Sidney Gottlieb came from interviews with Ray Cline, John Stockwell, about 10 other ex-CIA officers, and other friends of Gottlieb.

Memos quoted on the early MKULTRA program include Memorandum from ADDP Helms to DCI Dulles, 4/3/53, Tab A, pp. 1-2 (quoted in Church Committee Report, Book I); APF A-1, April 13, 1953, Memorandum for Deputy Director (Administration, Subject: Project MKULTRA—Extremely Sensitive Research and Development Program; #A/B,I,64/6, 6 February 1952, Memorandum for the Record, Subject: Contract with [deleted] #A/B,I,64/29, undated, Memorandum for Technical Services Staff, Subject: Alcohol Antagonists and Accelerators, Research and Development Project. The Gottlieb quote is from Hearing before the Subcommittee on Health and Scientific Research of the Senate Committee on Human Resources, September 21, 1977, p. 206.

The background data on LSD came particularly from *The Beyond Within: The LSD Story* by Sidney Cohen (New York: Atheneum, 1972). Other sources included *Origins of Psychopharmacology: From CPZ to LSD* by Anne E. Caldwell (Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1970) and Document 352, "An OSI Study of the Strategic Medical Importance

of LSD-25," 30 August 1955.

TSS's use of outside researchers came from interviews with four former TSSers. MKULTRA Subprojects 8, 10, 63, and 66 described Robert Hyde's work. Subprojects 7, 27, and 40 concerned Harold Abramson. Hodge's work was in subprojects 17 and 46. Carl Pfeiffer's Agency connection, along with Hyde's, Abramson's, and Isbell's, was laid out by Lyman B. Kirkpatrick, Memorandum for the Record, 1 December 1953, Subject: Conversation with Dr. Willis Gibbons of TSS re Olson Case (found at p. 1030, Kennedy Subcommittee 1975 Biomedical and Behavioral Research Hearings). Isbell's testing program was also described at those hearings, as it was in Document # 14, 24 July, 1953, Memo For: Liaison & Security Officer/TSS, Subject #71 An Account of the Chemical Division's Contacts in the National Institute of Health; Document #37, 14 July 1954, subject [deleted]; and Document # 41, 31 August, 1956, subject; trip to Lexington, Ky., 21-23 August 1956. Isbell's program was further described in a "Report on ADAMHA Involvement in LSD Research," found at p. 993 of 1975 Kennedy subcommittee hearings. The firsthand account of the actual testing came from an interview with Edward M. Flowers, Washington, D.C.

The section on TSS's noncontract informants came from interviews with TSS sources, reading the proceedings of the Macy Conferences on "Problems of Consciousness" and "Neuropharmacology," and interviews with several participants including Sidney Cohen, Humphrey Osmond, and Hudson Hoagland.

The material on CIA's relations with Sandoz and Eli Lilly came from Document #24, 16 November, 1953, Subject: ARTICHOKE Conference; Document #268, 23 October, 1953, Subject: Meeting in Director's Office at 1100 hours on 23 October with Mr. Wisner and [deleted]; Document # 316, 6 January, 1954, Subject: Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD-25); and Document #338, 26 October 1954, Subject: Potential Large Scale Availability of LSD through newly discovered synthesis by [deleted]; interviews with Sandoz and Lilly former executives; interviews with TSS sources; and Sidney Gottlieb's testimony before Kennedy subcommittee, 1977, p. 203.

Henry Beecher's US government connections were detailed in his private papers, in a report on the Swiss-LSD death to the CIA at p. 396, Church Committee Report, Book I, and in interviews with two of his former associates.

The description of TSS's internal testing progression comes from interviews with former staff members. The short reference to Sid Gottlieb's arranging for LSD to be given a speaker at a political rally comes from Document #A/B, II, 26/8, 9 June 1954, Subject: MKULTRA. Henry Beecher's report to the CIA on the Swiss suicide is found at p. 396, Church Committee Report, Book I.

Footnotes

1. During the 1950s, Boston Psychopathic changed its name to Massachusetts Mental

Health Center, the name it bears today.

2. Pronounced M-K-ULTRA. The MK digraph simply identified it as a TSS project. As for the ULTRA part, it may have had its etymological roots in the most closely guarded Anglo-American World War II intelligence secret, the ULTRA program, which handled the cracking of German military codes. While good espionage tradecraft called for cryptonyms to have no special meaning, wartime experiences were still very much on the minds of men like Allen Dulles.

3. By no means did TSS neglect other drugs. It looked at hundreds of others from cocaine to nicotine, with special emphasis on special-purpose substances. One 1952 memo talked about the urgent operational need for a chemical “producing general listlessness and lethargy.” Another mentioned finding—as TSS later did—a potion to accelerate the effects of liquor, called an “alcohol extender.”

4. As happened to Albert Hofmann the first time, Abramson once unknowingly ingested some LSD, probably by swallowing water from his spiked snail tank. He started to feel bad, but with his wife’s help, he finally pinpointed the cause. According to brain and dolphin expert John Lilly, who heard the story from Mrs. Abramson, Harold was greatly relieved that his discomfort was not grave. “Oh, it’s nothing serious,” he said. “It’s just an LSD psychosis. I’ll just go to bed and sleep it off.”

5. Army researchers, as usual running about five years behind the CIA, became interested in the sustained use of LSD as an interrogation device during 1961 field tests (called Operation THIRD CHANCE). The Army men tested the drug in Europe on nine foreigners and one American, a black soldier named James Thornwell, accused of stealing classified documents. While Thornwell was reacting to the drug under extremely stressful conditions, his captors threatened “to extend the state indefinitely, even to a permanent condition of insanity,” according to an Army document. Thornwell is now suing the U.S. government for \$30 million.

In one of those twists that Washington insiders take for granted and outsiders do not quite believe, Terry Lenzner, a partner of the same law firm seeking this huge sum for Thornwell, is the lawyer for Sid Gottlieb, the man who oversaw the 77-day trips at Lexington and even more dangerous LSD testing.

6. A 1975 CIA document clears up the mystery of how the Agency’s military sources could have made such a huge error in estimating Sandoz’s LSD supply (and probably also explains the earlier inaccurate report that the Russians had bought 50,000,000 doses). What happened, according to the document, was that the U.S. military attaché in Switzerland did not know the difference between a milligram (1/1,000 of a gram) and a kilogram (1,000 grams). This mix-up threw all his calculations off by a factor of 1,000,000.

7. Military security agencies supported the LSD work of such well-known researchers as Amedeo Marrazzi of the University of Minnesota and Missouri Institute of Psychia-

try, Henry Beecher of Harvard and Massachusetts General Hospital, Charles Savage while he was at the Naval Medical Research Institute, James Dille of the University of Washington, Gerald Klee of the University of Maryland Medical School, Neil Burch of Baylor University (who performed later experiments for the CIA), and Paul Hoch and James Cattell of the New York State Psychiatric Institute, whose forced injections of a mescaline derivative led to the 1953 death of New York tennis professional Harold Blauer. (Dr. Cattell later told Army investigators, “We didn’t know whether it was dog piss or what it was we were giving him.”)

8. TSS officials had long known that LSD could be quite dangerous. In 1952, Harvard Medical School’s Henry Beecher who regularly gave the Agency information on his talks with European colleagues, reported that a Swiss doctor had suffered severe depression after taking the drug and had killed herself three weeks later.

CONCERNING THE CASE OF DR. FRANK OLSEN

In November 1953, Sid Gottlieb decided to test LSD on a group of scientists from the Army Chemical Corps’ Special Operations Division (SOD) at Fort Detrick in Frederick, Maryland. Although the Clandestine Services hierarchy had twice put TSS under strict notice not to use LSD without permission from above, Gottlieb must have felt that trying the drug on SOD men was not so different from giving it to his colleagues at the office. After all, officials at TSS and SOD worked intimately together, and they shared one of the darkest secrets of the Cold War: that the U.S. government maintained the capability—which it would use at times—to kill or incapacitate selected people with biological weapons. Only a handful of the highest CIA officials knew that TSS was paying SOD about \$200,000 a year in return for operational systems to infect foes with disease.

Gottlieb planned to drop the LSD on the SOD men in the splendid isolation of a three-day working retreat. Twice a year, the SOD and TSS men who collaborated on MKNAOMI, their joint program, held a planning session at a remote site where they could brainstorm without interruption. On November 18, 1953, they gathered at Deep Creek Lodge, a log building in the woods of Western Maryland. It had been built as a Boy Scout camp 25 years earlier. Surrounded by the water of a mountain lake on three sides, with the peaks of the Appalachian chain looking down over the thick forest, the lodge was isolated enough for even the most security conscious spy. Only an occasional hunter was likely to wander through after the summer months.

Dr. John Schwab, who had founded SOD in 1950, Lt. Colonel Vincent Ruwet, its current chief, and Dr. Frank Olson, its temporary head earlier that year, led the Detrick group. These germ warriors came under the cover of being wildlife writers and lecturers off on a busman’s holiday. They carefully removed the Fort Detrick parking stickers from their cars before setting out. Sid Gottlieb brought three co-workers from the Agency, including his deputy Robert Lashbrook.

They met in the living room of the lodge, in front of a roaring blaze in the huge

walk-in fireplace. Then they split off into smaller groups for specialized meetings. The survivors among those who attended these sessions remain as tight-lipped as ever, willing to share a few details of the general atmosphere but none of the substance. However, from other sources at Fort Detrick and from government documents, the MKNAOMI research can be pieced together. It was this program that was discussed during the fateful retreat.

Under MKNAOMI, the SOD men developed a whole arsenal of toxic substances for CIA use. If Agency operators needed to kill someone in a few seconds with, say, a suicide pill, SOD provided super-deadly shellfish toxin.[1] On his ill-fated U-2 flight over the Soviet Union in 1960, Francis Gary Powers carried—and chose not to use—a drill bit coated with this poison concealed in a silver dollar. While perfect for someone anxious to die—or kill—instantly, shellfish toxin offered no time to escape and could be traced easily. More useful for assassination, CIA and SOD men decided, was botulinum. With an incubation period of 8 to 12 hours, it allowed the killer time to separate himself from the deed. Agency operators would later supply pills laced with this lethal food poison to its Mafia allies for inclusion in Fidel Castro’s milkshake. If CIA officials wanted an assassination to look like a death from natural causes, they could choose from a long list of deadly diseases that normally occurred in particular countries. Thus in 1960, Clandestine Services chief Richard Bissell asked Sid Gottlieb to pick out an appropriate malady to kill the Congo’s Patrice Lumumba. Gottlieb told the Senate investigators that he selected one that “was supposed to produce a disease that was . . . indigenous to that area [of West Africa] and that could be fatal.” Gottlieb personally carried the bacteria to the Congo, but this murderous operation was scrubbed before Lumumba could be infected. (The Congolese leader was killed shortly thereafter under circumstances that still are not clear.)

When CIA operators merely wanted to be rid of somebody temporarily, SOD stockpiled for them about a dozen diseases and toxins of varying strengths. At the relatively benign end of the SOD list stood Staph. enterotoxin, a mild form of food poisoning—mild compared to botulinum. This Staph. infection almost never killed and simply incapacitated its victim for 3 to 6 hours. Under the skilled guidance of Sid Gottlieb’s wartime predecessor, Stanley Lovell, OSS had used this very substance to prevent Nazi official Hjalmar Schacht from attending an economic conference during the war. More virulent in the SOD arsenal was Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis virus. It usually immobilized a person for 2 to 5 days and kept him in a weakened state for several more weeks. If the Agency wanted to incapacitate someone for a period of months, SOD had two different kinds of brucellosis.[2]

A former senior official at Fort Detrick was kind enough to run me through all the germs and toxins SOD kept for the CIA, listing their advantages and disadvantages. Before doing so, he emphasized that SOD was also trying to work out ways to protect U.S. citizens and installations from attack with similar substances. “You can’t have a serious defense,” he says, “unless someone has thought about offense.” He stated that Japan made repeated biological attacks against China during World War II—which was one

reason for starting the American program.[3] He knows of no use since by the Soviet Union or any other power.

According to the Detrick official, anyone contemplating use of a biological product had to consider many other factors besides toxicity and incubation period.

Can the germ be detected easily and countered with a vaccine? He notes that anthrax, a fatal disease (when inhaled) that SOD stored for CIA, has the advantage of symptoms that resemble pneumonia; similarly, Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis can be mistaken for the gripe. While vaccines do exist for many of the stockpiled diseases, SOD was forever developing more virulent strains. "I don't know of any organism susceptible to a drug that can't be made more resistant," states the Detrick man.

Did the disease have a high degree of secondary spread? SOD preferred it not to, because these germ warfare men did not want to start epidemics—that was the job of others at Fort Detrick.

Was the organism stable? How did humidity affect it? SOD considered these and many other factors.

To the CIA, perhaps the most important question was whether it could covertly deliver the germ to infect the right person. One branch of SOD specialized in building delivery systems, the most famous of which now is the dart gun fashioned out of a .45 pistol that ex-CIA Director William Colby displayed to the world at a 1975 Senate hearing. The Agency had long been after SOD to develop a "non-discernible microbioinoculator" which could give people deadly shots that, according to a CIA document, could not be "easily detected upon a detailed autopsy." SOD also rigged up aerosol sprays that could be fired by remote control, including a fluorescent starter that was activated by turning on the light, a cigarette lighter that sprayed when lit, and an engine head bolt that shot off as the engine heated. "If you're going to infect people, the most likely way is respiratory," notes the high Detrick official. "Everybody breathes, but you might not get them to eat."

Frank Olson specialized in the airborne delivery of disease. He had been working in the field ever since 1943, when he came to Fort Detrick as one of the original military officers in the U. S. biological warfare program. Before the end of the war, he developed a painful ulcer condition that led him to seek a medical discharge from the uniformed military, but he had stayed on as a civilian. He joined SOD when it started in 1950. Obviously good at what he did, Olson served for several months as acting chief of SOD in 1952-53 but asked to be relieved when the added stress caused his ulcer to flare up. He happily returned to his lesser post as a branch chief, where he had fewer administrative duties and could spend more time in the laboratory. A lover of practical jokes, Olson was very popular among his many friends. He was an outgoing man, but, like most of his generation, he kept his inner feelings to himself. His great passion was his family, and he spent most of his spare time playing with his three kids and helping around the

house. He had met his wife while they both studied at the University of Wisconsin.

Olson attended all the sessions and apparently did everything expected of him during the first two days at the lodge. After dinner on Thursday, November 19, 1953—the same day that a Washington Post editorial decried the use of dogs in chemical experiments—Olson shared a drink of Cointreau with all but two of the men present. (One had a heart condition; the other, a reformed alcoholic, did not drink.) Unbeknownst to the SOD men, Sid Gottlieb had decided to spike the liqueur with LSD.[4]

“To me, everyone was pretty normal,” says SOD’s Benjamin Wilson. “No one was aware anything had happened until Gottlieb mentioned it. [20 minutes after the drink] Gottlieb asked if we had noticed anything wrong. Everyone was aware, once it was brought to their attention.” They tried to continue their discussion, but once the drug took hold, the meeting deteriorated into laughter and boisterous conversation. Two of the SOD men apparently got into an all-night philosophical conversation that had nothing to do with biological warfare. Ruwet remembers it as “the most frightening experience I ever had or hope to have.” Ben Wilson recalls that “Olson was psychotic. He couldn’t understand what happened. He thought someone was playing tricks on him.... One of his favorite expressions was ‘You guys are a bunch of thespians.’”

Olson and most of the others became increasingly uncomfortable and could not sleep.[5] When the group gathered in the morning, Olson was still agitated, obviously disturbed, as were several of his colleagues. The meeting had turned sour, and no one really wanted to do more business. They all straggled home during the day.

Alice Olson remembers her husband coming in before dinner that evening: “He said nothing. He just sat there. Ordinarily when he came back from a trip, he’d tell me about the things he could—what they had to eat, that sort of thing. During dinner, I said, ‘It’s a damned shame the adults in this family don’t communicate anymore.’ He said, ‘Wait until the kids get to bed and I’ll talk to you.’ “ Later that night, Frank Olson told his wife he had made “a terrible mistake,” that his colleagues had laughed at him and humiliated him. Mrs. Olson assured him that the others were his friends, that they would not make fun of him. Still, Olson would not tell her any more. He kept his fears bottled up inside, and he shared nothing of his growing feeling that someone was out to get him. Alice Olson was accustomed to his keeping secrets. Although she realized he worked on biological warfare, they never talked about it. She had had only little glimpses of his profession. He complained about the painful shots he was always taking.[6] He almost never took a bath at home because he showered upon entering and leaving his office every day. When a Detrick employee died of anthrax (one of three fatalities in the base’s 27-year history), Frank Olson told his wife the man had died of pneumonia.

Alice Olson had never even seen the building where her husband worked. Fort Detrick was built on the principle of concentric circles, with secrets concealed inside secrets. To enter the inner regions where SOD operated, one needed not only the highest security clearance but a “need to know” authorization. Her husband was not about to

break out of a career of government-imposed secrecy to tell her about the TOP SECRET experiment that Sid Gottlieb had performed on him.

The Olsons spent an uncommunicative weekend together. On Sunday they sat on the davenport in their living room, holding hands—something they had not done for a long time. “It was a rotten November day,” recalls Mrs. Olson. “The fog outside was so thick you could hardly see out the front door. Frank’s depression was dreadful.” Finally, she recalls, they packed up the three young children, and went off to the local theater. The film turned out to be *Luther*. “It was a very serious movie,” remembers Mrs. Olson, “not a good one to see when you’re depressed.”

The following day, Olson appeared at 7:30 A.M. in the office of his boss, Lieutenant Colonel Ruwet. To Ruwet, Olson seemed “agitated.” He told Ruwet he wanted either to quit or be fired. Taken aback, Ruwet reassured Olson that his conduct at the lodge had been “beyond reproach.” Seemingly satisfied and relieved, Olson agreed to stay on and spent the rest of the day on routine SOD business. That evening, the Olsons spent their most lighthearted evening since before the retreat to Deep Creek Lodge, and they planned a farewell party for a colleague the following Saturday night.

Tuesday morning, Ruwet again arrived at his office to find a disturbed Frank Olson waiting for him. Olson said he felt “all mixed up” and questioned his own competence. He said that he should not have left the Army during the war because of his ulcer and that he lacked the ability to do his present work. After an hour, Ruwet decided Olson needed “psychiatric attention.” Ruwet apparently felt that the CIA had caused Olson’s problem in the first place, and instead of sending him to the base hospital, he called Gottlieb’s deputy Robert Lashbrook to arrange for Olson to see a psychiatrist.

After a hurried conference, Lashbrook and Gottlieb decided to send Olson to Dr. Harold Abramson in New York. Abramson had no formal training in psychiatry and did not hold himself out to be a psychiatrist. He was an allergist and immunologist interested in treating the problems of the mind. Gottlieb chose him because he had a TOP SECRET CIA security clearance and because he had been working with LSD—under Agency contract—for several years. Gottlieb was obviously protecting his own bureaucratic position by not letting anyone outside TSS know what he had done. Having failed to observe the order to seek higher approval for LSD use, Gottlieb proceeded to violate another CIA regulation. It states, in effect, that whenever a potential flap arises that might embarrass the CIA or lead to a break in secrecy, those involved should immediately call the Office of Security. For health problems like Olson’s, Security and the CIA medical office keep a long list of doctors (and psychiatrists) with TOP SECRET clearance who can provide treatment.

Gottlieb had other plans for Frank Olson, and off to New York went the disturbed SOD biochemist in the company of Ruwet and Lashbrook. Olson alternately improved and sank deeper and deeper into his feelings of depression, inadequacy, guilt, and paranoia. He began to think that the CIA was putting a stimulant like Benzedrine in his coffee

to keep him awake and that it was the Agency that was out to get him. That first day in New York, Abramson saw Olson at his office. Then at 10:30 in the evening, the allergist visited Olson in his hotel room, armed with a bottle of bourbon and a bottle of the sedative Nembutal—an unusual combination for a doctor to give to someone with symptoms like Olson's.

Before Olson's appointment with Dr. Abramson the following day, he and Ruwet accompanied Lashbrook on a visit to a famous New York magician named John Mulholland, whom TSS had put under contract to prepare a manual that would apply "the magician's art to covert activities." An expert at pulling rabbits out of hats could easily find new and better ways to slip drugs into drinks, and Gottlieb signed up Mulholland to work on, among other things, "the delivery of various materials to unwitting subjects." Lashbrook thought that the magician might amuse Olson, but Olson became "highly suspicious." The group tactfully cut their visit short, and Lashbrook dropped Olson off at Abramson's office. After an hour's consultation with Abramson that afternoon the allergist gave Olson permission to return to Frederick the following day, Thanksgiving, to be with his family.

Olson, Ruwet, and Lashbrook had plane reservations for Thursday morning, so that night, in a preholiday attempt to lift spirits, they all went to see the Rodgers and Hammerstein hit musical, *Me and Juliet*. Olson became upset during the first act and told Ruwet that he knew people were waiting outside the theater to arrest him. Olson and Ruwet left the show at intermission, and the two old friends walked back to the Statler Hotel, near Penn Station. Later, while Ruwet slept in the next bed, Olson crept out of the hotel and wandered the streets. Gripped by the delusion that he was following Ruwet's orders, he tore up all his paper money and threw his wallet down a chute. At 5:30 A.M., Ruwet and Lashbrook found him sitting in the Statler lobby with his hat and coat on.

They checked out of the hotel and caught the plane back to Washington. An SOD driver picked Olson and Ruwet up at National Airport and started to drive them back to Frederick. As they drove up Wisconsin Avenue, Olson had the driver pull into a Howard Johnson's parking lot. He told Ruwet that he was "ashamed" to see his family in his present state and that he feared he might become violent with his children. Ruwet suggested he go back to see Abramson in New York, and Olson agreed. Ruwet and Olson drove back to Lashbrook's apartment on New Hampshire Avenue off Dupont Circle, and Lashbrook summoned Sid Gottlieb from Thanksgiving dinner in Virginia. All agreed that Lashbrook would take Olson back to New York while Ruwet would go back to Frederick to explain the situation to Mrs. Olson and to see his own family. (Ruwet was Olson's friend, whereas Lashbrook was no more than a professional acquaintance. Olson's son Eric believes that his father's mental state suffered when Ruwet left him in the hands of the CIA's Lashbrook, especially since Olson felt the CIA was "out to get him.") Olson and Lashbrook flew to LaGuardia airport and went to see Abramson at his Long Island office. Then the two men ate a joyless Thanksgiving dinner at a local restaurant. Friday morning Abramson drove them into Manhattan. Abramson, an allergist, finally realized that he had more on his hands with Olson than he could handle, and he recommended hospitalization. He wrote afterward that Olson "was in a psychotic state . . . with delusions of persecution."

Olson agreed to enter Chestnut Lodge, a Rockville, Maryland sanitarium that had CIA-cleared psychiatrists on the staff. They could not get plane reservations until the next morning, so Olson and Lashbrook decided to spend one last night at the Statler. They took a room on the tenth floor. With his spirits revived, Olson dared to call his wife for the first time since he had left originally for New York. They had a pleasant talk, which left her feeling better.

In the early hours of the morning, Lashbrook woke up just in time to see Frank Olson crash through the drawn blinds and closed window on a dead run.

Within seconds, as a crowd gathered around Olson's shattered body on the street below, the cover-up started. Lashbrook called Gottlieb to tell him what had happened before he notified the police. Next, Lashbrook called Abramson, who, according to Lashbrook, "wanted to be kept out of the thing completely." Abramson soon called back and offered to assist. When the police arrived, Lashbrook told them he worked for the Defense Department. He said he had no idea why Olson killed himself, but he did know that the dead man had "suffered from ulcers." The detectives assigned to the case later reported that getting information out of Lashbrook was "like pulling teeth." They speculated to each other that the case could be a homicide with homosexual overtones, but they soon dropped their inquiries when Ruwet and Abramson verified Lashbrook's sketchy account and invoked high government connections.

Back in Washington, Sid Gottlieb finally felt compelled to tell the Office of Security about the Olson case. Director Allen Dulles personally ordered Inspector General Lyman Kirkpatrick to make a full investigation, but first, Agency officials tried to make sure that no outsider would tie Olson's death either to the CIA or LSD. Teams of Security officers were soon scurrying around New York and Washington, making sure the Agency had covered its tracks. One interviewed Lashbrook and then accompanied him to a meeting with Abramson. When Lashbrook and Abramson asked the security officer to leave them alone, he complied and then, in the best traditions of his office, listened in on the conversation covertly. From his report on their talk, it can safely be said that Lashbrook and Abramson conspired to make sure they told identical stories. Lashbrook dictated to Abramson, who made a recording of the symptoms that Olson was supposed to be suffering from and the problems that were bothering him. Lashbrook even stated that Mrs. Olson had suggested her husband see a psychiatrist months before the LSD incident. [7] Lashbrook's comments appeared in three reports Abramson submitted to the CIA, but these reports were internally inconsistent. In one memo, Abramson wrote that Olson's "psychotic state . . . seemed to have been crystallized by [the LSD] experiment." In a later report, Abramson called the LSD dose "therapeutic" and said he believed "this dosage could hardly have had any significant role in the course of events that followed. [8]

The CIA officially—but secretly—took the position that the LSD had "triggered" Olson's suicide. Agency officials worked industriously behind the scenes to make sure that Mrs. Olson received an adequate government pension—two-thirds of her husband's base pay. Ruwet, who had threatened to expose the whole affair if Mrs. Olson did not get

the pension, submitted a form saying Olson had died of a “classified illness.” Gottlieb and Lashbrook kept trying to have it both ways in regard to giving Olson LSD, according to the CIA’s General Counsel. They acknowledged LSD’s triggering function in his death, but they also claimed it was “practically impossible” for the drug to have harmful aftereffects. The General Counsel called these two positions “completely inconsistent,” and he wrote he was “not happy with what seems to me a very casual attitude on the part of TSS representatives to the way this experiment was conducted and to their remarks that this is just one of the risks running with scientific investigation.”

As part of his investigation, Inspector General Kirkpatrick sequestered Gottlieb’s LSD files, which Kirkpatrick remembers did not make Gottlieb at all happy. “I brought out his stutter,” says Kirkpatrick with a wry smile. “He was quite concerned about his future.” Kirkpatrick eventually recommended that some form of reprimand be given to Gottlieb, TSS chief Willis Gibbons, and TSS deputy chief James “Trapper” Drum, who had waited 20 days after Olson’s death to admit that Gottlieb had cleared the experiment with him. Others opposed Kirkpatrick’s recommendation. Admiral Luis deFlorez, the Agency’s Research Chairman, sent a personal memo to Allen Dulles saying reprimands would be an “injustice” and would hinder “the spirit of initiative and enthusiasm so necessary in our work.” The Director’s office went along, and Kirkpatrick began the tortuous process of preparing letters for Dulles’ signature that would say Gottlieb, Gibbons, and Drum had done something wrong, but nothing too wrong. Kirkpatrick went through six drafts of the Gottlieb letter alone before he came up with acceptable wording. He started out by saying TSS officials had exercised “exceedingly bad judgment.” That was too harsh for high Agency officials, so Kirkpatrick tried “very poor judgment.” Still too hard. He settled for “poor judgment.” The TSS officials were told that they should not consider the letters to be reprimands and that no record of the letters would be put in their personnel files where they could conceivably harm future careers.

The Olson family up in Frederick did not get off so easily. Ruwet told them Olson had jumped or fallen out of the window in New York, but he mentioned not a word about the LSD, whose effects Ruwet himself believed had led to Olson’s death. Ever the good soldier, Ruwet could not bring himself to talk about the classified experiment—even to ease Alice Olson’s sorrow. Mrs. Olson did not want to accept the idea that her husband had willfully committed suicide. “It was very important to me—almost the core of my life—that my children not feel their father had walked out on them,” recalls Mrs. Olson.

For the next 22 years, Alice Olson had no harder evidence than her own belief that her husband did not desert her and the family. Then in June 1975, the Rockefeller Commission studying illegal CIA domestic operations reported that a man fitting Frank Olson’s description had leaped from a New York hotel window after the CIA had given him LSD without his knowledge. The Olson family read about the incident in the Washington Post. Daughter Lisa Olson Hayward and her husband went to see Ruwet, who had retired from the Army and settled in Frederick. In an emotional meeting, Ruwet confirmed that Olson was the man and said he could not tell the family earlier because he did not have permission. Ruwet tried to discourage them from going public or seeking

compensation from the government, but the Olson family did both. [9] On national television, Alice Olson and each of her grown children took turns reading from a prepared family statement:

We feel our family has been violated by the CIA in two ways," it said. "First, Frank Olson was experimented upon illegally and negligently. Second, the true nature of his death was concealed for twenty-two years.... In telling our story, we are concerned that neither the personal pain this family has experienced nor the moral and political outrage we feel be slighted. Only in this way can Frank Olson's death become part of American memory and serve the purpose of political and ethical reform so urgently needed in our society.

The statement went on to compare the Olsons with families in the Third World "whose hopes for a better life were destroyed by CIA intervention." Although Eric Olson read those words in behalf of the whole family, they reflected more the politics of the children than the feelings of their mother, Alice Olson. An incredibly strong woman who seems to have made her peace with the world, Mrs. Olson went back to college after her husband's death, got a degree, and held the family together while she taught school. She has no malice in her heart toward Vin Ruwet, her friend who withheld that vital piece of information from her all those years. He comforted her and gave support during the most difficult of times, and she deeply appreciates that. Mrs. Olson defends Ruwet by saying he was in "a bad position," but then she stops in mid-sentence and says, "If I had only been given some indication that it was the pressure of work.... If only I had had something I could have told the kids. I don't know how [Ruwet] could have done it either. It was a terrible thing for a man who loved him."

"I'm not vindictive toward Vin [Ruwet]," reflects Mrs. Olson. "Gottlieb is a different question. He was despicable." She tells how Gottlieb and Lashbrook both attended Olson's funeral in Frederick and contributed to a memorial fund. A week or two later, the two men asked to visit her. She knew they did not work at Detrick, but she did not really understand where they came from or their role. "I didn't want to see them," she notes. "Vin told me it would make them feel better. I didn't want an ounce of flesh from them. I didn't think it was necessary, but, okay, I agreed. In retrospect, it was so bizarre, it makes me sick . . . I was a sucker for them."

Gottlieb and Lashbrook apparently never returned to the biological warfare offices at SOD. Little else changed, however. Ray Treichler and Henry Bortner took over CIA's liaison with SOD. SOD continued to manufacture and stockpile bacteriological agents for the CIA until 1969, when President Richard Nixon renounced the use of biological warfare tactics.

And presumably, someone replaced Frank Olson.

Notes

The description of the CIA's relationship with SOD at Fort Detrick comes from interviews with several ex-Fort Detrick employees; Church Committee hearings on "Unauthorized Storage of Toxic Agents, Volume 1; Church Committee "Summary Report on CIA Investigation of MKNAOMI" found in Report, Book I, pp. 360-63; and/ Kennedy subcommittee hearings on Biological Testing Involving Human Subjects by the Department of Defense, 1977. The details of Sid Gottlieb's involvement in the plot to kill Patrice Lumumba are found in the Church Committee's Interim Report on "Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders," pp. 20-21. The Church committee allowed Gottlieb to be listed under the pseudonym Victor Scheider, but several sources confirm Gottlieb's true identity, as does the biographic data on him submitted to the Kennedy subcommittee by the CIA, which puts him in the same job attributed to "Scheider" at the same time. The plot to give botulinum to Fidel Castro is outlined in the Assassination report, pp. 79-83. The incident with the Iraqi colonel is on p. 181 of the same report.

The several inches of CIA documents on the Olson case were released by the Olson family in 1976 and can be found in the printed volume of the 1975 Kennedy subcommittee hearings on Biomedical and Behavioral Research, pp.1005-1132. They form the base of much of the narrative, along with interviews with Alice Olson, Eric Olson, Benjamin Wilson, and several other ex-SOD men (who added next to nothing). Information also was gleaned from Vincent Ruwet's testimony before the Kennedy subcommittee in 1975, pp. 138-45 and the Church committee's summary of the affair, Book I, pp. 394-403. The quote on Harold Abramson's intention to give his patients unwitting doses of LSD is found in MKULTRA subproject 7, June 8, 1953, letter to Dr. [deleted]. Magician John Mulholland's work for the Agency is described in MKULTRA subprojects 19 and 34.

Footnotes

1. Toxins are chemical substances, not living organisms, derived from biological agents. While they can make people sick or dead, they cannot reproduce themselves like bacteria. Because of their biological origin, toxins came under the responsibility of Fort Detrick rather than Edgewood Arsenal, the facility which handled the chemical side of America's chemical and biological warfare (CBW) programs.

2. Brucellosis may well have been the disease that Gottlieb selected in the spring of 1960 when the Clandestine Services' Health Alteration Committee approved an operation to disable an Iraqi colonel, said to be "promoting Soviet-bloc political interests" for at least three months. Gottlieb told the Church committee that he had a monogrammed handkerchief treated with the incapacitating agency, and then mailed it to the colonel. CIA officials told the committee that the colonel was shot by a firing squad—which the Agency had nothing to do with—before the handkerchief arrived.

3. For some reason, the U.S. government has made it a point not to release information about Japanese use of biological warfare. The senior Detrick source says, "We knew they sprayed Manchuria. We had the results of how they produced and disseminated [the biological agents, including anthrax].... I read the autopsy reports myself. We

had people who went over to Japan after the war.”

4. Gottlieb stated just after Olson’s death, at a time when he was trying to minimize his own culpability, that he had talked to the SOD men about LSD and that they had agreed in general terms to the desirability of unwitting testing. Two of the SOD group in interviews and a third in congressional testimony flatly deny the Gottlieb version. Gottlieb and the SOD men all agree Gottlieb gave no advance warning that he was giving them a drug in their liqueur.

5. For the very reason that most trips last about eight hours no matter what time a subject takes the drug, virtually all experimenters, including TSS’s own contractors, give LSD in the morning to avoid the discomfort of sleepless nights.

6. To enter the SOD building, in addition to needing an incredibly hard-to-get security clearance, one had to have an up-to-date shot card with anywhere from 10 to 20 immunizations listed. The process was so painful and time consuming that at one point in the 1960s the general who headed the whole Army Chemical Corps decided against inspecting SOD and getting an on-the-spot briefing. When asked about this incident, an SOD veteran who had earlier resigned said, “That’s the way we kept them out. Those [military] types didn’t need to know. Most of the security violations came from the top level.... He could have gone in without shots if he had insisted. The safety director would have protested, but he could have.”

7. Mrs. Olson says that this is an outright lie.

8. Nonpsychiatrist Abramson who allowed chemist Lashbrook to tell him about his patient’s complexes clearly had a strange idea what was “therapeutic”—or psychotherapeutic, for that matter. In Abramson’s 1953 proposal to the CIA for \$85,000 to study LSD, he wrote that over the next year he “hoped” to give hospital patients “who are essentially normal from a psychiatric point of view . . . unwitting doses of the drug for psychotherapeutic purposes.” His treatment brings to mind the William Burroughs character in Naked Lunch who states; “Now, boys, you won’t see this operation performed very often, and there’s a reason for that . . . you see, it has absolutely no medical value.”

9. President Gerald Ford later personally apologized to the Olson family, and Congress passed a bill in 1976 to pay \$750,000 in compensation to Mrs. Olson and her three children. The family voluntarily abandoned the suit.

THE SAFEHOUSES

Frank Olson’s death could have been a major setback for the Agency’s LSD testing, but the program, like Sid Gottlieb’s career, emerged essentially unscathed. High CIA officials did call a temporary halt to all experiments while they investigated the Olson case and re-examined the general policy. They cabled the two field stations that had supplies of the drug (Manila and Atsugi, Japan) not to use it for the time being, and they

even took away Sid Gottlieb's own private supply and had it locked up in his boss' safe, to which no one else had the combination.

In the end, however, Allen Dulles accepted the view Richard Helms put forth that the only "operationally realistic" way to test drugs was to try them on unwitting people. Helms noted that experiments which gave advance warning would be "pro forma at best and result in a false sense of accomplishment and readiness." For Allen Dulles and his top aides, the possible importance of LSD clearly outweighed the risks and ethical problem of slipping the drug to involuntary subjects. They gave Gottlieb back his LSD.

Once the CIA's top echelon had made its decision to continue unwitting testing, there remained, in Richard Helms' words, "only then the question of how best to do it." The Agency's role in the Olson affair had come too perilously close to leaking out for the comfort of the security-minded, so TSS officials simply had to work out a testing system with better cover. That meant finding subjects who could not be so easily traced back to the Agency.

Well before Olson's death, Gottlieb and the MKULTRA crew had started pondering how best to do unwitting testing. They considered using an American police force to test drugs on prisoners, informants, and suspects, but they knew that some local politicians would inevitably find out. In the Agency view, such people could not be trusted to keep sensitive secrets. TSS officials thought about trying Federal prisons or hospitals, but, when sounded out, the Bureau of Prisons refused to go along with true unwitting testing (as opposed to the voluntary, if coercive, form practiced on drug addicts in Kentucky). They contemplated moving the program overseas, where they and the ARTI-CHOKE teams were already performing operational experiments, but they decided if they tested on the scale they thought was necessary, so many foreigners would have to know that it would pose an unacceptable security risk.

Sid Gottlieb is remembered as the brainstorming genius of the MKULTRA group—and the one with a real talent for showing others, without hurting their feelings, why their schemes would not work. States an ex-colleague who admires him greatly, "In the final analysis, Sid was like a good soldier—if the job had to be done, he did it. Once the decision was made, he found the most effective way."

In this case, Gottlieb came up with the solution after reading through old OSS files on Stanley Lovell's search for a truth drug. Gottlieb noted that Lovell had used George White, a prewar employee of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, to test concentrated marijuana. Besides trying the drug out on Manhattan Project volunteers and unknowing suspected Communists, White had slipped some to August Del Gracio, the Lucky Luciano lieutenant. White had called the experiment a great success. If it had not been—if Del Gracio had somehow caught on to the drugging—Gottlieb realized that the gangster would never have gone to the police or the press. His survival as a criminal required he remain quiet about even the worst indignities heaped upon him by government agents.

To Gottlieb, underworld types looked like ideal test subjects. Nevertheless, according to one TSS source, “We were not about to fool around with the Mafia.” Instead, this source says they chose “the borderline underworld”—prostitutes, drug addicts, and other small-timers who would be powerless to seek any sort of revenge if they ever found out what the CIA had done to them. In addition to their being unlikely whistleblowers, such people lived in a world where an unwitting dose of some drug—usually knockout drops—was an occupational hazard anyway. They would therefore be better equipped to deal with—and recover from—a surprise LSD trip than the population as a whole. Or so TSS officials rationalized. “They could at least say to themselves, ‘Here I go again. I’ve been slipped a mickey,’” says a TSS veteran. Furthermore, this veteran remembers, his former colleagues reasoned that if they had to violate the civil rights of anyone, they might as well choose a group of marginal people.

George White himself had left OSS after the war and returned to the Narcotics Bureau. In 1952 he was working in the New York office. As a high-ranking narcotics agent, White had a perfect excuse to be around drugs and people who used them. He had proved during the war that he had a talent for clandestine work, and he certainly had no qualms when it came to unwitting testing. With his job, he had access to all the possible subjects the Agency would need, and if he could use LSD or any other drug to find out more about drug trafficking, so much the better. From a security viewpoint, CIA officials could easily deny any connection to anything White did, and he clearly was not the crybaby type. For Sid Gottlieb, George White was clearly the one. The MKULTRA chief decided to contact White directly to see if he might be interested in picking up with the CIA where he had left off with OSS.

Always careful to observe bureaucratic protocol, Gottlieb first approached Harry Anslinger, the longtime head of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, and got permission to use White on a part-time basis. Then Gottlieb traveled to New York and made his pitch to the narcotics agent, who stood 5’7”, weighed over 200 pounds, shaved his head, and looked something like an extremely menacing bowling ball. After an early-morning meeting, White scrawled in his sweat-stained, leather-bound diary for that day, June 9, 1952: “Gottlieb proposed I be a CIA consultant—I agree.” By writing down such a thing and using Gottlieb’s true name,^[1] White had broken CIA security regulations even before he started work. But then, White was never known as a man who followed rules.

Despite the high priority that TSS put on drug testing, White’s security approval did not come through until almost a year later. “It was only last month that I got cleared,” the outspoken narcotics agent wrote to a friend in 1953. “I then learned that a couple of crew-cut, pipe-smoking punks had either known me—or heard of me—during OSS days and had decided I was ‘too rough’ for their league and promptly blackballed me. It was only when my sponsors discovered the root of the trouble they were able to bypass the blockade. After all, fellas, I didn’t go to Princeton.”

People either loved or hated George White, and he had made some powerful enemies, including New York Governor Thomas Dewey and J. Edgar Hoover. Dewey

would later help block White from becoming the head of the Narcotics Bureau in New York City, a job White sorely wanted. For some forgotten reason, Hoover had managed to stop White from being hired by the CIA in the Agency's early days, at a time when he would have preferred to leave narcotics work altogether. These were two of the biggest disappointments of his life. White's previous exclusion from the CIA may explain why he jumped so eagerly at Gottlieb's offer and why at the same time he privately heaped contempt on those who worked for the Agency. A remarkably heavy drinker, who would sometimes finish off a bottle of gin in one sitting, White often mocked the CIA crowd over cocktails. "He thought they were a joke," recalls one longtime crony. "They were too complicated, and they had other people do their heavy stuff."

Unlike his CIA counterparts, White loved the glare of publicity. A man who gloried in talking about himself and cultivating a hard-nosed image, White knew how to milk a drug bust for all it was worth—a skill that grew out of early years spent as a newspaper reporter in San Francisco and Los Angeles. In search of a more financially secure profession, he had joined the Narcotics Bureau in 1934, but he continued to pal around with journalists, particularly those who wrote favorably about him. Not only did he come across in the press as a cop hero, but he helped to shape the picture of future Kojaks by serving as a consultant to one of the early-television detective series. To start a raid, he would dramatically tip his hat to signal his agents—and to let the photographers know that the time had come to snap his picture. "He was sort of vainglorious," says another good friend, "the kind of guy who if he did something, didn't mind having the world know about it." [2]

The scientists from TSS, with their Ph.D.s and lack of street experience, could not help admiring White for his swashbuckling image. Unlike the men from MKULTRA, who, for all their pretensions, had never worked as real-live spies, White had put his life on the line for OSS overseas and had supposedly killed a Japanese agent with his bare hands. The face of one ex-TSS man lit up, like a little boy's on Christmas morning, as he told of racing around New York in George White's car and parking illegally with no fear of the law. "We were Ivy League, white, middle-class," notes another former TSSer. "We were naive, totally naive about this, and he felt pretty expert. He knew the whores, the pimps, the people who brought in the drugs. He'd purportedly been in a number of shootouts where he'd captured millions of dollars worth of heroin.... He was a pretty wild man. I know I was afraid of him. You couldn't control this guy . . . I had a little trouble telling who was controlling who in those days."

White lived with extreme personal contradictions. As could be expected of a narcotics agent, he violently opposed drugs. Yet he died largely because his beloved alcohol had destroyed his liver. He had tried everything else, from marijuana to LSD, and wrote an acquaintance, "I did feel at times I was having a 'mind-expanding' experience but this vanished like a dream immediately after the session." He was a law-enforcement official who regularly violated the law. Indeed, the CIA turned to him because of his willingness to use the power of his office to ride roughshod over the rights of others—in the name of "national security," when he tested LSD for the Agency, in the name of

stamping out drug abuse, for the Narcotics Bureau. As yet another close associate summed up White's attitude toward his job, "He really believed the ends justified the means."

George White's "pragmatic" approach meshed perfectly with Sid Gottlieb's needs for drug testing. In May 1953 the two men, who wound up going folk dancing together several times, formally joined forces. In CIA jargon, White became MKULTRA subproject #3. Under this arrangement, White rented two adjacent Greenwich Village apartments, posing as the sometime artist and seaman "Morgan Hall." White agreed to lure guinea pigs to the "safehouse"—as the Agency men called the apartments—slip them drugs, and report the results to Gottlieb and the others in TSS. For its part, the CIA let the Narcotics Bureau use the place for undercover activities (and often for personal pleasure) whenever no Agency work was scheduled, and the CIA paid all the bills, including the cost of keeping a well-stocked liquor cabinet—a substantial bonus for White. Gottlieb personally handed over the first \$4,000 in cash, to cover the initial costs of furnishing the safehouse in the lavish style that White felt befitted him.

Gottlieb did not limit his interest to drugs. He and other TSS officials wanted to try out surveillance equipment. CIA technicians quickly installed see-through mirrors and microphones through which eavesdroppers could film, photograph, and record the action. "Things go wrong with listening devices and two-way mirrors, so you build these things to find out what works and what doesn't," says a TSS source. "If you are going to entrap, you've got to give the guy pictures [flagrante delicto] and voice recordings. Once you learn how to do it so that the whole thing looks comfortable, cozy, and safe, then you can transport the technology overseas and use it." This TSS man notes that the Agency put to work in the bedrooms of Europe some of the techniques developed in the George White safehouse operation.

In the safehouse's first months, White tested LSD, several kinds of knockout drops, and that old OSS standby, essence of marijuana. He served up the drugs in food, drink, and cigarettes and then tried to worm information—usually on narcotics matters—from his "guests." Sometimes MKULTRA men came up from Washington to watch the action. A September 1953 entry in White's diary noted: "Lashbrook at 81 Bedford Street—Owen Winkle and LSD surprise—can wash." Sid Gottlieb's deputy, Robert Lashbrook, served as "project monitor" for the New York safehouse.[3]

White had only been running the safehouse six months when Olson died (in Lashbrook's company), and Agency officials suspended the operation for re-evaluation. They soon allowed him to restart it, and then Gottlieb had to order White to slow down again. A New York State commissioner had summoned the narcotics agent to explain his role in the deal that wound up with Governor Dewey pardoning Lucky Luciano after the war. The commissioner was asking questions that touched on White's use of marijuana on Del Gracio, and Gottlieb feared that word of the CIA's current testing might somehow leak out. This storm also soon passed, but then, in early 1955, the Narcotics Bureau transferred White to San Francisco to become chief agent there. Happy with White's performance, Gottlieb decided to let him take the entire safehouse operation with him to the

Coast. White closed up the Greenwich Village apartments, leaving behind unreceipted “tips” for the landlord “to clear up any difficulties about the alterations and damages,” as a CIA document put it.^[4]

White soon rented a suitable “pad” (as he always called it) on Telegraph Hill, with a stunning view of San Francisco Bay, the Golden Gate Bridge, and Alcatraz. To supplement the furniture he brought from the New York safehouse, he went out and bought items that gave the place the air of the brothel it was to become: Toulouse-Lautrec posters, a picture of a French cancan dancer, and photos of manacled women in black stockings. “It was supposed to look rich,” recalls a narcotics agent who regularly visited, “but it was furnished like crap.”

White hired a friend’s company to install bugging equipment, and William Hawkins, a 25-year-old electronics whiz then studying at Berkley put in four DD-4 microphones disguised as electrical wall outlets and hooked them up to two F-301 tape recorders, which agents monitored in an adjacent “listening post.” Hawkins remembers that White “kept a pitcher of martinis in the refrigerator, and he’d watch me for a while as I installed a microphone and then slip off.” For his own personal “observation post,” White had a portable toilet set up behind a two-way mirror, where he could watch the proceedings, usually with drink in hand.

The San Francisco safehouse specialized in prostitutes. “But this was before The Hite Report and before any hooker had written a book,” recalls a TSS man, “so first we had to go out and learn about their world. In the beginning, we didn’t know what a john was or what a pimp did.” Sid Gottlieb decided to send his top staff psychologist, John Gittinger, to San Francisco to probe the demimonde.

George White supplied the prostitutes for the study, although White, in turn, delegated much of the pimping function to one of his assistants, Ira “Ike” Feldman. A muscular but very short man, whom even the 5’7” White towered over, Feldman tried even harder than his boss to act tough. Dressed in suede shoes, a suit with flared trousers, a hat with a turned-up brim, and a huge zircon ring that was supposed to look like a diamond, Feldman first came to San Francisco on an undercover assignment posing as an East Coast mobster looking to make a big heroin buy. Using a drug-addicted prostitute name Janet Jones, whose common-law husband states that Feldman paid her off with heroin, the undercover man lured a number of suspected drug dealers to the “pad” and helped White make arrests.

As the chief Federal narcotics agent in San Francisco, White was in a position to reward or punish a prostitute. He set up a system whereby he and Feldman provided Gittinger with all the hookers the psychologist wanted. White paid off the women with a fixed number of “chits.” For each chit, White owed one favor. “So the next time the girl was arrested with a john,” says an MKULTRA veteran, “she would give the cop George White’s phone number. The police all knew White and cooperated with him without asking questions. They would release the girl if he said so. White would keep good records

of how many chits each person had and how many she used. No money was exchanged, but five chits were worth \$500 to \$1,000.” Prostitutes were not the only beneficiaries of White’s largess. The narcotics agent worked out a similar system to forgive the transgressions of small time drug pushers when the MKULTRA men wanted to talk to them about “the rules of their game,” according to the source.

TSS officials wanted to find out everything they could about how to apply sex to spying, and the prostitute project became a general learning and then training ground for CIA carnal operations. After all, states one TSS official, “We did quite a study of prostitutes and their behavior.... At first nobody really knew how to use them. How do you train them? How do you work them? How do you take a woman who is willing to use her body to get money out of a guy to get things which are much more important, like state secrets. I don’t care how beautiful she is—educating the ordinary prostitute up to that level is not a simple task.”

The TSS men continually tried to refine their knowledge. They realized that prostitutes often wheedled extra money out of a customer by suggesting some additional service as male orgasm neared. They wondered if this might not also be a good time to seek sensitive information. “But no,” says the source, “we found the guy was focused solely on hormonal needs. He was not thinking of his career or anything else at that point.” The TSS experts discovered that the postsexual, light-up-a-cigarette period was much better suited to their ulterior motives. Says the source:

Most men who go to prostitutes are prepared for the fact that [after the act] she’s beginning to work to get herself out of there, so she can get back on the street to make some more money. . . . To find a prostitute who is willing to stay is a hell of a shock to anyone used to prostitutes. It has a tremendous effect on the guy. It’s a boost to his ego if she’s telling him he was really neat, and she wants to stay for a few more hours.... Most of the time, he gets pretty vulnerable. What the hell’s he going to talk about? Not the sex, so he starts talking about his business. It’s at this time she can lead him gently. But you have to train prostitutes to do that. Their natural inclination is to do exactly the opposite.

The men from MKULTRA learned a great deal about varying sexual preferences. One of them says:

We didn’t know in those days about hidden sadism and all that sort of stuff. We learned a lot about human nature in the bedroom. We began to understand that when people wanted sex, it wasn’t just what we had thought of—you know, the missionary position.... We started to pick up knowledge that could be used in operations, but with a lot of it we never figured out any way to use it operationally. We just learned.... All these ideas did not come to us at once. But evolving over three or four years in which these studies were going on, things emerged which we tried. Our knowledge of prostitutes’ behavior became pretty damn good. . . . This comes across now that somehow we were just playing around and we just found all these exotic ways to waste the taxpayers’ money on satisfying our hidden urges. I’m not saying that watching prostitutes was not exciting

or something like that. But what I am saying was there was a purpose to the whole business.[5]

In the best tradition of Mata Hari, the CIA did use sex as a clandestine weapon, although apparently not so frequently as the Russians. While many in the Agency believed that it simply did not work very well, others like CIA operators in Berlin during the mid-1960s felt prostitutes could be a prime source of intelligence. Agency men in that city used a network of hookers to good advantage—or so they told visitors from headquarters. Yet, with its high proportion of Catholics and Mormons—not to mention the Protestant ethic of many of its top leaders—the Agency definitely had limits beyond which prudery took over. For instance, a TSS veteran says that a good number of case officers wanted no part of homosexual entrapment operations. And to go a step further, he recalls one senior KGB man who told too many sexual jokes about young boys. “It didn’t take too long to recognize that he was more than a little fascinated by youths,” says the source. “I took the trouble to point out he was probably too good, too well-trained, to be either entrapped or to give away secrets. But he would have been tempted toward a compromising position by a preteen. I mentioned this, and they said, ‘As a psychological observer, you’re probably quite right. But what the hell are we going to do about it? Where are we going to get a twelve-year-old boy?’ “ The source believes that if the Russian had had a taste for older men, U.S. intelligence might have mounted an operation, “but the idea of a twelve-year-old boy was just more than anybody could stomach.”

As the TSS men learned more about the San Francisco hustlers, they ventured outside the safehouse to try out various clandestine-delivery gimmicks in public places like restaurants, bars, and beaches. They practiced ways to slip LSD to citizens of the demimonde while buying them a drink or lighting up a cigarette, and they then tried to observe the effects when the drug took hold. Because the MKULTRA scientists did not move smoothly among the very kinds of people they were testing, they occasionally lost an unwitting victim in a crowd—thereby sending a stranger off alone with a head full of LSD.

In a larger sense, all the test victims would become lost. As a matter of policy, Sid Gottlieb ordered that virtually no records be kept of the testing. In 1973, when Gottlieb retired from the Agency, he and Richard Helms agreed to destroy what they thought were the few existing documents on the program. Neither Gottlieb nor any other MKULTRA man has owned up to having given LSD to an unknowing subject, or even to observing such an experiment—except of course in the case of Frank Olson. Olson’s death left behind a paper trail outside of Gottlieb’s control and that hence could not be denied. Otherwise, Gottlieb and his colleagues have put all the blame for actual testing on George White, who is not alive to defend himself. One reason the MKULTRA veterans have gone to such lengths to conceal their role is obvious: fear of lawsuits from victims claiming damaged health.

At the time of the experiments, the subjects’ health did not cause undue concern.

At the safehouse, where most of the testing took place, doctors were seldom present. Dr. James Hamilton, a Stanford Medical School psychiatrist and White's OSS colleague, visited the place from time to time, apparently for studies connected to unwitting drug experiments and deviant sexual practices. Yet neither Hamilton nor any other doctor provided much medical supervision. From his perch atop the toilet seat, George White could do no more than make surface observations of his drugged victims. Even an experienced doctor would have had difficulty handling White's role. In addition to LSD, which they knew could cause serious, if not fatal problems, TSS officials gave White even more exotic experimental drugs to test, drugs that other Agency contractors may or may not have already used on human subjects. "If we were scared enough of a drug not to try it out on ourselves, we sent it to San Francisco," recalls a TSS source. According to a 1963 report by CIA Inspector General John Earman, "In a number of instances, however, the test subject has become ill for hours or days, including hospitalization in at least one case, and [White] could only follow up by guarded inquiry after the test subject's return to normal life. Possible sickness and attendant economic loss are inherent contingent effects of the testing."

The Inspector General noted that the whole program could be compromised if an outside doctor made a "correct diagnosis of an illness." Thus, the MKULTRA team not only made some people sick but had a vested interest in keeping doctors from finding out what was really wrong. If that bothered the Inspector General, he did not report his qualms, but he did say he feared "serious damage to the Agency" in the event of public exposure. The Inspector General was only somewhat reassured by the fact that George White "maintain[ed] close working relations with local police authorities which could be utilized to protect the activity in critical situations."

If TSS officials had been willing to stick with their original target group of marginal underworld types, they would have had little to fear from the police. After all, George White was the police. But increasingly they used the safehouse to test drugs, in the Inspector General's words, "on individuals of all social levels, high and low, native American and foreign." After all, they were looking for an operational payoff, and they knew people reacted differently to LSD according to everything from health and mood to personality structure. If TSS officials wanted to slip LSD to foreign leaders, as they contemplated doing to Fidel Castro, they would try to spring an unwitting dose on somebody as similar as possible. They used the safehouse for "dry runs" in the intermediate stage between the laboratory and actual operations.

For these dress rehearsals, George White and his staff procurer, Ike Feldman, enticed men to the apartment with prostitutes. An unsuspecting john would think he had bought a night of pleasure, go back to a strange apartment, and wind up zonked. A CIA document that survived Sid Gottlieb's shredding recorded this process. Its author, Gottlieb himself, could not break a lifelong habit of using nondescriptive language. For the MKULTRA chief, the whores were "certain individuals who covertly administer this material to other people in accordance with [White's] instructions." White normally paid the women \$100 in Agency funds for their night's work, and Gottlieb's prose reached

new bureaucratic heights as he explained why the prostitutes did not sign for the money: “Due to the highly unorthodox nature of these activities and the considerable risk incurred by these individuals, it is impossible to require that they provide a receipt for these payments or that they indicate the precise manner in which the funds were spent.” The CIA’s auditors had to settle for canceled checks which White cashed himself and marked either “Stormy” or, just as appropriately, “Undercover Agent.” The program was also referred to as “Operation Midnight Climax.”

TSS officials found the San Francisco safehouse so successful that they opened a branch office, also under George White’s auspices, across the Golden Gate on the beach in Marin County.[6] Unlike the downtown apartment, where an MKULTRA man says “you could bring people in for quickies after lunch,” the suburban Marin County outlet proved useful for experiments that required relative isolation. There, TSS scientists tested such MKULTRA specialties as stink bombs, itching and sneezing powders, and diarrhea inducers. TSS’s Ray Treichler, the Stanford chemist, sent these “harassment substances” out to California for testing by White, along with such delivery systems as a mechanical launcher that could throw a foul-smelling object 100 yards, glass ampules that could be stepped on in a crowd to release any of Treichler’s powders, a fine hypodermic needle to inject drugs through the cork in a wine bottle, and a drug-coated swizzle stick.

TSS men also planned to use the Marin County safehouse for an ill-fated experiment that began when staff psychologists David Rhodes and Walter Pasternak spent a week circulating in bars, inviting strangers to a party. They wanted to spray LSD from an aerosol can on their guests, but according to Rhodes’ Senate testimony, “the weather defeated us.” In the heat of the summer, they could not close the doors and windows long enough for the LSD to hang in the air and be inhaled. Sensing a botched operation, their MKULTRA colleague, John Gittinger (who brought the drug out from Washington) shut himself in the bathroom and let go with the spray. Still, Rhodes testified, Gittinger did not get high, and the CIA men apparently scrubbed the party.[7]

The MKULTRA crew continued unwitting testing until the summer of 1963 when the Agency’s Inspector General stumbled across the safehouses during a regular inspection of TSS activities. This happened not long after Director John McCone had appointed John Earman to the Inspector General position.[8] Much to the displeasure of Sid Gottlieb and Richard Helms, Earman questioned the propriety of the safehouses, and he insisted that Director McCone be given a full briefing. Although President Kennedy had put McCone in charge of the Agency the year before, Helms—the professional’s professional—had not bothered to tell his outsider boss about some of the CIA’s most sensitive activities, including the safehouses and the CIA-Mafia assassination plots.[9]

Faced with Earman’s demands, Helms—surely one of history’s most clever bureaucrats—volunteered to tell McCone himself about the safehouses (rather than have Earman present a negative view of the program). Sure enough, Helms told Earman afterward, McCone raised no objections to unwitting testing (as Helms described it). A determined man and a rather brave one, Earman countered with a full written report to

McCone recommending that the safehouses be closed. The Inspector General cited the risks of exposure and pointed out that many people both inside and outside the Agency found “the concepts involved in manipulating human behavior . . . to be distasteful and unethical.” McCone reacted by putting off a final decision but suspending unwitting testing in the meantime.

Over the next year, Helms, who then headed the Clandestine Services, wrote at least three memos urging resumption. He cited “indications . . . of an apparent Soviet aggressiveness in the field of covertly administered chemicals which are, to say the least, inexplicable and disturbing,” and he claimed the CIA’s “positive operational capacity to use drugs is diminishing owing to a lack of realistic testing.”^[10] To Richard Helms, the importance of the program exceeded the risks and the ethical questions, although he did admit, “We have no answer to the moral issue.” McCone simply did nothing for two years.

The director’s indecision had the effect of killing the program, nevertheless. TSS officials closed the San Francisco safehouse in 1965 and the New York one in 1966. Years later in a personal letter to Sid Gottlieb, George White wrote an epitaph for his role with the CIA: “I was a very minor missionary, actually a heretic, but I toiled wholeheartedly in the vineyards because it was fun, fun, fun. Where else could a red-blooded American boy lie, kill, cheat, steak rape, and pillage with the sanction and blessing of the All-Highest?”

After 10 years of unwitting testing, the men from MKULTRA apparently scored no major breakthroughs with LSD or other drugs. They found no effective truth drug, recruitment pill, or aphrodisiac. LSD had not opened up the mind to CIA control. “We had thought at first that this was the secret that was going to unlock the universe,” says a TSS veteran. “We found that human beings had resources far greater than imagined.”

Yet despite the lack of precision and uncertainty, the CIA still made field use of LSD and other drugs that had worked their way through the MKULTRA testing progression. A 1957 report showed that TSS had already moved 6 drugs out of the experimental stage and into active use. Up to that time, CIA operators had utilized LSD and other psychochemicals against 33 targets in 6 different operations. Agency officials hoped in these cases either to discredit the subject by making him seem insane or to “create within the individual a mental and emotional situation which will release him from the restraint of self-control and induce him to reveal information willingly under adroit manipulation.” The Agency has consistently refused to release details of these operations, and TSS sources who talk rather freely about other matters seem to develop amnesia when the subject of field use comes up.

Nevertheless, it can be said that the CIA did establish a relationship with an unnamed foreign secret service to interrogate prisoners with LSD-like drugs. CIA operators participated directly in these interrogations, which continued at least until 1966. Often the Agency showed more concern for the safety of its operational targets abroad

than it did for its unwitting victims in San Francisco, since some of the foreign subjects were given medical examinations before being slipped the drug.[11]

In these operations, CIA men sometimes brought in local doctors for reasons that had nothing to do with the welfare of the patient. Instead, the doctor's role was to certify the apparent insanity of a victim who had been unwittingly dosed with LSD or an even more durable psychochemical like BZ (which causes trips lasting a week or more and which tends to induce violent behavior). If a doctor were to prescribe hospitalization or other severe treatment, the effect on the subject could be devastating. He would suffer not only the experience itself, including possible confinement in a mental institution, but also social stigma. In most countries, even the suggestion of mental problems severely damages an individual's professional and personal standing (as Thomas Eagleton, the recipient of some shock therapy, can testify). "It's an old technique," says an MKULTRA veteran. "You neutralize someone by having their constituency doubt them." The Church committee confirms that the Agency used this technique at least several times to assassinate a target's character.[12]

Still, the Clandestine Services did not frequently call on TSS for LSD or other drugs. Many operators had practical and ethical objections. In part to overcome such objections and also to find better ways to use chemical and biological substances in covert operations, Sid Gottlieb moved up in 1959 to become Assistant for Scientific Matters to the Clandestine Services chief. Gottlieb found that TSS had kept the MKULTRA programs so secret that many field people did not even know what techniques were available. He wrote that tight controls over field use in MKDELTA operations "may have generated a general defeatism among case officers," who feared they would not receive permission or that the procedure was not worth the effort. Gottlieb tried to correct these shortcomings by providing more information on the drug arsenal to senior operators and by streamlining the approval process. He had less luck in overcoming views that drugs do not work or are not reliable, and that their operational use leads to laziness and poor tradecraft.

If the MKULTRA program had ever found that LSD or any other drug really did turn a man into a puppet, Sid Gottlieb would have had no trouble surmounting all those biases. Instead, Gottlieb and his fellow searchers came frustratingly close but always fell short of finding a reliable control mechanism. LSD certainly penetrated to the innermost regions of the mind. It could spring loose a whole gamut of feelings, from terror to insight. But in the end, the human psyche proved so complex that even the most skilled manipulator could not anticipate all the variables. He could use LSD and other drugs to chip away at free will. He could score temporary victories, and he could alter moods, perception—sometimes even beliefs. He had the power to cause great harm, but ultimately he could not conquer the human spirit.

Notes

The CIA's reaction to Frank Olson's death is described in numerous memos re-

leased by the Agency to the Olson family, which can be found at pp.1005-1132 of the Kennedy Subcommittee 1975 hearings on Biomedical and Behavioral Research. See particularly at p. 1077, 18 December 1953, Subject: The Suicide of Frank Olson and at p. 1027, 1 December 1953, Subject: Use of LSD.

Richard Helms' views on unwitting testing are found in Document #448, 17 December 1963, Subject: Testing of Psychochemicals and Related Materials and in a memorandum to the CIA Director, June 9, 1964, quoted from on page 402 of the Church Committee Report, Book I.

George White's diary and letters were donated by his widow to Foothills Junior College, Los Altos, California and are the source of a treasure chest of material on him, including his letter to a friend explaining his almost being "blackballed" from the CIA, the various diary entries cited, including references to folk-dancing with Gottlieb, the interview with Hal Lipset where he explains his philosophy on chasing criminals, and his letter to Sid Gottlieb dated November 21, (probably) 1972.

The New York and San Francisco safehouses run by George White are the subjects of MKULTRA subprojects 3,14,16,42, and 149. White's tips to the landlord are described in 42-156, his liquor bills in 42-157, "dry-runs" in 42-91. The New York safehouse run by Charles Siragusa is subproject 132. The "intermediate" tests are described in document 132-59.

Paul Avery, a San Francisco freelance writer associated with the Center for Investigative Reporting in Oakland, California interviewed William Hawkins and provided assistance on the details of the San Francisco safehouse and George White's background. Additional information on White came from interviews with his widow, several former colleagues in the Narcotics Bureau, and other knowledgeable sources in various San Francisco law-enforcement agencies. An ex-Narcotics Bureau official told of Dr. James Hamilton's study of unusual sexual practices and the description of his unwitting drug testing comes from MKULTRA subproject 2, which is his subproject.

Ray Treichler discussed some of his work with harassment substances in testimony before the Kennedy subcommittee on September 20, 1977, pp. 105-8. He delivered his testimony under the pseudonym "Philip Goldman."

"The Gang that Couldn't Spray Straight" article appeared in the September 20, 1977 Washington Post.

Richard Helms' decision not to tell John McCone about the CIA's connection to the Mafia in assassination attempts against Castro is described in the Church Committee's Assassination report, pp. 102-3.

The 1957 Inspector General's Report on TSS, Document #417 and the 1963 inspection of MKULTRA, 14 August 1963, Document #59 provided considerable detail through-

out the entire chapter. The Church Committee Report on MKULTRA in Book I, pp. 385-422 also provided considerable information.

Sid Gottlieb's job as Assistant to the Clandestine Services chief for Scientific Matters is described in Document #74 (operational series) 20 October 1959, Subject: Application of Imaginative Research on the Behavioral and Physical Sciences to [deleted] Problems" and in the 1963 Inspector General's report.

Interviews with ex-CIA Inspector General Lyman Kirkpatrick, another former Inspector General's staff employee, and several ex-TSS staffers contributed significantly to this chapter.

Helms' letter to the Warren Commission on "Soviet Brainwashing Techniques," dated 19 June 1964, was obtained from the National Archives.

The material on the CIA's operational use of LSD came from the Church Committee Report, Book I, pp. 399-403 and from an affidavit filed in the Federal Court case of John D. Marks v. Central Intelligence Agency, et. al., Civil Action No. 76-2073 by Eloise R. Page, Chief, Policy and Coordination Staff of the CIA's Directorate of Operations. In listing all the reasons why the Agency should not provide the operational documents, Ms. Page gave some information on what was in the documents. The passages on TSS's and the Medical Office's positions on the use of LSD came from a memo written by James Angleton, Chief, Counterintelligence Staff on December 12, 1957 quoted in part at p. 401 of the Church Committee Report, Book I.

Footnotes

1. CIA operators and agents all had cover names by which they were supposed to be called—even in classified documents. Gottlieb was "Sherman R. Grifford." George White became "Morgan Hall."

2. One case which put White in every newspaper in the country was his 1949 arrest of blues singer Billie Holliday on an opium charge. To prove she had been set up and was not then using drugs, the singer checked into a California sanitarium that had been recommended by a friend of a friend, Dr. James Hamilton. The jury then acquitted her. Hamilton's involvement is bizarre because he had worked with George White testing truth drugs for OSS, and the two men were good friends. White may have put his own role in perspective when he told a 1970 interviewer he "enjoyed" chasing criminals. "It was a game for me," he said. "I felt quite a bit of compassion for a number of the people that I found it necessary to put in jail, particularly when you'd see the things that would happen to their families. I'd give them a chance to stay out of jail and take care of their families by giving me information, perhaps, and they would stubbornly refuse to do so. They wouldn't be a rat, as they would put it."

3. Despite this indication from White's diary that Lashbrook came to the New York

safehouse for an “LSD surprise” and despite his signature on papers authorizing the sub-project, Lashbrook flatly denied all firsthand knowledge of George White’s testing in 1977 Senate testimony. Subcommittee chairman Edward Kennedy did not press Lashbrook, nor did he refer the matter to the Justice Department for possible perjury charges.

4. This was just one of many expenditures that would drive CIA auditors wild while going over George White’s accounts. Others included \$44.04 for a telescope, liquor bills over \$1,000 “with no record as to the necessity of its use,” and \$31.75 to make an on-the-spot payment to a neighborhood lady whose car he hit. The reason stated for using government funds for the last expense: “It was important to maintain security and forestall an insurance investigation.”

5. In 1984, George Orwell wrote about government-encouraged prostitution: “Mere debauchery did not matter very much, so long as it was furtive and joyless, and only involved the women of a submerged and despised class.”

6. In 1961 MKULTRA officials started a third safehouse in New York, also under the Narcotics Bureau’s supervision. This one was handled by Charles Siragusa who, like White, was a senior agent and OSS veteran.

7. Rhodes’ testimony about this incident, which had been set up in advance with Senator Edward Kennedy’s staff, brought on the inevitable “Gang That Couldn’t Spray Straight” headline in the Washington Post. This approach turned the public perception of a deadly serious program into a kind of practical joke carried out badly by a bunch of bumblers.

8. Lyman Kirkpatrick, the longtime Inspector General who had then recently left the job to take a higher Agency post, had personally known of the safehouse operation since right after Olson’s death and had never raised any noticeable objection. He now states he was “shocked” by the unwitting testing, but that he “didn’t have the authority to follow up . . . I was trying to determine what the tolerable limits were of what I could do and still keep my job.”

9. Trying to explain why he had specifically decided not to inform the CIA Director about the Agency’s relationship with the mob, Helms stated to the Church committee, “Mr. McCone was relatively new to this organization, and I guess I must have thought to myself, well this is going to look peculiar to him . . . This was, you know not a very savory effort.” Presumably, Helms had similar reasons for not telling McCone about the unwitting drug-testing in the safehouses.

10. Helms was a master of telling different people different stories to suit his purposes. At the precise time he was raising the Soviet menace to push McCone into letting the unwitting testing continue, he wrote the Warren Commission that not only did Soviet behavioral research lag five years behind the West’s but that “there is no present evi-

dence that the Soviets have any singular, new potent, drugs . . . to force a course of action on an individual.”

11. TSS officials led by Sid Gottlieb, who were responsible for the operational use of LSD abroad, took the position that there was “no danger medically” in unwitting doses and that neither giving a medical exam or having a doctor present was necessary. The Agency’s Medical Office disagreed, saying the drug was “medically dangerous.” In 1957 Inspector General Lyman Kirkpatrick noted it would be “unrealistic” to give the Medical Office what amounted to veto power over covert operations by letting Agency doctors rule on the health hazard to subjects in the field.

12. While I was doing the research for this book, many people approached me claiming to be victims of CIA drugging plots. Although I listened carefully to all and realized that some might be authentic victims, I had no way of distinguishing between someone acting strangely and someone made to act strangely. Perhaps the most insidious aspect of this whole technique is that anyone blaming his aberrant behavior on a drug or on the CIA gets labeled a hopeless paranoid and his case is thrown into the crank file. There is no better cover than operating on the edge of madness.

One leftist professor in a Latin American university who had opposed the CIA says that he was working alone in his office one day in 1974 when a strange woman entered and jabbed his wrist with a pin stuck in a small round object. Almost immediately, he became irrational, broke glasses, and threw water in colleagues’ faces. He says his students spotted an ambulance waiting for him out front. They spirited him out the back door and took him home, where he tripped (or had psychotic episodes) for more than a week. He calls the experience a mix of “heaven and hell,” and he shudders at the thought that he might have spent the time in a hospital “with nurses and straitjackets.” Although he eventually returned to his post at the university, he states that it took him several years to recover the credibility he lost the day he “went crazy at the office.” If the CIA was involved, it had neutralized a foe.

MUSHROOMS TO COUNTERCULTURE

The MKULTRA scientists reaped little but disaster, mischief, and disappointment from their efforts to use LSD as a miracle weapon against the minds of their opponents. Nevertheless, their insatiable need to try every possibility led them to test hundreds of other substances, including all the drugs that would later be called psychedelic. These drugs were known to have great potency. They were derived from natural botanical products, and the men from MKULTRA believed from the beginning that rare organic materials might somehow have the greatest effect on the human mind. The most amazing of the psychedelics came from odd corners of the natural world. Albert Hofmann created LSD largely out of ergot, a fungus that grows on rye; mescaline is nothing more than the synthetic essence of peyote cactus. Psilocybin, the drug that Timothy Leary preferred to LSD for his Harvard experiments, was synthesized from exotic Mexican mushrooms that occupy a special place in CIA history.

When the MKULTRA team first embarked on its mind-control explorations, the “magic mushroom” was only a rumor or fable in the linear history of the Western world. On nothing more than the possibility that the legend was based on fact, the Agency’s scientists tracked the mushroom to the most remote parts of Mexico and then spent lavishly to test and develop its mind-altering properties. The results, like the LSD legacy, were as startling as they were unintended.

Among the botanicals that mankind has always turned to for intoxicants and poisons, mushrooms stand out. There is something enchantingly odd about the damp little buttons that can thrill a gourmet or kill one, depending on the subtle differences among the countless varieties. These fungi have a long record in unorthodox warfare. Two thousand years before the CIA looked to unleash powerful mushrooms in covert operations, the Roman Empress Agrippina eliminated her husband Claudius with a dish of poisonous mushrooms. According to Roman history, Agrippina wanted the emperor dead so that her son Nero could take the throne. She planned to take advantage of Claudius’ love for the delicious *Amanita caesarea* mushroom, but she had to choose carefully among its deadly look-alikes. The poison could not be “sudden and instantaneous in its operation, lest the desperate achievement should be discovered,” wrote Gordon and Valentina Wasson in their monumental and definitive work, *Mushrooms, Russia and History*. The Empress settled on the lethal *Amanita phalloides*, a fungus the Wassons considered well suited to the crime: “The victim would not give away the game by abnormal indispositions at the meal, but when the seizure came he would be so severely stricken that thereafter he would no longer be in command of his own affairs.” Agrippina knew her mushrooms, and Nero became Emperor.

CIA mind-control specialists sought to emulate and surpass that kind of sophistication, as it might apply to any conceivable drug. Their fixation on the “magic mushroom” grew indirectly out of a meeting between drug experts and Morse Allen, head of the Agency’s ARTICHOKE program, in October 1952. One expert told Allen about a shrub called piule, whose seeds had long been used as an intoxicant by Mexican Indians at religious ceremonies. Allen, who wanted to know about anything that distorted reality, immediately arranged for a young CIA scientist to take a Mexican field trip and gather samples of piule as well as other plants of “high narcotic and toxic value of interest to ARTICHOKE.”

That young scientist arrived in Mexico City early in 1953. He could not advertise the true purpose of his trip because of ARTICHOKE’s extreme secrecy, so he assumed cover as a researcher interested in finding native plants which were anesthetics. Fluent in Spanish and familiar with Mexico, he had no trouble moving around the country, meeting with leading experts on botanicals. Then he was off into the mountains south of the capital with his own field-testing equipment, gathering specimens and testing them crudely on the spot. By February, he had collected sacks full of material, including 10 pounds of piule. Before leaving Mexico to look for more samples around the Caribbean, the young scientist heard amazing tales about special mushrooms that grew only in the hot and rainy summer months. Such stories had circulated among Europeans in Mexico

since Cortez had conquered the country early in the sixteenth century. Spanish friars had reported that the Aztecs used strange mushrooms in their religious ceremonies, which these converters of the heathens described as “demonic holy communions.” Aztec priests called the special mushrooms *teonanactl*, “God’s flesh.” But Cortez’s plunderers soon lost track of the rite, as did the traders and anthropologists who followed in their wake. Only the legend survived.

Back in Washington, the young scientist’s samples went straight to the labs, and Agency officials scoured the historical record for accounts of the strange mushrooms. Morse Allen himself, though responsible in ARTICHOKE research for everything from the polygraph to hypnosis, took the trouble to go through the Indian lore. “Very early accounts of the ceremonies of some tribes of Mexican Indians show that mushrooms are used to produce hallucinations and to create intoxication in connection with religious festivals,” he wrote. “In addition, this literature shows that witch doctors or ‘diviners’ used some types of mushrooms to produce confessions or to locate stolen objects or to predict the future.” Here was a possible truth drug, Morse Allen reasoned. “Since it had been determined that no area of human knowledge is to be left unexplored in connection with the ARTICHOKE program, it was therefore regarded as essential that the peculiar qualities of the mushroom be explored....” Allen declared. “Full consideration,” he concluded, should be given to sending an Agency man back to Mexico during the summer. The CIA had begun its quest for “God’s flesh.”

Characteristically, Morse Allen was planning ahead in case the CIA’s searchers came up with a mushroom worth having in large quantities. He knew that the supply from the tropics varied by season, and, anyway, it would be impractical to go to Mexico for fungi each time an operational need popped up. So Allen decided to see if it were possible to grow the mushrooms at home, either outdoors or in hothouses. On June 24, 1953, he and an associate drove from Washington to Toughkenamon, Pennsylvania, in the heart of “the largest mushroom-growing area in the world.” At a three-hour session with the captains of the mushroom industry, Allen explained the government’s interest in poisonous and narcotic fungi. Allen reported that the meeting “was primarily designed to obtain a ‘foothold’ in the center of the mushroom-growing industry where, if requirements for mushroom growing were demanded, it would be done by professionals in the trade.” The mushroom executives were quite reluctant to grow toxic products because they knew that any accidental publicity would scare their customers. In the end, however, their patriotism won out, and they agreed to grow any kind of fungus the government desired. Allen considered the trip a great success.

As useful as this commitment might be, an element of chance remained as long as the CIA had to depend on the natural process. But if the Agency could find synthetic equivalents for the active ingredients, it could manufacture rather than grow its own supply. Toward this goal of bypassing nature, Morse Allen had little choice but to turn for help to the man who the following year would wrest most of the ARTICHOKE functions from his grasp: Sid Gottlieb. Gottlieb, himself a Ph.D. in chemistry, had scientists working for him who knew what to do on the level of test tubes and beakers. Allen ran ARTI-

CHOKED out of the Office of Security, which was not equipped for work on the frontiers of science.

Gottlieb and his colleagues moved quickly into the mysteries of the Mexican hallucinogens. They went to work on the chemical structures of the piule and other plants that Morse Allen's emissary brought back from his field trip, but they neglected to report their findings to the bureaucratically outflanked Allen. Gottlieb and the MKULTRA crew soon got caught up in the search for the magic mushroom. While TSS had its own limited laboratory facilities, it depended on secret contractors for most research and development. Working with an associate, a cadaverously thin chemistry Ph.D. named Henry Bortner, Gottlieb passed the tropical plants to a string of corporate and academic researchers. One of them, Dr. James Moore, a 29-year-old chemist at Parke, Davis & Company in Detroit, was destined to be the first man in the CIA camp to taste the magic mushroom. Moore's career was typical of the specialists in the CIA's vast network of private contractors. His path to the mushroom led through several jobs and offbeat assignments, always with Agency funds and direction behind him. A precise, meticulous man of scientific habits, Moore was hardly the sort one would expect to find chasing psychedelic drugs. Such pursuits began for him in March 1953, when he had returned to his lab at Parke, Davis after a year of postdoctoral research at the University of Basel. His supervisor had called him in with an intriguing proposal: How would he like to work inside the company on a CIA contract? "Those were not particularly prosperous times, and the company was glad to get someone else to pay my salary [\$8,000 a year]," notes Moore 25 years later. "If I had thought I was participating in a scheme run by a small band of mad individuals, I would have demurred."

He accepted the job.

The Agency contracted with Parke, Davis, as it did with numerous other drug companies, universities, and government agencies to develop behavioral products and poisons from botanicals. CIA-funded chemists extracted deadly substances like the arrowpoison curare from natural products, while others worked on ways to deliver these poisons most effectively, like the "nondiscernible microbioinoculator" (or dart gun) that the Army Chemical Corps invented. CIA-connected botanists collected—and then chemists analyzed—botanicals from all over the tropics: a leaf that killed cattle, several plants deadly to fish, another leaf that caused hair to fall out, sap that caused temporary blindness, and a host of other natural products that could alter moods, dull or stimulate nerves, or generally disorient people. Among the plants Moore investigated was Jamaica dogwood, a plant used by Caribbean natives to stun fish so they could be easily captured for food. This work resulted in the isolation of several new substances, one of which Moore named "lisetin," in honor of his daughter.

Moore had no trouble adjusting to the secrecy demanded by his CIA sponsors, having worked on the Manhattan Project as a graduate student. He dealt only with his own case officer, Henry Bortner, and two or three other CIA men in TSS. Once Moore completed his chemical work on a particular substance, he turned the results over to

Bortner and apparently never learned of the follow-up. Moore worked in his own little isolated compartment, and he soon recognized that the Agency preferred contractors who did not ask questions about what was going on in the next box.

In 1955 Moore left private industry for academia, moving from Detroit to the relatively placid setting of the University of Delaware in Newark. The school made him an assistant professor, and he moved into a lab in the Georgian red-brick building that housed the chemistry department. Along with his family, Moore brought his CIA contract—then worth \$16,000 a year, of which he received \$650 per month, with the rest going to pay research assistants and overhead. Although the Agency allowed a few top university officials to be briefed on his secret connection, Moore appeared to his colleagues and students to be a normal professor who had a healthy research grant from the Geschickter Fund for Medical Research in Washington.

In the world of natural products—particularly mushrooms—the CIA soon made Moore a full-service agent. With some help from his CIA friends, he made contact with the leading lights in mycology (the study of mushrooms), attended professional meetings, and arranged for others to send him samples. From the CIA's point of view, he could not have had better cover. As Sid Gottlieb wrote, Moore “maintains the fiction that the botanical specimens he collects are for his own use since his field interest is natural-product chemistry.” Under this pretext, Moore had a perfect excuse to make and purchase for the CIA chemicals that the Agency did not want traced. Over the years, Moore billed the Agency for hundreds of purchases, including 50 cents for an unidentified pamphlet, \$433.13 for a particular shipment of mescaline, \$1147.60 for a large quantity of mushrooms, and \$12,000 for a quarter-ton of fluothane, an inhalation anesthetic. He shipped his purchases on as Bortner directed.

Moore eventually became a kind of short-order cook for what CIA documents call “offensive CW, BW” weapons at “very low cost and in a few days’ time . . .” If there were an operational need, Bortner had only to call in the order, and Moore would whip up a batch of a “reputed depilatory” or hallucinogens like DMT or the incredibly potent BZ. On one occasion in 1963, Moore prepared a small dose of a very lethal carbamate poison—the same substance that OSS used two decades earlier to try to kill Adolf Hitler. Moore charged the Agency his regular consulting fee, \$100, for this service.

“Did I ever consider what would have happened if this stuff were given to unwitting people?” Moore asks, reflecting on his CIA days. “No. Particularly no. Had I been given that information, I think I would have been prepared to accept that. If I had been knee-jerk about testing on unwitting subjects, I wouldn’t have been the type of person they would have used. There was nothing that I did that struck me as being so sinister and deadly.... It was all investigative.”

James Moore was only one of many CIA specialists on the lookout for the magic mushroom. For three years after Morse Allen’s man returned from Mexico with his tales of wonder, Moore and the others in the Agency’s network pushed their lines of inquiry

among contacts and travelers into Mexican villages so remote that Spanish had barely penetrated. Yet they found no magic mushrooms. Given their efforts, it was ironic that the man who beat them to “God’s flesh” was neither a spy nor a scientist, but a banker. It was R. Gordon Wasson, vice-president of J. P. Morgan & Company, amateur mycologist, and co-author with his wife Valentina of *Mushrooms, Russia and History*. Nearly 30 years earlier, Wasson and his Russian-born wife had become fascinated by the different ways that societies deal with the mushroom, and they followed their lifelong obsession with these fungi, in all their glory, all over the globe.[1]

They found whole nationalities, such as the Russians and the Catalans, were mycophiles, while others like the Spaniards and the Anglo-Saxons were not. They learned that in ancient Greece and Rome there was a belief that certain kinds of mushrooms were brought into being by lightning bolts. They discovered that widely scattered peoples, including desert Arabs, Siberians, Chinese, and Maoris of New Zealand, have shared the idea that mushrooms have supernatural connections. Their book appeared in limited edition, selling new in 1957 for \$125. It contains facts and legends, lovingly told, as well as beautiful photographs of nearly every known species of mushroom.

Inevitably, the Wassons heard tell of “God’s flesh,” and in 1953 they started spending their vacations pursuing it. They took their first unsuccessful trek to Mexico about the time James Moore got connected to the CIA and Morse Allen met with the Pennsylvania mushroom executives. They had no luck until their third expedition, when Gordon Wasson and his traveling companion, Allan Richardson, found their holy grail high in the mountains above Oaxaca. On June 29, 1955, they entered the town hall in a village called Huautla de Jimenez. There, they found a young Indian about 35, sitting by a large table in an upstairs room. Unlike most people in the village, he spoke Spanish. “He had a friendly manner,” Wasson later wrote, “and I took a chance. Leaning over the table, I asked him earnestly and in a low voice if I could speak to him in confidence. Instantly curious, he encouraged me. ‘Will you,’ I went on, ‘help me learn the secrets of the divine mushroom?’ and I used the Indian name nti sheeto, correctly pronouncing it with glottal stop and tonal differentiation of the syllables. When [he] recovered from his surprise he said warmly that nothing could be easier.”

Shortly thereafter, the Indian led Wasson and Richardson down into a deep ravine where mushrooms were growing in abundance. The white men snapped picture after picture of the fungi and picked a cardboard box-full. Then, in the heavy humid heat of the afternoon, the Indian led them up the mountain to a woman who performed the ancient mushroom rite. Her name was Maria Sabina. She was not only a curandera, or shaman, of “the highest quality,” wrote Wasson, but a “señora sin mancha, a woman without stain.” Wasson described her as middle-aged and short, “with a spirituality in her expression that struck us at once. She had a presence. We showed our mushrooms to the woman and her daughter. They cried out in rapture over the firmness, the fresh beauty and abundance of our young specimens. Through the interpreter we asked if they would serve us that night. They said yes.”

That night, Wasson, Richardson, and about 20 Indians gathered in one of the village's adobe houses. The natives wore their best clothes and were friendly to the white strangers. The host provided chocolate drinks, which evoked for Wasson accounts of similar beverages being served early Spanish writers. Maria Sabina sat on a mat before a simple altar table that was adorned with the images of the Child Jesus and the Baptism in Jordan. After cleaning the mushrooms, she handed them out to all the adults present, keeping 26 for herself and giving Wasson and Richardson 12 each.

Maria Sabina put out the last candle about midnight, and she chanted haunting, tightly measured melodies. The Indian celebrants responded with deep feeling. Both Wasson and Richardson began to experience intense hallucinations that did not diminish until about 4:00 A.M. "We were never more wide awake, and the visions came whether our eyes were open or closed," Wasson wrote:

They emerged from the center of the field of our vision, opening up as they came, now rushing, now slowly at the pace that our will chose. They were vivid in color, always harmonious. They began with art motifs, such as might decorate carpets or textiles or wallpaper or the drawing board of an architect. Then they evolved into palaces with courts, arcades, gardens—resplendent palaces with semiprecious stones.... Could the miraculous mobility that I was now enjoying be the explanation for the flying witches that played some important part in the folklore and fairy tales of northern Europe? These reflections passed through my mind at the very time that I was seeing the vision, for the effect of the mushrooms is to bring about a fission of the spirit, a split in the person, a kind of schizophrenia, with the rational side continuing to reason and to observe the sensations that the other side is enjoying. The mind is attached by an elastic cord to the vagrant senses.

Thus Gordon Wasson described the first known mushroom trip by "outsiders" in recorded history. The CIA's men missed the event, but they quickly learned of it, even though Wasson's visit was a private noninstitutional one to a place where material civilization had not reached. Such swiftness was assured by the breadth of the Agency's informant network, which included formal liaison arrangements with agencies like the Agriculture Department and the FDA and informal contacts all over the world. A botanist in Mexico City sent the report that reached both CIA headquarters and then James Moore. In the best bureaucratic form, the CIA description of Wasson's visions stated sparsely that the New York banker thought he saw "a multitude of architectural forms." Still, "God's flesh" had been located, and the MKULTRA leaders snatched up information that Wasson planned to return the following summer and bring back some mushrooms.

During the intervening winter, James Moore wrote Wasson—"out of the blue," as Wasson recalls—and expressed a desire to look into the chemical properties of Mexican fungi. Moore eventually suggested that he would like to accompany Wasson's party, and, to sweeten the proposition, he mentioned that he knew a foundation that might be willing to help underwrite the expedition. Sure enough, the CIA's conduit, the Geschickter Fund, made a \$2,000 grant. Inside the MKULTRA program, the quest for the divine mush-

room became Subproject 58.

Joining Moore and Wasson on the 1956 trip were the world-renowned French mycologist Roger Heim and a colleague from the Sorbonne. The party made the final leg of the trip, one at a time, in a tiny Cessna, but when it was Moore's turn, the load proved too much for the plane. The pilot suddenly took a dramatic right angle turn through a narrow canyon and made an unscheduled stop on the side of a hill. Immediately on landing, an Indian girl ran out and slid blocks under the wheels, so the plane would not roll back into a ravine. The pilot decided to lighten the load by leaving Moore among the local Indians, who spoke neither English nor Spanish. Later in the day, the plane returned and picked up the shaken Moore.

Finally in Huautla, sleeping on a dirt floor and eating local food, everyone revelled in the primitiveness of the adventure except Moore, who suffered. In addition to diarrhea, he recalls, "I had a terribly bad cold, we damned near starved to death, and I itched all over." Beyond his physical woes, Moore became more and more alienated from the others, who got on famously. Moore was a "complainer," according to Wasson. "He had no empathy for what was going on," recalls Wasson. "He was like a landlubber at sea. He got sick to his stomach and hated it all." Moore states, "Our relationship deteriorated during the course of the trip."

Wasson returned to the same Maria Sabina who had led him to the high ground the year before. Again the ritual started well after dark and, for everyone but Moore, it was an enchanted evening. Sings Wasson: "I had the most superb feeling—a feeling of ecstasy. You're raised to a height where you have not been in everyday life—not ever." Moore, on the other hand, never left the lowlands. His description: "There was all this chanting in the dialect. Then they passed the mushrooms around, and we chewed them up. I did feel the hallucinogenic effect, although 'disoriented' would be a better word to describe my reaction."

Soon thereafter, Moore returned to Delaware with a bag of mushrooms—just in time to take his pregnant wife to the hospital for delivery. After dropping her off with the obstetrician, he continued down the hall to another doctor about his digestion. Already a thin man, Moore had lost 15 pounds. Over the next week, he slowly nursed himself back to health. He reported in to Bortner and started preliminary work in his lab to isolate the active ingredient in the mushrooms. Bortner urged him on; the men from MKULTRA were excited at the prospect that they might be able to create "a completely new chemical agent." They wanted their own private supply of "God's flesh." Sid Gottlieb wrote that if Moore succeeded, it was "quite possible" that the new drugs could "remain an Agency secret."

Gottlieb's dream of a CIA monopoly on the divine mushroom vanished quickly under the influence of unwanted competitors, and indeed, the Agency soon faced a control problem of burgeoning proportions. While Moore toiled in his lab, Roger Heim in Paris unexpectedly pulled off the remarkable feat of growing the mushrooms in artificial

culture from spore prints he had made in Mexico. Heim then sent samples to none other than Albert Hofmann, the discoverer of LSD, who quickly isolated and chemically reproduced the active chemical ingredient. He named it psilocybin.

The dignified Swiss chemist had beaten out the CIA, [2] and the men from MKULTRA found themselves trying to obtain formulas and supplies from overseas. Instead of locking up the world's supply of the drug in a safe somewhere, they had to keep track of disbursements from Sandoz, as they were doing with LSD. Defeated by the old master, Moore laid his own work aside and sent away to Sandoz for a supply of psilocybin.

This lapse in control still did not quash the hopes of Agency officials that the mushroom might become a powerful weapon in covert operations. Agency scientists rushed it into the experimental stage. Within three summers of the first trip with James Moore, the CIA's queasy professor from America, the mushroom had journeyed through laboratories on two continents, and its chemical essence had worked its way back to Agency conduits and a contractor who would test it. In Kentucky, Dr. Harris Isbell ordered psilocybin injected into nine black inmates at the narcotics prison. His staff laid the subjects out on beds as the drug took hold and measured physical symptoms every hour: blood pressure, knee-jerk reflexes, rectal temperature, precise diameter of eye pupils, and so on. In addition, they recorded the inmates' various subjective feelings:

After 30 minutes, anxiety became quite definite and was expressed as consisting of fear that something evil was going to happen, fear of insanity, or of death.... At times patients had the sensation that they could see the blood and bones in their own body or in that of another person. They reported many fantasies or dreamlike states in which they seemed to be elsewhere. Fantastic experiences, such as trips to the moon or living in gorgeous castles were occasionally reported.... Two of the 9 patients . . . felt their experiences were caused by the experimenters controlling their minds....

Experimental data piled up, with operational testing to follow.

But the magic mushroom never became a good spy weapon. It made people behave strangely but no one could predict where their trips would take them. Agency officials craved certainty.

On the other hand, Gordon Wasson found revelation. After a lifetime of exploring and adoring mushrooms, he had discovered the greatest wonder of all in that remote Indian village. His experience inspired him to write an account of his journey for the "Great Adventures" series in Life magazine. The story, spread across 17 pages of text and color photographs, was called "Seeking the Magic Mushroom: A New York banker goes to Mexico's mountains to participate in the age-old rituals of Indians who chew strange growths that produce visions." In 1957, before the Russian sputnik shook America later that year, Life introduced its millions of readers to the mysteries of hallucinogens, with a tone of glowing but dignified respect. Wasson wrote movingly of his long search for mushroom lore, and he became positively rhapsodic in reflecting on his Mexican

“trip.”

In man's evolutionary past, as he groped his way out from his lowly past, there must have come a moment in time when he discovered the secret of the hallucinatory mushrooms. Their effect on him, as I see it, could only have been profound, a detonator to new ideas. For the mushrooms revealed to him worlds beyond the horizons known to him, in space and time, even worlds on a different plane of being, a heaven and perhaps a hell. For the credulous, primitive mind, the mushrooms must have reinforced mightily the idea of the miraculous. Many emotions are shared by men with the animal kingdom, but awe and reverence and the fear of God are peculiar to men. When we bear in mind the beatific sense of awe and ecstasy and caritas engendered by the divine mushrooms, one is emboldened to the point of asking whether they may not have planted in primitive man the very idea of God.

The article caused a sensation in the United States, where people had already been awakened to ideas like these by Aldous Huxley's *The Doors of Perception*. It lured waves of respectable adults—precursors of later hippie travelers—to Mexico in search of their own curanderas. (Wasson came to have mixed feelings about the response to his story, after several tiny Mexican villages were all but trampled by American tourists on the prowl for divinity.) One person whose curiosity was stimulated by the article was a young psychology professor named Timothy Leary. In 1959, in Mexico on vacation, he ate his first mushrooms. He recalls he “had no idea it was going to change my life.” Leary had just been promised tenure at Harvard, but his life of conventional prestige lost appeal for him within five hours of swallowing the mushroom: “The revelation had come. The veil had been pulled back.... The prophetic call. The works. God had spoken.”

Having responded to a *Life* article about an expedition that was partially funded by the CIA, Leary returned to a Harvard campus where students and professors had for years served as subjects for CIA- and military-funded LSD experiments. His career as a drug prophet lay before him. Soon he would be quoting in his own *Kamasutra* from the CIA's contractor Harold Abramson and others, brought together for scholarly drug conferences by the sometime Agency conduit, the Macy Foundation.

With LSD, as with mushrooms, the men from MKULTRA remained oblivious, for the most part, to the rebellious effect of the drug culture in the United States. “I don't think we were paying any attention to it,” recalls a TSS official. The CIA's scientists looked at drugs from a different perspective and went on trying to fashion their spy arsenal. Through the entire 1960s and into the 1970s, the Agency would scour Latin America for poisonous and narcotic plants.[3] Earlier, TSS officials and contractors actually kept spreading the magic touch of drugs by forever pressing new university researchers into the field. Boston Psychopathic's Max Rinkel stirred up the interest of Rochester's Harold Hodge and told him how to get a grant from the Agency conduit, the Geschickter Fund. Hodge's group found a way to put a radioactive marker into LSD, and the MKULTRA crew made sure that the specially treated substance found its way to still more scientists. When a contractor like Harold Abramson spoke highly of the drug at a new conference or semi-

nar, tens or hundreds of scientists, health professionals, and subjects—usually students—would wind up trying LSD.

One day in 1954, Ralph Blum, a senior at Harvard on his way to a career as a successful author, heard from a friend that doctors at Boston Psychopathic would pay \$25 to anyone willing to spend a day as a happy schizophrenic. Blum could not resist. He applied, passed the screening process, took a whole battery of Wechsler psychological tests, and was told to report back on a given morning. That day, he was shown into a room with five other Harvard students. Project director Bob Hyde joined them and struck Blum as a reassuring father figure. Someone brought in a tray with six little glasses full of water and LSD. The students drank up. For Blum, the drug did not take hold for about an hour and a half—somewhat longer than the average. While Hyde was in the process of interviewing him, Blum felt his mind shift gears. “I looked at the clock on the wall and thought how well behaved it was. It didn’t pay attention to itself. It just stayed on the wall and told time.” Blum felt that he was looking at everything around him from a new perspective. “It was a very subtle thing,” he says. “My ego filter had been pretty much removed. I turned into a very accessible state—accessible to myself. I knew when someone was lying to me, and the richness of the experience was such that I didn’t want to suffer fools gladly.” Twenty-four years later, Blum concludes: “It was undeniably a very important experience for me. It made a difference in my life. It began to move the log jam of my old consciousness. You can’t do it with just one blast. It was the beginning of realizing it was safe to love again. Although I wouldn’t use them until much later, it gave me a new set of optics. It let me know there was something downstream.”[4]

Many student subjects like Blum thought LSD transformed the quality of their lives. Others had no positive feelings, and some would later use the negative memories of their trips to invalidate the whole drug culture and stoned thinking process of the 1960s. In a university city like Boston where both the CIA and the Army were carrying on large testing programs at hospitals connected to Harvard, volunteering for an LSD trip became quite popular in academic circles. Similar reactions, although probably not as pronounced, occurred in other intellectual centers. The intelligence agencies turned to America’s finest universities and hospitals to try LSD, which meant that the cream of the country’s students and graduate assistants became the test subjects.

In 1969 the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs published a fascinating little study designed to curb illegal LSD use. The authors wrote that the drug’s “early use was among small groups of intellectuals at large Eastern and West Coast universities. It spread to undergraduate students, then to other campuses. Most often, users have been introduced to the drug by persons of higher status. Teachers have influenced students; upperclassmen have influenced lower-classmen.” Calling this a “trickle-down phenomenon,” the authors seem to have correctly analyzed how LSD got around the country. They left out only one vital element, which they had no way of knowing: That somebody had to influence the teachers and that up there at the top of the LSD distribution system could be found the men of MKULTRA.

Harold Abramson apparently got a great kick out of getting his learned friends high on LSD. He first turned on Frank Fremont-Smith, head of the Macy Foundation which passed CIA money to Abramson. In this cozy little world where everyone knew everybody, Fremont-Smith organized the conferences that spread the word about LSD to the academic hinterlands. Abramson also gave Gregory Bateson, Margaret Mead's former husband, his first LSD. In 1959 Bateson, in turn, helped arrange for a beat poet friend of his named Allen Ginsberg to take the drug at a research program located off the Stanford campus. No stranger to the hallucinogenic effects of peyote, Ginsberg reacted badly to what he describes as "the closed little doctor's room full of instruments," where he took the drug. Although he was allowed to listen to records of his choice (he chose a Gertrude Stein reading, a Tibetan mandala, and Wagner), Ginsberg felt he "was being connected to Big Brother's brain." He says that the experience resulted in "a slight paranoia that hung on all my acid experiences through the mid-1960s until I learned from meditation how to disperse that."

Anthropologist and philosopher Gregory Bateson then worked at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Palo Alto. From 1959 on, Dr. Leo Hollister was testing LSD at that same hospital. Hollister says he entered the hallucinogenic field reluctantly because of the "unscientific" work of the early LSD researchers. He refers specifically to most of the people who attended Macy conferences. Thus, hoping to improve on CIA and military-funded work, Hollister tried drugs out on student volunteers, including a certain Ken Kesey, in 1960. Kesey said he was a jock who had only been drunk once before, but on three successive Tuesdays, he tried different psychedelics. "Six weeks later I'd bought my first ounce of grass," Kesey later wrote, adding, "Six months later I had a job at that hospital as a psychiatric aide." Out of that experience, using drugs while he wrote, Kesey turned out *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. He went on to become the counterculture's second most famous LSD visionary, spreading the creed throughout the land, as Tom Wolfe would chronicle in *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*.

CIA officials never meant that the likes of Leary, Kesey, and Ginsberg should be turned on. Yet these men were, and they, along with many of the lesser-known experimental subjects, like Harvard's Ralph Blum, created the climate whereby LSD escaped the government's control and became available by the early sixties on the black market. No one at the Agency apparently foresaw that young Americans would voluntarily take the drug—whether for consciousness expansion or recreational purposes. The MKULTRA experts were mainly on a control trip, and they proved incapable of gaining insight from their own LSD experiences of how others less fixated on making people do their bidding would react to the drug.

It would be an exaggeration to put all the blame on—or give all the credit to—the CIA for the spread of LSD. One cannot forget the nature of the times, the Vietnam War, the breakdown in authority, and the wide availability of other drugs, especially marijuana. But the fact remains that LSD was one of the catalysts of the traumatic upheavals of the 1960s. No one could enter the world of psychedelics without first passing, unawares, through doors opened by the Agency. It would become a supreme irony that the CIA's

enormous search for weapons among drugs—fueled by the hope that spies could, like Dr. Frankenstein, control life with genius and machines—would wind up helping to create the wandering, uncontrollable minds of the counterculture.

Notes

R. Gordon and Valentina Wasson's mammoth work, *Mushrooms, Russia and History*, (New York: Pantheon, 1957), was the source for the account of the Empress Agrippina's murderous use of mushrooms. Wasson told the story of his various journeys to Mexico in a series of interviews and in a May 27, 1957 *Life* magazine article, "Seeking the Magic Mushroom."

Morse Allen learned of piule in a sequence described in document #A/B,I,33/7, 14 November 1952, Subject: Piule. The sending of the young CIA scientist to Mexico was outlined in #A/B, I,33/3,5 December 1952. Morse Allen commented on mushroom history and covert possibilities in #A/B, I, 34/4, 26 June 1953, Subject: Mushrooms—Narcotic and Poisonous Varieties. His trip to the American mushroom-growing capital was described in Document Number illegible], 25 June 1953, Subject: Trip to Toughkenamon, Pennsylvania. The failure of TSS to tell Morse Allen about the results of the botanical lab work is outlined in #A/B, I, 39/5, 10 August 1954 Subject: Reports; Request for from TSS [deleted].

James Moore told much about himself in a long interview and in an exchange of correspondence. MKULTRA Subproject 51 dealt with Moore's consulting relationship with the Agency and Subproject 52 with his ties as a procurer of chemicals. See especially Document 51-46, 8 April 1963, Subject: MKULTRA Subproject 51; 51-24, 27 August 1956, Subject: MKULTRA Subproject 51-B; 52-94, 20 February 1963, Subject: (BB) Chemical and Physical Manipulants; 52-19, 20 December 1962; 52-17, 1 March 1963; 52-23, 6 December 1962; 52-64, 24 August 1959.

The CIA's arrangements with the Department of Agriculture are detailed in #A/B, I, 34/4, 26 June, 1953, Subject: Mushrooms—Narcotic and Poisonous varieties and Document [number illegible], 13 April 1953, Subject: Interview with Cleared Contacts.

Dr. Harris Isbell's work with psilocybin is detailed in Isbell document # 155, "Comparison of the Reaction Induced by Psilocybin and LSD-25 in Man."

Information on the counterculture and its interface with CIA drug-testing came from interviews with Timothy Leary, Allen Ginsburg, Humphrey Osmond, John Lilly, Sidney Cohen, Ralph Blum, Herbert Kelman, Leo Hollister, Herbert DeShon, and numerous others. Ken Kesey described his first trip in *Garage Sale* (New York: Viking Press, 1973). Timothy Leary's *Kamasutra* was actually a book hand-produced in four copies and called *Psychedelic Theory: Working Papers* from the Harvard IFIF Psychedelic Research Project, 1960-1963. Susan Berns Wolf Rothchild kindly made her copy available. The material about Harold Abramson's turning on Frank Fremont-Smith and Gregory Bateson

came from the proceedings of a conference on LSD sponsored by the Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation on April 22, 23, and 24, 1959, pp. 8-22.

Footnotes

1. On their honeymoon, in the summer of 1927, the Wassons were strolling along a mountain path when suddenly Valentina abandoned Gordon's side. "She had spied wild mushrooms in the forest," wrote Wasson, "and racing over the carpet of dried leaves in the woods, she knelt in poses of adoration before one cluster and then another of these growths. In ecstasy she called each kind by an endearing Russian name. Like all good Anglo-Saxons, I knew nothing about the fungal world and felt the less I knew about these putrid, treacherous excrescences the better. For her they were things of grace infinitely inviting to the perceptive mind." In spite of his protests, Valentina gathered up the mushrooms and brought them back to the lodge where she cooked them for dinner. She ate them all—alone. Wasson wanted no part of the fungi. While she mocked his horror, he predicted in the face of her laughter he would wake up a widower the next morning. When Valentina survived, the couple decided to find an explanation for "the strange cultural cleavage" that had caused them to react so differently to mushrooms. From then on, they were hooked, and the world became the richer.

2. Within two years, Albert Hofmann would scoop the CIA once again, with some help from Gordon Wasson. In 1960 Hofmann broke down and chemically recreated the active ingredient in hallucinatory ololiuqui seeds sent him by Wasson before the Agency's contractor, William Boyd Cook of Montana State University, could do the job. Hofmann's and Wasson's professional relationship soon grew into friendship, and in 1962 they traveled together on horseback to Huautla de Jimenez to visit Maria Sabina. Hofmann presented the curandera with some genuine Sandoz psilocybin. Wasson recalls: "Of course, Albert Hofmann is so conservative he always gives too little a dose, and it didn't have any effect." The crestfallen Hofmann believed he had duplicated "God's flesh," and he doubled the dose. Then Maria Sabina had her customary visions, and she reported, according to Wasson, the drug was the "same" as the mushroom. States Wasson, whose prejudice for real mushrooms over chemicals is unmistakable, "I don't think she said it with very much enthusiasm."

3. See Chapter 12.

4. Lincoln Clark, a psychiatrist who tested LSD for the Army at Massachusetts General Hospital, reflects a fairly common view among LSD researchers when he belittles drug-induced thinking of the sort described by Blum. "Everybody who takes LSD has an incredible experience that you can look at as having positive characteristics. I view it as pseudo-insight. This is part of the usual response of intellectually pretentious people." On the other hand, psychiatrist Sidney Cohen, who has written an important book on LSD, noted that to experience a visionary trip, "the devotee must have faith in, or at least be open to the possibility of the 'other state.' . . . He must 'let go,' not offer too much resistance to losing his personal identity. The ability to surrender oneself is probably

the most important operation of all.”

BRAINWASHING

In September 1950, the Miami News published an article by Edward Hunter titled “ ‘Brain-Washing’ Tactics Force Chinese into Ranks of Communist Party.” It was the first printed use in any language of the term “brainwashing,” which quickly became a stock phrase in Cold War headlines. Hunter, a CIA propaganda operator who worked under cover as a journalist, turned out a steady stream of books and articles on the subject. He made up his coined word from the Chinese *hsi-nao*—“to cleanse the mind”—which had no political meaning in Chinese.

American public opinion reacted strongly to Hunter’s ideas, no doubt because of the hostility that prevailed toward communist foes, whose ways were perceived as mysterious and alien. Most Americans knew something about the famous trial of the Hungarian Josef Cardinal Mindszenty, at which the Cardinal appeared zombie-like, as though drugged or hypnotized. Other defendants at Soviet “show trials” had displayed similar symptoms as they recited unbelievable confessions in dull, cliché-ridden monotonous. Americans were familiar with the idea that the communists had ways to control hapless people, and Hunter’s new word helped pull together the unsettling evidence into one sharp fear. The brainwashing controversy intensified during the heavy 1952 fighting in Korea, when the Chinese government launched a propaganda offensive that featured recorded statements by captured U.S. pilots, who “confessed” to a variety of war crimes including the use of germ warfare.

The official American position on prisoner confessions was that they were false and forced. As expressed in an Air Force Headquarters document, “Confessions can be of truthful details.... For purposes of this section, ‘confessions’ are considered as being the forced admission to a lie.” But if the military had understandable reasons to gloss over the truth or falsity of the confessions, this still did not address the fact that confessions had been made at all. Nor did it lay to rest the fears of those like Edward Hunter who saw the confessions as proof that the communists now had techniques “to put a man’s mind into a fog so that he will mistake what is true for what is untrue, what is right for what is wrong, and come to believe what did not happen actually had happened, until he ultimately becomes a robot for the Communist manipulator.”

By the end of the Korean War, 70 percent of the 7,190 U.S. prisoners held in China had either made confessions or signed petitions calling for an end to the American war effort in Asia. Fifteen percent collaborated fully with the Chinese, and only 5 percent steadfastly resisted. The American performance contrasted poorly with that of the British, Australian, Turkish, and other United Nations prisoners—among whom collaboration was rare, even though studies showed they were treated about as badly as the Americans. Worse, an alarming number of the prisoners stuck by their confessions after returning to the United States. They did not, as expected, recant as soon as they stepped on U.S. soil. Puzzled and dismayed by this wholesale collapse of morale among the POWs,

American opinion leaders settled in on Edward Hunter's explanation: The Chinese had somehow brainwashed our boys.

But how? At the height of the brainwashing furor, conservative spokesmen often seized upon the very mystery of it all to give a religious cast to the political debate. All communists have been, by definition, brainwashed through satanic forces, they argued—thereby making the enemy seem like robots completely devoid of ordinary human feelings and motivation. Liberals favored a more scientific view of the problem. Given the incontrovertible evidence that the Russians and the Chinese could, in a very short time and often under difficult circumstances, alter the basic belief and behavior patterns of both domestic and foreign captives, liberals argued that there must be a technique involved that would yield its secrets under objective investigation.

CIA Director Allen Dulles favored the scientific approach, although he naturally encouraged his propaganda experts to exploit the more emotional interpretations of brainwashing. Dulles and the heads of the other American security agencies became almost frantic in their efforts to find out more about the Soviet and Chinese successes in mind control. Under pressure for answers, Dulles turned to Dr. Harold Wolff, a world-famous neurologist with whom he had developed an intensely personal relationship. Wolff was then treating Dulles' own son for brain damage suffered from a Korean War head wound. Together they shared the trauma of the younger Dulles' fits and mental lapses. Wolff, a skinny little doctor with an overpowering personality, became fast friends with the tall, patrician CIA Director. Dulles may have seen brainwashing as an induced form of brain damage or mental illness. In any case, in late 1953, he asked Wolff to conduct an official study of communist brainwashing techniques for the CIA. Wolff, who had become fascinated by the Director's tales of the clandestine world, eagerly accepted.

Harold Wolff was known primarily as an expert on migraine headaches and pain, but he had served on enough military and intelligence advisory panels that he knew how to pick up Dulles' mandate and expand on it. He formed a working partnership with Lawrence Hinkle, his colleague at Cornell University Medical College in New York City. Hinkle handled the administrative part of the study and shared in the substance. Before going ahead, the two doctors made sure they had the approval of Cornell's president, Deane W. Malott and other high university officials who checked with their contacts in Washington to make sure the project did indeed have the great importance that Allen Dulles stated. Hinkle recalls a key White House aide urging Cornell to cooperate. The university administration agreed, and soon Wolff and Hinkle were poring over the Agency's classified files on brainwashing. CIA officials also helped arrange interviews with former communist interrogators and prisoners alike. "It was done with great secrecy," recalls Hinkle. "We went through a great deal of hoop-de-do and signed secrecy agreements, which everyone took very seriously."

The team of Wolff and Hinkle became the chief brainwashing studiers for the U.S. government, although the Air Force and Army ran parallel programs.^[1] Their secret report to Allen Dulles, later published in a declassified version, was considered the de-

finitive U.S. Government work on the subject. In fact, if allowances are made for the Cold War rhetoric of the fifties, the Wolff-Hinkle report still remains one of the better accounts of the massive political re-education programs in China and the Soviet Union. It stated flatly that neither the Soviets nor the Chinese had any magical weapons—no drugs, exotic mental ray-guns, or other fanciful machines. Instead, the report pictured communist interrogation methods resting on skillful, if brutal, application of police methods. Its portrait of the Soviet system anticipates, in dry and scholarly form, the work of novelist Alexander Solzhenitzyn in *The Gulag Archipelago*. Hinkle and Wolff showed that the Soviet technique rested on the cumulative weight of intense psychological pressure and human weakness, and this thesis alone earned the two Cornell doctors the enmity of the more right-wing CIA officials such as Edward Hunter. Several of his former acquaintances remember that Hunter was fond of saying that the Soviets brainwashed people the way Pavlov had conditioned dogs.

In spite of some dissenters like Hunter, the Wolff-Hinkle model became, with later refinements, the best available description of extreme forms of political indoctrination. According to the general consensus, the Soviets started a new prisoner off by putting him in solitary confinement. A rotating corps of guards watched him constantly, humiliating and demeaning him at every opportunity and making it clear he was totally cut off from all outside support. The guards ordered him to stand for long periods, let him sit, told him exactly the position he could take to lie down, and woke him if he moved in the slightest while sleeping. They banned all outside stimuli—books, conversation, or news of the world.

After four to six weeks of this mind-deadening routine, the prisoner usually found the stress unbearable and broke down. “He weeps, he mutters, and prays aloud in his cell,” wrote Hinkle and Wolff. When the prisoner reached this stage, the interrogation began. Night after night, the guards brought him into a special room to face the interrogator. Far from confronting his captive with specific misdeeds, the interrogator told him that he knew his own crimes—all too well. In the most harrowing Kafkaesque way, the prisoner tried to prove his innocence to he knew not what. Together the interrogator and prisoner reviewed the prisoner’s life in detail. The interrogator seized on any inconsistency—no matter how minute—as further evidence of guilt, and he laughed at the prisoner’s efforts to justify himself.

But at least the prisoner was getting a response of some sort. The long weeks of isolation and uncertainty had made him grateful for human contact even grateful that his case was moving toward resolution. True, it moved only as fast as he was willing to incriminate himself, but . . . Gradually, he came to see that he and his interrogator were working toward the same goal of wrapping up his case. In tandem, they ransacked his soul. The interrogator would periodically let up the pressure. He offered a cigarette, had a friendly chat, explained he had a job to do—making it all the more disappointing the next time he had to tell the prisoner that his confession was unsatisfactory.

As the charges against him began to take shape, the prisoner realized that he

could end his ordeal only with a full confession. Otherwise the grueling sessions would go on forever. "The regimen of pressure has created an overall discomfort which is well nigh intolerable," wrote Hinkle and Wolff. "The prisoner invariably feels that 'something must be done to end this.' He must find a way out." A former KGB officer, one of many former interrogators and prisoners interviewed for the CIA study, said that more than 99 percent of all prisoners signed a confession at this stage.

In the Soviet system under Stalin, these confessions were the final step of the interrogation process, and the prisoners usually were shot or sent to a labor camp after sentencing. Today, Russian leaders seem much less insistent on exacting confessions before jailing their foes, but they still use the penal (and mental health) system to remove from the population classes of people hostile to their rule.

The Chinese took on the more ambitious task of re-educating their prisoners. For them, confession was only the beginning. Next, the Chinese authorities moved the prisoner into a group cell where his indoctrination began. From morning to night, he and his fellow prisoners studied Marx and Mao, listened to lectures, and engaged in self-criticism. Since the progress of each member depended on that of his cellmates, the group pounced on the slightest misconduct as an indication of backsliding. Prisoners demonstrated the zeal of their commitment by ferociously attacking deviations. Constant intimacy with people who reviled him pushed the resistant prisoner to the limits of his emotional endurance. Hinkle and Wolff found that "The prisoner must conform to the demands of the group sooner or later." As the prisoner developed genuine changes of attitude, pressure on him relaxed. His cellmates rewarded him with increasing acceptance and esteem. Their acceptance, in turn, reinforced his commitment to the Party, for he learned that only this commitment allowed him to live successfully in the cell. In many cases, this process produced an exultant sense of mission in the prisoner—a feeling of having finally straightened out his life and come to the truth. To be sure, this experience, which was not so different from religious conversion, did not occur in all cases or always last after the prisoner returned to a social group that did not reinforce it.

From the first preliminary studies of Wolff and Hinkle, the U.S. intelligence community moved toward the conclusion that neither the Chinese nor the Russians made appreciable use of drugs or hypnosis, and they certainly did not possess the brainwashing equivalent of the atomic bomb (as many feared). Most of their techniques were rooted in age-old methods, and CIA brainwashing researchers like psychologist John Gittinger found themselves poring over ancient documents on the Spanish Inquisition. Furthermore, the communists used no psychiatrists or other behavioral scientists to devise their interrogation system. The differences between the Soviet and Chinese systems seemed to grow out of their respective national cultures. The Soviet brainwashing system resembled a heavy-handed cop whose job was to isolate, break, and then subdue all the troublemakers in the neighborhood. The Chinese system was more like thousands of skilled acupuncturists, working on each other and relying on group pressure, ideology, and repetition. To understand further the Soviet or Chinese control systems, one had to plunge into the subtle mysteries of national and individual character.

While CIA researchers looked into those questions, the main thrust of the Agency's brainwashing studies veered off in a different direction. The logic behind the switch was familiar in the intelligence business. Just because the Soviets and the Chinese had not invented a brainwashing machine, officials reasoned, there was no reason to assume that the task was impossible. If such a machine were even remotely feasible, one had to assume the communists might discover it. And in that case, national security required that the United States invent the machine first. Therefore, the CIA built up its own elaborate brainwashing program, which, like the Soviet and Chinese versions, took its own special twist from our national character. It was a tiny replica of the Manhattan Project, grounded in the conviction that the keys to brainwashing lay in technology. Agency officials hoped to use old-fashioned American know-how to produce shortcuts and scientific breakthroughs. Instead of turning to tough cops, whose methods repelled American sensibilities, or the gurus of mass motivation, whose ideology Americans lacked, the Agency's brainwashing experts gravitated to people more in the mold of the brilliant—and sometimes mad—scientist, obsessed by the wonders of the brain.

In 1953 CIA Director Allen Dulles made a rare public statement on communist brainwashing: "We in the West are somewhat handicapped in getting all the details," Dulles declared. "There are few survivors, and we have no human guinea pigs to try these extraordinary techniques." Even as Dulles spoke, however, CIA officials acting under his orders had begun to find the scientists and the guinea pigs. Some of their experiments would wander so far across the ethical borders of experimental psychiatry (which are hazy in their own right) that Agency officials thought it prudent to have much of the work done outside the United States.

Call her Lauren G. For 19 years, her mind has been blank about her experience. She remembers her husband's driving her up to the old gray stone mansion that housed the hospital, Allan Memorial Institute, and putting her in the care of its director, Dr. D. Ewen Cameron. The next thing she recalls happened three weeks later:

They gave me a dressing gown. It was way too big, and I was tripping all over it. I was mad. I asked why did I have to go round in this sloppy thing. I could hardly move because I was pretty weak. I remember trying to walk along the hall, and the walls were all slanted. It was then that I said, "Holy Smokes, what a ghastly thing." I remember running out the door and going up the mountain in my long dressing gown.

The mountain, named Mont Royal, loomed high above Montreal. She stumbled and staggered as she tried to climb higher and higher. Hospital staff members had no trouble catching her and dragging her back to the Institute. In short order, they shot her full of sedatives, attached electrodes to her temples, and gave her a dose of electroshock. Soon she slept like a baby.

Gradually, over the next few weeks, Lauren G. began to function like a normal person again. She took basket-weaving therapy and played bridge with her fellow patients. The hospital released her, and she returned to her husband in another Canadian

city.

Before her mental collapse in 1959, Lauren G. seemed to have everything going for her. A refined, glamorous horsewoman of 30, whom people often said looked like Elizabeth Taylor, she had auditioned for the lead in *National Velvet* at 13 and married the rich boy next door at 20. But she had never loved her husband and had let her domineering mother push her into his arms. He drank heavily. "I was really unhappy," she recalls. "I had a horrible marriage, and finally I had a nervous breakdown. It was a combination of my trying to lose weight, sleep loss, and my nerves."

The family doctor recommended that her husband send her to Dr. Cameron, which seemed like a logical thing to do, considering his wide fame as a psychiatrist. He had headed Allan Memorial since 1943, when the Rockefeller Foundation had donated funds to set up a psychiatric facility at McGill University. With continuing help from the Rockefellers, McGill had built a hospital known far beyond Canada's borders as innovative and exciting. Cameron was elected president of the American Psychiatric Association in 1953, and he became the first president of the World Psychiatric Association. His friends joked that they had run out of honors to give him.

Cameron's passion lay in the more "objective" forms of therapy, with which he could more easily and swiftly bring about improvements in patients than with the notoriously slow Freudian methods. An impatient man, he dreamed of finding a cure for schizophrenia. No one could tell him he was not on the right track. Cameron's supporter at the Rockefeller Foundation, Robert Morrison, recorded in his private papers that he found the psychiatrist tense and ill-at-ease, and Morrison ventured that this may account for "his lack of interest and effectiveness in psychotherapy and failure to establish warm personal relations with faculty members, both of which were mentioned repeatedly when I visited Montreal." Another Rockefeller observer noted that Cameron "appears to suffer from deep insecurity and has a need for power which he nourishes by maintaining an extraordinary aloofness from his associates."

When Lauren G.'s husband delivered her to Cameron, the psychiatrist told him she would receive some electroshock, a standard treatment at the time. Besides that, states her husband, "Cameron was not very communicative, but I didn't think she was getting anything out of the ordinary." The husband had no way of knowing that Cameron would use an unproved experimental technique on his wife—much less that the psychiatrist intended to "depattern" her. Nor did he realize that the CIA was supporting this work with about \$19,000 a year in secret funds.^[2]

Cameron defined "depatterning" as breaking up existing patterns of behavior, both the normal and the schizophrenic, by means of particularly intensive electroshocks, usually combined with prolonged, drug-induced sleep. Here was a psychiatrist willing—indeed, eager—to wipe the human mind totally clean. Back in 1951, *ARTICHOKE*'s Morse Allen had likened the process to "creation of a vegetable." Cameron justified this tabula rasa approach because he had a theory of "differential amnesia," for which he provided

no statistical evidence when he published it. He postulated that after he produced “complete amnesia” in a subject, the person would eventually recover memory of his normal but not his schizophrenic behavior. Thus, Cameron claimed he could generate “differential amnesia.” Creating such a state in which a man who knew too much could be made to forget had long been a prime objective of the ARTICHOKE and MKULTRA programs.

Needless to say, Lauren G. does not recall a thing today about those weeks when Cameron depatterned her. Afterward, unlike over half of the psychiatrist’s depatterning patients, Lauren G. gradually recovered full recall of her life before the treatment, but then, she remembered her mental problems, too.[3] Her husband says she came out of the hospital much improved. She declares the treatment had no effect one way or another on her mental condition, which she believes resulted directly from her miserable marriage. She stopped seeing Cameron after about a month of outpatient electroshock treatments, which she despised. Her relationship with her husband further deteriorated, and two years later she walked out on him. “I just got up on my own hind legs,” she states. “I said the hell with it. I’m going to do what I want and take charge of my own life. I left and started over.” Now divorced and remarried, she feels she has been happy ever since.

Cameron’s depatterning, of which Lauren G. had a comparatively mild version, normally started with 15 to 30 days of “sleep therapy.” As the name implies, the patient slept almost the whole day and night. According to a doctor at the hospital who used to administer what he calls the “sleep cocktail,” a staff member woke up the patient three times a day for medication that consisted of a combination of 100 mg. Thorazine, 100 mg. Nembutal, 100 mg. Seconal, 150 mg. Veronal, and 10 mg. Phenergan. Another staff doctor would also awaken the patient two or sometimes three times daily for electroshock treatments.[4] This doctor and his assistant wheeled a portable machine into the “sleep room” and gave the subject a local anesthetic and muscle relaxant, so as not to cause damage with the convulsions that were to come. After attaching electrodes soaked in saline solution, the attendant held the patient down and the doctor turned on the current. In standard, professional electroshock, doctors gave the subject a single dose of 110 volts, lasting a fraction of a second, once a day or every other day. By contrast, Cameron used a form 20 to 40 times more intense, two or three times daily, with the power turned up to 150 volts. Named the “Page-Russell” method after its British originators, this technique featured an initial one-second shock, which caused a major convulsion, and then five to nine additional shocks in the middle of the primary and follow-on convulsions. Even Drs. Page and Russell limited their treatment to once a day, and they always stopped as soon as their patient showed “pronounced confusion” and became “faulty in habits.” Cameron, however, welcomed this kind of impairment as a sign the treatment was taking effect and plowed ahead through his routine.

The frequent screams of patients that echoed through the hospital did not deter Cameron or most of his associates in their attempts to “depattern” their subjects completely. Other hospital patients report being petrified by the “sleep rooms,” where the treatment took place, and they would usually creep down the opposite side of the hall.

Cameron described this combined sleep-electroshock treatment as lasting between 15 to 30 days, with some subjects staying in up to 65 days (in which case, he reported, he awakened them for three days in the middle). Sometimes, as in the case of Lauren G., patients would try to escape when the sedatives wore thin, and the staff would have to chase after them. "It was a tremendous nursing job just to keep these people going during the treatment," recalls a doctor intimately familiar with Cameron's operation. This doctor paints a picture of dazed patients, incapable of taking care of themselves, often groping their way around the hospital and urinating on the floor.

Cameron wrote that his typical depatterning patient—usually a woman—moved through three distinct stages. In the first, the subject lost much of her memory. Yet she still knew where she was, why she was there, and who the people were who treated her. In the second phase, she lost her "space-time image," but still wanted to remember. In fact, not being able to answer questions like, "Where am I?" and "How did I get here?" caused her considerable anxiety. In the third stage, all that anxiety disappeared. Cameron described the state as "an extremely interesting constriction of the range of recollections which one ordinarily brings in to modify and enrich one's statements. Hence, what the patient talks about are only his sensations of the moment, and he talks about them almost exclusively in highly concrete terms. His remarks are entirely uninfluenced by previous recollections—nor are they governed in any way by his forward anticipations. He lives in the immediate present. All schizophrenic symptoms have disappeared. There is complete amnesia for all events in his life."

Lauren G. and 52 other subjects at Allan Memorial received this level of depatterning in 1958 and 1959. Cameron had already developed the technique when the CIA funding started. The Agency sent the psychiatrist research money to take the treatment beyond this point. Agency officials wanted to know if, once Cameron had produced the blank mind, he could then program in new patterns of behavior, as he claimed he could. As early as 1953—the year he headed the American Psychiatric Association—Cameron conceived a technique he called "psychic driving," by which he would bombard the subject with repeated verbal messages. From tape recordings based on interviews with the patient, he selected emotionally loaded "cue statements"—first negative ones to get rid of unwanted behavior and then positive to condition in desired personality traits. On the negative side, for example, the patient would hear this message as she lay in a stupor:

Madeleine, you let your mother and father treat you as a child all through your single life. You let your mother check you up sexually after every date you had with a boy. You hadn't enough determination to tell her to stop it. You never stood up for yourself against your mother or father but would run away from trouble.... They used to call you "crying Madeleine." Now that you have two children, you don't seem to be able to manage them and keep a good relationship with your husband. You are drifting apart. You don't go out together. You have not been able to keep him interested sexually.

Leonard Rubenstein, Cameron's principal assistant, whose entire salary was paid

from CIA-front funds, put the message on a continuous tape loop and played it for 16 hours every day for several weeks. An electronics technician, with no medical or psychological background, Rubenstein, an electrical whiz, designed a giant tape recorder that could play 8 loops for 8 patients at the same time. Cameron had the speakers installed literally under the pillows in the “sleep rooms.” “We made sure they heard it,” says a doctor who worked with Cameron. With some patients, Cameron intensified the negative effect by running wires to their legs and shocking them at the end of the message.

When Cameron thought the negative “psychic driving” had gone far enough, he switched the patient over to 2 to 5 weeks of positive tapes:

You mean to get well. To do this you must let your feelings come out. It is all right to express your anger.... You want to stop your mother bossing you around. Begin to assert yourself first in little things and soon you will be able to meet her on an equal basis. You will then be free to be a wife and mother just like other women.

Cameron wrote that psychic driving provided a way to make “direct, controlled changes in personality,” without having to resolve the subject’s conflicts or make her relive past experiences. As far as is known, no present-day psychologist or psychiatrist accepts this view. Dr. Donald Hebb, who headed McGill’s psychology department at the time Cameron was in charge of psychiatry, minces no words when asked specifically about psychic driving: “That was an awful set of ideas Cameron was working with. It called for no intellectual respect. If you actually look at what he was doing and what he wrote, it would make you laugh. If I had a graduate student who talked like that, I’d throw him out.” Warming to his subject, Hebb continues: “Look, Cameron was no good as a researcher.... He was eminent because of politics.” Nobody said such things at the time, however. Cameron was a very powerful man.

The Scottish-born psychiatrist, who never lost the burr in his voice, kept searching for ways to perfect depatterning and psychic driving. He held out to the CIA front—the Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology—that he could find more rapid and less damaging ways to break down behavior. He sent the Society a proposal that combined his two techniques with sensory deprivation and strong drugs. His smorgasbord approach brought together virtually all possible techniques of mind control, which he tested individually and together. When his Agency grant came through in 1957, Cameron began work on sensory deprivation.

For several years, Agency officials had been interested in the interrogation possibilities of this technique that Hebb himself had pioneered at McGill with Canadian defense and Rockefeller money. It consisted of putting a subject in a sealed environment—a small room or even a large box—and depriving him of all sensory input: eyes covered with goggles, ears either covered with muffs or exposed to a constant, monotonous sound, padding to prevent touching, no smells—with this empty regime interrupted only by meal and bathroom breaks. In 1955 Morse Allen of ARTICHOKE made contact at the Na-

tional Institutes of Health with Dr. Maitland Baldwin who had done a rather gruesome experiment in which an Army volunteer had stayed in the “box” for 40 hours until he kicked his way out after, in Baldwin’s words, “an hour of crying loudly and sobbing in a most heartrending fashion.” The experiment convinced Baldwin that the isolation technique could break any man, no matter how intelligent or strong-willed. Hebb, who unlike Baldwin released his subjects when they wanted, had never left anyone in “the box” for more than six days. Baldwin told Morse Allen that beyond that sensory deprivation would almost certainly cause irreparable damage. Nevertheless, Baldwin agreed that if the Agency could provide the cover and the subjects, he would do, according to Allen’s report, “terminal type” experiments. After numerous meetings inside the CIA on how and where to fund Baldwin, an Agency medical officer finally shot down the project as being “immoral and inhuman,” suggesting that those pushing the experiments might want to “volunteer their heads for use in Dr. Baldwin’s ‘noble’ project.”

With Cameron, Agency officials not only had a doctor willing to perform terminal experiments in sensory deprivation, but one with his own source of subjects. As part of his CIA-funded research, he had a “box” built in the converted stables behind the hospital that housed Leonard Rubenstein and his behavioral laboratory. Undaunted by the limits set in Hebb’s work, Cameron left one woman in for 35 days, although he had so scrambled her mind with his other techniques that one cannot say, as Baldwin predicted to the Agency, if the prolonged deprivation did specific damage. This subject’s name was Mary C., and, try as he might, Cameron could not get through to her. As the aloof psychiatrist wrote in his notes: “Although the patient was prepared by both prolonged sensory isolation (35 days) and by repeated depatterning, and although she received 101 days of positive driving, no favorable results were obtained.” [5] Before prescribing this treatment, Cameron had diagnosed the 52-year-old Mary C.: “Conversion reaction in a woman of the involuntional age with mental anxiety; hypochondriatic.” In other words, Mary C. was going through menopause.

In his proposal to the CIA front, Cameron also said he would test curare, the South American arrow poison which, when liberally applied, kills by paralyzing internal body functions. In nonlethal doses, curare causes a limited paralysis which blocks but does not stop these functions. According to his papers, some of which wound up in the archives of the American Psychiatric Association, Cameron injected subjects with curare in conjunction with sensory deprivation, presumably to immobilize them further.

Cameron also tested LSD in combination with psychic driving and other techniques. In late 1956 and early 1957, one of his subjects was Val Orlikow, whose husband David has become a member of the Canadian parliament. Suffering from what she calls a “character neurosis that started with postpartum depression,” she entered Allan Memorial as one of Cameron’s personal patients. He soon put her under his version of LSD therapy. One to four times a week, he or another doctor would come into her room and give her a shot of LSD, mixed with either a stimulant or a depressant and then leave her alone with a tape recorder that played excerpts from her last session with him. As far as is known, no other LSD researcher ever subjected his patients to unsupervised trips—

certainly not over the course of two months when her hospital records show she was given LSD 14 times. "It was terrifying," Mrs. Orlikow recalls. "You're afraid you've gone off somewhere and can't come back." She was supposed to write down on a pad whatever came into her head while listening to the tapes, but often she became so frightened that she could not write at all. "You become very small," she says, as her voice quickens and starts to reflect some of her horror. "You're going to fall off the step, and God, you're going down into hell because it's so far, and you are so little. Like Alice, where is the pill that makes you big, and you're a squirrel, and you can't get out of the cage, and somebody's going to kill you." Then, suddenly, Mrs. Orlikow pulls out of it and lucidly states, "Some very weird things happened."

Mrs. Orlikow hated the LSD treatment. Several times she told Cameron she would take no more, and the psychiatrist would put his arm around her and ask, "Lassie," which he called all his women patients, "don't you want to get well, so you can go home and see your husband?" She remembers feeling guilty about not following the doctor's orders, and the thought of disappointing Cameron, whom she idolized, crushed her. Finally, after Cameron talked her out of quitting the treatment several times, she had to end it. She left the hospital but stayed under his private care. In 1963 he put her back in the hospital for more intensive psychic driving. "I thought he was God," she states. "I don't know how I could have been so stupid.... A lot of us were naive. We thought psychiatrists had the answers. Here was the greatest in the world, with all these titles."

In defense of Cameron, a former associate says the man truly cared about the welfare of his patients. He wanted to make them well. As his former staff psychologist wrote:

He abhorred the waste of human potential, seen most dramatically in the young people whose minds were distorted by what was then considered to be schizophrenia. He felt equally strongly about the loss of wisdom in the aged through memory malfunction. For him, the end justified the means, and when one is dealing with the waste of human potential, it is easy to adopt this stance.

Cameron retired abruptly in 1964, for unexplained reasons. His successor, Dr. Robert Cleghorn, made a virtually unprecedented move in the academic world of mutual back-scratching and praise. He commissioned a psychiatrist and a psychologist, unconnected to Cameron, to study his electroshock work. They found that 60 percent of Cameron's depatterned patients complained they still had amnesia for the period 6 months to 10 years before the therapy.[6] They could find no clinical proof that showed the treatment to be any more or less effective than other approaches. They concluded that "the incidence of physical complications and the anxiety generated in the patient because of real or imagined memory difficulty argue against" future use of the technique.

The study-team members couched their report in densely academic jargon, but one of them speaks more clearly now. He talks bitterly of one of Cameron's former pa-

tients who needs to keep a list of her simplest household chores to remember how to do them. Then he repeats several times how powerful a man Cameron was, how he was “the godfather of Canadian psychiatry.” He continues, “I probably shouldn’t talk about this, but Cameron—for him to do what he did—he was a very schizophrenic guy, who totally detached himself from the human implications of his work . . . God, we talk about concentration camps. I don’t want to make this comparison, but God, you talk about ‘we didn’t know it was happening,’ and it was—right in our back yard.”

Cameron died in 1967, at age 66, while climbing a mountain. The American Journal of Psychiatry published a long and glowing obituary with a full-page picture of his not-unpleasant face.

D. Ewen Cameron did not need the CIA to corrupt him. He clearly had his mind set on doing unorthodox research long before the Agency front started to fund him. With his own hospital and source of subjects, he could have found elsewhere encouragement and money to replace the CIA’s contribution which never exceeded \$20,000 a year. However, Agency officials knew exactly what they were paying for. They traveled periodically to Montreal to observe his work, and his proposal was chillingly explicit. In Cameron, they had a doctor, conveniently outside the United States, willing to do terminal experiments in electroshock, sensory deprivation, drug testing, and all of the above combined. By literally wiping the minds of his subjects clean by depatterning and then trying to program in new behavior, Cameron carried the process known as “brainwashing” to its logical extreme.

It cannot be said how many—if any—other Agency brainwashing projects reached the extremes of Cameron’s work. Details are scarce, since many of the principal witnesses have died, will not talk about what went on, or lie about it. In what ways the CIA applied work like Cameron’s is not known. What is known, however, is that the intelligence community, including the CIA, changed the face of the scientific community during the 1950s and early 1960s by its interest in such experiments. Nearly every scientist on the frontiers of brain research found men from the secret agencies looking over his shoulders, impinging on the research. The experience of Dr. John Lilly illustrates how this intrusion came about.

In 1953 Lilly worked at the National Institutes of Health, outside Washington, doing experimental studies in an effort to “map” the body functions controlled from various locations in the brain. He devised a method of pounding up to 600 tiny sections of hypodermic tubing into the skulls of monkeys, through which he could insert electrodes “into the brain to any desired distance and at any desired location from the cortex down to the bottom of the skull,” he later wrote. Using electric stimulation, Lilly discovered precise centers of the monkeys’ brains that caused pain, fear, anxiety, and anger. He also discovered precise, separate parts of the brain that controlled erection, ejaculation, and orgasm in male monkeys. Lilly found that a monkey, given access to a switch operating a correctly planted electrode, would reward himself with nearly continuous orgasms—at least once every 3 minutes—for up to 16 hours a day.

As Lilly refined his brain “maps,” officials of the CIA and other agencies descended upon him with a request for a briefing. Having a phobia against secrecy, Lilly agreed to the briefing only under the condition that it and his work remain unclassified, completely open to outsiders. The intelligence officials submitted to the conditions most reluctantly, since they knew that Lilly’s openness would not only ruin the spy value of anything they learned but could also reveal the identities and the interests of the intelligence officials to enemy agents. They considered Lilly annoying, uncooperative—possibly even suspicious.

Soon Lilly began to have trouble going to meetings and conferences with his colleagues. As part of the cooperation with the intelligence agencies, most of them had agreed to have their projects officially classified as SECRET, which meant that access to the information required a security clearance. [7] Lilly’s security clearance was withdrawn for review, then tangled up and misplaced—all of which he took as pressure to cooperate with the CIA. Lilly, whose imagination needed no stimulation to conjure up pictures of CIA agents on deadly missions with remote-controlled electrodes strategically implanted in their brains, decided to withdraw from that field of research. He says he had decided that the physical intrusion of the electrodes did too much brain damage for him to tolerate.

In 1954 Lilly began trying to isolate the operations of the brain, free of outside stimulation, through sensory deprivation. He worked in an office next to Dr. Maitland Baldwin, who the following year agreed to perform terminal sensory deprivation experiments for ARTICHOKE’s Morse Allen but who never told Lilly he was working in the field. While Baldwin experimented with his sensory-deprivation “box,” Lilly invented a special “tank.” Subjects floated in a tank of body-temperature water wearing a face mask that provided air but cut off sight and sound. Inevitably, intelligence officials swooped down on Lilly again, interested in the use of his tank as an interrogation tool. Could involuntary subjects be placed in the tank and broken down to the point where their belief systems or personalities could be altered?

It was central to Lilly’s ethic that he himself be the first subject of any experiment, and, in the case of the consciousness-exploring tank work, he and one colleague were the only ones. Lilly realized that the intelligence agencies were not interested in sensory deprivation because of its positive benefits, and he finally concluded that it was impossible for him to work at the National Institutes of Health without compromising his principles. He quit in 1958.

Contrary to most people’s intuitive expectations, Lilly found sensory deprivation to be a profoundly integrating experience for himself personally. He considered himself to be a scientist who subjectively explored the far wanderings of the brain. In a series of private experiments, he pushed himself into the complete unknown by injecting pure Sandoz LSD into his thigh before climbing into the sensory-deprivation tank. [8] When the counterculture sprang up, Lilly became something of a cult figure, with his unique approach to scientific inquiry—though he was considered more of an outcast by many in

the professional research community.

For most of the outside world, Lilly became famous with the release of the popular film, *The Day of the Dolphin*, which the filmmakers acknowledged was based on Lilly's work with dolphins after he left NIH. Actor George C. Scott portrayed a scientist, who, like Lilly, loved dolphins, did pioneering experiments on their intelligence, and tried to find ways to communicate with them. In the movie, Scott became dismayed when the government pounced on his breakthrough in talking to dolphins and turned it immediately to the service of war. In real life, Lilly was similarly dismayed when Navy and CIA scientists trained dolphins for special warfare in the waters off Vietnam.[9]

A few scientists like Lilly made up their minds not to cross certain ethical lines in their experimental work, while others were prepared to go further even than their sponsors from ARTICHOKE and MKULTRA. Within the Agency itself, there was only one final question: Will a technique work? CIA officials zealously tracked every lead, sparing no expense to check each angle many times over. By the time the MKULTRA program ended in 1963, Agency researchers had found no foolproof way to brainwash another person.[10] "All experiments beyond a certain point always failed," says the MKULTRA veteran, "because the subject jerked himself back for some reason or the subject got amnesiac or catatonic." Agency officials found through work like Cameron's that they could create "vegetables," but such people served no operational use. People could be tortured into saying anything, but no science could guarantee that they would tell the truth.

The impotency of brainwashing techniques left the Agency in a difficult spot when Yuri Nosenko defected to the United States in February 1964. A ranking official of the Soviet KGB, Nosenko brought with him stunning information. He said the Russians had bugged the American embassy in Moscow, which turned out to be true. He named some Russian agents in the West. And he said that he had personally inspected the KGB file of Lee Harvey Oswald, who only a few months earlier had been murdered before he could be brought to trial for the assassination of President Kennedy. Nosenko said he learned that the KGB had had no interest in Oswald.

Was Nosenko telling the truth, or was he a KGB "plant" sent to throw the United States off track about Oswald? Was his information about penetration correct, or was Nosenko himself the penetration? Was he acting in good faith? Were the men within the CIA who believed he was acting in good faith themselves acting in good faith? These and a thousand other questions made up the classical trick deck for spies—each card having "true" on one side and "false" on the other. Top CIA officials felt a desperate need to resolve the issue of Nosenko's legitimacy. With numerous Agency counterintelligence operations hanging in the balance, Richard Helms, first as Deputy Director and then as Director, allowed CIA operators to work Nosenko over with the interrogation method in which Helms apparently had the most faith. It turned out to be not any truth serum or electroshock depatterning program or anything else from the Agency's brainwashing search. Helms had Nosenko put through the tried-and-true Soviet method: isolate the

prisoner, deaden his senses, break him. For more than three years—1,277 days, to be exact—Agency officers kept Nosenko in solitary confinement. As if they were using the Hinkle-Wolff study as their instruction manual and the Cardinal Mindszenty case as their success story, the CIA men had guards watch over Nosenko day and night, giving him not a moment of privacy. A light bulb burned continuously in his cell. He was allowed nothing to read—not even the labels on toothpaste boxes. When he tried to distract himself by making a chess set from pieces of lint in his cell, the guards discovered his game and swept the area clean. Nosenko had no window, and he was eventually put in a specially built 12' X 12' steel bank vault.

Nosenko broke down. He hallucinated. He talked his head off to his interrogators, who questioned him for 292 days, often while they had him strapped into a lie detector. If he told the truth, they did not believe him. While the Soviets and Chinese had shown that they could make a man admit anything, the CIA interrogators apparently lacked a clear idea of exactly what they wanted Nosenko to confess. When it was all over and Richard Helms ordered Nosenko freed after three and a half years of illegal detention, some key Agency officers still believed he was a KGB plant. Others thought he was on the level. Thus the big questions remained unresolved, and to this day, CIA men—past and present—are bitterly split over who Nosenko really is.

With the Nosenko case, the CIA's brainwashing programs had come full circle. Spurred by the widespread alarm over communist tactics, Agency officials had investigated the field, started their own projects, and looked to the latest technology to make improvements. After 10 years of research, with some rather gruesome results, CIA officials had come up with no techniques on which they felt they could rely. Thus, when the operational crunch came, they fell back on the basic brutality of the Soviet system.

Notes

Edward Hunter's article " 'Brain-Washing' Tactics Force Chinese into Ranks of Communist Party" appeared in the Miami News on September 24, 1950. His book was *Brainwashing in Red China* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1951). Other material came from several interviews with Hunter just before he died in June 1978.

The Air Force document cited on brainwashing was called "Air Force Headquarters Panel Convened to Record Air Force Position Regarding Conduct of Personnel in Event of Capture," December 14, 1953. Researcher Sam Zuckerman found it and showed it to me.

The figures on American prisoners in Korea and the quote from Edward Hunter came from hearings before the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, 84th Congress, June 19, 20, 26, and 27, 1956.

The material on the setting up of the Cornell-Hinkle-Wolff study came from interviews with Hinkle, Helen Goodell, and several CIA sources. Hinkle's and Wolff's study

on brainwashing appeared in classified form on 2 April 1956 as a Technical Services Division publication called *Communist Control Techniques* and in substantially the same form but unclassified as “Communist Interrogation and Indoctrination of ‘Enemies of the State’—An Analysis of Methods Used by the Communist State Police.” *AMA Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry*, August, 1956, Vol. 76.

Allen Dulles spoke on “Brain Warfare” before the Alumni Conference of Princeton University, Hot Springs, Virginia on April 10, 1953, and the quote on guinea pigs came from that speech.

The comments of Rockefeller Foundation officials about D. Ewen Cameron and the record of Rockefeller funding were found in Robert S. Morrison’s diary, located in the Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Pocantico Hills, New York.

The key articles on Cameron’s work on depatterning and psychic driving were “Production of Differential Amnesia as a Factor in the Treatment of Schizophrenia,” *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, 1960, 1, p. 26 and “Effects of Repetition of Verbal Signals upon the Behavior of Chronic Psychoneurotic Patients” by Cameron, Leonard Levy, and Leonard Rubenstein, *Journal of Mental Science*, 1960, 106, 742. The background on Page-Russell electroshocks came from “Intensified Electrical Convulsive Therapy in the Treatment of Mental Disorders” by L. G. M. Page and R. J. Russell, *Lancet*, Volume 254, Jan.—June, 1948. Dr. John Cavanagh of Washington, D.C. provided background on the use of electroshock and sedatives in psychiatry.

Cameron’s MKULTRA subproject was #68. See especially document 68-37, “Application for Grant to Study the Effects upon Human Behavior of the Repetition of Verbal Signals,” January 21, 1957.

Part of Cameron’s papers are in the archives of the American Psychiatric Association in Washington, and they provided considerable information on the treatment of Mary C., as well as a general look at his work. Interviews with at least a dozen of his former colleagues also provided considerable information.

Interviews with John Lilly and Donald Hebb provided background on sensory deprivation. Maitland Baldwin’s work in the field was discussed in a whole series of AR-TICHOKE documents including #A/B, I, 76/4, 21 March 1955, Subject: Total Isolation; #A/B, I, 76/12, 19 May 1955, Subject: Total Isolation—Additional Comments; and #A/B, I, 76/17, 27 April 1955, Subject: Total Isolation, Supplemental Report #2. The quote from Aldous Huxley on sensory deprivation is taken from the book of his writings, *Moksha: Writings on Psychedelics and the Visionary Experience (1931-1963)*, edited by Michael Horowitz and Cynthia Palmer (New York: Stonehill, 1978).

The material on Val Orlikow’s experiences with Dr. Cameron came from interviews with her and her husband David and from portions of her hospital records, which she furnished.

Cameron's staff psychologist Barbara Winrib's comments on him were found in a letter to the Montreal Star, August 11, 1977.

The study of Cameron's electroshock work ordered by Dr. Cleghorn was published as "Intensive Electroconvulsive Therapy: A Follow-up Study," by A. E. Schwartzman and P. E. Termansen, Canadian Psychiatric Association, Volume 12, 1967.

In addition to several interviews, much material on John Lilly came from his autobiography, *The Scientist* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1978).

The CIA's handling of Yuri Nosenko was discussed at length in hearings before the House Assassinations Committee on September 15, 1978. The best press account of this testimony was written by Jeremiah O'Leary of the Washington Star on September 16, 1978: "How CIA Tried to Break Defector in Oswald Case."

Footnotes

1. Among the Air Force and Army project leaders were Dr. Fred Williams of the Air Force Psychological Warfare Division, Robert Jay Lifton, Edgar Schein, Albert Biderman, and Lieutenant Colonel James Monroe (an Air Force officer who would later go to work full time in CIA behavioral programs).

2. Cameron himself may not have known that the Agency was the ultimate source of these funds which came through a conduit, the Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology. A CIA document stated he was unwitting when the grants started in 1957, and it cannot be said whether he ever found out.

3. Cameron wrote that when a patient remembered his schizophrenic symptoms, the schizophrenic behavior usually returned. If the amnesia held for these symptoms, as Cameron claimed it often did, the subject usually did not have a relapse. Even in his "cured" patients, Cameron found that Rorschach tests continued to show schizophrenic thinking despite the improvement in overt behavior. To a layman, this would seem to indicate that Cameron's approach got only at the symptoms, not the causes of mental problems. Not deterred, however, Cameron dismissed this inconsistency as a "persistent enigma."

4. Cameron wrote in a professional journal that he gave only two electroshocks a day, but a doctor who actually administered the treatment for him says that three were common at the beginning of the therapy.

5. In his proposal to the Human Ecology group, Cameron wrote that his subjects would be spending only 16 hours a day in sensory deprivation, while they listened to psychic driving tapes (thus providing some outside stimuli). Nevertheless, one of Cameron's colleagues states that some patients, including Mary C. were in continuously. Always looking for a better way, Cameron almost certainly tried both variations.

6. Cleghorn's team found little loss of memory on objective tests, like the Wechsler Memory Scale but speculated that these tests measured a different memory function—short-term recall—than that the subjects claimed to be missing.

7. Lilly and other veterans of government-supported research note that there is a practical advantage for the scientist who allows his work to be classified: it gives him an added claim on government funds. He is then in a position to argue that if his work is important enough to be SECRET, it deserves money.

8. As was the case with LSD work, sensory deprivation research had both a mind control and a transcendental side. Aldous Huxley wrote thusly about the two pioneers in the field: "What men like Hebb and Lilly are doing in the laboratory was done by the Christian hermits in the Thebaid and elsewhere, and by Hindu and Tibetan hermits in the remote fastness of the Himalayas. My own belief is that these experiences really tell us something about the nature of the universe, that they are valuable in themselves and, above all, valuable when incorporated into our world-picture and acted upon [in] normal life."

9. In a program called "swimmer nullification," government scientists trained dolphins to attack enemy frogmen with huge needles attached to their snouts. The dolphins carried tanks of compressed air, which when jabbed into a deepdiver caused him to pop dead to the surface. A scientist who worked in this CIA-Navy program states that some of the dolphins sent to Vietnam during the late 1960s got out of their pens and disappeared—unheard of behavior for trained dolphins. John Lilly confirms that a group of the marine mammals stationed at Cam Ranh Bay did go AWOL, and he adds that he heard that some eventually returned with their bodies and fins covered with attack marks made by other dolphins.

10. After 1963 the Agency's Science and Technology Directorate continued brain research with unknown results. See Chapter 12.

HUMAN ECOLOGY

Well before Harold Wolff and Lawrence Hinkle finished their brainwashing study for Allen Dulles in 1956, Wolff was trying to expand his role in CIA research and operations. He offered Agency officials the cooperation of his colleagues at Cornell University, where he taught neurology and psychiatry in the Medical College. In proposal after proposal, Wolff pressed upon the CIA his idea that to understand human behavior—and how governments might manipulate it—one had to study man in relationship to his total environment. Calling this field "human ecology," Wolff drew into it the disciplines of psychology, medicine, sociology, and anthropology. In the academic world of the early 1950s, this cross-disciplinary approach was somewhat new, as was the word "ecology," but it made sense to CIA officials. Like Wolff, they were far in advance of the trends in the behavioral sciences.

Wolff carved out vast tracts of human knowledge, some only freshly discovered, and proposed a partnership with the Agency for the task of mastering that knowledge for operational use. It was a time when knowledge itself seemed bountiful and promising, and Wolff was expansive about how the CIA could harness it. Once he figured out how the human mind really worked, he wrote, he would tell the Agency “how a man can be made to think, ‘feel,’ and behave according to the wishes of other men, and, conversely, how a man can avoid being influenced in this manner.”

Such notions, which may now appear naive or perverse, did not seem so unlikely at the height of the Cold War. And Wolff’s professional stature added weight to his ideas. Like D. Ewen Cameron, he was no obscure academic. He had been President of the New York Neurological Association and would become, in 1960, President of the American Neurological Association. He served for several years as editor-in-chief of the American Medical Association’s Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry. Both by credentials and force of personality, Wolff was an impressive figure. CIA officials listened respectfully to his grand vision of how spies and doctors could work symbiotically to help—if not save—the world. Also, the Agency men never forgot that Wolff had become close to Director Allen Dulles while treating Dulles’ son for brain damage.

Wolff’s specialized neurological practice led him to believe that brain maladies, like migraine headaches, occurred because of disharmony between man and his environment. In this case, he wrote to the Agency, “The problem faced by the physician is quite similar to that faced by the Communist interrogator.” Both would be trying to put their subject back in harmony with his environment whether the problem was headache or ideological dissent. Wolff believed that the beneficial effects of any new interrogation technique would naturally spill over into the treatment of his patients, and vice versa. Following the Soviet model, he felt he could help his patients by putting them into an isolated, disoriented state—from which it would be easier to create new behavior patterns. Although Russian-style isolation cells were impractical at Cornell, Wolff hoped to get the same effect more quickly through sensory deprivation. He told the Agency that sensory-deprivation chambers had “valid medical reason” as part of a treatment that relieved migraine symptoms and made the patient “more receptive to the suggestions of the psychotherapist.” He proposed keeping his patients in sensory deprivation until they “show an increased desire to talk and to escape from the procedure.” Then, he said, doctors could “utilize material from their own past experience in order to create psychological reactions within them.” This procedure drew heavily on the Stalinist method. It cannot be said what success, if any, Wolff had with it to the benefit of his patients at Cornell.

Wolff offered to devise ways to use the broadest cultural and social processes in human ecology for covert operations. He understood that every country had unique customs for child rearing, military training, and nearly every other form of human intercourse. From the CIA’s point of view, he noted, this kind of sociological information could be applied mainly to indoctrinating and motivating people. He distinguished these motivating techniques from the “special methods” that he felt were ‘more relevant to subversion, seduction, and interrogation.’ He offered to study those methods, too, and asked

the Agency to give him access to everything in its files on “threats, coercion, imprisonment, isolation, deprivation, humiliation, torture, ‘brainwashing, ‘black psychiatry,’ hypnosis, and combinations of these with or without chemical agents.” Beyond mere study, Wolff volunteered the unwitting use of Cornell patients for brainwashing experiments, so long as no one got hurt. He added, however, that he would advise the CIA on experiments that harmed their subjects if they were performed elsewhere. He obviously felt that only the grandest sweep of knowledge, flowing freely between scholar and spy, could bring the best available techniques to bear on their respective subjects

In 1955 Wolff incorporated his CIA-funded study group as the Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology, with himself as president.[1] Through the Society, Wolff extended his efforts for the Agency, and his organization turned into a CIA-controlled funding mechanism for studies and experiments in the behavioral sciences.

In the early days of the Society, Agency officials trusted Wolff and his untried ideas with a sensitive espionage assignment. In effect, the new specialty of human ecology was going to telescope the stages of research and application into one continuing process. Speeding up the traditional academic method was required because the CIA men faced an urgent problem. “What was bothering them,” Lawrence Hinkle explains, “was that the Chinese had cleaned up their agents in China.... What they really wanted to do was come up with some Chinese [in America], steer them to us, and make them into agents.” Wolff accepted the challenge and suggested that the Cornell group hide its real purpose behind the cover of investigating “the ecological aspects of disease” among Chinese refugees. The Agency gave the project a budget of \$84,175 (about 30 percent of the money it put into Cornell in 1955) and supplied the study group with 100 Chinese refugees to work with. Nearly all these subjects had been studying in the United States when the communists took over the mainland in 1949, so they tended to be dislocated people in their thirties.

On the Agency side, the main concern, as expressed by one ARTICHOKE man, was the “security hazard” of bringing together so many potential agents in one place. Nevertheless, CIA officials decided to go ahead. Wolff promised to tell them about the inner reaches of the Chinese character, and they recognized the operational advantage that insight into Chinese behavior patterns could provide. Moreover, Wolff said he would pick out the most useful possible agents. The Human Ecology Society would then offer these candidates “fellowships” and subject them to more intensive interviews and “stress producing” situations. The idea was to find out about their personalities, past conditioning, and present motivations, in order to figure out how they might perform in future predicaments—such as finding themselves back in Mainland China as American agents. In the process, Wolff hoped to mold these Chinese into people willing to work for the CIA. Mindful of leaving some cover for Cornell, he was adamant that Agency operators not connected with the project make the actual recruitment pitch to those Chinese whom the Agency men wanted as agents.

As a final twist, Wolff planned to provide each agent with techniques to withstand

the precise forms of hostile interrogation they could expect upon returning to China. CIA officials wanted to “precondition” the agents in order to create long lasting motivation “impervious to lapse of time and direct psychological attacks by the enemy.” In other words, Agency men planned to brainwash their agents in order to protect them against Chinese brainwashing.

Everything was covered—in theory, at least. Wolff was going to take a crew of 100 refugees and turn as many of them as possible into detection-proof, live agents inside China, and he planned to do the job quickly through human ecology. It was a heady chore for the Cornell professor to take on after classes.

Wolff hired a full complement of psychologists, psychiatrists, and anthropologists to work on the project. He bulldozed his way through his colleagues’ qualms and government red tape alike. Having hired an anthropologist before learning that the CIA security office would not give her a clearance, Wolff simply lied to her about where the money came from. “It was a function of Wolff’s imperious nature,” says his partner Hinkle. “If a dog came in and threw up on the rug during a lecture, he would continue.” Even the CIA men soon found that Harold Wolff was not to be trifled with. “From the Agency side, I don’t know anyone who wasn’t scared of him,” recalls a longtime CIA associate. “He was an autocratic man. I never knew him to chew anyone out. He didn’t have to. We were damned respectful. He moved in high places. He was just a skinny little man but talk about mind control! He was one of the controllers.”

In the name of the Human Ecology Society, the CIA paid \$1,200 a month to rent a fancy town house on Manhattan’s East 78th Street to house the Cornell group and its research projects. Agency technicians traveled to New York in December 1954 to install eavesdropping microphones around the building. These and other more obvious security devices—safes, guards, and the like—made the town house look different from the academic center it was supposed to be. CIA liaison personnel held meetings with Wolff and the staff in the secure confines of the town house, and they all carefully watched the 100 Chinese a few blocks away at the Cornell hospital. The Society paid each subject \$25 a day so the researchers could test them, probe them, and generally learn all they could about Chinese people—or at least about middle-class, displaced, anti-Communist ones.

It is doubtful that any of Wolff’s Chinese ever returned to their homeland as CIA agents, or that all of Wolff’s proposals were put into effect.

In any case, the project was interrupted in midstream by a major shake-up in the CIA’s entire mind-control effort. Early in 1955, Sid Gottlieb and his Ph.D. crew from TSS took over most of the ARTICHOKE functions, including the Society, from Morse Allen and the Pinkerton types in the Office of Security. The MKULTRA men moved quickly to turn the Society into an entity that looked and acted like a legitimate foundation. First they smoothed over the ragged covert edges. Out came the bugs and safes so dear to Morse Allen and company. The new crew even made some effort (largely unsuccessful) to attract non-CIA funds.

The biggest change, however, was the Cornell professors now had to deal with Agency representatives who were scientists and who had strong ideas of their own on research questions. Up to this point, the Cornellians had been able to keep the CIA's involvement within bounds acceptable to them. While Harold Wolff never ceased wanting to explore the furthest reaches of behavior control, his colleagues were wary of going on to the outer limits—at least under Cornell cover.

No one would ever confuse MKULTRA projects with ivory-tower research, but Gottlieb's people did take a more academic—and sophisticated—approach to behavioral research than their predecessors. The MKULTRA men understood that not every project would have an immediate operational benefit, and they believed less and less in the existence of that one just-over-the-horizon technique that would turn men into puppets. They favored increasing their knowledge of human behavior in relatively small steps, and they concentrated on the reduced goal of influencing and manipulating their subjects. "You're ahead of the game if you can get people to do something ten percent more often than they would otherwise," says an MKULTRA veteran.

Accordingly, in 1956, Sid Gottlieb approved a \$74,000 project to have the Human Ecology Society study the factors that caused men to defect from their countries and cooperate with foreign governments. MKULTRA officials reasoned that if they could understand what made old turncoats tick, it might help them entice new ones. While good case officers instinctively seemed to know how to handle a potential agent—or thought they did—the MKULTRA men hoped to come up with systematic, even scientific improvements. Overtly, Harold Wolff designed the program to look like a follow-up study to the Society's earlier programs, noting to the Agency that it was "feasible to study foreign nationals under the cover of a medical-sociological study." (He told his CIA funders that "while some information of general value to science should be produced, this in itself will not be a sufficient justification for carrying out a study of this nature.") Covertly, he declared the purpose of the research was to assess defectors' social and cultural background, their life experience, and their personality structure, in order to understand their motivations, value systems, and probable future reactions.

The 1956 Hungarian revolt occurred as the defector study was getting underway, and the Human Ecology group, with CIA headquarters approval, decided to turn the defector work into an investigation of 70 Hungarian refugees from that upheaval. By then, most of Harold Wolff's team had been together through the brainwashing and Chinese studies. While not all of them knew of the CIA's specific interests, they had streamlined their procedures for answering the questions that Agency officials found interesting. They ran the Hungarians through the battery of tests and observations in six months, compared to a year and a half for the Chinese project.

The Human Ecology Society reported that most of their Hungarian subjects had fought against the Russians during the Revolution and that they had lived through extraordinarily difficult circumstances, including arrest, mistreatment, and indoctrination. The psychologists and psychiatrists found that, often, those who had survived with the

fewest problems had been those with markedly aberrant personalities. “This observation has added to the evidence that healthy people are not necessarily ‘normal,’ but are people particularly adapted to their special life situations,” the group declared.

While CIA officials liked the idea that their Hungarian subjects had not knuckled under communist influence, they recognized that they were working with a skewed sample. American visa restrictions kept most of the refugee left-wingers and former communist officials out of the United States; so, as a later MKULTRA document would state, the Society wound up studying “western-tied rightist elements who had never been accepted completely” in postwar Hungary. Agency researchers realized that these people would “contribute little” toward increasing the CIA’s knowledge of the processes that made a communist official change his loyalties.

In order to broaden their data base, MKULTRA officials decided in March 1957 to bring in some unwitting help. They gave a contract to Rutgers University sociologists Richard Stephenson and Jay Schulman “to throw as much light as possible on the sociology of the communist system in the throes of revolution.” The Rutgers professors started out by interviewing the 70 Hungarians at Cornell in New York, and Schulman went on to Europe to talk to disillusioned Communists who had also fled their country.

From an operational point of view, these were the people the Agency really cared about; but, as socialists, most of them probably would have resisted sharing their experiences with the CIA—if they had known.^[2] Jay Schulman would have resisted, too. After discovering almost 20 years later that the Agency had paid his way and seen his confidential interviews, he feels misused. “In 1957 I was myself a quasi-Marxist and if I had known that this study was sponsored by the CIA, there is really, obviously, no way that I would have been associated with it,” says Schulman. “My view is that social scientists have a deep personal responsibility for questioning the sources of funding; and the fact that I didn’t do it at the time was simply, in my judgment, indication of my own naiveté and political innocence, in spite of my ideological bent.”

Deceiving Schulman and his Hungarian subjects did not bother the men from MKULTRA in the slightest. According to a Gottlieb aide, one of the strong arguments inside the CIA for the whole Human Ecology program was that it gave the Agency a means of approaching and using political mavericks who could not otherwise get security clearances. “Sometimes,” he chuckles, “these left-wing social scientists were damned good.” This MKULTRA veteran scoffs at the displeasure Schulman expresses: “If we’d gone to a guy and said, ‘We’re CIA,’ he never would have done it. They were glad to get the money in a world where damned few people were willing to support them.... They can’t complain about how they were treated or that they were asked to do something they wouldn’t have normally done.”

The Human Ecology Society soon became a conduit for CIA money flowing to projects, like the Rutgers one, outside Cornell. For these grants, the Society provided only cover and administrative support behind the gold-plated names of Cornell and

Harold Wolff. From 1955 to 1958, Agency officials passed funds through the Society for work on criminal sexual psychopaths at Ionia State Hospital, [3] a mental institution located on the banks of the Grand River in the rolling farm country 120 miles northwest of Detroit. This project had an interesting hypothesis: That child molesters and rapists had ugly secrets buried deep within them and that their stake in not admitting their perversions approached that of spies not wanting to confess. The MKULTRA men reasoned that any technique that would work on a sexual psychopath would surely have a similar effect on a foreign agent. Using psychologists and psychiatrists connected to the Michigan mental health and the Detroit court systems, they set up a program to test LSD and marijuana, wittingly and unwittingly, alone and in combination with hypnosis. Because of administrative delays, the Michigan doctors managed to experiment only on 26 inmates in three years—all sexual offenders committed by judges without a trial under a Michigan law, since declared unconstitutional. The search for a truth drug went on, under the auspices of the Human Ecology Society, as well as in other MKULTRA channels.

The Ionia project was the kind of expansionist activity that made Cornell administrators, if not Harold Wolff, uneasy. By 1957, the Cornellians had had enough. At the same time, the Agency sponsors decided that the Society had outgrown its dependence on Cornell for academic credentials—that in fact the close ties to Cornell might inhibit the Society's future growth among academics notoriously sensitive to institutional conflicts. One CIA official wrote that the Society "must be given more established stature in the research community to be effective as a cover organization." Once the Society was cut loose in the foundation world, Agency men felt they would be freer to go anywhere in academia to buy research that might assist covert operations. So the CIA severed the Society's formal connection to Cornell.

The Human Ecology group moved out of its East 78th Street town house, which had always seem a little too plush for a university program, and opened up a new headquarters in Forest Hills, Queens, which was an inappropriate neighborhood for a well-connected foundation. [4] Agency officials hired a staff of four led by Lieutenant Colonel James Monroe, who had worked closely with the CIA as head of the Air Force's study of Korean War prisoners. Sid Gottlieb and the TSS hierarchy in Washington still made the major decisions, but Monroe and the Society staff, whose salaries the Agency paid, took over the Society's dealings with the outside world and the monitoring of several hundred thousand dollars a year in research projects. Monroe personally supervised dozens of grants, including Dr. Ewen Cameron's brainwashing work in Montreal. Soon the Society was flourishing as an innovative foundation, attracting research proposals from a wide variety of behavioral scientists, at a time when these people—particularly the unorthodox ones—were still the step-children of the fund-granting world.

After the Society's exit from Cornell, Wolff and Hinkle stayed on as president and vice-president, respectively, of the Society's board of directors. Dr. Joseph Hinsey, head of the New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center also remained on the board. Allen Dulles continued his personal interest in the Society's work and came to one of the first meetings of the new board, which, as was customary with CIA fronts, included some big

outside names. These luminaries added worthiness to the enterprise while playing essentially figurehead roles. In 1957 the other board members were John Whitehorn, chairman of the psychiatry department at Johns Hopkins University, Carl Rogers, professor of psychology and psychiatry at the University of Wisconsin, and Adolf A. Berle, onetime Assistant Secretary of State and chairman of the New York Liberal Party. [5] Berle had originally put his close friend Harold Wolff in touch with the CIA, and at Wolff's request, he came on the Society board despite some reservations. "I am frightened about this one," Berle wrote in his diary. "If the scientists do what they have laid out for themselves, men will become manageable ants. But I don't think it will happen."

There was a lot of old-fashioned backscratching among the CIA people and the academics as they settled into the work of accommodating each other. Even Harold Wolff, the first and the most enthusiastic of the scholar-spies, had made it clear from the beginning that he expected some practical rewards for his service. According to colleague Hinkle, who appreciated Wolff as one of the great grantsmen of his time, Wolff expected that the Agency "would support our research and we would be their consultants." Wolff bluntly informed the CIA that some of his work would have no direct use "except that it vastly enhances our value . . . as consultants and advisers." In other words, Wolff felt that his worth to the CIA increased in proportion to his professional accomplishments and importance—which in turn depended partly on the resources he commanded. The Agency men understood, and over the last half of the 1950s, they were happy to contribute almost \$300,000 to Wolff's own research on the brain and central nervous system. In turn, Wolff and his reputation helped them gain access to other leading lights in the academic world.

Another person who benefited from Human Ecology funds was Carl Rogers, whom Wolff had also asked to serve on the board. Rogers, who later would become famous for his nondirective, nonauthoritarian approach to psychotherapy, respected Wolff's work, and he had no objection to helping the CIA. Although he says he would have nothing to do with secret Agency activities today, he asks for understanding in light of the climate of the 1950s. "We really did regard Russia as the enemy," declares Rogers, "and we were trying to do various things to make sure the Russians did not get the upper hand." Rogers received an important professional reward for joining the Society board. Executive Director James Monroe had let him know that, once he agreed to serve, he could expect to receive a Society grant. "That appealed to me because I was having trouble getting funded," says Rogers. "Having gotten that grant [about \$30,000 over three years], it made it possible to get other grants from Rockefeller and NIMH." Rogers still feels grateful to the Society for helping him establish a funding "track record," but he emphasizes that the Agency never had any effect on his research.

Although MKULTRA psychologist John Gittinger suspected that Rogers' work on psychotherapy might provide insight into interrogation methods, the Society did not give Rogers money because of the content of his work. The grant ensured his services as a consultant, if desired, and, according to a CIA document, "free access" to his project. But above all, the grant allowed the Agency to use Rogers' name. His standing in the

academic community contributed to the layer of cover around the Society that Agency officials felt was crucial to mask their involvement.

Professor Charles Osgood's status in psychology also improved the Society's cover, but his research was more directly useful to the Agency, and the MKULTRA men paid much more to get it. In 1959 Osgood, who four years later became president of the American Psychological Association, wanted to push forward his work on how people in different societies express the same feelings, even when using different words and concepts. Osgood wrote in "an abstract conceptual framework," but Agency officials saw his research as "directly relevant" to covert activities. They believed they could transfer Osgood's knowledge of "hidden values and cues" in the way people communicate into more effective overseas propaganda. Osgood's work gave them a tool—called the "semantic differential"—to choose the right words in a foreign language to convey a particular meaning.

Like Carl Rogers, Osgood got his first outside funding for what became the most important work of his career from the Human Ecology Society. Osgood had written directly to the CIA for support, and the Society soon contacted him and furnished \$192,975 for research over five years. The money allowed him to travel widely and to expand his work into 30 different cultures. Also like Rogers, Osgood eventually received NIMH money to finish his research, but he acknowledges that the Human Ecology grants played an important part in the progress of his work. He stresses that "there was none of the feeling then about the CIA that there is now, in terms of subversive activities," and he states that the Society had no influence on anything he produced. Yet Society men could and did talk to him about his findings. They asked questions that reflected their own covert interests, not his academic pursuits, and they drew him out, according to one of them, "at great length."

Osgood had started studying cross-cultural meaning well before he received the Human Ecology money, but the Society's support ensured that he would continue his work on a scale that suited the Agency's purposes, as well as his own.

A whole category of Society funding, called "cover grants," served no other purpose than to build the Society's false front. These included a sociological study of Levittown, Long Island (about \$4,500), an analysis of the Central Mongoloid skull (\$700), and a look at the foreign-policy attitudes of people who owned fallout shelters, as opposed to people who did not (\$2,500). A \$500 Human Ecology grant went to Istanbul University for a study of the effects of circumcision on Turkish boys. The researcher found that young Turks, usually circumcised between the ages of five and seven, felt "severe emotional impact with attending symptoms of withdrawal." The children saw the painful operations as "an act of aggression" that brought out previously hidden fears—or so the Human Ecology Society reported.

In other instances, the Society put money into projects whose covert application was so unlikely that only an expert could see the possibilities. Nonetheless, in 1958 the

Society gave \$5,570 to social psychologists Muzafer and Carolyn Wood Sherif of the University of Oklahoma for work on the behavior of teen-age boys in gangs. The Sherifs, both ignorant of the CIA connection, [6] studied the group structures and attitudes in the gangs and tried to devise ways to channel antisocial behavior into more constructive paths. Their results were filtered through clandestine minds at the Agency. "With gang warfare," says an MKULTRA source, "you tried to get some defectors-in-place who would like to modify some of the group behavior and cool it. Now, getting a juvenile delinquent defector was motivationally not all that much different from getting a Soviet one."

MKULTRA officials were clearly interested in using their grants to build contacts and associations with prestigious academics. The Society put \$1,500 a year into the *Research in Mental Health Newsletter* published jointly at McGill University by the sociology and psychiatric departments. Anthropologist Margaret Mead, an international culture heroine, sat on the newsletter's advisory board (with, among others, D. Ewen Cameron), and the Society used her name in its biennial report. Similarly, the Society gave grants of \$26,000 to the well-known University of London psychologist, H. J. Eysenck, for his work on motivation. An MKULTRA document acknowledged that this research would have "no immediate relevance for Agency needs," but that it would "lend prestige" to the Society. The grants to Eysenck also allowed the Society to take funding credit for no less than nine of his publications in its 1963 report. The following year, the Society managed to purchase a piece of the work of the most famous behaviorist of all, Harvard's B. F. Skinner. Skinner, who had tried to train pigeons to guide bombs for the military during World War II, received a \$5,000 Human Ecology grant to pay the costs of a secretary and supplies for the research that led to his book, *Freedom and Dignity*. Skinner has no memory of the grant or its origins but says, "I don't like secret involvement of any kind. I can't see why it couldn't have been open and aboveboard."

A TSS source explains that grants like these "bought legitimacy" for the Society and made the recipients "grateful." He says that the money gave Agency employees at Human Ecology a reason to phone Skinner—or any of the other recipients—to pick his brain about a particular problem. In a similar vein, another MKULTRA man, psychologist John Gittinger mentions the Society's relationship with Erwin Goffman of the University of Pennsylvania, whom many consider today's leading sociological theorist. The Society gave him a small grant to help finish a book that would have been published anyway. As a result, Gittinger was able to spend hours talking with him about, among other things, an article he had written earlier on confidence men. These hucksters were experts at manipulating behavior, according to Gittinger, and Goffman unwittingly "gave us a better understanding of the techniques people use to establish phony relationships"—a subject of interest to the CIA.

To keep track of new developments in the behavioral sciences, Society representatives regularly visited grant recipients and found out what they and their colleagues were doing. Some of the knowing professors became conscious spies. Most simply relayed the latest professional gossip to their visitors and sent along unpublished papers. The prestige of the Human Ecology grantees also helped give the Agency access to be-

havioral scientists who had no connection to the Society. “You could walk into someone’s office and say you were just talking to Skinner,” says an MKULTRA veteran. “We didn’t hesitate to do this. It was a way to name-drop.”

The Society did not limit its intelligence gathering to the United States. As one Agency source puts it, “The Society gave us a legitimate basis to approach anyone in the academic community anywhere in the world.” CIA officials regularly used it as cover when they traveled abroad to study the behavior of foreigners of interest to the Agency, including such leaders as Nikita Khrushchev. The Society funded foreign researchers and also gave money to American professors to collect information abroad. In 1960, for instance, the Society sponsored a survey of Soviet psychology through the simple device of putting up \$15,000 through the official auspices of the American Psychological Association to send ten prominent psychologists on a tour of the Soviet Union. Nine of the ten had no idea of the Agency involvement, but CIA officials were apparently able to debrief everyone when the group returned. Then the Society sponsored a conference and book for which each psychologist contributed a chapter. The book added another \$5,000 to the CIA’s cost, but \$20,000 all told seemed like a small price to pay for the information gathered. The psychologists—except perhaps the knowledgeable one—did nothing they would not ordinarily have done during their trip, and the scholarly community benefited from increased knowledge on an important subject. The only thing violated was the openness and trust normally associated with academic pursuits. By turning scholars into spies—even unknowing ones—CIA officials risked the reputation of American research work and contributed potential ammunition toward the belief in many countries that the U.S. notion of academic freedom and independence from the state is self-serving and hypocritical.

Secrecy allowed the Agency a measure of freedom from normal academic restrictions and red tape, and the men from MKULTRA used that freedom to make their projects more attractive. The Society demanded “no stupid progress reports,” recalls psychologist and psychiatrist Martin Orne, who received a grant to support his Harvard research on hypnotism. As a further sign of generosity and trust, the Society gave Orne a follow-on \$30,000 grant with no specified purpose. [7] Orne could use it as he wished. He believes the money was “a contingency investment” in his work, and MKULTRA officials agree. “We could go to Orne anytime,” says one of them, “and say, ‘Okay, here is a situation and here is a kind of guy. What would you expect we might be able to achieve if we could hypnotize him?’ Through his massive knowledge, he could speculate and advise.” A handful of other Society grantees also served in similar roles as covert Agency consultants in the field of their expertise.

In general, the Human Ecology Society served as the CIA’s window on the world of behavioral research. No phenomenon was too arcane to escape a careful look from the Society, whether extrasensory perception or African witch doctors. “There were some unbelievable schemes,” recalls an MKULTRA veteran, “but you also knew Einstein was considered crazy. You couldn’t be so biased that you wouldn’t leave open the possibility that some crazy idea might work.” MKULTRA men realized, according to the veteran,

that “ninety percent of what we were doing would fail” to be of any use to the Agency. Yet, with a spirit of inquiry much freer than that usually found in the academic world, the Society took early stabs at cracking the genetic code with computers and finding out whether animals could be controlled through electrodes placed in their brains.

The Society’s unrestrained, scattershot approach to behavioral research went against the prevailing wisdom in American universities—both as to methods and to subjects of interest. During the 1950s one school of thought—so-called “behaviorism,”—was accepted on campus, virtually to the exclusion of all others. The “behaviorists,” led by Harvard’s B. F. Skinner, looked at psychology as the study of learned observable responses to outside stimulation. To oversimplify, they championed the approach in which psychologists gave rewards to rats scurrying through mazes, and they tended to dismiss matters of great interest to the Agency: e.g., the effect of drugs on the psyche, subjective phenomena like hypnosis, the inner workings of the mind, and personality theories that took genetic differences into account.

By investing up to \$400,000 a year into the early, innovative work of men like Carl Rogers, Charles Osgood, and Martin Orne, the CIA’s Human Ecology Society helped liberate the behavioral sciences from the world of rats and cheese. With a push from the Agency as well as other forces, the field opened up. Former iconoclasts became eminent, and, for better or worse, the Skinnerian near-monopoly gave way to a multiplication of contending schools. Eventually, a reputable behavioral scientist could be doing almost anything: holding hands with his students in sensitivity sessions, collecting survey data on spanking habits, or subjectively exploring new modes of consciousness. The CIA’s money undoubtedly changed the academic world to some degree, though no one can say how much.

As usual, the CIA men were ahead of their time and had started to move on before the new approaches became established. In 1963, having sampled everything from palm reading to subliminal perception, Sid Gottlieb and his colleagues satisfied themselves that they had overlooked no area of knowledge—however esoteric—that might be promising for CIA operations. The Society had served its purpose; now the money could be better spent elsewhere. Agency officials transferred the still-useful projects to other covert channels and allowed the rest to die quietly. By the end of 1965, when the remaining research was completed, the Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology was gone.

Notes

MKULTRA subprojects 48 and 60 provided the basic documents on the Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology. These were supplemented by the three biennial reports of the Society that could be found: 1957, 1961, and 1961-1963. Wolff’s own research work is MKULTRA subproject 61. Wolff’s proposals to the Agency are in #A/B, II, 10/68, undated “Proposed Plan for Implementing [deleted]” in two documents included in 48-29, March 5, 1956, “General Principles Upon Which these Proposals Are Based.” The Agency’s plans for the Chinese Project are described in #A/B, II, 10/48, undated,

Subject: Cryptonym [deleted] A/B, II 10/72, 9 December, 1954, Subject: Letter of Instructions, and #A/B, II, 10/110, undated, untitled.

Details of the logistics of renting the Human Ecology headquarters and bugging it are in #A/B, II, 10/23, 30 August, 1954, Subject: Meeting of Working Committee of [deleted], No. 5 and #A/B, II, 10/92, 8 December, 1954, Subject: Technical Installation.

The Hungarian project, as well as being described in the 1957 biennial report, was dealt with in MKULTRA subprojects 65 and 82, especially 65-12, 28 June 1956, Subject: MKULTRA subproject 65; 65-11, undated, Subject: Dr. [deleted]'s Project—Plans for the Coming Year, July, 1957-June, 1958; and 82-15, 11 April 1958, Subject: Project MKULTRA, Subproject 82.

The Ionia State sexual psychopath research was MKULTRA Subproject 39, especially 39-4, 9 April 1958, Subject: Trip Report, Visit to [deleted], 7 April 1958. Paul Magnusson of the Detroit Free Press and David Pearl of the Detroit ACLU office both furnished information.

Carl Rogers' MKULTRA subproject was # 97. He also received funds under Subproject 74. See especially 74-256, 7 October 1958, Supplement to Individual Grant under MKULTRA, Subproject No. 74 and 97-21, 6 August 1959, Subject: MKULTRA Subproject 97.

H. J. Eysenck's MKULTRA subproject was #111. See especially 111-3, 3 April 1961, Subject: Continuation of MKULTRA Subproject 111. The American Psychological Association-sponsored trip to the Soviet Union was described in Subproject 107. The book that came out of the trip was called *Some Views on Soviet Psychology*, Raymond Bauer (editor), (Washington: American Psychological Association; 1962).

The Sherifs' research on teenage gangs was described in Subproject # 102 and the 1961 Human Ecology biennial report. Dr. Carolyn Sherif also wrote a letter to the American Psychological Association Monitor, February 1978. Dr. Sherif talked about her work when she and I appeared on an August 1978 panel at the American Psychological Association's convention in Toronto.

Martin Orne's work for the Agency was described in Subproject 84. He contributed a chapter to the Society-funded book, *The Manipulation of Human Behavior*, edited by Albert Biderman and Herbert Zimmer-(New York: John Wiley & Sons; 1961), pp. 169-215. Financial data on Orne's Institute for Experimental Psychiatry came from a filing with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Attachment to Form 1023.

The quote from John Gittinger came from an interview with him conducted by Dr. Patricia Greenfield. Dr. Greenfield also interviewed Jay Schulman, Carl Rogers, and Charles Osgood for an article in the December 1977 issue of the American Psychological Association Monitor, from which my quotes of Schulman's comments are taken. She discussed Erving Goffman's role in a presentation to a panel of the American Psychological

Association convention in Toronto in August 1978. The talk was titled "CIA Support of Basic Research in Psychology: Policy Implications."

Footnotes

1. In 1961 the Society changed its name to the Human Ecology Fund, but for convenience sake it will be called the Society throughout the book.

2. Also to gain access to this same group of leftist Hungarian refugees in Europe, the Human Ecology Society put \$15,000 in 1958 into an unwitting study by Dr. A. H. M. Struik of the University of Nijmegen in the Netherlands. An Agency document extolled this arrangement not only as a useful way of studying Hungarians but because it provided "entree" into a leading European university and psychological research center, adding "such a connection has manifold cover and testing possibilities as well as providing a base from which to take advantage of developments in that area of the world."

3. Professor Laurence Hinkle states that it was never his or Cornell's intention that the Society would be used as a CIA funding conduit. When told that he himself had written letters on the Ionia project, he replied that the Society's CIA-supplied bookkeeper was always putting papers in front of him and that he must have signed without realizing the implications.

4. By 1961 the CIA staff had tired of Queens and moved the Society back into Manhattan to 201 East 57th Street. In 1965 as the Agency was closing down the front, it switched its headquarters to 183i Connecticut Avenue N.W. in Washington, the same building owned by Dr. Charles Geschickter that housed another MKULTRA conduit, the Geschickter Fund for Medical Research.

5. Other establishment figures who would grace the Human Ecology board over the years included Leonard Carmichael, head of the Smithsonian Institution, Barnaby Keeney, president of Brown University, and George A. Kelly, psychology professor and Society fund recipient at Ohio State University.

6. According to Dr. Carolyn Sherif, who says she and her husband did not share the Cold War consensus and would never have knowingly taken CIA funds Human Ecology executive director James Monroe lied directly about the source of the Society's money, claiming it came from rich New York doctors and Texas millionaires who gave it for tax purposes. Monroe used this standard cover story with other grantees.

7. A 1962 report of Orne's laboratory, the Institute for Experimental Psychiatry, showed that it received two sizable grants before the end of that year: \$30,000 from Human Ecology and \$30,000 from Scientific Engineering Institute, another CIA front organization. Orne says he was not aware of the latter group's Agency connection at the time, but learned of it later. He used its grant to study new ways of using the polygraph.

THE GITTINGER ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

With one exception, the CIA's behavioral research—whether on LSD or on electroshock—seems to have had more impact on the outside world than on Agency operations. That exception grew out of the work of the MKULTRA program's resident genius, psychologist John Gittinger. While on the CIA payroll, toiling to find ways to manipulate people, Gittinger created a unique system for assessing personality and predicting future behavior. He called his method—appropriately—the Personality Assessment System (PAS). Top Agency officials have been so impressed that they have given the Gittinger system a place in most agent-connected activities. To be sure, most CIA operators would not go nearly so far as a former Gittinger aide who says, “The PAS was the key to the whole clandestine business.” Still, after most of the touted mind controllers had given up or been sent back home, it was Gittinger, the staff psychologist, who sold his PAS system to cynical, anti-gimmick case officers in the Agency's Clandestine Services. And during the Cuban missile crisis, it was Gittinger who was summoned to the White House to give his advice on how Khrushchev would react to American pressure.

A heavy-set, goateed native of Oklahoma who in his later years came to resemble actor Walter Slezak, Gittinger looked much more like someone's kindly grandfather than a calculating theoretician. He had an almost insatiable curiosity about personality, and he spent most of his waking hours tinkering with and trying to perfect his system. So obsessed did he become that he always had the feeling even after other researchers had verified large chunks of the PAS and after the CIA had put it into operational use—that the whole thing was “a kind of paranoid delusion.”

Gittinger started working on his system even before he joined the CIA in 1950. Prior to that, he had been director of psychological services at the state hospital in Norman, Oklahoma. His high-sounding title did not reflect the fact that he was the only psychologist on the staff. A former high school guidance counselor and Naval lieutenant commander during World War II, he was starting out at age 30 with a master's degree. Every day he saw several hundred patients whose mental problems included virtually everything in the clinical textbooks.

Numerous tramps and other itinerants, heading West in search of the good life in California, got stuck in Oklahoma during the cold winter months and managed to get themselves admitted to Gittinger's hospital. In warmer seasons of the year, quite a few of them worked, when they had to, as cooks or dishwashers in the short-order hamburger stands that dotted the highways in the days before fast food. They functioned perfectly well in these jobs until freezing nights drove them from their outdoor beds. The hospital staff usually called them “seasonal schizophrenics” and gave them shelter until spring. Gittinger included them in the psychological tests he was so fond of running on his patients.

As he measured the itinerants on the Wechsler intelligence scale, a standard IQ test with 11 parts,^[1] Gittinger made a chance observation that became, he says, the

“bedrock” of his whole system. He noticed that the short-order cooks tended to do well on the digit-span subtest which rated their ability to remember numbers. The dishwashers, in contrast, had a poor memory for digits. Since the cooks had to keep track of many complex orders—with countless variations of medium rare, onions, and hold-the-mayo—their retentive quality served them well.

Gittinger also noticed that the cooks had different personality traits than the dishwashers. The cooks seemed able to maintain a high degree of efficiency in a distracting environment while customers were constantly barking new orders at them. They kept their composure by falling back on their internal resources and generally shutting themselves off from the commotion around them. Gittinger dubbed this personality type, which was basically inner-directed, an “Internalizer” (abbreviated “I”). The dishwashers, on the other hand, did not have the ability to separate themselves from the external world. In order to perform their jobs, they had to be placed off in some far corner of the kitchen with their dirty pots and pans, or else all the tumult of the place diverted them from their duty. Gittinger called the dishwasher type an “Externalizer” (E). He found that if he measured a high digit span in any person—not just a short-order cook—he could make a basic judgment about personality.

From observation, Gittinger concluded that babies were born with distinct personalities which then were modified by environmental factors. The Internalized—or I—baby was caught up in himself and tended to be seen as a passive child; hence, the world usually called him a “good baby.” The E tot was more interested in outside stimuli and attention, and thus was more likely to cause his parents problems by making demands. Gittinger believed that the way parents and other authority figures reacted to the child helped to shape his personality. Adults often pressured or directed the I child to become more outgoing and the E one to become more self-sufficient. Gittinger found he could measure the compensations, or adjustments, the child made on another Wechsler subtest, the one that rated arithmetic ability. He noticed that in later life, when the person was subject to stress, these compensations tended to disappear, and the person reverted to his original personality type. Gittinger wrote that his system “makes possible the assessment of fundamental discrepancies between the surface personality and the underlying personality structure—discrepancies that produce tension, conflict, and anxiety.”

Besides the E-I dimensions, Gittinger identified two other fundamental sets of personality characteristics that he could measure with still other Wechsler subtests. Depending on how a subject did on the block design subtest, Gittinger could tell if he were Regulated (R) or Flexible (F). The Regulated person had no trouble learning by rote but usually did not understand what he learned. The Flexible individual, on the other hand, had to understand something before he learned it. Gittinger noted that R children could learn to play the piano moderately well with comparatively little effort. The F child most often hated the drudgery of piano lessons, but Gittinger observed that the great concert pianists tended to be Fs who had persevered and mastered the instrument.

Other psychologists had thought up personality dimensions similar to Gittinger’s

E and I, R and F. even if they defined them somewhat differently. Gittinger's most original contribution came in a third personality dimension, which revealed how well people were able to adapt their social behavior to the demands of the culture they lived in. Gittinger found he could measure this dimension with the picture arrangement Wechsler subtest, and he called it the Role Adaptive (A) or Role Uniform (U). It corresponded to "charisma," since other people were naturally attracted to the A person while they tended to ignore the U.

All this became immensely more complicated as Gittinger measured compensations and modifications with other Wechsler subtests. This complexity alone worked against the acceptance of his system by the outside world, as did the fact that he based much of it on ideas that ran contrary to accepted psychological doctrine—such as his heretical notion that genetic differences existed. It did not help, either, that Gittinger was a non-Ph.D. whose theory sprang from the kitchen habits of vagrants in Oklahoma.

Any one of these drawbacks might have stifled Gittinger in the academic world, but to the pragmatists in the CIA, they were irrelevant. Gittinger's strange ideas seemed to work. With uncanny accuracy, he could look at nothing more than a subject's Wechsler numbers, pinpoint his weaknesses, and show how to turn him into an Agency spy. Once Gittinger's boss, Sid Gottlieb, and other high CIA officials realized how Gittinger's PAS could be used to help case officers handle agents, they gave the psychologist both the time and money to improve his system under the auspices of the Human Ecology Society.

Although he was a full-time CIA employee, Gittinger worked under Human Ecology cover through the 1950s. Agency officials considered the PAS to be one of the Society's greatest triumphs, definitely worth continuing after the Society was phased out. In 1962 Gittinger and his co-workers moved their base of operations from the Human Ecology headquarters in New York to a CIA proprietary company, set up especially for them in Washington and called Psychological Assessment Associates. Gittinger served as president of the company, whose cover was to provide psychological services to American firms overseas. He personally opened a branch office in Tokyo (later moved to Hong Kong) to service CIA stations in the Far East. The Washington staff, which grew to about 15 professionals during the 1960s, handled the rest of the world by sending assessment specialists off for temporary visits.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars in Human Ecology grants and then even more money in Psychological Assessment contracts—all CIA funds—flowed out to verify and expand the PAS. For example, the Society gave about \$140,000 to David Saunders of the Educational Testing Service, the company that prepares the College Board exams. Saunders, who knew about the Agency's involvement, found a correlation between brain (EEG) patterns and results on the digit-span test, and he helped Gittinger apply the system to other countries. In this regard, Gittinger and his colleagues understood that the Wechsler battery of subtests had a cultural bias and that a Japanese E had a very different personality from, say, a Russian E. To compensate, they worked out localized ver-

sions of the PAS for various nations around the world.

While at the Human Ecology group, Gittinger supervised much of the Society's other research in the behavioral sciences, and he always tried to interest Society grantees in his system. He looked for ways to mesh their research with his theories—and vice versa. Some, like Carl Rogers and Charles Osgood, listened politely and did not follow up. Yet Gittinger would always learn something from their work that he could apply to the PAS. A charming man and a skillful raconteur, Gittinger convinced quite a few of the other grantees of the validity of his theories and the importance of his ideas. Careful not to threaten the egos of his fellow professionals, he never projected an air of superiority. Often he would leave people even the skeptical—openmouthed in awe as he painted unnervingly accurate personality portraits of people he had never met. Indeed, people frequently accused him of somehow having cheated by knowing the subject in advance or peeking at his file.

Gittinger patiently and carefully taught his system to his colleagues, who all seem to have views of him that range from great respect to pure idolatry. For all his willingness to share the PAS, Gittinger was never able to show anyone how to use the system as skillfully as he did. Not that he did not try; he simply was a more talented natural assessor than any of the others. Moreover, his system was full of interrelations and variables that he instinctively understood but had not bothered to articulate. As a result, he could look at Wechsler scores and pick out behavior patterns which would be valid and which no one else had seen. Even after Agency officials spent a small fortune trying to computerize the PAS, they found, as one psychologist puts it, the machine “couldn't tie down all the variables” that Gittinger was carrying around in his head.

Some Human Ecology grantees, like psychiatrist Robert Hyde, were so impressed with Gittinger's system that they made the PAS a major part of their own research. Hyde routinely gave Wechslers to his subjects before plying them with liquor, as part of the Agency's efforts to find out how people react to alcohol. In 1957 Hyde moved his research team from Boston Psychopathic Hospital, where he had been America's first LSD tripper, to Butler Health Center in Providence. There, with Agency funds, Hyde built an experimental party room in the hospital, complete with pinball machine, dartboard, and bamboo bar stools. From behind a two-way mirror, psychologists watched the subjects get tipsy and made careful notes on their reaction to alcohol. Not surprisingly, the observers found that pure Internalizers became more withdrawn after several drinks, and that uncompensated Es were more likely to become garrulous—in essence, sloppy drunks. Thus Gittinger was able to make generalizations about the different ways an I or an E responded to alcohol.^[2] Simply by knowing how people scored on the Wechsler digit-span test, he could predict how they would react to liquor. Hyde and Harold Abramson at Mount Sinai Hospital made the same kind of observations for LSD finding, among other things, that an E was more likely than an I to have a bad trip. (Apparently, an I is more accustomed than an E to “being into his own head” and losing touch with external reality.)

At Gittinger's urging, other Human Ecology grantees gave the Wechsler battery to their experimental subjects and sent him the scores. He was building a unique data base on all phases of human behavior, and he needed samples of as many distinct groups as possible. By getting the scores of actors, he could make generalizations about what sort of people made good role-players. Martin Orne at Harvard sent in scores of hypnosis subjects, so Gittinger could separate the personality patterns of those who easily went into a trance from those who could not be hypnotized. Gittinger collected Wechslers of businessmen, students, high-priced fashion models, doctors, and just about any other discrete group he could find a way to have tested. In huge numbers, the Wechslers came flowing in—29,000 sets in all by the early 1970s—each one accompanied by biographic data. With the 10 subtests he used and at least 10 possible scores on each of those, no two Wechsler results in the whole sample ever looked exactly the same. Gittinger kept a computer printout of all 29,000 on his desk, and he would fiddle with them almost every day—looking constantly for new truths that could be drawn out of them.

John Gittinger was interested in all facets of personality, but because he worked for the CIA, he emphasized deviant forms. He particularly sought out Wechslers of people who had rejected the values of their society or who had some vice—hidden or otherwise—that caused others to reject them. By studying the scores of the defectors who had come over to the West, Gittinger hoped to identify common characteristics of men who had become traitors to their governments. If there were identifiable traits, Agency operators could look for them in prospective spies. Harris Isbell, who ran the MKULTRA drug-testing program at the Lexington, Kentucky detention hospital, sent in the scores of heroin addicts. Gittinger wanted to know what to look for in people susceptible to drugs.

The Human Ecology project at Ionia State Hospital in Michigan furnished Wechslers of sexual psychopaths. These scores showed that people with uncontrollable urges have different personality patterns than so-called normals. Gittinger himself journeyed to the West Coast to test homosexuals, lesbians, and the prostitutes he interviewed under George White's auspices in the San Francisco safehouse. With each group, he separated out the telltale signs that might be a future indicator of their sexual preference in others. Gittinger understood that simply by looking at the Wechsler scores of someone newly tested, he could pick out patterns that corresponded to behavior of people in the data base.

The Gittinger system worked best when the TSS staff had a subject's Wechsler scores to analyze, but Agency officials could not very well ask a Russian diplomat or any other foreign target to sit down and take the tests. During World War II, OSS chief William Donovan had faced a similar problem in trying to find out about Adolf Hitler's personality, and Donovan had commissioned psychoanalyst Walter Langer to make a long-distance psychiatric profile of the German leader. Langer had sifted through all the available data on the Führer, and that was exactly what Gittinger's TSS assessments staff did when they lacked direct contact (and when they had it, too). They pored over all the intelligence gathered by operators, agents, bugs, and taps and looked at samples of a man's handwriting.^[3] The CIA men took the process of "indirect assessment" one step

further than Langer had, however. They observed the target's behavior and looked for revealing patterns that corresponded with traits already recorded among the subjects of the 29,000 Wechsler samples.

Along this line, Gittinger and his staff had a good idea how various personality types acted after consuming a few drinks. Thus, they reasoned, if they watched a guest at a cocktail party and he started to behave in a recognizable way—by withdrawing, for instance—they could make an educated guess about his personality type—in this case, that he was an I. In contrast, the drunken Russian diplomat who became louder and began pinching every woman who passed by probably was an E. Instead of using the test scores to predict how a person would behave, the assessments staff was, in effect, looking at behavior and working backward to predict how the person would have scored if he had taken the test. The Gittinger staff developed a whole checklist of 30 to 40 patterns that the skilled observer could look for. Each of these traits reflected one of the Wechsler subtests, and it corresponded to some insight picked up from the 29,000 scores in the data base.

Was the target sloppy or neat? Did he relate to women stiffly or easily? How did he hold a cigarette and put it into his mouth? When he went through a receiving line, did he immediately repeat the name of each person introduced to him? Taken as a whole, all these observations allowed Gittinger to make a reasoned estimate about a subject's personality, with emphasis on his vulnerabilities. As Gittinger describes the system, "If you could get a sample of several kinds of situations, you could begin to get some pretty good information." Nevertheless, Gittinger had his doubts about indirect assessment. "I never thought we were good at this," he says.

The TSS assessment staff, along with the Agency's medical office use the PAS indirectly to keep up the OSS tradition of making psychological portraits of world leaders like Hitler. Combining analytical techniques with gossipy intelligence, the assessors tried to give high-level U.S. officials a better idea of what moved the principal international political figures.^[4] One such study of an American citizen spilled over into the legally forbidden domestic area when in 1971 the medical office prepared a profile of Daniel Ellsberg at the request of the White House. To get raw data for the Agency assessors, John Ehrlichman authorized a break-in at Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office in California. John Gittinger vehemently denies that his staff played any role in preparing this profile, which the White House plumbers intended to use as a kind of psychological road map to compromise Ellsberg—just as CIA operators regularly worked from such assessments to exploit the weaknesses of foreigners.

Whether used directly or indirectly, the PAS gave Agency case officers a tool to get a better reading of the people with whom they dealt. CIA field stations overseas routinely sent all their findings on a target, along with indirect assessment checklists, back to Washington, so headquarters personnel could decide whether or not to try recruitment. The TSS assessment staff contributed to this process by attempting to predict what ploys would work best on the man in the case officers' sights. "Our job was to rec-

ommend what strategy to try,” says a onetime Gittinger colleague. This source states he had direct knowledge of cases where TSS recommendations led to sexual entrapment operations, both hetero- and homosexual. “We had women ready—called them a stable,” he says, and they found willing men when they had to.

One CIA psychologist stresses that the PAS only provided “clues” on how to compromise people. “If somebody’s assessment came in like the sexual psychopaths’, it would raise red flags,” he notes. But TSS staff assessors could only conclude that the target had a potentially serious sex problem. They could by no means guarantee that the target’s defenses could be broken. Nevertheless, the PAS helped dictate the best weapons for the attack. “I’ve heard John [Gittinger] say there’s always something that someone wants,” says another former Agency psychologist. “And with the PAS you can find out what it is. It’s not necessarily sex or booze. Sometimes it’s status or recognition or security.” Yet another Gittinger colleague describes this process as “looking for soft spots.” He states that after years of working with the system, he still bridled at a few of the more fiendish ways “to get at people” that his colleagues dreamed up. He stayed on until retirement, however, and he adds, “None of this was personal. It was for national security reasons.”

A few years ago, ex-CIA psychologist James Keehner told reporter Maureen Orth that he personally went to New York in 1969 to give Wechsler tests to an American nurse who had volunteered her body for her country. “We wanted her to sleep with this Russian,” explained Keehner. “Either the Russian would fall in love with her and defect, or we’d blackmail him. I had to see if she could sleep with him over a period of time and not get involved emotionally. Boy, was she tough!” Keehner noted that he became disgusted with entrapment techniques, especially after watching a film of an agent in bed with a “recruitment target.” He pointed out that Agency case officers, many of whom “got their jollies” from such work, used a hidden camera to get their shots. The sexual technology developed in the MKULTRA safehouses in New York and San Francisco had been put to work. The operation worked no better in the 1960s, however, than TSS officials predicted such activities would a decade earlier. “You don’t really recruit agents with sexual blackmail,” Keehner concluded. “That’s why I couldn’t even take reading the files after a while. I was sickened at seeing people take pleasure in other people’s inadequacies. First of all, I thought it was just dumb. For all the money going out, nothing ever came back.”

Keehner became disgusted by the picking-at-scabs aspect of TSS assessment work. Once the PAS had identified a target as having potential mental instabilities, staff members sometimes suggested ways to break him down, reasoning that by using a ratchet-like approach to put him under increased pressure, they might be able to break the lines that tied him to his country, if not to his sanity. Keehner stated, “I was sent to deal with the most negative aspects of the human condition. It was planned destructiveness. First, you’d check to see if you could destroy a man’s marriage. If you could, then that would be enough to put a lot of stress on the individual, to break him down. Then you might start a minor rumor campaign against him. Harass him constantly. Bump his car in traffic. A lot of it is ridiculous, but it may have a cumulative effect.” Agency case officers might also use this same sort of stress-producing campaign against a particularly effec-

tive enemy intelligence officer whom they knew they could never recruit but whom they hoped to neutralize.

Most operations—including most recruitments—did not rely on such nasty methods. The case officer still benefited from the TSS staffs assessment, but he usually wanted to minimize stress rather than accentuate it. CIA operators tended to agree that the best way to recruit an agent was to make the relationship as productive and satisfying as possible for him, operating from the old adage about catching more flies with honey than vinegar. “You pick the thing most fearful to him—the things which would cause him the most doubt,” says the source. “If his greatest fear is that he can’t trust you to protect him and his family, you overload your pitch with your ability to do it. Other people need structure, so you tell them exactly what they will need to do. If you leave it open-ended, they’ll be scared you’ll ask them to do things they’re incapable of.”[5]

Soon after the successful recruitment of a foreigner to spy for the CIA, either a CIA staff member or a specially trained case officer normally sat down with the new agent and gave him the full battery of Wechsler subtests—a process that took several hours. The tester never mentioned that the exercise had anything to do with personality but called it an “aptitude” test—which it also is. The assessments office in Washington then analyzed the results. As with the polygraph, the PAS helped tell if the agent were lying. It could often delve deeper than surface concepts of true and false. The PAS might show that the agent’s motivations were not in line with his behavior. In that case, if the gap were too great, the case officer could expect to run up against considerable deception—resulting either from espionage motives or psychotic tendencies.

The TSS staff assessors sent a report back to the field on the best way to deal with the new agent and the most effective means to exploit him. They would recommend whether his case officer should treat him sternly or permissively. If the agent were an Externalizer who needed considerable companionship, the assessors might suggest that the case officer try to spend as much time with him as possible.[6] They would probably recommend against sending this E agent on a long mission into a hostile country, where he could not have the friendly company he craved.

Without any help from John Gittinger or his system, covert operators had long been deciding matters like these, which were, after all, rooted in common sense. Most case officers prided themselves on their ability to play their agents like a musical instrument, at just the right tempo, and the Gittinger system did not shake their belief that nothing could beat their own intuition. Former CIA Deputy Director Ray Cline expresses a common view when he says the PAS “was part of the system—kind of a check-and-balance—a supposedly scientific tool that was not weighed very heavily. I never put as much weight on the psychological assessment reports as on a case officer’s view.... In the end, people went with their own opinion.” Former Director William Colby found the assessment reports particularly useful in smoothing over that “traumatic” period when a case officer had to pass on his agent to a replacement. Understandably, the agent often saw the switch as a danger or a hardship. “The new guy has to show some understanding

and sympathy,” says Colby, who had 30 years of operational experience himself, “but it doesn’t work if these feelings are not real.”

For those Agency officers who yearned to remove as much of the human element as possible from agent operations, Gittinger’s system was a natural. It reduced behavior to a workable formula of shorthand letters that, while not insightful in all respects, gave a reasonably accurate description of a person. Like Social Security numbers, such formulas fitted well with a computerized approach. While not wanting to overemphasize the Agency’s reliance on the PAS, former Director Colby states that the system made dealing with agents “more systematized, more professional.”

In 1963 the CIA’s Inspector General gave the TSS assessment staff high marks and described how it fit into operations:

The [Clandestine Services] case officer is first and foremost, perhaps, a practitioner of the art of assessing and exploiting human personality and motivations for ulterior purposes. The ingredients of advanced skill in this art are highly individualistic in nature, including such qualities as perceptiveness and imagination. [The PAS] seeks to enhance the case officer’s skill by bringing the methods and disciplines of psychology to bear.... The prime objectives are control, exploitation, or neutralization. These objectives are innately anti-ethical rather than therapeutic in their intent.

In other words, the PAS is directed toward the relationship between the American case officer and his foreign agent, that lies at the heart of espionage. In that sense, it amounts to its own academic discipline—the psychology of spying—complete with axioms and reams of empirical data. The business of the PAS, like that of the CIA, is control.

One former CIA psychologist, who still feels guilty about his participation in certain Agency operations, believes that the CIA’s fixation on control and manipulation mirrors, in a more virulent form, the way Americans deal with each other generally. “I don’t think the CIA is too far removed from the culture,” he says. “It’s just a matter of degree. If you put a lot of money out there, there are many people who are lacking the ethics even of the CIA. At least the Agency had an ideological basis.” This psychologist believes that the United States has become an extremely control-oriented society—from the classroom to politics to television advertising. Spying and the PAS techniques are unique only in that they are more systematic and secret.

Another TSS scientist believes that the Agency’s behavioral research was a logical extension of the efforts of American psychologists, psychiatrists, and sociologists to change behavior—which he calls their “sole motivation.” Such people manipulate their subjects in trying to make mentally disturbed people well, in turning criminals into law-abiding citizens, in improving the work of students, and in pushing poor people to get off welfare. The source cites all of these as examples of “behavior modification” for socially acceptable reasons, which, like public attitudes toward spying, change from time to time. “Don’t get the idea that all these behavioral scientists were nice and pure, that

they didn't want to change anything, and that they were detached in their science," he warns. "They were up to their necks in changing people. It just happened that the things they were interested in were not always the same as what we were." Perhaps the saving grace of the behavioral scientists is summed up by longtime MKULTRA consultant Martin Orne: "We are sufficiently ineffective so that our findings can be published." With the PAS, CIA officials had a handy tool for social engineering. The Gittinger staff found one use for it in the sensitive area of selecting members of foreign police and intelligence agencies. All over the globe, Agency operators have frequently maintained intimate working relations with security services that have consistently mistreated their own citizens. The assessments staff played a key role in choosing members of the secret police in at least two countries whose human-rights records are among the world's worst.

In 1961, according to TSS psychologist John Winne, the CIA and the Korean government worked together to establish the newly created Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA). The American CIA station in Seoul asked headquarters to send out an assessor to "select the initial cadre" of the KCIA. Off went Winne on temporary duty. "I set up an office with two translators," he recalls, "and used a Korean version of the Wechsler." The Agency psychologist gave the tests to 25 to 30 police and military officers and wrote up a half-page report on each, listing their strengths and weaknesses. Winne wanted to know about each candidate's "ability to follow orders, creativity, lack of personality disorders, motivation—why he wanted out of his current job. It was mostly for the money, especially with the civilians." The test results went to the Korean authorities, whom Winne believes made the personnel decisions "in conjunction with our operational people."

"We would do a job like this and never get feedback, so we were never sure we'd done a good job," Winne complains. Sixteen years after the end of his mission to Seoul and after news of KCIA repression at home and bribes to American congressmen abroad, Winne feels that his best efforts had "boomeranged." He states that Tongsun Park was not one of the KCIA men he tested.

In 1966 CIA staffers, including Gittinger himself, took part in selecting members of an equally controversial police unit in Uruguay—the anti-terrorist section that fought the Tupamaro urban guerrillas. According to John Cassidy, the CIA's deputy station chief there at the time, Agency operators worked to set up this special force together with the Agency for International Development's Public Safety Mission (whose members included Dan Mitrione, later kidnapped and killed by the Tupamaros). The CIA-assisted police claimed they were in a life-and-death struggle against the guerrillas, and they used incredibly brutal methods, including torture, to stamp out most of the Uruguayan left along with the guerrillas.

While the special police were being organized, "John [Gittinger] came down for three days to get the program underway," recalls Cassidy. Then Hans Greiner, a Gittinger associate, ran Wechslers on 20 Uruguayan candidates. One question on the information subtest was "How many weeks in the year?" Eighteen of the 20 said it was 48, and only

one man got the answer right. (Later he was asked about his answer, and he said he had made a mistake; he meant 48.) But when Greiner asked this same group of police candidates, "Who wrote Faust?" 18 of the 20 knew it was Goethe. "This tells you something about the culture," notes Cassidy, who served the Agency all over Latin America. It also points up the difficulty Gittinger had in making the PAS work across cultural lines.

In any case, CIA man Cassidy found the assessment process most useful for showing how to train the anti-terrorist section. "According to the results, these men were shown to have very dependent psychologies and they needed strong direction," recalls the now-retired operator. Cassidy was quite pleased with the contribution Gittinger and Greiner made. "For years I had been dealing with Latin Americans," says Cassidy, "and here, largely by psychological tests, one of [Gittinger's] men was able to analyze people he had no experience with and give me some insight into them.... Ordinarily, we would have just selected the men and gone to work on them."

In helping countries like South Korea and Uruguay pick their secret police, TSS staff members often inserted a devilish twist with the PAS. They could not only choose candidates who would make good investigators, interrogators, or whatever, but they could also spot those who were most likely to succumb to future CIA blandishments. "Certain types were more recruitable," states a former assessor. "I looked for them when I wrote my reports.... Anytime the Company [the CIA] spent money for training a foreigner, the object was that he would ultimately serve our control purposes." Thus, CIA officials were not content simply to work closely with these foreign intelligence agencies; they insisted on penetrating them, and the PAS provided a useful aid.

In 1973 John Gittinger and his longtime associate John Winne, who picked KCIA men, published a basic description of the PAS in a professional journal. Although others had written publicly about the system, this article apparently disturbed some of the Agency's powers, who were then cutting back on the number of CIA employees at the order of short-time Director James Schlesinger. Shortly thereafter, Gittinger, then 56, stopped being president of Psychological Assessment Associates but stayed on as a consultant. In 1974 I wrote about Gittinger's work, albeit incompletely, in *Rolling Stone* magazine. Gittinger was disturbed that disclosure of his CIA connection would hurt his professional reputation. "Are we tarred by a brush because we worked for the CIA?" he asked during one of several rather emotional exchanges. "I'm proud of it." He saw no ethical problems in "looking for people's weaknesses" if it helped the CIA obtain information, and he declared that for many years most Americans thought this was a useful process. At first, he offered to give me the Wechsler tests and prepare a personality assessment to explain the system, but Agency officials prohibited his doing so. "I was given no explanation," said the obviously disappointed Gittinger. "I'm very proud of my professional work, and I had looked forward to being able to explain it."

In August 1977 Gittinger publicly testified in Senate hearings. While he obviously would have preferred talking about his psychological research, his most persistent questioner, Senator Edward Kennedy, was much more interested in bringing out sensational

details about prostitutes and drug testing. A proud man, Gittinger felt “humiliated” by the experience, which ended with him looking foolish on national television. The next month, the testimony of his former associate, David Rhodes, further bruised Gittinger. Rhodes told the Kennedy subcommittee about Gittinger’s role in leading the “Gang that Couldn’t Spray Straight” in an abortive attempt to test LSD in aerosol cans on unwitting subjects. Gittinger does not want his place in history to be determined by this kind of activity. He would like to see his Personality Assessment System accepted as an important contribution to science.

Tired of the controversy and worn down by trying to explain the PAS, Gittinger has moved back to his native Oklahoma. He took a copy of the 29,000 Wechsler results with him, but he has lost his ardor for working with them. A handful of psychologists around the country still swear by the system and try to pass it on to others. One, who uses it in private practice, says that in therapy it saves six months in understanding the patient. This psychologist takes a full reading of his patient’s personality with the PAS, and then he varies his treatment to fit the person’s problems. He believes that most American psychologists and psychiatrists treat their patients the same whereas the PAS is designed to identify the differences between people. Gittinger very much hopes that others will accept this view and move his system into the mainstream. “It means nothing unless I can get someone else to work on it,” he declares. Given the preconceptions of the psychological community, the inevitable taint arising from the CIA’s role in developing the system, and Gittinger’s lack of academic credentials and energy, his wish will probably not be fulfilled.

Notes

The material on the Gittinger Personality Assessment System (PAS) comes from “An Introduction to the Personality Assessment System” by John Winne and John Gittinger, Monograph Supplement No. 38, Clinical Psychology Publishing Co., Inc. 1973; an interview with John Winne; interviews with three other former CIA psychologists; 1974 interviews with John Gittinger by the author; and an extended interview with Gittinger by Dr. Patricia Greenfield, Associate Professor of Psychology at UCLA. Some of the material was used first in a Rolling Stone article, July 18, 1974, “The CIA Won’t Quite Go Public.” Robert Hyde’s alcohol research at Butler Health Center was MKULTRA Subproject 66. See especially 66-17, 27 August, 1958. Subject: Proposed Alcohol Study—1958-1959 and 66-5. undated, Subject: Equipment—Ecology Laboratory.

The 1963 Inspector General’s report on TSS, as first released under the Freedom of Information Act, did not include the section on personality assessment quoted from in the chapter. An undated, untitled document, which was obviously this section, was made available in one of the CIA’s last releases.

MKULTRA subproject 83 dealt with graphology research, as did part of Subproject 60, which covered the whole Human Ecology Society. See especially 83-7, December 11, 1959, Subject: [deleted] Graphological Review and 60-28, undated, Subject [deleted]

Activities Report, May, 1959-April, 1960.

Information on the psychological profile of Ferdinand Marcos came from a U.S. Government source who had read it. Information on the profile of the Shah of Iran came from a column by Jack Anderson and Les Whitten "CIA Study Finds Shah Insecure," Washington Post, July 11, 1975.

The quotes from James Keehner came from an article in New Times by Maureen Orth, "Memoirs of a CIA Psychologist," June 25, 1975.

For related reports on the CIA's role in training foreign police and its activities in Uruguay, see an article by Taylor Branch and John Marks, "Tracking the CIA," Harper's Weekly, January 25, 1975 and Philip Agee's book, *Inside the Company: CIA Diary* (London: Penguin; 1975).

The quote from Martin Orne was taken from Patricia Greenfield's APA Monitor article cited in the last chapter's notes.

Gittinger's testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the Kennedy subcommittee on August 3, 1977 appeared on pages 50-63. David Rhodes' testimony on Gittinger's role in the abortive San Francisco LSD spraying appeared in hearings before the Kennedy subcommittee, September 20, 1977, pp. 100-110.

Footnotes

1. Developed by psychologist David Wechsler, this testing system is called, in different versions, the Wechsler-Bellevue and the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale. As Gittinger worked with it over the years, he made modifications that he incorporated in what he named the Wechsler-Bellevue-G. For simplicity's sake, it is simply referred to as the Wechsler system throughout the book.

2. As with most of the descriptions of the PAS made in the book, this is an oversimplification of a more complicated process. The system, as Gittinger used it, yielded millions of distinct personality types. His observations on alcohol were based on much more than a straight I and E comparison. For the most complete description of the PAS in the open literature, see the article by Gittinger and Winne cited in the chapter notes.

3. Graphology (handwriting analysis) appealed to CIA officials as a way of supplementing PAS assessments or making judgments when only a written letter was available. Graphology was one of the seemingly arcane fields which the Human Ecology Society had investigated and found operational uses for. The Society wound up funding handwriting research and a publication in West Germany where the subject was taken much more seriously than in the United States, and it sponsored a study to compare handwriting analyses with Wechsler scores of actors (including some homosexuals), patients in psychotherapy, criminal psychopaths, and fashion models. Gittinger went on to hire a

resident graphologist who could do the same sort of amazing things with handwriting as the Oklahoma psychologist could do with Wechsler scores. One former colleague recalls her spotting—accurately—a stomach ailment in a foreign leader simply by reading one letter. Asked in an interview about how the Agency used her work, she replied, “If they think they can manipulate a person, that’s none of my business. I don’t know what they do with it. My analysis was not done with that intention.... Something I learned very early in government was not to ask questions.”

4. A profile of Ferdinand Marcos found the Filipino president’s massive personal enrichment while in office to be a natural outgrowth of his country’s tradition of putting loyalty to one’s family and friends ahead of all other considerations. Agency assessors found the Shah of Iran to be a brilliant but dangerous megalomaniac whose problems resulted from an overbearing father, the humiliation of having served as a puppet ruler, and his inability for many years to produce a male heir.

5. This source reports that case officers usually used this sort of nonthreatening approach and switched to the rougher stuff if the target decided he did not want to spy for the CIA. In that case, says the ex-CIA man, “you don’t want the person to say no and run off and tattle. You lose an asset that way—not in the sense of the case officer being shot, but by being nullified.” The spurned operator might then offer not to reveal that the target was cheating on his wife or had had a homosexual affair, in return for the target not disclosing the recruitment attempt to his own intelligence service.

6. While Agency officials might also have used the PAS to select the right case officer to deal with the E agent—one who would be able to sustain the agent’s need for a close relationship over a long period of time—they almost never used the system with this degree of precision. An Agency office outside TSS did keep Wechslers and other test scores on file for most case officers, but the Clandestine Services management was not willing to turn over the selection of American personnel to the psychologists.

HYPNOSIS

No mind-control technique has more captured popular imagination—and kindled fears—than hypnosis. Men have long dreamed they could use overwhelming hypnotic powers to compel others to do their bidding. And when CIA officials institutionalized that dream in the early Cold War Days, they tried, like modern-day Svengalis, to use hypnosis to force their favors on unwitting victims.

One group of professional experts, as well as popular novelists, argued that hypnosis would lead to major breakthroughs in spying. Another body of experts believed the opposite. The Agency men, who did not fully trust the academics anyway, listened to both points of view and kept looking for applications which fit their own special needs. To them, hypnosis offered too much promise not to be pursued, but finding the answers was such an elusive and dangerous process that 10 years after the program started CIA officials were still searching for practical uses.

The CIA's first behavioral research czar, Morse Allen of ARTICHOKE, was intrigued by hypnosis. He read everything he could get his hands on, and in 1951 he went to New York for a four-day course from a well-known stage hypnotist. This hypnotist had taken the Svengali legend to heart, and he bombarded Allen with tales of how he used hypnosis to seduce young women. He told the ARTICHOKE chief that he had convinced one mesmerized lady that he was her husband and that she desperately wanted him. That kind of deception has a place in covert operations, and Morse Allen was sufficiently impressed to report back to his bosses the hypnotist's claim that "he spent approximately five nights a week away from home engaging in sexual intercourse."

Apart from the bragging, the stage hypnotist did give Morse Allen a short education in how to capture a subject's attention and induce a trance. Allen returned to Washington more convinced than ever of the benefits of working hypnosis into the ARTICHOKE repertory and of the need to build a defense against it. With permission from above, he decided to take his hypnosis studies further, right in his own office. He asked young CIA secretaries to stay after work and ran them through the hypnotic paces—proving to his own satisfaction that he could make them do whatever he wanted. He had secretaries steal SECRET files and pass them on to total strangers, thus violating the most basic CIA security rules. He got them to steal from each other and to start fires. He made one of them report to the bedroom of a strange man and then go into a deep sleep. "This activity clearly indicates that individuals under hypnosis might be compromised and blackmailed," Allen wrote.

On February 19, 1954, Morse Allen simulated the ultimate experiment in hypnosis: the creation of a "Manchurian Candidate," or programmed assassin. Allen's "victim" was a secretary whom he put into a deep trance and told to keep sleeping until he ordered otherwise. He then hypnotized a second secretary and told her that if she could not wake up her friend, "her rage would be so great that she would not hesitate to 'kill.'" Allen left a pistol nearby, which the secretary had no way of knowing was unloaded. Even though she had earlier expressed a fear of firearms of any kind, she picked up the gun and "shot" her sleeping friend. After Allen brought the "killer" out of her trance, she had apparent amnesia for the event, denying she would ever shoot anyone.

With this experiment, Morse Allen took the testing as far as he could on a make-believe basis, but he was neither satisfied nor convinced that hypnosis would produce such spectacular results in an operational setting. All he felt he had proved was that an impressionable young volunteer would accept a command from a legitimate authority figure to take an action she may have sensed would not end in tragedy. She presumably trusted the CIA enough as an institution and Morse Allen as an individual to believe he would not let her do anything wrong. The experimental setting, in effect, legitimated her behavior and prevented it from being truly antisocial.

Early in 1954, Allen almost got his chance to try the crucial test. According to a CIA document, the subject was to be a 35-year-old, well-educated foreigner who had once worked for a friendly secret service, probably the CIA itself. He had now shifted

his loyalty to another government, and the CIA was quite upset with him. The Agency plan was to hypnotize him and program him into making an assassination attempt. He would then be arrested at the least for attempted murder and “thereby disposed of.” The scenario had several holes in it, as the operators presented it to the ARTICHOKE team. First, the subject was to be involuntary and unwitting, and as yet no one had come up with a consistently effective way of hypnotizing such people. Second, the ARTICHOKE team would have only limited custody of the subject, who was to be snatched from a social event. Allen understood that it would probably take months of painstaking work to prepare the man for a sophisticated covert operation. The subject was highly unlikely to perform after just one command. Yet, so anxious were the ARTICHOKE men to try the experiment that they were willing to go ahead even under these unfavorable conditions: “The final answer was that in view of the fact that successful completion of this proposed act of attempted assassination was insignificant to the overall project; to wit, whether it was even carried out or not, that under ‘crash conditions’ and appropriate authority from Headquarters, the ARTICHOKE team would undertake the problem in spite of the operational limitations.”

This operation never took place. Eager to be unleashed, Morse Allen kept requesting prolonged access to operational subjects, such as the double agents and defectors on whom he was allowed to work a day or two. Not every double agent would do. The candidate had to be among the one person in five who made a good hypnotic subject, and he needed to have a dissociative tendency to separate part of his personality from the main body of his consciousness. The hope was to take an existing ego state—such as an imaginary childhood playmate—and build it into a separate personality, unknown to the first. The hypnotist would communicate directly with this schizophrenic offshoot and command it to carry out specific deeds about which the main personality would know nothing. There would be inevitable leakage between the two personalities, particularly in dreams; but if the hypnotists were clever enough, he could build in cover stories and safety valves which would prevent the subject from acting inconsistently.

All during the spring and summer of 1954, Morse Allen lobbied for permission to try what he called “terminal experiments” in hypnosis, including one along the following scenario:

CIA officials would recruit an agent in a friendly foreign country where the Agency could count on the cooperation of the local police force. CIA case officers would train the agent to pose as a leftist and report on the local communist party. During training, a skilled hypnotist would hypnotize him under the guise of giving him medical treatment (the favorite ARTICHOKE cover for hypnosis). The hypnotist would then provide the agent with information and tell him to forget it all when he snapped out of the trance. Once the agent had been properly conditioned and prepared, he would be sent into action as a CIA spy. Then Agency officials would tip off the local police that the man was a dangerous communist agent, and he would be arrested. Through their liaison arrangement with the police, Agency case officers would be able to watch and even guide the course of the interrogation.

In this way, they could answer many of their questions about hypnosis on a live guinea pig who believed his life was in danger. Specifically, the men from ARTICHOKE wanted to know how well hypnotic amnesia held up against torture. Could the amnesia be broken with drugs? One document noted that the Agency could even send in a new hypnotist to try his hand at cracking through the commands of the first one. Perhaps the most cynical part of the whole scheme came at the end of the proposal: "In the event that the agent should break down and admit his connection with US intelligence, we a) deny this absolutely and advise the agent's disposal, or b) indicate that the agent may have been dispatched by some other organ of US intelligence and that we should thereafter run the agent jointly with [the local intelligence service]."

An ARTICHOKE team was scheduled to carry out field tests along these lines in the summer of 1954. The planning got to an advanced stage, with the ARTICHOKE command center in Washington cabling overseas for the "time, place, and bodies available for terminal experiments." Then another cable complained of the "diminishing numbers" of subjects available for these tests. At this point, the available record becomes very fuzzy. The minutes of an ARTICHOKE working group meeting indicate that a key Agency official—probably the station chief in the country where the experiments were going to take place—had second thoughts. One participant at the meeting, obviously rankled by the obstructionism, said if this nay-sayer did not change his attitude, ARTICHOKE officials would have the Director himself order the official to go along.

Although short-term interrogations of unwitting subjects with drugs and hypnosis (the "A" treatment) continued, the more complicated tests apparently never did get going under the ARTICHOKE banner. By the end of the year, 1954, Allen Dulles took the behavioral-research function away from Morse Allen and gave it to Sid Gottlieb and the men from MKULTRA. Allen had directly pursued the goal of creating a Manchurian Candidate, which he clearly believed was possible. MKULTRA officials were just as interested in finding ways to assert control over people, but they had much less faith in the frontal-assault approach pushed by Allen. For them, finding the Manchurian Candidate became a figurative exercise. They did not give up the dream. They simply pursued it in smaller steps, always hoping to increase the percentages in their favor. John Gittinger, the MKULTRA case officer on hypnosis, states, "Predictable absolute control is not possible on a particular individual. Any psychologist, psychiatrist, or preacher can get control over certain kinds of individuals, but that's not a predictable, definite thing." Gittinger adds that despite his belief to this effect, he felt he had to give "a fair shake" to people who wanted to try out ideas to the contrary.

Gottlieb and his colleagues had already been doing hypnosis research for two years. They did a few basic experiments in the office, as Morse Allen did, but they farmed out most of the work to a young Ph.D. candidate at the University of Minnesota, Alden Sears. Sears, who later moved his CIA study project to the University of Denver, worked with student subjects to define the nature of hypnosis. Among many other things, he looked into several of the areas that would be building blocks in the creation of a Manchurian Candidate. Could a hypnotist induce a totally separate personality? Could a sub-

ject be sent on missions he would not remember unless cued by the hypnotist? Sears, who has since become a Methodist minister, refused to talk about methods he experimented with to build second identities.[1] By 1957, he wrote that the experiments that needed to be done “could not be handled in the University situation.” Unlike Morse Allen, he did not want to perform the terminal experiments.

Milton Kline, a New York psychologist who says he also did not want to cross the ethical line but is sure the intelligence agencies have, served as an unpaid consultant to Sears and other CIA hypnosis research. Nothing Sears or others found disabused him of the idea that the Manchurian Candidate is possible. “It cannot be done by everyone,” says Kline, “It cannot be done consistently, but it can be done.”

A onetime president of the American Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis, Kline was one of many outside experts to whom Gittinger and his colleagues talked. Other consultants, with equally impressive credentials, rejected Kline’s views. In no other area of the behavioral sciences was there so little accord on basic questions. “You could find an expert who would agree with everything,” says Gittinger. “Therefore, we tried to get everybody.”

The MKULTRA men state that they got too many unsolicited suggestions on how to use hypnosis in covert operations. “The operators would ask us for easy solutions,” recalls a veteran. “We therefore kept a laundry list of why they couldn’t have what they wanted. We spent a lot of time telling some young kid whose idea we had heard a hundred times why it wouldn’t work. We would wind up explaining why you couldn’t have a free lunch.” This veteran mentions an example: CIA operators put a great deal of time and money into servicing “dead drops” (covert mail pickup points, such as a hollow tree) in the Soviet Union. If a collector was captured, he was likely to give away the locations. Therefore Agency men suggested that TSS find a way to hypnotize these secret mailmen, so they could withstand interrogation and even torture if arrested.

Morse Allen had wanted to perform the “terminal experiment” to see if a hypnotically induced amnesia would stand up to torture. Gittinger says that as far as he knows, this experiment was never carried out. “I still like to think we were human beings enough that this was not something we played with,” says Gittinger. Such an experiment could have been performed, as Allen suggested, by friendly police in a country like Taiwan or Paraguay. CIA men did at least discuss joint work in hypnosis with a foreign secret service in 1962.[2] Whether they went further simply cannot be said.

Assuming the amnesia would hold, the MKULTRA veteran says the problem was how to trigger it. Perhaps the Russian phrase meaning “You’re under arrest” could be used as a preprogrammed cue, but what if the police did not use these words as they captured the collector? Perhaps the physical sensation of handcuffs being snapped on could do it, but a metal watchband could have the same effect. According to the veteran, in the abstract, the scheme sounded fine, but in practicality, a foolproof way of triggering the amnesia could not be found. “You had to accept that when someone is caught,

they're going to tell some things," he says.

MKULTRA officials, including Gittinger, did recommend the use of hypnosis in operational experiments on at least one occasion. In 1959 an important double agent, operating outside his homeland, told his Agency case officer that he was afraid to go home again because he did not think he could withstand the tough interrogation that his government used on returning overseas agents. In Washington, the operators approached the TSS men about using hypnosis, backed up with drugs, to change the agent's attitude. They hoped they could instill in him the "ability or the necessary will" to hold up under questioning.

An MKULTRA official—almost certainly Gittinger—held a series of meetings over a two-week period with the operators and wrote that the agent was "a better than average" hypnotic subject, but that his goal was to get out of intelligence work: The agent "probably can be motivated to make at least one return visit to his homeland by application of any one of a number of techniques, including hypnosis, but he may redefect in the process." The MKULTRA official continued that hypnosis probably could not produce an "operationally useful" degree of amnesia for the events of the recent past or for the hypnotic treatment itself that the agent "probably has the native ability to withstand ordinary interrogation . . . provided it is to his advantage to do so."

The MKULTRA office recommended that despite the relatively negative outlook for the hypnosis, the Agency should proceed anyway. The operation had the advantage of having a "fail-safe" mechanism because the level of hypnosis could be tested out before the agent actually had to return. Moreover, the MKULTRA men felt "that a considerable amount of useful experience can be gained from this operation which could be used to improve Agency capability in future applications." In effect, they would be using hypnosis not as the linchpin of the operation, but as an adjunct to help motivate the agent.

Since the proposed operation involved the use of hypnosis and drugs, final approval could only be given by the high-level Clandestine Services committee set up for this purpose and chaired by Richard Helms. Permission was not forthcoming

In June 1960 TSS officials launched an expanded program of operational experiments in hypnosis in cooperation with the Agency's Counterintelligence Staff. The legendary James Angleton—the prototype for the title character Saxonton in Aaron Latham's *Orchids for Mother* and for Wellington in Victor Marchetti's *The Rope Dancer*—headed Counterintelligence, which took on some of the CIA's most sensitive missions (including the illegal Agency spying against domestic dissidents). Counterintelligence officials wrote that the hypnosis program could provide a "potential breakthrough in clandestine technology." Their arrangement with TSS was that the MKULTRA men would develop the technique in the laboratory, while they took care of "field experimentation."

The Counterintelligence program had three goals: (1) to induce hypnosis very rapidly in unwitting subjects; (2) to create durable amnesia; and (3) to implant durable

and operationally useful posthypnotic suggestion. The Agency released no information on any “field experimentation” of the latter two goals, which of course are the building blocks of the Manchurian Candidate. Agency officials provided only one heavily censored document on the first goal, rapid induction.

In October 1960 the MKULTRA program invested \$9,000 in an outside consultant to develop a way of quickly hypnotizing an unwitting subject. John Gittinger says the process consisted of surprising “somebody sitting in a chair, putting your hands on his forehead, and telling the guy to go to sleep.” The method worked “fantastically” on certain people, including some on whom no other technique was effective, and not on others. “It wasn’t that predictable,” notes Gittinger, who states he knows nothing about the field testing.

The test, noted in that one released document, did not take place until July 1963—a full three years after the Counterintelligence experimental program began, during which interval the Agency is claiming that no other field experiments took place. According to a CIA man who participated in this test, the Counterintelligence Staff in Washington asked the CIA station in Mexico City to find a suitable candidate for a rapid induction experiment. The station proposed a low-level agent, whom the Soviets had apparently doubled. A Counterintelligence man flew in from Washington and a hypnotic consultant arrived from California. Our source and a fellow case officer brought the agent to a motel room on a pretext. “I puffed him up with his importance,” says the Agency man. “I said the bosses wanted to see him and of course give him more money.” Waiting in an adjoining room was the hypnotic consultant. At a prearranged time, the two case officers gently grabbed hold of the agent and tipped his chair over until the back was touching the floor. The consultant was supposed to rush in at that precise moment and apply the technique. Nothing happened. The consultant froze, unable to do the deed. “You can imagine what we had to do to cover-up,” says the official, who was literally left holding the agent. “We explained we had heard a noise, got excited, and tipped him down to protect him. He was so grubby for money he would have believed any excuse.”

There certainly is a huge difference between the limited aim of this bungled operation and one aimed at building a Manchurian Candidate. The MKULTRA veteran maintains that he and his colleagues were not interested in a programmed assassin because they knew in general it would not work and, specifically, that they could not exert total control. “If you have one hundred percent control, you have one hundred percent dependency,” he says. “If something happens and you haven’t programmed it in, you’ve got a problem. If you try to put flexibility in, you lose control. To the extent you let the agent choose, you don’t have control.” He admits that he and his colleagues spent hours running the arguments on the Manchurian Candidate back and forth. “Castro was naturally our discussion point,” he declares. “Could you get somebody gung-ho enough that they would go in and get him?” In the end, he states, they decided there were more reliable ways to kill people. “You can get exactly the same thing from people who are hypnotizable by many other ways, and you can’t get anything out of people who are not hypnotizable, so it has no use,” says Gittinger.

The only real gain in employing a hypnotized killer would be, in theory, that he would not remember who ordered him to pull the trigger. Yet, at least in the Castro case, the Cuban leader already knew who was after him. Moreover, there were plenty of people around willing to take on the Castro contract. "A well-trained person could do it without all this mumbo-jumbo," says the MKULTRA veteran. By going to the Mafia for hitmen, CIA officials in any case found killers who had a built-in amnesia mechanism that had nothing to do with hypnosis.[3]

The MKULTRA veteran gives many reasons why he believes the CIA never actually tried a Manchurian Candidate operation, but he acknowledges that he does not know.[4] If the ultimate experiments were performed, they would have been handled with incredible secrecy. It would seem, however, that the same kind of reasoning that impelled Sid Gottlieb to recommend testing powerful drugs on unwitting subjects would have led to experimentation along such lines, if not to create the Manchurian Candidate itself, on some of the building blocks, or lesser antisocial acts. Even if the MKULTRA men did not think hypnosis would work operationally, they had not let that consideration prevent them from trying out numerous other techniques. The MKULTRA chief could even have used a defensive rationale: He had to find out if the Russians could plant a "sleeper" killer in our midst, just as Richard Condon's novel discussed.

If the assassin scenario seemed exaggerated, Gottlieb still would have wanted to know what other uses the Russians might try. Certainly, he could have found relatively "expendable" subjects, as he and Morse Allen had for other behavior control experiments. And even if the MKULTRA men really did restrain themselves, it is unlikely that James Angleton and his counterintelligence crew would have acted in such a limited fashion when they felt they were on the verge of a "breakthrough in clandestine technology."

Notes

Morse Allen's training in hypnosis was described in Document #A/B, V,28/1, 9 July 1951, Subject [Deleted]. His hypnosis experiments in the office are described in a long series of memos. See especially #A/B, III, 2/18, 10 February 1954, Hypnotic Experimentation and Research and #A/B, II, 10/71, 19 August 1954, Subject: Operational/Security [deleted] and unnumbered document, 5 May 1955, Subject: Hypnotism and Covert Operations.

The quote on U.S. prisoners passing through Manchuria came from document #19, 18 June 1953, ARTICHOKE Conference.

Alden Sears' hypnosis work was the subject of MKULTRA subprojects 5, 25, 29, and 49. See especially 49-28, undated, Proposal for Research in Hypnosis at the [deleted], June 1, 1956 to May 31, 1957, 49-34, undated, Proposals for Research in Hypnosis at the [deleted], June 1, 1956 to May 31, 1957; 5-11, 28 May 1953, Project MKULTRA, Subproject 5 and 5-13,20 April 1954, Subject: [deleted]. See also Patrick Oster's article in the

Chicago Sun-Times, September 4, 1977, "How CIA 'Hid' Hypnosis Research."

General background on hypnosis came from interviews with Alden Sears, Martin Orne, Milton Kline, Ernest Hilgard, Herbert Spiegel, William Kroger, Jack Tracktir, John Watkins, and Harold Crasilneck. See Orne's chapter on hypnosis in *The Manipulation of Human Behavior*, edited by Albert Biderman and Herbert Zimmer (New York: John Wiley & Sons; 1961), pp. 169-215.

The contemplated use of hypnosis in an operation involving a foreign intelligence service is referred to in the Affidavit by Eloise R. Page, in the case *John D. Marks v. Central Intelligence Agency et al.*, Civil Action no. 76-2073.

The 1959 proposed use of hypnosis that was approved by TSS is described in documents #433, 21 August 1959, Possible Use of Drugs and Hypnosis in [deleted] Operational Case; #434, 27 August 1959, Comments on [deleted]; and #435, 15 September 1959, Possible Use of Drugs and Hypnosis in [deleted] Operational Case.

MKULTRA Subproject 128 dealt with the rapid induction technique. See especially 128-1, undated, Subject: To test a method of rapid hypnotic induction in simulated and real operational settings (MKULTRA 128).

A long interview with John Gittinger added considerably to this chapter. Mr. Gittinger had refused earlier to be interviewed directly by me for this book. Our conversation was limited solely to hypnosis.

Footnotes

1. Sears still maintains the fiction that he thought he was dealing only with a private foundation, the Geschickter Fund, and that he knew nothing of the CIA involvement in funding his work. Yet a CIA document in his MKULTRA subproject says he was "aware of the real purpose" of the project." Moreover, Sid Gottlieb brought him to Washington in 1954 to demonstrate hypnosis to a select group of Agency officials.

2. Under my Freedom of Information suit, the CIA specifically denied access to the documents concerning the testing of hypnosis and psychedelic drugs in cooperation with foreign intelligence agencies. The justification given was that releasing such documents would reveal intelligence sources and methods, which are exempted by law. The hypnosis experiment was never carried out, according to the generic description of the document which the Agency had to provide in explaining why it had to be withheld.

3. Referring to this CIA-mob relationship, author Robert Sam Anson has written, "It was inevitable: Gentlemen wishing to be killers gravitated to killers wishing to be gentlemen."

4. The veteran admits that none of the arguments he uses against a conditioned

assassin would apply to a programmed “patsy” whom a hypnotist could walk through a series of seemingly unrelated events—a visit to a store, a conversation with a mailman, picking a fight at a political rally. The subject would remember everything that happened to him and be amnesic only for the fact the hypnotist ordered him to do these things. There would be no gaping inconsistency in his life of the sort that can ruin an attempt by a hypnotist to create a second personality. The purpose of this exercise is to leave a circumstantial trail that will make the authorities think the patsy committed a particular crime. The weakness might well be that the amnesia would not hold up under police interrogation, but that would not matter if the police did not believe his preposterous story about being hypnotized or if he were shot resisting arrest. Hypnosis expert Milton Kline says he could create a patsy in three months- an assassin would take him six.

THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

I'm a professional and I just don't talk about these things. Lots of things are not fit for the public. This has nothing to do with democracy. It has to do with common sense.

—GRATION H. YASETEVITCH, 1978

To hope that the power that is being made available by the behavioral sciences will be exercised by the scientists, or by a benevolent group, seems to me to be a hope little supported by either recent or distant history. It seems far more likely that behavioral scientists, holding their present attitudes, will be in the position of the German rocket scientists specializing in guided missiles. First they worked devotedly for Hitler to destroy the USSR and the United States. Now, depending on who captured them they work devotedly for the USSR in the interest of destroying the United States, or devotedly for the United States in the interest of destroying the USSR. If behavioral scientists are concerned solely with advancing their science it seems most probable that they will serve the purpose of whatever group has the power.

—CARL ROGERS, 1961

Sid Gottlieb was one of many CIA officials who tried to find a way to assassinate Fidel Castro. Castro survived, of course, and his victory over the Agency in April 1961 at the Bay of Pigs put the Agency in the headlines for the first time, in a very unfavorable light. Among the fiasco's many consequences was Gottlieb's loss of the research part of the CIA's behavior-control programs. Still, he and the others kept trying to kill Castro.

In the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs, President Kennedy reportedly vowed to splinter the CIA into a thousand pieces. In the end, he settled for firing Allen Dulles and his top deputies. To head the Agency, which lost none of its power, Kennedy brought in John McCone, a defense contractor and former head of the Atomic Energy Commission. With no operational background, McCone had a different notion than Dulles of how to manage the CIA, particularly in the scientific area. “McCone never felt akin to the covert way

of doing things,” recalls Ray Cline, whom the new Director made his Deputy for Intelligence. McCone apparently believed that science should be in the hands of the scientists, not the clandestine operators, and he brought in a fellow Californian, an aerospace “whiz kid” named Albert “Bud” Wheelon to head a new Agency Directorate for Science and Technology.

Before then, the Technical Services Staff (TSS), although located in the Clandestine Services, had been the Agency’s largest scientific component. McCone decided to strip TSS of its main research functions—including the behavioral one—and let it concentrate solely on providing operational support. In 1962 he approved a reorganization of TSS that brought in Seymour Russell, a tough covert operator, as the new chief. “The idea was to get a close interface with operations,” recalls an ex-CIA man. Experienced TSS technicians remained as deputies to the incoming field men, and the highest deputyship in all TSS went to Sid Gottlieb, who became number-two man under Russell. For Gottlieb, this was another significant promotion helped along by his old friend Richard Helms, whom McCone had elevated to be head of the Clandestine Services.

In his new job, Gottlieb kept control of MKULTRA. Yet, in order to comply with McCone’s command on research programs, Gottlieb had to preside over the partial dismantling of his own program. The loss was not as difficult as it might have been, because, after 10 years of exploring the frontiers of the mind, Gottlieb had a clear idea of what worked and what did not in the behavioral field. Those areas that still were in the research stage tended to be extremely esoteric and technical, and Gottlieb must have known that if the Science Directorate scored any breakthroughs, he would be brought back into the picture immediately to apply the advances to covert operations.

“Sid was not the kind of bureaucrat who wanted to hold on to everything at all costs,” recalls an admiring colleague. Gottlieb carefully pruned the MKULTRA lists, turning over to the Science Directorate the exotic subjects that showed no short-term operational promise and keeping for himself those psychological, chemical, and biological programs that had already passed the research stage. As previously stated, he moved John Gittinger and the personality-assessment staff out of the Human Ecology Society and kept them under TSS control in their own proprietary company.

While Gottlieb was effecting these changes, his programs were coming under attack from another quarter. In 1963 the CIA Inspector General did the study that led to the suspension of unwitting drug testing in the San Francisco and New York safehouses. This was a blow to Gottlieb, who clearly intended to hold on to this kind of research. At the same time, the Inspector General also recommended that Agency officials draft a new charter for the whole MKULTRA program, which still was exempt from most internal CIA controls. He found that many of the MKULTRA subprojects were of “insufficient sensitivity” to justify bypassing the Agency’s normal procedures for approving and storing records of highly classified programs. Richard Helms, still the protector of unfettered behavioral research, responded by agreeing that there should be a new charter—on the condition that it be almost the same as the old one. “The basic reasons for requesting

waiver of standardized administrative controls over these sensitive activities are as valid today as they were in April, 1953," Helms wrote. Helms agreed to such changes as having the CIA Director briefed on the programs twice a year, but he kept the approval process within his control and made sure that all the files would be retained inside TSS. And as government officials so often do when they do not wish to alter anything of substance, he proposed a new name for the activity. In June 1964 MKULTRA became MKSEARCH. [1]

Gottlieb acknowledged that security did not require transferring all the surviving MKULTRA subprojects over to MKSEARCH. He moved 18 subprojects back into regular Agency funding channels, including ones dealing with the sneezing powders, stink bombs, and other "harassment substances." TSS officials had encouraged the development of these as a way to make a target physically uncomfortable and hence to cause short-range changes in his behavior.

Other MKULTRA subprojects dealt with ways to maximize stress on whole societies. Just as Gittinger's Personality Assessment System provided a psychological road map for exploiting an individual's weaknesses, CIA "destabilization" plans provided guidelines for destroying the internal integrity of target countries like Castro's Cuba or Allende's Chile. Control—whether of individuals or nations—has been the Agency's main business, and TSS officials supplied tools for the "macro" as well as the "micro" attacks.

For example, under MKULTRA Subproject #143, the Agency gave Dr. Edward Bennett of the University of Houston about \$20,000 a year to develop bacteria to sabotage petroleum products. Bennett found a substance that, when added to oil, fouled or destroyed any engine into which it was poured. CIA operators used exactly this kind of product in 1967 when they sent a sabotage team made up of Cuban exiles into France to pollute a shipment of lubricants bound for Cuba. The idea was that the tainted oil would "grind out motors and cause breakdowns," says an Agency man directly involved. This operation, which succeeded, was part of a worldwide CIA effort that lasted through the 1960s into the 1970s to destroy the Cuban economy. [2] Agency officials reasoned, at least in the first years, that it would be easier to overthrow Castro if Cubans could be made unhappy with their standard of living. "We wanted to keep bread out of the stores so people were hungry," says the CIA man who was assigned to anti-Castro operations. "We wanted to keep rationing in effect and keep leather out, so people got only one pair of shoes every 18 months."

Leaving this broader sort of program out of the new structure, Gottlieb regrouped the most sensitive behavioral activities under the MKSEARCH umbrella. He chose to continue seven projects, and the ones he picked give a good indication of those parts of MKULTRA that Gottlieb considered important enough to save. These included none of the sociological studies, nor the search for a truth drug. Gottlieb put the emphasis on chemical and biological substances—not because he thought these could be used to turn men into robots, but because he valued them for their predictable ability to disori-

ent, discredit, injure, or kill people. He kept active two private labs to produce such substances, funded consultants who had secure ways to test them and ready access to subjects, and maintained a funding conduit to pass money on to these other contractors. Here are the seven surviving MKSEARCH subprojects:

First on the TSS list was the safehouse program for drug testing run by George White and others in the Federal Bureau of Narcotics. Even in 1964, Gottlieb and Helms had not given up hope that unwitting experiments could be resumed, and the Agency paid out \$30,000 that year to keep the safehouses open. In the meantime, something was going on at the “pad”—or at least George White kept on sending the CIA vouchers for unorthodox expenses—\$1,100 worth in February 1965 alone under the old euphemism for prostitutes, “undercover agents for operations.” What White was doing with or to these agents cannot be said, but he kept the San Francisco operation active right up until the time it finally closed in June. Gottlieb did not give up on the New York safehouse until the following year.[3]

MKSEARCH Subproject #2 involved continuing a \$150,000-a-year contract with a Baltimore biological laboratory. This lab, run by at least one former CIA germ expert, gave TSS “a quick-delivery capability to meet anticipated future operational needs,” according to an Agency document. Among other things, it provided a private place for “large-scale production of microorganisms.” The Agency was paying the Army Biological Laboratory at Fort Detrick about \$100,000 a year for the same services. With its more complete facilities, Fort Detrick could be used to create and package more esoteric bacteria, but Gottlieb seems to have kept the Baltimore facility going in order to have a way of producing biological weapons without the Army’s germ warriors knowing about it. This secrecy-within-secrecy was not unusual when TSS men were dealing with subjects as sensitive as infecting targets with diseases. Except on the most general level, no written records were kept on the subject. Whenever an operational unit in the Agency asked TSS about obtaining a biological weapon, Gottlieb or his aides automatically turned down the request unless the head of the Clandestine Services had given his prior approval. Gottlieb handled these operational needs personally, and during the early 1960s (when CIA assassination attempts probably were at their peak) even Gottlieb’s boss, the TSS chief, was not told what was happening.

With his biological arsenal assured, Gottlieb also secured his chemical flank in MKSEARCH. Another subproject continued a relationship set up in 1959 with a prominent industrialist who headed a complex of companies, including one that custom-manufactured rare chemicals for pharmaceutical producers. This man, whom on several occasions CIA officials gave \$100 bills to pay for his products, was able to perform specific lab jobs for the Agency without consulting with his board of directors. In 1960 he supplied the Agency with 3 kilos (6.6 pounds) of a deadly carbamate—the same poison OSS’s Stanley Lovell tried to use against Hitler. [4] This company president also was useful to the Agency because he was a ready source of information on what was going on in the chemical world. The chemical services he offered, coupled with his biological counterpart, gave the CIA the means to wage “instant” chemical and biological attacks—a

capability that was frequently used, judging by the large numbers of receipts and invoices that the CIA released under the Freedom of Information Act.

With new chemicals and drugs constantly coming to their attention through their continuing relations with the major pharmaceutical companies, TSS officials needed places to test them, particularly after the safehouses closed. Dr. James Hamilton, the San Francisco psychiatrist who worked with George White in the original OSS marijuana days, provided a way. He became MKSEARCH Subproject #3.

Hamilton had joined MKULTRA in its earliest days and had been used as a West Coast supervisor for Gottlieb and company. Hamilton was one of the renaissance men of the program, working on everything from psychochemicals to kinky sex to carbon-dioxide inhalation. By the early 1960s, he had arranged to get access to prisoners at the California Medical Facility at Vacaville. [5] Hamilton worked through a nonprofit research institute connected to the Facility to carry out, as a document puts it, “clinical testing of behavioral control materials” on inmates. Hamilton’s job was to provide “answers to specific questions and solutions to specific problems of direct interest to the Agency.” In a six-month span in 1967 and 1968, the psychiatrist spent over \$10,000 in CIA funds simply to pay volunteers—which at normal rates meant he experimented on between 400 to 1,000 inmates in that time period alone.

Another MKSEARCH subproject provided \$20,000 to \$25,000 a year to Dr. Carl Pfeiffer. Pfeiffer’s Agency connection went back to 1951, when he headed the Pharmacology Department at the University of Illinois Medical School. He then moved to Emory University and tested LSD and other drugs on inmates of the Federal penitentiary in Atlanta. From there, he moved to New Jersey, where he continued drug experiments on the prisoners at the Bordentown reformatory. An internationally known pharmacologist, Pfeiffer provided the MKSEARCH program with data on the preparation, use, and effect of drugs. He was readily available if Gottlieb or a colleague wanted a study made of the properties of a particular substance, and like most of TSS’s contractors, he also was an intelligence source. Pfeiffer was useful in this last capacity during the latter part of the 1960s because he sat on the Food and Drug Administration committee that allocated LSD for scientific research in the United States. By this time, LSD was so widely available on the black market that the Federal Government had replaced the CIA’s informal controls of the 1950s with laws and procedures forbidding all but the most strictly regulated research. With Pfeiffer on the governing committee, the CIA could keep up its traditional role of monitoring above-ground LSD experimentation around the United States.

To cover some of the more exotic behavioral fields, another MKSEARCH program continued TSS’s relationship with Dr. Maitland Baldwin, the brain surgeon at the National Institutes of Health who had been so willing in 1955 to perform “terminal experiments” in sensory deprivation for Morse Allen and the ARTICHOKE program. After Allen was pushed aside by the men from MKULTRA, the new TSS team hired Baldwin as a consultant. According to one of them, he was full of bright ideas on how to control behavior, but they were wary of him because he was such an “eager beaver” with an obvious streak of

“craziness.” Under TSS auspices, Baldwin performed lobotomies on apes and then put these simian subjects into sensory deprivation—presumably in the same “box” he had built himself at NIH and then had to repair after a desperate soldier kicked his way out. There is no information available on whether Baldwin extended this work to humans, although he did discuss with an outside consultant how lobotomized patients reacted to prolonged isolation. Like Hamilton, Baldwin was a jack-of-all trades who in one experiment beamed radio frequency energy directly at the brain of a chimpanzee and in another cut off one monkey’s head and tried to transplant it to the decapitated body of another monkey. Baldwin used \$250 in Agency money to buy his own electroshock machine, and he did some kind of unspecified work at a TSS safehouse that caused the CIA to shell out \$1450 to renovate and repair the place.

The last MKSEARCH subproject covered the work of Dr. Charles Geschickter, who served TSS both as researcher and funding conduit. CIA documents show that Geschickter tested powerful drugs on mental defectives and terminal cancer patients, apparently at the Georgetown University Hospital in Washington. In all, the Agency put \$655,000 into Geschickter’s research on knockout drugs, stress-producing chemicals, and mind-altering substances. Nevertheless, the doctor’s principal service to TSS officials seems to have been putting his family foundation at the disposal of the CIA—both to channel funds and to serve as a source of cover to Agency operators. About \$2.1 million flowed through this tightly controlled foundation to other researchers. [6] Under MKSEARCH, Geschickter continued to provide TSS with a means to assess drugs rapidly, and he branched out into trying to knock out monkeys with radar waves to the head (a technique which worked but risked frying vital parts of the brain). The Geschickter Fund for Medical Research remained available as a conduit until 1967. [7]

As part of the effort to keep finding new substances to test within MKSEARCH, Agency officials continued their search for magic mushrooms, leaves, roots, and barks. In 1966, with considerable CIA backing, J. C. King, the former head of the Agency’s Western Hemisphere Division who was eased out after the Bay of Pigs, formed an ostensibly private firm called Amazon Natural Drug Company. King, who loved to float down jungle rivers on the deck of his houseboat with a glass of scotch in hand, searched the backwaters of South America for plants of interest to the Agency and/or medical science. To do the work, he hired Amazon men and women, plus at least two CIA paramilitary operators who worked out of Amazon offices in Iquitos, Peru. They shipped back to the United States finds that included *Chondodendron toxicoferum*, a paralytic agent which is “absolutely lethal in high doses,” according to Dr. Timothy Plowman, a Harvard botanist who like most of the staff was unwitting of the CIA involvement. Another plant that was collected and grown by Amazon employees was the hallucinogen known as yage, which author William Burroughs has described as “the final fix.”

MKSEARCH went on through the 1960s and into the early 1970s, but with a steadily decreasing budget. In 1964 it cost the Agency about \$250,000. In 1972 it was down to four subprojects and \$110,000. Gottlieb was a very busy man by then, having taken over all TSS in 1967 when his patron, Richard Helms finally made it to the top of the Agency. In

June 1972 Gottlieb decided to end MKSEARCH, thus bringing down the curtain on the quest he himself had started two decades before. He wrote this epitaph for the program:

As a final commentary, I would like to point out that, by means of Project MKSEARCH, the Clandestine Service has been able to maintain contact with the leading edge of developments in the field of biological and chemical control of human behavior. It has become increasingly obvious over the last several years that this general area had less and less relevance to current clandestine operations. The reasons for this are many and complex, but two of them are perhaps worth mentioning briefly. On the scientific side, it has become very clear that these materials and techniques are too unpredictable in their effect on individual human beings, under specific circumstances, to be operationally useful. Our operations officers, particularly the emerging group of new senior operations officers, have shown a discerning and perhaps commendable distaste for utilizing these materials and techniques. They seem to realize that, in addition to moral and ethical considerations, the extreme sensitivity and security constraints of such operations effectively rule them out.

About the time Gottlieb wrote these words, the Watergate break-in occurred, setting in train forces that would alter his life and that of Richard Helms. A few months later, Richard Nixon was reelected. Soon after the election, Nixon, for reasons that have never been explained, decided to purge Helms. Before leaving to become Ambassador to Iran, Helms presided over a wholesale destruction of documents and tapes—presumably to minimize information that might later be used against him. Sid Gottlieb decided to follow Helms into retirement, and the two men mutually agreed to get rid of all the documentary traces of MKULTRA. They had never kept files on the safehouse testing or similarly sensitive operations in the first place, but they were determined to erase the existing records of their search to control human behavior.

Gottlieb later told a Senate committee that he wanted to get rid of the material because of a “burgeoning paper problem” within the Agency, because the files were of “no constructive use” and might be “misunderstood,” and because he wanted to protect the reputations of the researchers with whom he had collaborated on the assurance of secrecy. Gottlieb got in touch with the men who had physical custody of the records, the Agency’s archivists, who proceeded to destroy what he and Helms thought were the only traces of the program. They made a mistake, however—or the archivists did. Seven boxes of substantive records and reports were incinerated, but seven more containing invoices and financial records survived—apparently due to misfiling.

Nixon named James Schlesinger to be the new head of the Agency, a post in which he stayed only a few months before the increasingly beleaguered President moved him over to be Secretary of Defense at the height of Watergate. During his short stop at CIA, Schlesinger sent an order to all Agency employees asking them to let his office know about any instances where Agency officials might have carried out any improper or illegal actions. Somebody mentioned Frank Olson’s suicide, and it was duly included in the many hundreds of pages of misdeeds reported which became known within the CIA as

the “family jewels.”

Schlesinger, an outsider to the career CIA operators, had opened a Pandora’s box that the professionals never managed to shut again. Samples of the “family jewels” were slipped out to New York Times reporter Seymour Hersh, who created a national furor in December 1974 when he wrote about the CIA’s illegal spying on domestic dissidents during the Johnson and Nixon years. President Gerald Ford appointed a commission headed by Vice-President Nelson Rockefeller to investigate the past CIA abuses—and to limit the damage. Included in the final Rockefeller report was a section on how an unnamed Department of the Army employee had jumped out of a New York hotel window after Agency men had slipped him LSD. That revelation made headlines around the country. The press seized upon the sensational details and virtually ignored two even more revealing sentences buried in the Rockefeller text: “The drug program was part of a much larger CIA program to study possible means for controlling human behavior. Other studies explored the effects of radiation, electric-shock, psychology, psychiatry, sociology, and harassment substances.”

At this point, I entered the story. I was intrigued by those two sentences, and I filed a Freedom of Information request with the CIA to obtain all the documents the Agency had furnished the Rockefeller Commission on behavior control. Although the law requires a government agency to respond within 10 days, it took the Agency more than a year to send me the first 50 documents on the subject, which turned out to be heavily censored.

In the meantime, the committee headed by Senator Frank Church was looking into the CIA, and it called in Sid Gottlieb, who was then spending his retirement working as a volunteer in a hospital in India. Gottlieb secretly testified about CIA assassination programs. (In describing his role in its final report, the Church Committee used a false name, “Victor Scheider.”) Asked about the behavioral-control programs, Gottlieb apparently could not—or would not—remember most of the details. The committee had almost no documents to work with, since the main records had been destroyed in 1973 and the financial files had not yet been found.

The issue lay dormant until 1977, when, about June 1, CIA officials notified my lawyers that they had found the 7 boxes of MKULTRA financial records and that they would send me the releasable portions over the following months. As I waited, CIA Director Stansfield Turner notified President Carter and then the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that an Agency official had located the 7 boxes. Admiral Turner publicly described MKULTRA as only a program of drug experimentation and not one aimed at behavior control. On July 20 I held a press conference at which I criticized Admiral Turner for his several distortions in describing the MKULTRA program. To prove my various points, I released to the reporters a score of the CIA documents that had already come to me and that gave the flavor of the behavioral efforts. Perhaps it was a slow news day, or perhaps people simply were interested in government attempts to tamper with the mind. In any event, the documents set off a media bandwagon that had the story reported on all

three network television news shows and practically everywhere else.

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and Senator Edward Kennedy's Subcommittee on Health and Scientific Research soon announced they would hold public hearings on the subject. Both panels had looked into the secret research in 1975 but had been hampered by the lack of documents and forthcoming witnesses. At first the two committees agreed to work together, and they held one joint hearing. Then, Senator Barry Goldwater brought behind-the-scenes pressure to get the Intelligence panel, of which he was vice-chairman, to drop out of the proceedings. He claimed, among other things, that the committee was just rehashing old programs and that the time had come to stop dumping on the CIA. Senator Kennedy plowed ahead anyway. He was limited, however, by the small size of the staff he assigned to the investigation, and his people were literally buried in paper by CIA officials, who released 8,000 pages of documents in the weeks before the hearings. As the hearings started, the staff still not had read everything—let alone put it all in context.

As Kennedy's staff prepared for the public sessions, the former men from MKULTRA also got ready. According to one of them, they agreed among themselves to "keep the inquiry within bounds that would satisfy the committee." Specifically, he says that meant volunteering no more information than the Kennedy panel already had. Charles Siragusa, the narcotics agent who ran the New York safehouse, reports he got a telephone call during this period from Ray Treichler, the Stanford Ph.D. who specialized in chemical warfare for the MKULTRA program. "He wanted me to deny knowing about the safehouse," says Siragusa. "He didn't want me to admit that he was the guy.... I said there was no way I could do that." Whether any other ex-TSS men also suborned perjury cannot be said, but several of them appear to have committed perjury at the hearings. [8] As previously noted, Robert Lashbrook denied firsthand knowledge of the safehouse operation when, in fact, he had supervised one of the "pads" and been present, according to George White's diary, at the time of an "LSD surprise" experiment. Dr. Charles Geschickter testified he had not tested stress-producing drugs on human subjects while both his own 1960 proposal to the Agency and the CIA's documents indicate the opposite.

Despite the presence of a key aide who constantly cued him during the hearings, Senator Kennedy was not prepared to deal with these and other inconsistencies. He took no action to follow up obviously perjured testimony, and he seemed content to win headlines with reports of "The Gang That Couldn't Spray Straight." Although that particular testimony had been set up in advance by a Kennedy staffer, the Senator still managed to act surprised when ex-MKULTRA official David Rhodes told of the ill-fated LSD experiment at the Marin County safehouse.

The Kennedy hearings added little to the general state of knowledge on the CIA's behavior-control programs. CIA officials, both past and present, took the position that basically nothing of substance was learned during the 25-odd years of research, the bulk of which had ended in 1963, and they were not challenged. That proposition is, on its face, ridiculous, but neither Senator Kennedy nor any other investigator has yet put

any real pressure on the Agency to reveal the content of the research—what was actually learned—as opposed to the experimental means of carrying it out. In this book, I have tried to get at some of the substantive questions, but I have had access to neither the scientific records, which Gottlieb and Helms destroyed, nor the principal people involved. Gottlieb, for instance, who moved from India to Santa Cruz, California and then to parts unknown, turned down repeated requests to be interviewed. “I am interested in very different matters than the subject of your book these days,” he wrote, “and do not have either the time or the inclination to reprocess matters that happened a long time ago.”

Faced with these obstacles, I have tried to weave together a representative sample of what went on, but having dealt with a group of people who regularly incorporated lying into their daily work, I cannot be sure. I cannot be positive that they never found a technique to control people, despite my definite bias in favor of the idea that the human spirit defeated the manipulators. Only a congressional committee could compel truthful testimony from people who have so far refused to be forthcoming, and even Congress’ record has not been good so far. A determined investigative committee at least could make sure that the people being probed do not determine the “bounds” of the inquiry.

A new investigation would probably not be worth the effort just to take another stab at MKULTRA and ARTICHOKE. Despite my belief that there are some skeletons hidden—literally—the public probably now knows the basic parameters of these programs. The fact is, however, that CIA officials actively experimented with behavior-control methods for another decade after Sid Gottlieb and company lost the research action. The Directorate of Science and Technology—specifically its Office of Research and Development (ORD) did not remain idle after Director McCone transferred the behavioral research function in 1962.

In ORD, Dr. Stephen Aldrich, a graduate of Amherst and Northwestern Medical School, took over the role that Morse Allen and then Sid Gottlieb had played before him. Aldrich had been the medical director of the Office of Scientific Intelligence back in the days when that office was jockeying with Morse Allen for control of ARTICHOKE, so he was no stranger to the programs. Under his leadership, ORD officials kept probing for ways to control human behavior, and they were doing so with space-age technology that made the days of MKULTRA look like the horse-and-buggy era. If man could get to the moon by the end of the 1960s, certainly the well-financed scientists of ORD could make a good shot at conquering inner space.

They brought their technology to bear on subjects like the electric stimulation of the brain. John Lilly had done extensive work in this field a decade earlier, before concluding that to maintain his integrity he must find another field. CIA men had no such qualms, however. They actively experimented with placing electrodes in the brain of animals and—probably—men. Then they used electric and radio signals to move their subjects around. The field went far beyond giving monkeys orgasms, as Lilly had done. In the CIA itself, Sid Gottlieb and the MKULTRA crew had made some preliminary stud-

ies of it. They started in 1960 by having a contractor search all the available literature, and then they had mapped out the parts of animals' brains that produced reactions when stimulated. By April 1961 the head of TSS was able to report "we now have a 'production capability' " in brain stimulation and "we are close to having debugged a prototype system whereby dogs can be guided along specific courses." Six months later, a CIA document noted, "The feasibility of remote control of activities in several species of animals has been demonstrated.... Special investigations and evaluations will be conducted toward the application of selected elements of these techniques to man." Another six months later, TSS officials had found a use for electric stimulation: this time putting electrodes in the brains of cold-blooded animals—presumably reptiles. While much of the experimentation with dogs and cats was to find a way of wiring the animal and then directing it by remote control into, say, the office of the Soviet ambassador, this cold-blooded project was designed instead for the delivery of chemical and biological agents or for "executive action-type operations," according to a document. "Executive action" was the CIA's euphemism for assassination.

With the brain electrode technology at this level, Steve Aldrich and ORD took over the research function from TSS. What the ORD men found cannot be said, but the open literature would indicate that the field progressed considerably during the 1960s. Can the human brain be wired and controlled by a big enough computer? Aldrich certainly tried to find out.

Creating amnesia remained a "big goal" for the ORD researcher, states an ex-CIA man. Advances in brain surgery, such as the development of three-dimensional, "stereotaxic" techniques, made psychosurgery a much simpler matter and created the possibility that a precisely placed electrode probe could be used to cut the link between past memory and present recall. As for subjects to be used in behavioral experiments of this sort, the ex-CIA man states that ORD had access to prisoners in at least one American penal institution. A former Army doctor stationed at the Edgewood chemical laboratory states that the lab worked with CIA men to develop a drug that could be used to help program in new memories into the mind of an amnesic subject. How far did the Agency take this research? I don't know.

The men from ORD tried to create their own latter-day version of the Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology. Located outside Boston, it was called the Scientific Engineering Institute, and Agency officials had set it up originally in 1956 as a proprietary company to do research on radar and other technical matters that had nothing to do with human behavior. Its president, who says he was a "figurehead," was Dr. Edwin Land, the founder of Polaroid. In the early 1960s, ORD officials decided to bring it into the behavioral field and built a new wing to the Institute's modernistic building for the "life sciences." They hired a group of behavioral and medical scientists who were allowed to carry on their own independent research as long as it met Institute standards. These scientists were available to consult with frequent visitors from Washington, and they were encouraged to take long lunches in the Institute's dining room where they mixed with the physical scientists and brainstormed about virtually everything. One

veteran recalls a colleague joking, "If you could find the natural radio frequency of a person's sphincter, you could make him run out of the room real fast." Turning serious, the veteran states the technique was "plausible," and he notes that many of the crazy ideas bandied about at lunch developed into concrete projects.

Some of these projects may have been worked on at the Institute's own several hundred-acre farm located in the Massachusetts countryside. But of the several dozen people contacted in an effort to find out what the Institute did, the most anyone would say about experiments at the farm was that one involved stimulating the pleasure centers of crows' brains in order to control their behavior. Presumably, ORD men did other things at their isolated rural lab.

Just as the MKULTRA program had been years ahead of the scientific community, ORD activities were similarly advanced. "We looked at the manipulation of genes," states one of the researchers. "We were interested in gene splintering. The rest of the world didn't ask until 1976 the type of questions we were facing in 1965.... Everybody was afraid of building the supersoldier who would take orders without questioning, like the kamikaze pilot. Creating a subservient society was not out of sight." Another Institute man describes the work of a colleague who bombarded bacteria with ultraviolet radiation in order to create deviant strains. ORD also sponsored work in parapsychology. Along with the military services, Agency officials wanted to know whether psychics could read minds or control them from afar (telepathy), if they could gain information about distant places or people (clairvoyance or remote viewing), if they could predict the future (precognition), or influence the movement of physical objects or even the human mind (photokinesis). The last could have incredibly destructive applications, if it worked. For instance, switches setting off nuclear bombs would have to be moved only a few inches to launch a holocaust. Or, enemy psychics, with minds honed to laser-beam sharpness, could launch attacks to burn out the brains of American nuclear scientists. Any or all of these techniques have numerous applications to the spy trade.

While ORD officials apparently left much of the drug work to Gottlieb, they could not keep their hands totally out of this field. In 1968 they set up a joint program, called Project OFTEN, with the Army Chemical Corps at Edgewood, Maryland to study the effects of various drugs on animals and humans. The Army helped the Agency put together a computerized data base for drug testing and supplied military volunteers for some of the experiments. In one case, with a particularly effective incapacitating agent, the Army arranged for inmate volunteers at the Holmesburg State Prison in Philadelphia. Project OFTEN had both offensive and defensive sides, according to an ORD man who described it in a memorandum. He cited as an example of what he and his coworkers hoped to find "a compound that could simulate a heart attack or a stroke in the targeted individual." In January 1973, just as Richard Helms was leaving the Agency and James Schlesinger was coming in, Project OFTEN was abruptly canceled.

What—if any—success the ORD men had in creating heart attacks or in any of their other behavioral experiments simply cannot be said. Like Sid Gottlieb, Steve Aldrich

is not saying, and his colleagues seem even more closemouthed than Gottlieb's. In December 1977, having gotten wind of the ORD programs, I filed a Freedom of Information request for access to ORD files "on behavioral research, including but not limited to any research or operational activities related to bio-electrics, electric or radio stimulation of the brain, electronic destruction of memory, stereotaxic surgery, psychosurgery, hypnotism, parapsychology, radiation, microwaves, and ultrasonics." I also asked for documentation on behavioral testing in U.S. penal institutions, and I later added a request for all available files on amnesia. The Agency wrote back six months later that ORD had "identified 130 boxes (approximately 130 cubic feet) of material that are reasonably expected to contain behavioral research documents."

Considering that Admiral Turner and other CIA officials had tried to leave the impression with Congress and the public that behavioral research had almost all ended in 1963 with the phaseout of MKULTRA, this was an amazing admission. The sheer volume of material was staggering. This book is based on the 7 boxes of heavily censored MKULTRA financial records plus another 3 or so of ARTICHOKE documents, supplemented by interviews. It has taken me over a year, with significant research help, to digest this much smaller bulk. Clearly, greater resources than an individual writer can bring to bear will be needed to get to the bottom of the ORD programs.

A free society's best defense against unethical behavior modification is public disclosure and awareness. The more people understand consciousness-altering technology, the more likely they are to recognize its application, and the less likely it will be used. When behavioral research is carried out in secret, it can be turned against the government's enemies, both foreign and domestic. No matter how pure or defense-oriented the motives of the researchers, once the technology exists, the decision to use it is out of their hands. Who can doubt that if the Nixon administration or J. Edgar Hoover had had some foolproof way to control people, they would not have used the technique against their political foes, just as the CIA for years tried to use similar tactics overseas?

As with the Agency's secrets, it is now too late to put behavioral technology back in the box. Researchers are bound to keep making advances. The technology has already spread to our schools, prisons, and mental hospitals, not to mention the advertising community, and it has also been picked up by police forces around the world. Placing hoods over the heads of political prisoners—a modified form of sensory deprivation—has become a standard tactic around the world, from Northern Ireland to Chile. The Soviet Union has consistently used psychiatric treatment as an instrument of repression. Such methods violate basic human rights just as much as physical abuse, even if they leave no marks on the body.

Totalitarian regimes will probably continue, as they have in the past, to search secretly for ways to manipulate the mind, no matter what the United States does. The prospect of being able to control people seems too enticing for most tyrants to give up. Yet, we as a country can defend ourselves without sending our own scientists—mad or otherwise—into a hidden war that violates our basic ethical and constitutional principles.

After all, we created the Nuremberg Code to show there were limits on scientific research and its application. Admittedly, American intelligence officials have violated our own standard, but the U.S. Government has now officially declared violations will no longer be permitted. The time has come for the United States to lead by example in voluntarily renouncing secret government behavioral research. Other countries might even follow suit, particularly if we were to propose an international agreement which provides them with a framework to do so.

Tampering with the mind is much too dangerous to be left to the spies. Nor should it be the exclusive province of the behavioral scientists, who have given us cause for suspicion. Take this statement by their most famous member, B. F. Skinner: "My image in some places is of a monster of some kind who wants to pull a string and manipulate people. Nothing could be further from the truth. People are manipulated; I just want them to be manipulated more effectively." Such notions are much more acceptable in prestigious circles than people tend to think: D. Ewen Cameron read papers about "depatterning" with electroshock before meetings of his fellow psychiatrists, and they elected him their president. Human behavior is so important that it must concern us all. The more vigilant we and our representatives are, the less chance we will be unwitting victims.

Notes

The reorganization of TSS was described in document #59, 26 July 1963, Report of the Inspection of MKULTRA and in interviews with Ray Cline, Herbert Scoville, and several other former CIA officials.

Richard Helms' recommendations for a new MKULTRA charter were described in document #450, 9 June, 1964, Sensitive Research Programs (MKULTRA).

Admiral Stansfield Turner's statement on the MKULTRA program was made before a joint session of the Kennedy subcommittee and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, August 3, 1977, pp. 4-8.

MKSEARCH programs and their origins in MKULTRA are described in documents #449, 8 April 1964, Revision of Project MKULTRA and #S-1-7, untitled, undated.

Dr. Edward Bennett's work is the subject of MKULTRA subprojects 104 and 143. See especially 143-23, 11 December 1962, Subject: MKULTRA Subproject 143. Other information on the CIA's economic sabotage program against Cuba came from interviews with Major General Edward Lansdale, Ray Cline, William Colby, Lincoln Gordon, Covey Oliver, Charles Meyer, Richard Goodwin, Roger Morris, several former CIA and State Department officials, and Cuban government officials.

The continued safehouse operation is MKSEARCH subproject 4. See especially S-12-1, bank statements and receipts of safehouse. The CIA's dealings with the Treasury

Department over the Long committee's investigations of wiretaps are detailed in documents #451, 30 January 1967, A Report on a Series of Meetings with Department of the Treasury officials and #452, undated, Meeting with Department of Treasury Official.

The biological laboratory is the subject of MKULTRA subprojects 78 and 110 and MKSEARCH 2. See especially Documents 78-28, September 28, 1962, Subject: PM Support and Biological [deleted] and S-5-6, 8 September 1965, Subject: Hiring by Chief TSD/BB of [deleted], Former Staff Employee in a Consultant Capacity on an Agency Contract. The costs of the Fort Detrick operations came from p. 18 and p. 204 of the Church committee hearings on Unauthorized Storage of Toxic Agents September 16,17, and 18,1975. The description of TSS's procedures for dealing with biological weapons came from Document 78-28 (cited above) and document #509, undated (but clearly June 1975), Subject: Discussions of MKNAOMI with [deleted]

The chemical company subproject is MKULTRA subproject 116 and MKSEARCH 5. See especially 116-57,30 January 1961, Subject: MKULTRA, Subproject 116; 116-62, October 28, 1960, shipping invoice- and 116-61,4 November 1960, Subject: MKULTRA Subproject 116. Also see James Moore's subproject, MKULTRA 52; especially 52-53, invoice # 3, 1125-009-1902, April 27, 1960.

James Hamilton's work is the subject of MKULTRA subprojects 124 and 140 and MKSEARCH Subproject 3. See especially 140-57, 6 May 1965, Subject: Behavioral Control and 140-83, 29 May 1963, Subject: MKULTRA Subproject 140.

Carl Pfeiffer's subprojects are MKULTRA 9, 26, 28, and 47 and MKSEARCH 7. See especially S-7-4, undated, Subject: Approval of Project [deleted].

Maitland Baldwin's Subprojects are MKULTRA 62 and MKSEARCH 1. See especially 62-2, undated [deleted] Special Budget and 62-3, undated, 1956, Subject: Re: Trip to [deleted], October 10-14, 1956.

Charles Geschickter's subprojects are MKULTRA 23, 35, and 45 and MKSEARCH 6. See especially 35-10, May 16, 1955, Subject- To provide for Agency-Sponsored Research Involving Covert Biological and Chemical Warfare; 45-78, undated, Research Proposal: 1960, 45-104 undated, Subject: Research Proposal: 1958-1959; 45-95, 26 January 1959, Continuation of MKULTRA, Subproject No.45; 45-104,21 January 1958, Continuation of MKULTRA, Subproject No.45; 45-52,8 February 1962, Continuation of MKULTRA, Subproject No. 45; S-13-7,13 August Subject, Approval of [deleted]; and S-13-9, 13 September 1967, Subject: Approval of [deleted]. See also Geschickter's testimony before the Kennedy subcommittee, September 20, 1977, pp. 44-49.

The lack of congressional or executive branch knowledge of CIA behavioral activities was mentioned on p. 386, Church Committee Report, Book I.

Amazon Natural Drug's CIA connection was described by an ex-CIA official and

confirmed by the mother of another former Agency man. Several former employees described its activities in interviews.

Gottlieb's termination of MKSEARCH came from Document S-14-3 10 July 1972, Termination of MKSEARCH.

The destruction of MKULTRA documents was described in Document #419, 3 October, 1975, Subject: Destruction of Drug and Toxin Related Files and 460, 31 January, 1973, Subject: Project Files: (19511967).

The MKULTRA subprojects on electric stimulation of the brain are

106 and 142. See especially 106-1, undated, Subject: Proposal; 142-14, 22 May 1962, Subject: Project MKULTRA, Subproject No. 142; and document #76 (MKDELTA release), 21 April 1961, Subject: "Guided Animal" Studies.

The list of parapsychology goals was taken from an excellent article by John Wilhelm in the August 2, 1977 Washington Post: "Psychic Spying?"

Project OFTEN information was taken from document #455, 6 May 1974, Subject: Project OFTEN and Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from Deanne P. Siemer, September 20, 1977, Subject: Experimentation Programs Conducted by the Department of Defense That Had CIA Sponsorship or Participation and That Involved the Administration to Human Subjects of Drugs Intended for Mind-control or Behavior-modification Purposes.

The quote from B. F. Skinner was taken from Peter Schrag's book, Mind Control (New York: Pantheon, 1978) p. 10.

Footnotes

1. At 1977 Senate hearings, CIA Director Stansfield Turner summed up some of MKULTRA's accomplishments over its 11-year existence: The program contracted out work to 80 institutions, which included 44 colleges or universities, 15 research facilities or private companies, 12 hospitals or clinics, and 3 penal institutions. I estimate that MKULTRA cost the taxpayers somewhere in the neighborhood of \$10 million.

2. This economic sabotage program started in 1961, and the chain of command "ran up to the President," according to Kennedy adviser Richard Goodwin. On the CIA side, Agency Director John McCone "was very strong on it," says his former deputy Ray Cline. Cline notes that McCone had the standing orders to all CIA stations abroad rewritten to include "a sentence or two" authorizing a continuing program to disrupt the Cuban economy. Cuba's trade thus became a standing target for Agency operators, and with the authority on the books, CIA officials apparently never went back to the White House for renewed approval after Kennedy died, in Cline's opinion. Three former Assis-

tant Secretaries of State in the Johnson and Nixon administrations say the sabotage, which included everything from driving down the price of Cuban sugar to tampering with cane-cutting equipment, was not brought to their attention. Former CIA Director William Colby states that the Agency finally stopped the economic sabotage program in the early 1970s. Cuban government officials counter that CIA agents were still working to create epidemics among Cuban cattle in 1973 and that as of spring 1978, Agency men were committing acts of sabotage against cargo destined for Cuba.

3. In 1967 a Senate committee chaired by Senator Edward Long was inquiring into wiretapping by government agencies, including the Narcotics Bureau. The Commissioner of Narcotics, then Harry Giordano told a senior TSS man— almost certainly Gottlieb— that if CIA officials were “concerned” about its dealings with the Bureau involving the safehouses coming out during the hearings, the most “helpful thing” they could do would be to “turn the Long committee off.” How the CIA men reacted to this not very subtle blackmail attempt is unclear from the documents, but what does come out is that the TSS man and another top-level CIA officer misled and lied to the top echelon of the Treasury Department (the Narcotics Bureau’s parent organization) about the safehouses and how they were used.

4. James Moore of the University of Delaware, who also produced carbamates when he was not seeking the magic mushroom, served at times as an intermediary between the industrialist and the CIA.

5. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, it seemed that every radical on the West Coast was saying that the CIA was up to strange things in behavior modification at Vaville. Like many of yesterday’s conspiracy theories, this one turned out to be true.

6. Geschickter was an extremely important TSS asset with connections in high places. In 1955 he convinced Agency officials to contribute \$375,000 in secret funds toward the construction of a new research building at Georgetown University Hospital. (Since this money seemed to be coming from private sources, unwitting Federal bureaucrats doubled it under the matching grant program for hospital construction.) The Agency men had a clear understanding with Geschickter that in return for their contribution, he would make sure they received use of one-sixth of the beds and total space in the facility for their own “hospital safehouse.” They then would have a ready source of “human patients and volunteers for experimental use,” according to a CIA document, and the research program in the building would provide cover for up to three TSS staff members. Allen Dulles personally approved the contribution and then, to make sure, he took it to President Eisenhower’s special committee to review covert operations. The committee also gave its assent, with the understanding that Geschickter could provide “a reasonable expectation” that the Agency would indeed have use of the space he promised. He obviously did, because the CIA money was forthcoming. (This, incidentally, was the only time in a whole quarter-century of Agency behavior-control activities when the documents show that CIA officials went to the White House for approval of anything. The Church committee found no evidence that either the executive branch or Congress was informed

of the programs.)

7. In 1967, after Ramparts magazine exposed secret CIA funding of the National Student Association and numerous nonprofit organizations, President Johnson forbade CIA support of foundations or educational institutions. Inside the Agency there was no notion that this order meant ending relationships, such as the one with Geschickter. In his case, the agile CIA men simply transferred the funding from the foundation to a private company, of which his son was the secretary-treasurer.

8. Lying to Congress followed the pattern of lying to the press that some MKULTRA veterans adopted after the first revelations came out. For example, former Human Ecology Society director James Monroe told The New York Times on August 2, 1977 that “only about 25 to 30 percent” of the Society’s budget came from the CIA—a statement he knew to be false since the actual figure was well over 90 percent. His untruth allowed some other grantees to claim that their particular project was funded out of the non-Agency part of the Society.