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SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY

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SUNDAY MORNING MEETINGS, 11 a.m.
(Admission free)

Dec. 1—Dr. JOHN LEWIS
Is Science Superstitious?
Soprano solos: Mavis Condon

Dec. 8—IAN GORDON-BROWN
Human Rights
Bass solos: G. C. Dowman

Dec. 15—Lord SORESEN
Leadership and Democracy
Tenor solos: David Waters

(There will be no meeting on Dec. 22 or 29)

CONWAY DISCUSSIONS—TUESDAYS, 6.45 p.m.
(Admission: members free, non-members 2s. Refreshment break at 7.45 p.m.)

THEME FOR THE MONTH: ISRAEL TODAY

Dec. 3—Politics and Way of Life: Maurice Orbach, M.P.
Dec. 10—History and Economies: Eliahu Hirschberg
Dec. 17—Culture and the Future: Cultural counsellor from the Israeli Embassy

(There will be no meeting on Dec. 24 or 31)

SOUTH PLACE SUNDAY CONCERTS, 78th Season, 1968/69
Concerts 6.30 p.m. Doors open 6 p.m. Admission 4s.

Dec. 1—ALBERNI STRING QUARTET: Mozart D, K421; Bartok No. 2; Beethoven E flat, Op. 127.
Dec. 8—ILSE WOLF, JACK BRYMER, WILFRID PARRY: Poulenc Clarinet and Piano Sonata; Schubert Lieder; Arnold Clarinet and Piano Sonatina; Brahms F mi., Op. 120, No. 1 Clarinet and Piano Sonata; Schubert Der Hirt auf dem Felsen, D 963.

The Objects of the Society are the study and dissemination of ethical principles and the cultivation of a rational religious sentiment.

Any person in sympathy with these objects is cordially invited to become a member (minimum annual subscription 12s. 6d.). A membership application form will be found on the back cover.
EDITORIAL

So the great American public have at last chosen their 37th President. Or have they? The ironic thing about it is that all the complicated procedure, intended to ensure that the people choose the party candidates as well as finally choosing between them, resulted in the elimination by one means or another of all but the two candidates put up by the party machines, and in the final election of “tricky Dickie”, whom hardly anyone seemed to want. Most of the politically aware young voters who had supported Eugene McCarthy boycotted the polling booths when faced with the final choice that was no choice at all; while 90 per cent of the Negro vote went to Humphrey, as the lesser of two evils.

The American electoral system, like our own, is designed to keep out small parties, and, far more than our own, demands huge financial resources. The small margin by which Nixon defeated Humphrey may well have depended on the difference in the number of TV commercials put out by the two parties.

At first sight the result of the election is a tragedy, both for America and for the rest of the world, since there is no doubt that the principles and policies for which Humphrey stood were far less reactionary than those which Nixon’s vague promises concealed. In practice, however, it may not make much difference. The fear that Nixon will display the same unprincipled irresponsibility when in office as during his struggle to power is unfounded, for he has now got what he wanted, and the Presidency often seems to enlarge the incumbent to fill the job. In his electoral campaign, Nixon simply ignored the Negro population altogether; but as President he will be unable to ignore them. He hardly bothered to woo voters in the big cities, preferring to rely on those in the genteel suburbs; but it is in the big cities that the battle for American unity has to be fought. It could even be that the Republican Richard, having to face a Democratic Congress and Senate (a situation that has not arisen since 1892), and inheriting, as he does, the policies as well as the problems of L.B.J.—in particular, his last-minute bid for negotiated peace in Vietnam—will prove more liberal in terms of actual solutions than the somewhat ineffectual Hubert would have done, under pressure from all sides, and especially from the financiers of the large corporations, which wield most of the real power.

However, this prediction depends upon Nixon contriving to keep his Vice-President, Spiro J. Agnew—himself a big businessman and, it is said, associated with members of the Greek junta—under control when political decisions are at stake; and, above all, managing to keep himself alive for the term of his office—for Agnew in the White
Powerhouse could well mean another American Civil War, and another Cuban crisis with his finger on the H-bomb button could mean curtains for mankind. So long live President Nixon! Till December 1972, at least.

Ivory Towers

BY LORD SORENSEN

When I first moved into my present house it had a name-plate over the porch. To satisfy my proletarian prejudice I removed it and relied upon a number, but on my transition to the Peerage it might have been appropriate if I had adopted a titular designation such as "Ivory Tower". "Sorensen Court" would have been unsuitable, because that is already the name of a dismal council block of flats down a side street. In a sense "Ivory Tower" would have been most apt, for that at times is precisely what I need and what I have—a place of retreat from the world and one's fellows.

A Necessary Retreat

We all need such Ivory Towers in which we can find solitude wherein to read, write and brood in silent fellowship with books and if possible be protected from telephonic intrusion. Said Wordsworth, "The world is too much with us; late and soon, getting and spending, we lay waste our powers: Little we see in Nature that is ours; We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!" We need an Ivory Tower in which to nourish our self-consciousness, which some say is a delusion, but I contend is the centre of the world we know and more wonderful than all the marvels of science. Our Ivory Towers are the havens in which we replenish our creative capacity before we sail for another journey.

In his Ivory Tower, Karl Marx pursued his research and formulated his ideas, even as, in their different ways, did Rousseau, Tom Paine, Thomas Jefferson, Francis Bacon, Galileo, Confucius, Buddha, Plato and Jesus. We ourselves at times all retreat to Ivory Towers in which we individually probe, question, analyse and think for ourselves "far from the madding crowd" and without which we would be simply human ants. I am not, therefore, seeking to demolish Ivory Towers, but only to consider their human significance and some of their possible dangers.

—and its Dangers

One danger is that we can become isolated from the populace outside and develop a sense of superiority that prompts us to empty our rubbish bins onto assumed inferiors down below, perhaps also with a little vitriol. Another is that when we do emerge we may do so with a fanatical conviction that we have discovered some truth that we must impose on the lowly multitude, denouncing all rivals as spurious. Despots and dictators live in Ivory Castles from which they hold sway over their subjects for their real or imaginary good, just as my parents in my childhood compelled me to consume oleaginous breakfast porridge because they insisted that it was good for me, even if occasionally I returned it revoltingly to their embarrassment. Similar revolts occur in time not merely domestically, but against religious, ideological and political despotism.

I will be more concrete, for though ivory may be precious, concrete is more substantial. Physicists live necessarily in Ivory Towers of scientific research so that they can apply their intelligence objectively without interference. "Science", it is said, "must be for the sake of science". If, however, scientific knowledge remains with the scientist it is socially meaningless. Every scientist both builds on the preceding work of other scientists and relies on the services of others for equipment and to keep him alive, and...
therefore he must pay the debt he owes to them by contributing his discoveries. This he does through the application of science, which is why, if I myself give you meagre illumination mentally, you can at least secure physical light by switching a knob near the door instead of fiddling about with candles or greasy oil lamps as was once necessary.

The invention of electric bulbs and our present dependence on electric light, heat and power are due to the extension of the electrical knowledge of Lord Kelvin, Clark-Maxwell and Faraday in the 19th century and, much further back, to those ancients who pondered on the queer properties of amber when subjected to friction. The term “electricity” is derived from the Greek “Electron”, which means “amber”. From specialists in electrical knowledge we have received much, but this has not been an unmixed boon, for the physicist has also given us nuclear fission and the means by which we can annihilate mankind.

The Perils of Detachment

Some scientists say that this lethal potential is not their responsibility and that they have only made available the results of their research: what use is made of this has nothing to do with them. This is the defence of an Ivory Tower isolated from society and therefore it is highly dangerous. If the scientist claims a right to pursue his research without hindrance and society grants him that right then reciprocally the scientist must have a sense of social obligation by which he must relate his discoveries to the public good. He cannot wash his hands of the responsibility of providing society with weapons of racial destruction. Of course this applies too to those chemical and bacteriological means by which mankind can also commit wholesale genocide. Some scientists recognise this and refuse participation in such preparation, but why should not all scientists do likewise? Morality must control science or science can become immoral.

This is a dramatic illustration of the peril of Ivory Tower detachment, but there are other illustrations. Thus art can be detached until it becomes either the esoteric cult of an elite or merely an acquisitive decoration. John Ruskin and William Morris in the last century did much to rescue art from being the adornment of the wealthy and make it enshrined in daily life. It should not suffer confinement to forms of personal possession, but should be transmitted through the common things we need. Equally art forms that remain enigmatically or obscurely individualistic may gratify the artist's ego, but become socially irrelevant if they are incomprehensible.

Our Stately Homes

One thinks of the “Stately Homes of England” in their expansive parklands, their elegant furnishings and their pompous oil-paintings of the patrician and opulent. Some of these are now in public or semi-public possession and others have now been commercialised by their owners owing to financial pressure. Through these we can now wander at 3s. 6d. per head plus a bit more for tea, buns and jam, although so far the proletariat have not been pampered with the supply of whelks, shrimps or stewed eels. This may come in time, and meanwhile other attractions such as old vintage cars, steam-rollers, lions, giraffes and fun-fairs have been added to the historic or aesthetic treasures. But there are still many mansions wherein for the sole enjoyment of Ivory Tower owners and their privileged friends these spacious museums are strictly private and only those few can gaze on framed pictures of haughty women encased in garments that seen permanently affixed to their bodies, of complacent, proud magnates or noblemen, of accoutred fighting men with grim masks to betoken their prowess in battles and slaughter, and of mythological figures in seductive or gymnastic postures. These are the miserly hoards in the Ivory Towers of an economic superior class.

There are also theological Ivory-Towers in which are distilled ingenious
metaphysical concoctions the lowly laity were once compelled to swallow. Today in many lands the ecclesiastical distillers have lost their previous coercive authority and for the most part the laity pass by as if they were teetotallers ignoring a pub. Ivory Towers with spires and organs to many have become an anachronism, though not to all. Religious leaders and mystics can often fly so far from earthly reality as either to feel scorn for their birth-place or to make false judgments of what that reality involves. Gandhi, for instance, splendid though many of his qualities were, had ascetically distorted views on sex and also failed adequately to appreciate how the mass emotion he stimulated could break the restraints of ahimsa or non-violence he assumed would be strictly observed. Innocent sowing of the wind frequently produces a violent whirlwind to be reaped.

The Political Aspect

Politics can provide a salutary check to spiritual intoxication. There are also political Ivory Towers in which clever theories or social idealism are fashioned that are treated as candy-floss when conveyed to the marketplace. Utopian plans or ventures, in which such as I and others have engaged, prove unrealistic golden visions even if not without experimental social value. Many social idealists or theorists can be deluded in respect of the popular support on which they imagine they can rely. Thus the electoral support the Labour Party gained at the last General Election has dissolved in by-elections and municipal elections. A stalwart minority sustain their loyalty, but a large minority either has become politically apathetic or slithered over to opposition. Most electors are unconcerned with political theories, whether these be Socialist, Liberal, Conservative or Communist and are pragmatic bargain hunters to whom both theories and social idealism are secular pie in the sky.

The issue of immigration provides another illustration of Ivory Tower detachment. When a Conservative Government imposed curbs on immigration the then Labour Opposition nearly burst its blood vessels with passionate indignation, but when in power harsh facts compelled the Labour Government to continue and strengthen those curbs. This was not hypocrisy, but an enforced confrontation with facts previously emotionally evaded. When Mr. Enoch Powell made his famous or infamous speech, melodramatically warning the nation about the alleged menace of "coloured" immigration, plebeian dockers and meat porters marched on Westminster to demonstrate agreement with that talented Greek scholar. They represented many more. Intellectuals, however, including readers of The New Statesman, revelled in invective against the Labour Government and a cartoon depicted the Prime Minister as a puppet dangling from strings manipulated by the oafish Alf Garnett. The plight of the Kenya Asians was indeed a special issue, nevertheless basically this was only a variant of the essential problem which the Government had to deal.

Central to that problem is that of housing, for, with a heavy list of native applicants still urgently needing decent accommodation, how can local authorities cope with further immigration and avoid increasing existing gross over-crowding? I wonder how many N.S. readers offered to give up a room or two to accommodate a Kenya Asian family? There are other serious aspects of the problem, but I am inclined to think that failure by residents in Ivory Towers to appreciate that housing factor has given substance to those swayed by the ignorant, irrational and stupid colour prejudice, that Enoch Powell and his supporters have so lamentably exploited.

Finally, there is the episode of the French student riots in which genuine grievances became the initiative of a wider movement that it was firmly believed would usher in a new French revolution. It was right that the B.B.C. should present a dozen or so European students to state their cases despite protests from panicky conventionalists, but their divergent expositions
were notable more for their zeal than for their coherence. Some of those who appeared on television seemed confident that nihilistic attack would somehow be the prelude of an earthly paradise descending from a supernatural Marx. They lived in a super-heated Ivory Tower conservatory whose plants wilted when exposed to the cold blast of a French General Election, so that de Gaulle is now in charge with still greater support than ever, at least for a time.

The Need for Contact

I repeat. Ivory Towers are imperative for those who need to meditate, probe and think, for only thus can self-consciousness be nourished and inspiration found for creative service. My plea is simply that those who understand and cherish that necessity should never lose contact with people as they are with all their foibles, stubbornness and myopia. From our Ivory Towers must go forth those who seek to influence the multitude, even though sometimes they must insist on being heard and in consequence be liable to be flung into the ditch around their Tower. No Ivory Tower is worthy and will last if not built on democratic rock, which means toleration, true humility and respect. We must exercise thought and have our glowing visions, but only when we honestly assess the limitations of the world outside our necessary reserves will thought remain undaunted and the vision be fadeless. We shall then not grow desperate and cynical because evolution does not always proceed at express speed or because the future cannot be grasped tightly by feverish hands. Our faith in ultimate human values will prove imperishable if the doors of our Ivory Towers are not always bolted and barred and we do not spurn fellowship with the passing throng.

(Summary of a lecture given on July 7)

Levels of Human Aggressiveness

BY PROF. T. H. PEAR

One of today's vogue-words is "aggressiveness". It commends itself to an admirer of "plain words" for literary purposes; his demand for a plain word for "entropy" or "DNA" would be smilingly ignored. But is the meaning of "aggressiveness" plain? When did it become fashionable among psychologists and psychiatrists?

"Aggression" has a basic meaning: the act of stepping towards or approaching. The implication that the step is taken with intent to hurt or harm came later. "Aggressiveness" covers the qualities denoted in earlier psychological writings by such terms as "pugnacity" or "self-assertion" (William McDougall). The significance of "aggressiveness" as denoting a fundamental trait or disposition is still debated. It is therefore advisable to distinguish observable acts of aggression, in either of the above senses, from an assumed and unverifiable trait of aggressiveness attributed freely to persons, to groups of very different sizes, to "nations" (another slippery word). There may be no significant correlation between a person's propensity to perform such acts and their frequency, in a setting in which gestures and verbal expressions may, in ignorance of cultural diversities, be erroneously attributed to hypothetical traits of aggressiveness.

Additional shades of meaning have been primarily the effects of psychoanalytic theory: in many usages the common factor seems to have been absence of social feeling, the individual being regarded as opposed to society. Freud's view shifted from his earlier hypothesis, in which aggressiveness was conceived as a response to felt frustration of impulse, to a later assumption that it is an original, instinctive, independent disposition.
Aggressiveness in Man

It is interesting to examine the fringes of an established "subject" — which sometimes has become a vested interest — and to speculate why the boundaries were staked just there, when, and by whom. Are they now blurred? If so, why? Any concept of aggressiveness should concern ethnologists, zoologists, social psychologists, anthropologists and students of ethics and penology. In each of these studies there may be experts who doubt the competence of leaders of thought in a related subject. The supposition, for instance, that "man's behaviour, in the holistic sense, can be reduced to the same frameworks available for describing non-human animals, even the primates" is criticised. 

The narrower concept of human aggressiveness is nevertheless amazingly wide. Has it been rolled out too thin to stand up? In a country distant from his own a rich diplomat and his wife may use subtle means, e.g. discreet and expensive entertaining, to "sell the idea" of his nation. If this is aggression, does it "intend to hurt"? "Aggressive" advertising employs the "soft" as well as the "hard sell". In human courtship, a wooer who "takes the first step" may be regarded as aggressive by his victim, who may have been encouraged to resent or welcome such brash or virile behaviour — and naturally ambivalence can creep in. I have heard a committee urged to appoint an aggressive professor: some members may have been puzzled by the adjective, but the era of "grantsmanship" was dawning.

Though distrusting spatial metaphors in psychology, I suggest that human aggressive behaviour may be observed at different levels:

1. A very young baby screams and flails about with his limbs. How can we know if he feels aggressive? An inanimate toy could be constructed to display such movements.
2. Infants in a school playground pushing each other and shouting are aggressive in both senses perhaps. Yet some parents pay fees to a school in which aggressive behaviour is sedulously modified along lines deemed, in a "higher" social class, to be less aggressive.
3. Later, the school child may learn techniques of overt aggression, in "rough" games and boxing: sometimes he conforms to such disciplines because it makes life easier, but they may have bored him nevertheless.
4. In the army he can learn unarmed combat and button-pushing: aggressiveness in the second technique may be a handicap.

Aggressiveness in War

What are the relations between a normal citizen's personal aggressiveness and the functions which he may have to assume in a future large-scale war? Professor Otto Klineberg, who has spent most of his professional life in studying conflicts and war, gives reasons why he has never been persuaded that personal aggressiveness plays an important role as a motive for war. 

It is doubtful if many psychiatrists who discuss the relations between personal aggressiveness and modern warfare have themselves been involved as combatants for long periods. Many have behaved courageously in danger, like thousands of non-combatant men and women in the Forces, and tens of thousands of unarmed civilians in London, Rotterdam, Hamburg and Dresden. As late as 1945 a military doctor's position was still privileged; if he were taken prisoner he might soon be given useful work in a hospital. In a nuclear war vast areas of inhabited conurbations will, for obvious reasons, have no doctors.

For many months in England after September 1939, thousands of men and women had to be exhorted and taught to look, sound and feel aggressive, but it was army psychiatrists who curbed some expressions of enthusiasm by old-style instructors in the use of the bayonet.
Examining the view that "war is a necessary component of human nature and salvation can come only through sublimation" we encounter the difficulty that any concept of sublimation implies value-judgments. The word "sublimate" was borrowed from chemistry, and the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* comments "(fig) refine, purify, idealize". Dr. Leach remarks that "fashions in morality are as ambiguous as decency in dress". Who believes that scientists preparing for the next war against an "enemy", who may at the moment be our "friend", are seething daily with aggressiveness?

**Warfare Metaphor**

The technical and popular terms of warfare are used so often that we may cease to smile at some common instances. A fund-raising firm describes its activities to possible clients as a "campaign", with "tactics" and "strategy". A political candidate addressing a few supporters in a small hall is "fighting". A pole-jumping competition is described on the air as a "battle". A few minutes later we hear "the battle continues for the Professorship of Poetry at Oxford".

Writers who find resemblances between the aggressive actions of animals and sophisticated Man seldom mention that the child, early in life, acquires, through imitation and learning, aggressive verbal skills of speech and writing. Attempts are, however, being made to teach chimpanzees to copy "the best show Man has put on so far".

Much more light is desired on the felt nature of personal aggression, especially in its verbal form. The nations accuse each other of aggression. (One wonders how this nebulous word has been translated into Chinese or Russian!) The reply is that the action taken was only in self-defence (e.g. the recent invasion of Czechoslovakia).

"Gentleness, as well as gentility, is a product of training".

**REFERENCES**

3. Himmelweit, H.: "Frustration and Aggression". (cf. ref. (1)).

*(Summary of a lecture given on October 13)*

**Who Said That?**

1. "The Government should not further subordinate British policy to America. A settlement in Asia is imperilled by the lunatic fringe in the American Senate who want a holy crusade against Communism."

2. "So far as Her Majesty's Government are concerned, I repeat, as I have said many times before, that we have made absolutely plain our support for the American stand against Communist infiltration into South Vietnam."

Conway Discussions
(Report of October meetings)

The Pope or the Pill: G. N. Deodhekar
The Pope’s encyclical on contraceptives, said Mr. Doedhekar, has been described as a major blunder and a world disaster. A major blunder because it has split the Catholic Church down the middle; a world disaster because it places obstacles in the way of family planning and adds impetus to the population explosion in the poorer, already over-populated countries. It is said that as rationalists we are incapable of understanding an act of faith, and as non-Catholics it is none of our business anyway. It is true that we cannot understand an act of faith when it is irrational and to us nonsensical, but any decision by the Pope that sets humanitarianism at nought is everyone’s business. A decision that hinders or prevents the speaker’s country, India, from introducing much-needed family planning is our business, particularly as India is not a Catholic country.

There are two main objections that we are entitled to make to the implications of the Pope’s encyclical: (1) its impact upon the world’s population, the growth of which may, within the next thirty years, outstrip the world’s food supplies; and (2) the implication that the use of contraceptives inevitably leads to a sharp decline in morals and conjugal infidelity. On the reverse side, the ensuing revolt in the Roman Catholic Church, the doubts arising in Catholic minds, and the undermining of the Pope’s authority, must in the long run diminish the power of Catholicism, and this may well be the best thing that can happen for humanity.

During the discussion period, it was contended that the Roman Catholic Church leaned more on its vast political power than on its religion, and that the apparently illogical argument of the Pope was in fact an astute political decision. Faced with either the antagonism of the powerful reactionaries in the Vatican, or the confusion of the layman, he had chosen the latter, as the lesser of the two evils.

The World’s Hungry Millions: Leslie Aldous
Few people have been as closely associated with international aid agencies as Leslie Aldous. From the first Nutritional Committee formed by the League of Nations in the thirties, he has been associated with aid to the world’s needy millions. In a long, absorbing and fascinating survey of the United Nations special agencies, he explained their difficulties, hopes, labours and successes. Eighty per cent of the total funds of the United Nations are employed in these special agencies, dispensing medical aid, supplying food, giving technical aid and training, and carrying out medical research and research on strains of crops, irrigation, and soil conservation. Vast tracts of desert have been reclaimed in the Middle East, and fruit and crops now grow where, but twenty-five years ago, only arid sand abounded. Much more could be done in this direction if neighbouring states would cease their warlike tendencies. But real progress has been made in many parts of the world in stamping out killer diseases, increasing crop yields, extending technical know-how, and providing adequate diets — though the extent of progress is more than matched by the growth in population. Despite this, the work goes on, bringing relief and aid to millions of the world’s needy people.

Governments do little or nothing to draw attention to the great humanitarian work that is being done; private enterprise often stands in its way; the Catholic Church does much to frustrate plans for birth control; and many stupid people condemn aid to the under-developed countries as “money down the drain”. Yet here, in the special agencies, is the living example of man’s humanity to man, kindling a spark of hope for the unity of the world and the real brotherhood of man.
In the ensuing discussion, it was generally felt that the acquisitiveness of man, fostered by financial and political interests and narrow national pride, were the main stumbling blocks and we should do everything possible to support and draw attention to the great humanitarian tasks being carried out against tremendous odds by the United Nations special agencies.

Racial Integration: Martin Ennals

Martin Ennals contended that we were a racist people and the sooner we recognised and acknowledged this the better. Wherever we had settled we had set up a society based on the supposed superiority of one class or one race over another. Enoch Powell, unintentionally, through his negative, racist speech, brought home to us the stark reality of the fact that ours is a class-ridden, racist society — a view endorsed by the support given him by the dockers and Smithfield porters. Governments have evaded the problem, making mere gestures over the years, and the Prime Minister has just shown us, over Rhodesia, that he is more concerned with political expedients and solutions, than principles.

Mr. Jenkins, when Home Secretary, made what is probably the best definition of the needs of a non-racist society: “There must be equality of opportunity, provision for cultural diversity, and tolerance between people”. For without equality of opportunity there can be no justice, without justice there can be no friendship, and without these tolerance is not possible. Only when we have these, and start in earnest to tackle the problems of housing, schooling and employment, can we hope to see a lessening of the racial problems in this country. Fortunately there is an indication that the Government is beginning to recognise this, and although too little and very late, its decision to spend money on urban development is a step in the right direction. For us, the ordinary people, racism is a community problem, and we should all play our part in creating a classless community in our own areas.

In the discussion, the general feeling was that education against racism was necessary in the home, in school, on television, and on films, as well as attempts to establish good community relations.

Aggression: Joshua Fox, M.A., M.Sc.

What, asked Mr. Fox, is human aggression? Is it an inherent tendency? One school of thought contends that it is inherited by some racial types but not others. Is it a conscious trait or does it arise without our being aware of it? Is it a result of oppression in childhood? Opinion varies on these questions.

Can we turn to the animal kingdom for evidence? In their natural environment and free from the danger of man, animals do not appear to be aggressive. True, they kill for food, and will defend their mates, their young, and their territory; but, unless provoked, they are not aggressive. Laboratory experiments have shown that kittens and mice brought up together will continue living together in harmony. On the other hand, research into the effects of high population density on monkeys demonstrates that, although not normally aggressive, they tend to become so the closer together they are compelled to live. This seems to point to a social rather than a natural cause for aggression.

People in groups generally react to the pattern of the group. A group that has got together to share an interest is unlikely to show much aggressive tendency. Prison communities, on the other hand, tend to be aggressive, since they comprise two groups with conflicting interests — the prisoners who want to get out and the warders who are there to keep them in. A works group of employers and trade unionists will co-operate when they must on matters of mutual interest, but for the remainder of the time some aggressive tendency is present.

Now we come to examine the individual. If his basic needs of food,
warmth, clothing and shelter are met, he is not generally aggressive unless
his social needs are frustrated. Aggression is often evinced today in people's
drive for status. The frustration that comes from modern bureaucracy and
large-scale organisations may cause aggression.

In the ensuing discussion, there was some attempt to draw a firm
conclusion from the speaker, but he preferred to leave us to reach our
own conclusions on the evidence available, though he inclined to the
view that aggression is a social phenomenon rather than an innate one.

H.G.K.

To the Editor

Youth

Poor, discontented and abandoned youth! What are they going to inherit?
That mess in the world created by us? Must they live and work to satisfy
the needs of war, or must they break up our arms and sink them in the
ocean?

This is the future the youth of the world faces. But they are living with
us now, and have the right to participate in shaping our policies. They
see what is going on, and are "revolting" against the whole system of
society. They protest because what we are doing now is not for the benefit
of man, for we accept war by stockpiling the Bomb and financing Biological
and Chemical Warfare and Space Research.

We shouldn't blame youth because they object to wasting their lives
defending the muddle which we have so laboriously created. We rather
must blame ourselves for being apathetic to the world's problems and for
treating protest demonstrations as a "bad show" when in fact we are
responsible for it all and are guilty of abandoning youth in this crucial
moment of their anxiety and discontent.

We haven't shown them any understanding, and we haven't given them
even the slightest hope for their future. We just gave them police as
protection . . . for ourselves.

Stefan Tara

Chessington, Surrey

Meditation and Drugs

In reply to Mr. Stewart Cook's letter (November E.R.) most of our
new members are sensible people who join us because they like the Record;
they are, fortunately, not persons being eased into the Society from the
meditation classes. Our small society could not have survived such a
disaster, and we are pleased that our fears have proved unfounded.

Mr. Stewart Cook referred in an earlier letter (October) to anti-
meditators encouraging cannabis smoking. He gave no names or details,
and I presume he is referring to the distribution by anti-meditators of an
alleged pamphlet, Ethical Cannabis Smoking for Young Humanists!

I would implore Mr. Stewart Cook not to believe all he hears about us.
My views on drugs, for instance, are the same as those expressed by the
dreaded Mrs. Mary Whitehouse, the Y.W.C.A., and the World Health
Organisation. Drug addiction is a very terrible thing, and I will join him
in any crusade against it. But I will join no crusade against a trusted and
respectable member of our Society, simply because her views do not
coincide with those of some legal brontosaurus.

However, Mr. Stewart Cook's lively, forthright letters bring intelligent
conflict into the correspondence pages; and I hope that some time I may
be able to agree with him.

H. McCormack

London, N.W.4
Public Schools

The recent Headmasters' Conference shows one great cause of the widespread malaise and inefficiency in the country—the English public school. With ineffable smugness the tycoons of these establishments have boasted that they are indispensable: as the best schools in the country, they say, they are safe from government interference. If this is so it merely shows that snobbery and sycophancy are as rife in the Labour as in the Conservative and Liberal Parties.

In terms of equipment, rolling lawns, laurel hedges, rhododendron groves, vistas of playing fields where the Battle of Waterloo is annually re-fought, swimming pools with baby-talk names and staff classics degrees, they often compare favourably with the State sector. Endowed with the national wealth of past ages, they can afford to. Their academic results may or may not excel those of the best grammar schools and comprehensives, and the suspicion remains that the Oxbridge selection committees have an eagle eye for the right old-school-tie. They claim to inculcate "character", but it is the character of the embryo proconsul, the ability to rough it for a while in draughty dormitories on stodgy food before a life of well-heeled luxury, to be bashed by prefects in the glorious anticipation of eventually having fags of one's own, to worship the great God Conformity in compulsory chapel and give hell to misfits and "bolshies" (shell-pink intellectuals). It is a world contemptuous of democracy, artistry and intellect—save in the crudest success-geared orientation. But it is a success not of genuine achievement and real distinction, but of placemanship and gamesmanship.

Now, short of money by aristocratic standards, they are trying to get rate subsidies by graciously "admitting" a percentage of little local beasts. Of course these will be the brightest ones—to buck up their jaded examination results—and if these new boys aren't made thoroughly wretched as the weekend Bentleys and Fortnum & Mason hampers for their form-mates roll up, they will simply be "bought over" to the Establishment and come to despise their families. In a democracy there is a place for flannelled fools and for elite retreats, but let them be paid for by those who hanker after them. All public schools should be integrated into the public sector of education, and if Britain is to compete economically and grow morally, unearned privilege must be swept aside.

David Tribe
London, S.E.1
(President, National Secular Society)

Vietnam

How can the Editor say that the Americans are against free elections in South Vietnam? What does she think the Americans are fighting for? Sixty-thousand people have been executed in North Vietnam for opposing the Communist régime; over one-million have fled to the South; more than 100,000 have been executed or abducted by the execution squads of the Vietcong in South Vietnam. During the last elections in South Vietnam, over 72 per cent of the population who could do so (i.e. who were under South Vietnamese control) voted for the present South Vietnamese parliament, despite the threat by the Vietcong that anybody who took part in the elections would be executed. Russian rockets attack South Vietnamese towns, but the South is not allowed to retaliate. Free elections under U.N. control, yes; Communist dictatorship, no.

Philip Buttinger
London, S.W.17

[And the Greek junta recently got 99 per cent of the Greek electorate to vote in their favour. As for the refugees from North Vietnam, they were mostly Catholics, who superstitiously responded to the American psychological onslaught using such slogans as "Christ has gone to the South" and "The Virgin Mary has departed from the North".—Editor]
In aid of the Musicians’ Benevolent Fund

2,000th CONCERT
of the
South Place Sunday Concert Society
at
Queen Elizabeth Hall
(Manager: John Denison, Esq., O.B.E.)
on
Sunday, 9th March, 1969, 7.15 p.m.

Amadeus String Quartet
Gervase de Peyer

Haydn in G mi., Op. 74, No. 3; Beethoven in F, Op. 135;
Mozart Clarinet Quintet

Tickets 25s., 17s.6d., 10s., 5s.

Priority bookings may be made at the Conway Hall concerts on January 5, 12, 17, 24, and February 2. In addition, purchasers of Season Tickets for January to April may book seats when they buy their season tickets, and up to February 2, will be allowed a rebate of 3s. per season ticket. From February 8, the Royal Festival Hall box office will handle all ticket sales.
Off the Record

Who Cares about Cathy?
For the third time, "Cathy Come Home" has made the public care—to the tune of £10,000 in donations to Shelter, to provide homes for the homeless. Yet in the two years since Cathy first appeared on our screens, the number of homeless families in the London area has risen by several thousand, and the number of their children "taken into care" has gone up from 4,000 to 5,000.

Perhaps G.L.C. and borough councillors who have been buying up all the old houses they could lay their hands on, only to leave them vacant, boarded-up, and rotting, for five years and more pending "redevelopment", are too busy with their committee meetings to see "Cathy Come Home". Or surely they, too, would care?

B.S.

Book Reviews

Further Talk about Sex

Sexual Morals, by Connaire Kensit and Ruth Buchanan, reprinted from The Freethinker (Student Humanist Federation, 13 Prince of Wales Terrace, W.8; 1968; 6 pp.)

Marriage and the Family, by Connaire Kensit and Ruth Buchanan (B.H.A., 13 Prince of Wales Terrace, W.8; 1968; 16 pp.; 1s. 4d. post free)

The leaflet, Sexual Morals, by Connaire Kensit and Ruth Buchanan, is confessedly "a personal view", and as such is naturally more revolutionary than the carefully argued, eminently rational pamphlet, Marriage and the Family, prepared by the same authors as a basis for discussion to formulate official B.H.A. policy on this socially significant subject.

Sexual Morals is stimulating and controversial. I feel that there are some dubious assumptions about the way human emotions work—for instance, why should it always be wrong to express sexual jealousy, any more than it would always be wrong to express anger? After all, a person with whom one is intimate should surely be apprised of the way in which his actions, including his sexual actions, affect oneself. I am also a bit uneasy about the old-fashioned pleasure-based utilitarianism. Happiness and fulfilment of potential seem preferable to pleasure (at least in its general connotation) as the primary pursuits of mankind.

Marriage and the Family, proposed as policy for the British Humanist Association, is carefully—indeed, painstakingly—rational. Again I feel that insufficient account has probably been taken of the emotional structure of most human relationships. However, the argument is good and clear, and I am particularly sympathetic towards the contention that what suits people in general should not be imposed on the minority who do not conform to pattern. Thus in relation to male-female interests and roles, it seems to me both valid and important to stress individual differences here. Why, indeed, should people be forced to adopt a pattern which is wildly at variance with their natural tendencies?

I am also glad to see that some discussion of the position of old people is included in the pamphlet. The attitude of the writers in this respect is humane, which is not surprising since the principles on which the whole discussion is based are those of humanity and concern for the welfare of the individual.

A well-argued section on contraception and population control concludes this thought-provoking pamphlet, which is, to my mind, as fair-minded and objective a statement on the emotional subject of the family as it would be possible to produce.

RONA GERBER
Variorum Gospel

The Real Jesus, by Guilfoyle Williams (Guilfoyle Publications, 69 Abbey Road, Enfield, Middlesex, 1968; 144 pp.)

Much care and study have been given to the production of this privately-printed little volume by a long-standing member of the Humanist movement. The "Real Jesus" it portrays is drawn solely from the information provided by the four Gospels as given in King James's Bible. This limitation will disappoint the curious who may be attracted by the title, but the author addresses himself to Christians, and we must remind ourselves that the minds of most of the worshipping faithful today have been furnished with an image of Jesus definitely limited to this source.

It is with such Christians that the author is particularly concerned. He believes that many suppress any desire to explore the foundations of their faith lest they should be shown to be false. He stresses the necessity of respect for truth as "the first essential for effective and happy social living".

Those whose bible-reading ceased with their school-days may find considerable interest in this "complete Gospel", with its meticulous references to each of the four Gospels, indicating omissions and variations in the incidents as recorded. The contradictions and confusions of Holy Writ are set out with clarity and commonsense comment, and there is a useful note on the origin of the creeds. For those freethinkers who are prone to get involved in controversy with believers, The Real Jesus may prove a handy reference book.

G. L. Adams

Our man in Tierra del Fuego is always missing meetings

He gets his Humanist News weeks late, poor chap. But he still thinks it's worth supporting the British Humanist Association.

Perhaps because the B.H.A. is building a better society for his return. Help us to get it ready by the time he comes back. Join as a member or associate. At least find out what we do.

Write to Department ER, British Humanist Association
13 Prince of Wales Terrace, London W.8 for free literature
South Place News

New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members in the Society:
M. D. Bacon (Broxbourne), G. T. Baney (S.W.1), Mrs. B. Camerman (S.E.17), Miss T. Cohen (N.W.6), Miss Claude Eliat (Brussels), Miss D. G. Frogley (S.W.13), Miss M. Groome (Richmond, Surrey), I. Johnston (Elgin), G. E. Mighell (Bolney, Sussex), Mrs. D. M. Morgan (W.2), Mrs. F. Nead (Chigwell), Miss G. Pashley (Stainborough, Yorks.), Miss R. Sangar (S.W.14), Mrs. A. Schlesinger (Wembley), T. T. W. Simpson (Wymondham, Norfolk).

Development Fund Donations

We gratefully acknowledge the following further donations to the Society's Development Fund: G. A. King £2.5.6, N. Barnes £1.10.0, E. C. le Maitre £1.10, M. J. Collins £1, R. Wood £1, A. H. Finnis 12s. 6d., D. G. Baker 7s. 6d., Mrs. M. Mepham 7s. 6d., M. Preedy 7s. 6d.

All who value the work of the Society are urged to donate generously, sending their donations to the Hon. Treasurer at Conway Hall, and specifying the Development Fund.

Library Acquisitions

The following books have recently been added to our library:
Critics of Empire, Dr. Bernard Porter (reviewed October E.R.)
The Humanist Outlook, ed. Prof. A. J. Ayer (to be reviewed in a forthcoming issue).

The library has a unique collection of books, mainly on subjects of particular interest to humanists and students of religious emancipation and social progress. Books may be borrowed (by members only) after meetings, or used for research by appointment.

Subscriptions

As already announced (October E.R.), the annual subscription rate for associate members and journal subscribers is to be 12s. 6d. from January 1, when the price of a single copy of the journal will be raised to 1s. The announcement headed "Gift Subscriptions" in November ought, accordingly, to have given the amount of each subscription as 12s. 6d., not 8s.; but any orders sent in before the beginning of December will be executed at 8s.

The minimum annual membership subscription remains at 12s. 6d., but members are urged to donate extra if possible, as the minimum subscription does not cover the cost of the journal. It would also be greatly appreciated if as many members as possible would remit their subscriptions by banker's order, forms for which are obtainable from the Hon. Registrar.

To ensure safe delivery of your Ethical Record, please notify the Registrar immediately of any change of address.

Protest after Protest

The prison sentences passed on Miss Pat Arrowsmith and Mr. Andrew Papworth after the sit-down outside the offices of Elliott Automation were the subject of a letter of protest written by our Secretary on behalf of S.P.E.S. to the Home Secretary, with a copy to the Press Association. The Guardian of November 6 reported:

The Ethical Society, in a letter to the Home Secretary, described Miss Arrowsmith's sentence which followed her part in the non-violent siege of the London offices of Elliott Automation as "the most unjust since the Tolpuddle Martyrs".
S.P.E.S. Socials

Your attention is drawn to our social events—the Sunday Social on December 15, the Whist Drive on December 19, and Xmas Party with country-dancing and children’s fancy-dress contest on December 20—details of all of which are given in the diary opposite.

S.P.E.S. Visit

Sunday, December 8—Meet at 2.15-2.30 p.m. at the entrance to the Queen’s Gallery, Buckingham Palace, S.W.1, to view the paintings of the 17th-century Flemish master, Van Dyck. Admission 2s. 6d. Leader: Mrs. L. L. Booker (tel.: 743 3988).

Kindred Organisations

The tenth annual conference of the Student Humanist Federation is to be held during the weekend of January 3 to 5 at Loughborough University of Technology, on the theme “A Sin to be Different?” Speakers: Peter Fryer (on pornography), Gratton Puxon (on gypsies), Cynthia Reid (on lesbianism), and Tony Smythe (on discrimination against minorities). The all-in fee is £5. Enquiries to S.H.F., 13 Prince of Wales Terrace, W.8.

Humanist Holidays are seeking a new honorary treasurer. They also want a leader to take a small party to the Belgian Young Humanists’ Francisco Ferrer Club in Ostend next spring or summer. (Accommodation in hotel or youth hostel.) Regarding these items and also the Easter Holiday Centre (all ages) at Brighton, write to Mrs. M. Mepham, 29 Fairview Road, Sutton, Surrey. If interested in a ski party to Norway, sailing from Newcastle, early next year, write to Cliff Lovett, 15 Maple Close, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex.

A recent meeting of Humanists in the Oxford area, called together by the B.H.A., resulted in the formation of the Oxford Humanist Association, to cater for local Humanists who are not eligible to join the well-established Oxford University Humanist Group. The Hon. Sec. is Ronald Bell, 14 Wentworth Road, Oxford, and the Hon. Treasurer Colin Barralet, Marlings, Martins Lane, Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxford.

The Adlerian Society is holding a meeting at the Alliance Hall, Palmer Street, S.W.1, on Tuesday, December 3, at 7.30, when Dr. James Hemming will speak on “The Revolt of Youth”.

On Thursday, December 19, Dr. P. E. Hodgson of the Department of Nuclear Physics, Oxford, will address the H. G. Wells Society at the Imperial College, S.W.7, at 7.30 p.m., on “The Uses and Abuses of Science”.

Humanist Appeals

At this time of year, when donations for good causes are being sought and given, we should not forget those causes that are particularly of Humanist concern.

The Agnostics Adoption Society, which was set up four years ago to arrange child adoptions on a secular basis (since existing adoption societies generally insisted that adoptive parents should be regular church-goers) is to be the subject of the radio Week’s Good Cause on January 19, but readers of The Ethical Record can get their donations in well ahead of that date! There is also a membership scheme for a minimum annual subscription of £1, which entitles one to receive periodic news about the progress of the A.A.S. and attend its annual general meeting. Donations and/or membership applications should be sent to 69 Chaucer Road, S.E.24.

Another suitable recipient for the donations of Humanists is the Humanist Housing Association, which has so far provided three flatlet houses for the elderly. The H.H.A. treasurer is Miss K. McKeeen, 24 Dulverton Mansions, Gray’s Inn Road, W.C.1.

Then there are the two overseas projects founded under Humanist auspices—one in Botswana and one in Bihar. Donations to either or both can be sent via the B.H.A., 13 Prince of Wales Terrace, W.8.
Coming at Conway Hall

Sunday, December 1
11 a.m.—S.P.E.S. lecture* by Dr. John Lewis
2.15 p.m.—Discussion of morning lecture
6.30 p.m.—Concert*

Tuesday, December 3
6.45 p.m.—Conway Discussion*

Wednesday, December 4
7.30 p.m.—Central London Fabian Society: Dick Marsh, M.P. (Minister of Transport) on "Socialism in a Mixed Economy"

Thursday, December 5
9 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.—North London Blood Donor Centre

Friday, December 6
9 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.—North London Blood Donor Centre
7.30 p.m.—Opera Italiana: Rossini centenary programme

Saturday, December 7
7.30 p.m.—London Blues Concert

Sunday, December 8
11 a.m.—S.P.E.S. lecture* by Ian Gordon-Brown
2.15 p.m.—Discussion of morning lecture
4.30 p.m.—Session of the new S.P.E.S. Bridge Club: practice
6.30 p.m.—Concert*

Tuesday, December 10
6.45 p.m.—Conway Discussion*

Wednesday, December 11
7 p.m.—Meditation session (advanced)

Friday, December 13
12.30 to 2 p.m.—N.P.C. luncheon-lecture: "Through World Law to World Peace" by Mrs. Mia Lord, 1 p.m. (Refreshments from 12.30)
7.30 p.m.—London Jazz Centre: Evening with Mike Westbrook

Saturday, December 14
7 to 11 p.m.—Holiday Fellowship Carnival Dance

Sunday, December 15
11 a.m.—S.P.E.S. lecture* by Lord Sorensen
2.15 p.m.—Discussion of morning lecture
3 p.m.—S.P.E.S. Sunday Social in library. Tea will be served at 3.30 p.m., after which Mrs. C. Dowman will show some colour slides. Members and friends welcome.
6.30 p.m.—Concert*

Tuesday, December 17
6.45 p.m.—Conway Discussion*

Wednesday, December 18
7.30 p.m.—Central London Fabian Society: Mrs. Judith Hart, M.P. (Paymaster General) on her new post.

Thursday, December 19
2 to 5 p.m.—Princeton College concert
7 p.m.—S.P.E.S. Whist Drive in the library. Light refreshments will be served. Members and friends welcome

Friday, December 20
7.30 p.m.—Vietnam Solidarity: public meeting

Saturday, December 21
3 to 6 p.m.—XMAS COUNTRY DANCE PARTY, sponsored jointly by S.P.E.S. and the Progressive League. All ages welcome. Children's fancy-dress contest. Refreshments. (Adm. 3s. 6d.)
7 to 11 p.m.—Woodcraft Folk: folk-dancing evening

* See inside front cover for details
South Place Ethical Society

FOUNDED in 1793, the Society is a progressive movement which today advocates an ethical humanism, the study and dissemination of ethical principles based on humanism, and the cultivation of a rational religious sentiment free from all theological dogma.

We invite to membership all those who reject supernatural creeds and find themselves in sympathy with our views.

At Conway Hall there are opportunities for participation in many kinds of cultural activities, including discussions, lectures, concerts, dances, rambles and socials. A comprehensive reference and lending library is available, and all Members and Associates receive the Society's journal, The Ethical Record, free. The Sunday Evening Chamber Music Concerts founded in 1887 have achieved international renown.

Services available to members include the Naming Ceremony of Welcome to Children, the Solemnisation of Marriage, and Memorial and Funeral Services.

The Story of South Place, by S. K. Ratcliffe is a history of the Society and its interesting development within liberal thought.

Minimum subscriptions are: Members, 12s. 6d. p.a.; Life Members, £13 2s. 6d. (Life membership is available only to members of at least one year's standing). It is of help to the Society's officers if members pay their subscriptions by Bankers' Order, and it is of further financial benefit to the Society if Deeds of Covenant are entered into. Members are urged to pay more than the minimum subscription whenever possible, as the present amount is not sufficient to cover the cost of this journal.

A suitable form of bequest for those wishing to benefit the Society by their wills is to be found in the Annual Report.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

To THE HON. REGISTRAR, SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY,
CONWAY HALL HUMANIST CENTRE, RED LION SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1

Being in sympathy with the aims of South Place Ethical Society, I desire to become a Member and enclose .......... entitling me (according to the Rules of the Society) to membership for one year from the date of enrolment.

NAME .......................................................... (BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE)

ADDRESS ..........................................................

...........................................................................

OCCUPATION (disclosure optional) ..............................................

HOW DID YOU HEAR OF THE SOCIETY? .................................

DATE ............... SIGNATURE ...........................................

The Ethical Record is posted free to members. The annual charge to subscribers is 8s. Matter for publication should reach the Editor, Miss Barbara Smoker, 6 Stanstead Grove, S.E.6, by the 5th of the preceding month.

David Neil & Company, Dorking, Surrey