The Bertrand Russell Society, Inc.* 3802 North Kenneth Avenue Chicago Illinois 60641

RUSSELL SOCIETY NEWS
No. 52
November 1986

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(2)

1987 DUES ARE DUE

TO ALL MEMBERS: Everybody's renewal dues are due January 1, 1987. The January 1st due-date applies to all members, including first-year members (but not those who joined in December 1986.)

Here is the 1987 basic dues schedule: Regular, $25,; couple,$30; Student under 25, $12.50; Limited Income,$12.50. Plus $7.50 outside US, Canada and Mexico. Plus $2 for Canada and Mexico. In US dollars.

Canadian Members: To avoid paying too much or too little, pay in US rather than Canadian dollars. We suggest investigating the cost of sending money to the US by means of Canadian Postal Money Order. It may be the cheapest way.

Please mail dues to 1987, RD 1, Box 409, Coopersburg, PA 18036 USA

* If you want to make our life a little easier, send your dues soon. And if we receive them before January 1st, you will be on the Renewal Honor Roll.

Thanks!

TO FIRST YEAR MEMBERS — members who joined any time during 1986: the rest of this item is for you.

We know from experience that new members sometime feel put upon when asked to pay dues again after less than a year of membership. We understand that. We will explain why we use the present system, and we hope you will find our explanation persuasive.

In the previous system, a new member's dues covered 12 months of membership. That was good for the member but bad for the BRS. It required us to notify each member individually — on the anniversary date of enrollment — that the next year's dues were due. And we had to follow up on each member individually, to see whether dues had in fact been paid. This went on throughout the whole year. It was cumbersome to administer, provided many chances for error, and took a lot of time. In fact, it took more time than we had. We had to make a change.

The present system is easier to administer, produces fewer errors, and takes less time. Everyone's dues come due on the same date, January 1st. Simple!

We don't think that the new member whose first year of membership is less (sometimes considerably less) than 12 months has been short-changed in any important way, He/she has received just as many BRS newsletters (and after reading them, knows just as much about the BRS) as the member who joined in January.

All first-year members (except those who enroll in January) have an initial membership period that is shorter than a year. This happens only once — the first year. Thereafter dues come due every 12 months, on January first.

There is one exception to all the above: members who join in December (1986). Their renewal dues are not due till January first the year after next (1988).

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(3)

MONEY MATTERS

When money matters come up, the BRS is quite aware that money matters. It matters greatly. The BRS Treasury is not exactly awash in money.

We're not broke but neither are we rich. Or even comfortable. And certainly not relaxed.

We want to be sure that we always have enough to keep things going.

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*Russell Society News, a quarterly (Lee Eisler, Editor): RD 1, Box 409, Coopersburg, PA 18036
Russell Society Library: Tom Stanley, Librarian, Box 434, Wilder, VT 05088

So when you pay your renewal dues, pick a membership category that's right for you (in your financial circumstances) and right for the BRS (in its financial circumstances).

Here are the categories:

Student member $12.50
Limited income member $12.50
Regular member $25
Couple $30
Contributing member $35
Sustaining member $50
Supporting member$75
Sponsoring member $100
Patron $101 to $500
Benefactor $501 to $1000
Life member $1001 and up

Do what you can. We know that not every member can afford to make an extra contribution. We ask those who can to do so.

* Use the yellow renewal coupon on the front of this newsletter.

Thanks!

ANNUAL MEETING (1987)

(4) * Input wanted. This is a call for papers, and for your suggestions for talks at the Meeting. Send papers and suggestions to Harry Ruja, 4664 Troy Lane, La Mesa, CA 92041.

Here is a preview of arrangements: the Meeting will be held in San Diego the weekend of June 19-21. We will stay at El Conquistador, a "residence hall for students of San Diego State University." Costs seem modest: single room for both nights $30, double $24; $18.50 for 3 meals Saturday, and Sunday breakfast. Cab fare from the airport is $18. Bus fare 80¢;you must change buses. (Change buses and save $17.20. We'll tell you which buses next issue.)

Harry is Professor Emeritus at the University. He adds this bit of propaganda:

> Plan to come to San Diego for our Annual Conference June 19 to 21. Average temperature in sunny San Diego in June is 71 days, and a cool 60 nights. Rarely does it rain all summer long. [Query: Does it ever rain all summer long anywhere?] Comfortable modern accommodations have been secured for us near San Diego State University. I have examined the rooms. They are clean, cheerful, modern, spacious, each with adjoining bathroom (sharedby the adjoining room.) The cost is rock bottom: $15 day single, $12 day double. Read these figures and weep, you Easterners, who must dig down deep for hotel or motel accommodations. Our meals will be served in the same complex, also at reasonable prices — including the Saturday night banquet. The location is about 35 minutes from the airport by cab ($18).
>
> Since some of you may want to take an extended vacation, arriving early or leaving late, I suggest you write to the San Diego Convention and Visitors Bureau, 1200 Third Avenue, Suite 8245, San Diego, CA 92101, for information about area attractions. (For one thing, we're only 18 miles from the border with Mexico.)
>
> Bob Davis and I are working up a program. We'd dearly love to have ideas from the membership. Anyone out there want to read a paper? Let me know. Send me your ideas.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

(5) President Marvin Kohl reports:

Our warm thanks to HARRY RUJA for making arrangements to hold the next Annual Meeting of the Society at San Diego State University, June 19-21, 1987. Please reserve these dates.

Volume 8 of The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell, "The Philosophy of Logical Atomism and Other Essays, 1914-1919," is now available. The price is $60. However, John Pershing of Allen & Unwin has agreed to extend a 20% discount to members who use the coupon (next page).

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____ Volume 7	$55.00
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REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

(6) Science Committee (William K. Fielding, Chmn):

Like the generation of computers that can be printing-out one completed program, while interactively executing another, Bertrand Russell must have incubated and expressed ideas in an ongoing "I/O" system not easily analyzed. But -- whether by choice or chance -- large areas of human concern seem to have remained outside this marvelous process.

Except for a few instances of mentioning music enjoyed (at a 1920 Shanghai lunch, in one case), Russell clearly displayed no intimate acquaintance with this or any of the visual or performing arts. (Bernard Berenson tried unsuccessfully to excite in the young BR some of his own appreciation of classical painting.) That no such blind-spots can be detected in most of his contemporaries -- Dewey, G.B.Shaw, Santayana, among many others -- makes it appear significant.

One lifetime is never enough of Time to allow inclusion of all the avenues available to a civilized mind. Priorities that lead to outstanding work in one or two fields have to displace other aspects of life that will seem of equal importance to people less strictly motivated. But, however much Bertrand Russell may be said to have been totally immersed in our Age, can it be that he also missed some of our deepest levels of fulfillment?

You may well ask what all this has to do with Science? Yet consider, please, that a mind shares the computer's limitation: output depends entirely upon the data-base programmed into Memory. Whatever unseen ferment takes place within a personality's central processing unit (brain), ultimate answers will be enriched by having a strong admixture of humanistic "bytes" embedded in it's language.

Because we in The Bertrand Russell Society aspire to sustain gains of a thinking-man's Thinker, I suggest that we reflect on the advantages of wholeness. If we digress too far into byways of ineffectual pacifism, armchair atheism and "incestuous" praise of one-another's writings, we could be losing something of value. We might better be about blending a flavor of esthetic awareness into our possibly too-rigid assessment of our late patron-saint.

For, among the wealth of homely lessons he left to us, one indicates that wit and humor are twins; he exemplified a scientific philosophy that transcended numbers and time, he tramped along remote lanes of a world not offended by laughter. All he lacked was Time itself, time to truly enjoy -- as fully as he understood -- Life.

And as we move toward the close of a century in which the "exact" sciences -- from quarks to quasars -- are becoming increasingly resistant to exact definition, science and art seem less discrete. Perhaps Bertie, glancing backward, should have thought to revamp his dictum: "...inspired by love, savoring creativity and guided by educated guesses."

BY BERTRAND RUSSELL

(7) My Philosophy of Life" is the title of BR's 2nd talk over Australian radio, on July 9, 1950. Here it is:

If I am asked: "What do you value in human life,and why do you value it?" I cannot prove that my answer is better than another man's, as I could prove a proposition in mathematics. What I think I can prove is that, if men care for and aim at certain essentially very simple things, almost all will be happier and have a fuller life than they will if mankind is led astray by partial and combative aims, such as exploitation of other human beings, dominance over supposed inferiors, or victory in violent conflicts. On such grounds I can defend the belief that love is better than hate, that a society where there is diffused creative initiative is better than one composed of few masters and many slaves, and that, while what is of most value is to be found in the lives of individuals, the best individuals are those whose thoughts and feelings are linked to those of others — intimately to family and friends, less intimately, but still importantly, to those of all mankind, not only in the present, but also in the past and the future.

It is this sense of integration with the life of mankind that gives value to the study of history. Men at first were few; they lived in fear of wild beasts and in constant danger of starvation; they had little leisure for the activities that distinguish man from the brutes. The life of the human species hitherto has been a gradual march out of precarious darkness and misery into the slowly increasing light of knowledge and security against the harsh dominion of niggardly Nature. The chief causes of this progress have been the technical improvements brought about by human ingenuity. Each great stage in technical advance, however has brought with it at first great evils which were unnecessary. Agriculture brought human sacrifice, slavery and absolute monarchy. In our day science and machine industry have led to such things as the totalitarian state and the atom bomb. A philosophy of life in our day must seek to dissociate science and machine production from such evils, as the liberal thought of the eighteenth century dissociated agriculture from serfdom and subjection. A philosophy of life in our day must be one adapted to machine industry, not merely to one of the earlier stages of human development.

Machine industry has compelled communities to be much more closely knit, and much more highly organized than societies of former times. It has made men much more interdependent, and has compelled those who value individual liberty to seek fresh interpretations of the old doctrines. The power that modern technique give men over their physical environment has tended to shift the generally established values, giving more emphasis to energy and enterprise, and less to humility and endurance. It is easy to carry this change too far, but up to a point it is valuable.

Philosophers are fond of producing endless muddles about ultimate ethical values and bases of morals. My own belief is that so far as politics and practical life are concerned, we can sweep aside all those puzzles and content ourselves with commonsense principles which no one in his senses would dispute. We all desire, and need, food and shelter and clothing. We all desire security from injury, whether at the hands of each other, or at the hands of nature. We desire happiness and the joy of life, and health, and we desire freedom from constraint in so far as this is compatible with social life. We do not all desire intelligence. I have known people who were perfectly content to have very little of it. But we must all recognize that a modern community cannot prosper unless a considerable amount of intelligence is to be found among its members. On these things I think we are all agreed. Our disagreements are not on what is good to have, but as to who shall have it. This last is not an ethical question unless we adopt some principle of justice. In the absence of some such principle, the question of who shall enjoy the good things is a military question. Why are white Americans richer than Red Indians? Because they have superior weapons of war. Why was Europe for several centuries able to exploit the riches of the East? Because Europe was superior in artillery. It has been a rule hitherto in every age and in every country, that the powerful were rich and the weak were poor. Sometimes legal systems have preserved traditional wealth for a time without the backing of superior power, but such a state of affairs has always been temporary. Now, owing to the greater interdependence of individuals and nations, the predatory practices which have come down to us from the past are no longer appropriate. A community in which everybody steals from his neighbor instead of doing an honest day's work, will soon reach the point where there is nothing left to steal. Internally, civilized nations have long ago realized this fact, but where relations between different nations are concerned, those who mention this fact are still considered paradoxical and unpatriotic. This is entirely due to the fact that tradition outweighs commonsense. I spoke a moment ago about food and shelter and security as things that we all desire. We seek these things in practice

by destroying each other's crops, bombing each other's houses and killing each other in vast battles, which is absurd, as the geometers would say.

This lack of commonsense may cause a cynic to smile, but it will cause a lover of mankind to weep. We have at last, through science and scientific technique, emancipated ourselves to a certain degree from bondage and nature. If we were wise we could now extract necessities and moderate comforts without excessive labor. But for our own evil passions, we could build a society of human beings who would be happy and free and creative. The good individual, as I conceive him, is one who is free to develop and grow, who, because he is free,is not envious and restrictive of others. His happiness is dynamic, not static; it lies in what he is achieving, not in what he passively enjoys. Owing to his creative freedom he has out-going emotions of generosity and kindliness and affection, not the morbid thwarted malevolence of the man whose powers are allowed no scope. There is an intimate relation between the excellences of a society and the excellences of the individual. A good society is one that makes the existence of a good individual easy. It should give education in initiative and self-reliance; it should give both security and the opportunity for adventure; it should contain no poverty, no war, no slavery, whether physical or mental; it should be able to permit much freedom, because the individuals composing it would find adequate scope in co-operative activities, and in artistic or intellectual creation. I do not mean that there will be no longer need to restrain criminals; I mean that there will be so much scope for activities that are not criminal that few men will be tempted into crime. The world having all these excellences has become technically possible; nothing stands in its way except the evil passions of human beings, especially envy and hate and fear. Our very emancipation from slavery to nature has given to our evil passions a new scope and a new destructiveness. Never in human history has there been so great a possibility of good as at the present day, and never has there been so great a likelihood of appalling evil. This makes ours a very difficult time in which to live, and makes certain demands upon us, both individually and nationally, which in easier times would not be made.

In dangerous times, such as those in which we are living, certain virtues become difficult, but in proportion as they are difficult they are important. If our existence is to be useful rather than harmful, we must learn truthfulness in our thinking. This is difficult because much truth is painful, and because intellectual honesty makes it impossible to accept any easy nostrum. It is difficult also because it makes it almost impossible to be a wholehearted adherent of any Party. There is a cosy warmth in being one of a herd who are all of one mind, and their unanimity quiets our own doubts. But if you think for yourself you are not likely to discover any large group with whom you can agree about everything, and you will find some degree of mental loneliness unavoidable.

What is needed above all is courage. In many situations which occur in many countries at the present time, physical courage of the highest order is required. But for those of us who are more fortunate, courage is still required -- moral and mental courage. We must face the dangers which confront mankind, and we must not let ourselves imagine that there are easy or simple solutions. For example, some people will tell you that all would be well if we all underwent a change of heart. I think this is quite true, but it is not a very useful truth, since we do not know how to bring about such a change of heart.

Courage is needed to retain a rational outlook when reason can offer no certainty of a happy outcome. Many people, under the influence of fear, are inclined to relapse into some form of superstition, or to advocate on our side the very same detestable regimentation which leads us to condemn totalitarian regimes, not perceiving that this is to suffer moral defeat before the contest has begun.

Meanwhile we must retain sanity, which is difficult if we brood too much over what is dark and tragic. Whatever may be in store for us and for the world, it is well that our leisure should be spent in enjoying whatever can be enjoyed without injury to others. There are still dewy mornings and summer evenings and the sea and the stars; there are still love and friendship and music and poetry. And when we need some consolation nearer to the stuff of our anxieties, it is always to be found by removing our gaze from the immediate foreground. There have been earlier cataclysms, but the spirit of man has survived. In spite of some alarmists, it is hardly likely that our species will completely exterminate itself. And so long as man continues to exist we may be pretty sure that, whatever he may suffer for a time, and whatever brightness may be eclipsed, he will emerge sooner or later, perhaps strengthened and reinvigorated by a period of mental sleep. The universe is vast, and men are but tiny specks on an insignificant planet. But the more we realize our minuteness and our impotence in the face of cosmic forces, the more astonishing becomes what human beings have achieved. It is to the possible achievements of Man that our ultimate loyalty is due, and in that thought the brief troubles of our unquiet epoch become endurable. Much wisdom remains to be learnt, and if it is only to be learnt through adversity, we must endeavor to endure adversity with what fortitude we can command. but if we can acquire wisdom soon enough, adversity may not be necessary, and the future of Man may be happier than any part of his past.

(Thank you, TOM STANLEY.)

(8) On Architecture. From The Rotarian, June 1937, with thanks to TOM STANLEY:

Every social system that has existed has had its appropriate type of architecture. Medieval castles make visible the pride of feudal barons; Venetian palaces display the splendors derived from commerce with the East; French chateaux and Queen Anne country seats represent the secure power of a courtly and civilized aristocracy.

With the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution there goes a revolution in architecture. Old styles linger where the older forms of power linger: Napoleon adds to the Louvre, but his additions have a florid vulgarity which shows his insecurity. But the typical styles of the Nineteenth Century are two: the factory with its chimneys, and the rows of tiny houses for working-class families.

As one approaches London by rail, one passes endless streets of such dwellings, each inhabited by one family of small means. Each of these is a center of individual life; the communal life is represented by the office, the factory, or the mine, according to the locality. If an age is to be judged by the esthetic quality of its architecture, the last hundred years represent the lowest point yet reached by humanity.

The factory and the rows of small houses illustrate, between them, a curious inconsistency in our modern way of living.

While production had become increasingly communal, and is no longer,in its important branches, a matter for the single handicraftsman, our general outlook has become more individualistic. In the factory there is social life, which has produced the trade unions; but at home each family desires isolation. "I keep myself to myself," the women say. This feeling makes them endure, and even prefer, the separate little house, the separate little kitchen, the separate drudgery at house work,the separate care of children while they are not at school.

This type of architecture is connected with the status of women. In spite of feminism, the position of wives, especially in the working class, is not much changed from what it was. The wife still depends upon her husband's earnings, and does not receive wages although she works hard. Being professionally a housekeeper, she wants to have a house to keep. The desire to have scope for personal initiative, which is common to most human beings, has no outlet except in the home. The husband, on his side, enjoys the feeling that his wife works for him; moreover, his wife and his house provide more satisfaction for his instinct of property than would be possible with any different type of architecture.

All this would be changed if a woman's livelihood were not earned by the profession of wife and mother, but by some ordinary paid occupation. Already in the "middle class" there are enough wives who earn their living outside the home, to produce, in big towns, some approach to what their circumstances make desirable. If a woman has to work outside the home, she cannot cook or mind the children during the day; this requires communal kitchens and nursery schools. This, in turn, demands a type of architecture quite different from the sprawling streets of little villas that constitute an English or American suburb.

In the Middle Ages, communities of celibates produced a type of architecture which was satisfying and esthetically delightful. In England, monasteries and abbeys survive mainly as ruins to please tourists, but colleges, as Oxford and Cambridge, are still part of the national life, and retain the beauty of medieveal communalism. In relation to the general population, the problem is to secure the same communal advantages without celibacy. This problem will not be solved until most women earn their living outside the home. But when this economic change has been secured, certain important and highly desirable architectural changes will become possible, and indeed almost inevitable.

Robert Owen, more than a hundred years ago,incurred much ridicule for his "cooperative parallelograms,"which were an attempt to secure for wage earners the advantages of collegiate life. Although he was perhaps premature in this suggestion, it has since come nearer and nearer to what is practicable and desirable.

If I were dictator of town planning, I should pull down the squalid streets and separate houses, and substitute high blocks of buildings round three sides of a square, open to the sun, with a communal kitchen, spacious dining hall, another hall for amusements or meetings, and a nursery school in the center, which should be in the open air except during the bad weather.

The advantages of such a system of architecture would be many. To begin with the children: they would have wholesome food, provided in the nursery school according to the best principles of diet; they would have the companionship of children of their own age; they would have far more liberty of movement than is possible in a tiny home of the usual sort where grown-up work has to be carried on.

Rickets, now appallingly common, would disappear;the children would be freed from the nagging of an overworked mother; and their mental and physical development would be promoted by the freedom of the nursery school.

For women, the advantages would be quite as great. As soon as their children were weaned, they would be able to hand them over throughout the day to women specially trained in the care of young children. They would not have the business of buying food,cooking it, and washing up. They would, like their husbands, have hours of work and hours of leisure instead of being always busy. They would see their children in the mornings and the evenings, long enough for affection but not long enough for frayed nerves. And even the most affectionate adult is bound to find children trying on the nerves if there is never a moment's rest from their clamorous demands for attention.

Finally, for men and women equally, there would be an escape from the confinement of small rooms and sordidness into large public rooms,which might be as architecturally splendid as college halls. Beauty and space need no longer be the prerogative of the rich. There would be an end to the irritation that comes from being cooped up in too close quarters, a situation that too often makes family life intolerable.

Communal life decayed during the Nineteenth Century with the decay of institutions that had produced its traditional forms. But no community can remain healthy without communal life; and it must be the task of the immediate future to build up new forms more in harmony with the age.

And in building up these forms, architecture must play an essential part.

(9) "The Unhappy American Way", from "Symposium",Arms & Locke, eds. (NY: Rinehart,1955). It first appeared in The New York Times Magazine (6/15/52) as "The American Way (A Briton Says) Is Dour", and is reprinted in "Bertrand Russell's America, 1945-1970", Feinberg & Kasrils, eds. (Boston: South End Press, 1983).

It used to be said that English people take their pleasures sadly. No doubt this would still be true if they had any pleasures to take, but the price of alcohol and tobacco in my country has provided sufficient external causes for melancholy. I have sometimes thought that the habit of taking pleasures sadly has crossed the Atlantic, and I have wondered what it is that makes so many English-speaking people somber in their outlook in spite of good health and a good income.

In the course of my travels in America I have been impressed by a kind of fundamental malaise which seems to me extremely common and which poses difficult problems for the social reformer. Most social reformers have held the opinion that, if poverty were abolished and there were no more economic insecurity, the millennium would have arrived. But when I look at the faces of people in opulent cars, whether in your country or in mine, I do not see that look of radiant happiness which the aforesaid social reformers had led me to expect. In nine cases out of ten, I see instead a look of boredom and discontent and an almost frantic longing for something that might tickle the jaded palate.

But it is not only the very rich who suffer in this way. Professional men very frequently feel hopelessly thwarted. There is something that they long to do or some public object that they long to work for. But if they were to indulge their wishes in these respects, they fear that they would lose their livelihood. Their wives are equally unsatisfied, for their neighbor, Mrs. So-and-So, has gone ahead more quickly, has a better car, a larger apartment and grander friends.

Life for almost everybody is a long competitive struggle where very few can win the race, and those who do not win are unhappy. On social occasions when it is *de rigueur* to seem cheerful, the necessary demeanor is stimulated by alcohol. But the gaiety does not ring true and anybody who has just one drink too many is apt to lapse into lachrymose melancholy.

One finds this sort of thing only among English-speaking people. A Frenchman while he is abusing the Government is as gay as a lark. So is an Italian while he is telling you how his neighbor has swindled him. Mexicans, when they are not actually starving or actually being murdered, sing and dance and enjoy sunshine and food and drink with a gusto which is very rare north of the Mexican frontier. When Andrew Jackson conquered Pensacola from the Spaniards, his wife looked out of the window and saw the population enjoying itself although it was Sunday. She pointed out the scandal to her husband, who decreed that cheerfulness must cease forthwith. And it did.

When I try to understand what it is that prevents so many Americans from being as happy as one might expect, it seems to me that there are two causes, of which one goes much deeper than the other. The one that goes least deep is the necessity for subservience in some large organization. If you are an energetic man with strong views as to the right way of doing the job with which you are concerned, you find yourself invariably under the orders of some big man at the top who is elderly, weary and cynical. Whenever you have a bright idea, the boss puts a stopper on it. The more energetic you are and the more vision you have, the more you will suffer from the impossibility of doing any of the things that you feel ought to be done. When you go home and moan to your wife, she tells you that you are a silly fellow and that if you became the proper sort of yes-man your income would soon be doubled. If you try divorce and remarriage it is very unlikely that there will be any change in this respect. And so you are condemned to gastric ulcers and premature old age.

It was not always so. When Dr. Johnson compiled his dictionary, he compiled it as he thought fit. When he felt like saying that oats is food for men in Scotland and horses in England, he said so. When he defined a fishing-rod as a stick with a fish at one end and a fool at the other, there was nobody to point out to him that a remark of this sort would damage the sale of his great work among fishermen. But if, in the present day, you are (let us say) a contributor to an encyclopedia, there is an editorial policy which is solemn, wise and prudent, which allows no room for jokes, no place for personal preferences and no tolerance for idiosyncrasies. Everything has to be flattened out except where the prejudices of the editor are concerned. To these you must conform, however little you may share them. And so you have to be content with dollars instead of creative satisfaction. And the dollars, alas, leave you sad.

This brings me to the major cause of unhappiness, which is that most people in America act not on impulse but on some principle, and that principles upon which people act are usually based upon a false psychology and a false ethic. There is a general theory as to what makes for happiness and this theory is false. Life is conceived as a competitive struggle in which felicity consists in getting ahead of your neighbor. The joys which are not competitive are forgotten.

Now, I will not for a moment deny that getting ahead of your neighbor is delightful, but it is not the only delight of which human beings are capable. There are innumerable things which are not competitive. It is possible to enjoy food and drink without having to reflect that you have a better cook and a better wine merchant than your former friends whom you are learning to cold-shoulder. It is possible to be fond of your wife and your children without reflecting how much better she dresses than Mrs. So-and-So and how much better they are at athletics than the children of that old stick-in-the-mud Mr. Such-and-Such. There are those who can enjoy music without thinking how cultured the other ladies in their women's club will be thinking them. There are even people who can enjoy a fine day in spite of the fact that the sun shines on everybody. All these simple pleasures are destroyed as soon as competitiveness gets the upper hand.

But it is not only competitiveness that is the trouble. I could imagine a person who has turned against competitiveness and can only enjoy after conscious rejection of the competitive element. Such a person, seeing the sunshine in the morning, says to himself, "Yes, I may enjoy this and indeed I must, for it is a joy open to all." And however bored he may become with the sunshine he goes on persuading himself that he is enjoying it because he thinks he ought to.

"But," you will say, "are you maintaining that our actions ought not to be governed by moral principles? Are you suggesting that every whim and every impulse should be given free rein? Do you consider that if So-and-So's nose annoys you by being too long that gives you a right to tweak it? Sir," you will continue with indignation, "your doctrine is one which would uproot all the sources of morality and loosen all the bonds which hold society together. Only self-restraint, self-repression, iron self-control make it possible to endure the abominable beings among whom we have to live. No, sir! Better misery and gastric ulcers than such chaos as your doctrine would produce!"

I will admit at once that there is force in this objection. I have seen many noses that I should have liked to tweak, but never once have I yielded to the impulse. But this, like everything else, is a matter of degree. If you always yield to impulse, you are mad. If you never yield to impulse, you gradually dry up and very likely become mad to boot. In a life which is to be healthy and happy, impulse, though not allowed to run riot, must have sufficient scope to remain alive and to preserve that variety and diversity of interest which is natural to a human being. A life lived on a principle, no matter what, is too narrowly determined, too systematic and uniform, to be happy. However much you care about success, you should have times when you are merely enjoying life without a thought of subsequent gain. However proud you may be, as president of a women's club, of your impeccable culture, you should not be ashamed of reading a low-brow book if you want to. A life which is all principle is a life on rails. The rails may help toward rapid locomotion, but preclude the joy of wandering. Man spent some million years wandering before he invented rails, and his happiness still demands some reminiscence of the earlier ages of freedom.

ABOUT BR'S WRITINGS

(10) From Finland. To help you brush up on your Finnish, here is the first paragraph from Vapaa Ajattelija (Jan. 1986):

Amerikkalainen The Bertrand Russell Society onmyöntänyt vuoden 1985 kirjallisuuspalkintonsa teoksen "Cambridge Essays, 1888-1899" toimittajille. Teos ilmestyi (London: Allen & Unwin, 1983) ensimmäisenä osana 28-osaisesta Kokonaisuudesta "The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell". Tätä mahtavaa kokoamis- ja toimitustyötä johtaa amerikkalainen McMaster-ylioposta, jossa myös sijaitsee Russellin työtä ja Russell-tutkimusta edistä edistävä Russell Archives. Projekti Käsittää kaikki Russellin kirjoitukset lukuunottamatta hänen kiirjojaan.

Thank you, I think, TOM STANLEY.

ABOUT BERTRAND RUSSELL

(11) Schilpp on BR, 1970. About a month after BR's death, the Southern Illinois University newspaper, Daily Egyptian, asked SIU Professor PAUL A. SCHILPP what he thought of Russell.

"He was an iconoclastic skeptic and agnostic who never tired of seeking truth; happiness, both for himself and for all mankind; and a world of human understanding from which war would be forever banished." Paul A. Schilpp, distinguished visiting professor of philosophy and noted author of philosophy, made this observation in a recent interview about Russell and his acquaintance with him.

"My feeling is that his single greatest contribution was the fact that he was eternally questing. He was never satisfied. Many of my philosophical colleagues have criticized Bertrand Russell for the fact that they could never pigeonhole him. Every time they thought they had him caught, the next book would come out and he would be somewhere else.

"To my mind, this is greatly to his credit...if he changed his mind from one book even to the very next one, he'd go right ahead. And just too bad what he said in the last book -- he's going to say what he thinks now.

"To me he was the living representation of Faust, in which you're eternally seeking truth. And I think there is good evidence, even in his last three-volume autobiography, that he never claimed to have reached it."

Schilpp is the author of a 13-volume series of works entitled the "Library of Living Philosophers". One of the volumes concerns Russell and his writings.

"The two most humble men I ever met in my life, and who, because of their very great humility have affected me very profoundly, are the Alberts -- Albert Schweitzer and Albert Einstein.

"The two most opinionated, not to say actually conceited, philosophers I ever met in my life were George Santayana and Bertrand Russell.

"Now, since I used those adjectives, you can recognize that this is not anything I admire. I don't admire conceit. I'm perfectly willing to admit that in both cases they've every right to think highly of themselves because they were outstanding thinkers. And certainly in the case of Russell they've had a tremendous influence upon their generation.

"But...I would much rather sit at the feet of a Schweitzer or Einstein than at the feet of a Santayana or a Russell. Because however great a man's thoughts on philosophy may be, from my point of view the man is bigger than merely his thinking...

"Because I was going to do a volume on (Russell's) philosophy in my "Library of Living Philosophers", Northwestern University, when they invited him to address a mass audience in Orchestra Hall in Chicago...(they)asked me to introduce him.

"I think I probably spent more time on writing out that three or four sentence introduction than any introduction I can ever remember giving to anybody because, on the one hand, I wanted it brief and concise, and other the other hand, I wanted to be fair to the man. So I was very careful, and I gave him, I think, all of his due.

"But before that lecture was over I felt like eating my words, every last one of them. Because, whereas at the end of that lecture, I was asked by the university to give Lord Russell his check for $1,000, for my money that particular lecture wasn't worth a nickel. I would swear to you that on that occasion Lord Russell didn't give the lecture even a thought until he got up on his feet.

"But then of course being how he was, and the people realizing who he was and expecting something from him, they ate it up alive. He was swaying them for tears and laughter as he pleased. But by the end of it,you

asked yourself,'What did he say?' I felt he hadn't said anything. But the people just loved it. They had all paid $1 a seat and they thought they'd gotten their money's worth 10 times over.

"I felt he was just playing to the galleries, and absolutely nothing but.

"On the other hand, the very next time after that he gave his famous series of lectures at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaigne and I went down from Evanston to hear him. And on that occasion...(he gave) a magnificent series of lectures. And earlier, before the Orchestra Hall event, he had given a lecture on the Evanston campus...which was very good.

"Just as is also true of some of his (lectures), some of his books were pot boilers written to satisfy his publisher and bring in some extra money. But after all, among his 60 books,I would say that 50 will live a long time. And you want to allow a man, when he writes 60 books, 10 that aren't up to snuff.

"I was invited to tea by Russell (in his Chicago hotel room at the time of his lecture)...and when I rang the bell, the governess of his little boy, Conrad, opened the door. As soon as I stepped in, I found the boy, about 18 or 20 months old, and Bertrand Russell romping around on the floor, which is a very human side of Russell.

"And when we did sit down to tea, the governess was treated just like a member of the family. She was sitting down to tea with us just as if she were a member of the family. So when Russell advocated democracy,he was practicing in his own life what he was preaching.

"The sad fact of the case is that outside of philosophy majors, relatively few of our students today are actually familiar with the man's name.

"Now that he's died, I think he'll become more well known...He will certainly belong aside people like Santayana, William James, and John Dewey. I think he will rate along with the giants of this century in philosophy.

"I don't see anyone really taking his place. But with Russell dead and John Dewey dead...

"I think the same sort of thing is going to happen which is already happening to Dewey. When Dewey first passed away, aside from merely noticing his death, he seemed to sort of pop out of sight. But he's already beginning to come back.

"I think this is what's likely to happen with Russell. In other words, this year -- his death year -- there'll be a good deal written and said and shown about Russell. And then I think people will tend to forget. Then those people who write master's theses and doctor's dissertations, in looking around for subjects, are going to uncover him again -- discover him again -- start all over. This I think is what's likely to happen."

Then he really isn't dead?

"No. This is very true. This is the immortality of people that are really influencing mankind. He's not dead, in the same sense that Plato isn't dead."

So at 97 Bertrand Russell died. And will live on.

Professor Schilpp is a BRS Honorary member, a BRS Director, and recipient of the first Bertrand Russell Society Award (1980). This article was written for the Daily Egyptian (3/7/70) by Paul L. Hayden. Uncovered -- discovered -- by HARRY RUJA, to whom goes our thanks.

(12) Pearsall Smith on BR, from "Cyril Connelly" by David Pryce-Jones (NY: Tichnor & Fields, 1984) p. 99:

At Chilling during the summer, he found himself with Alys, younger sister and part-time housekeeper of Pearsall Smith -- in 1920 her husband, Bertrand Russell, had insisted upon a divorce, something to which she could not reconcile herself. 'Trouble with Bertie is two things,' so Cyril recorded in his diary, a verdict of Pearsall Smith's on this former brother-in-law of his,'he must have somthing to hate so he goes into politics and somone to love so he has to make money in journalism. He has to love and he has to hate and (with gruff satisfaction) that's how he's chained to the wheel.' Thank you, BOB DAVIS.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

(13) Membership Committee (Lee Eisler, Chairman):

During 1986, the BRS has been running its small classified ad in BOSTON REVIEW, FREE INQUIRY, HARPER'S, HUMANIST, MENSA, NATION, NUCLEAR TIMES, and PROGRESSIVE. Results have been meager. During the first 9 months of 1986, 38 new members enrolled, 20 of whom are traceable to our ads: FREE INQUIRY produced 5, HARPER'S 5, MENSA 4, NATION 3, PROGRESSIVE 2, and HUMANIST 1.

If we divide the total cost of advertising by the number of traceable enrollments, we find that the average cost of acquiring the 20 new members in 1986 was $44 per member (very high). In 1984, it was $31;in 1985, $24.

FREE INQUIRY and HARPER'S each produced 5 members, but the costs were very different: $7 per member for FREE INQUIRY, $53 for HARPER'S. We knew, from previous year's experiences, that the costs would be very different. So why didn't we just stay with low-priced FREE INQUIRY and drop high-priced HARPER'S? Because, if we had done so, we now would have 5 fewer members. And we need to acquire members.

(The average cost of a new 1986 member from all sources, traceable or not, is $23.)

As you know, advertising is not an exact science; it works by trial and error. For instance, we tried BOSTON REVIEW; zero results; we struck out.

* We would like to try other publications. If you know of a publication you think might be suitable for the BRS ad, please let us know. But bear in mind the following:

If some well-intentioned benefactor offered to pay for a BRS ad in the New York Daily News, or the New York Times, and if we accepted the offer, we would probably get many requests for information; and it might bankrupt us. Every request we answer costs us about a dollar, and if we answered thousands of requests, we'd soon be broke.

Publications select audiences. People who read FREE INQUIRY — or HARPER'S — are different from those who read the tabloid NY DAILY NEWS...and are more likely to join the BRS. We advertise in magazines whose audiences (we think) include a higher proportion of potential BRS members.

So if you're about to suggest a publication, please keep this in mind.

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In 1987, we will use substantially the same list of publications as in 1986. We drop BOSTON REVIEW, and add COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW and NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS...and possibly publications that you may suggest.

BR IN POPULAR CULTURE

(14) "Paradise Postponed" is a new PBS Masterpiece Theatre TV series in 11 episodes. The first episode, on 10/19/86, contained a sequence in which the Rev. Simeon Simcox was lying on a sleeping bag, after a 1958 Peace March, reading a book. JOHN TOBIN was pleased to see that the book was BR's "Human Society in Ethics and Politics".

BR QUOTED

(15) "Men who are unhappy, like men who sleep badly, are always proud of the fact."

"Of all forms of caution, caution in love is perhaps the most fatal to true happiness."

Both from Forbes Magazine, the first on 6/16/86, the second on 6/30/86...with thanks to our trusty Forbes watcher, WHITFIELD COBB.

BR'S INFLUENCE

(16) From "Portnoy's Complaint" by Philip Roth, with thanks to HARRY RUJA:

> What did Kay and I care less about than one, money, and two, religion? Our favorite philosopher was Bertrand Russell, our religion was Dylan Thomas' religion, Truth and Joy!... I finally had to tell her that I didn't seem to care for her any more. I was very honest, as Bertrand Russell said I should be.

1987 BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY AWARD

(17) * Nominations wanted for the BRS Award. Nominate someone you think deserves the Award, and say why. The nominee must meet one or more of these requirements: (1) is a member of Bertrand Russell's family; (2) had worked closely with Russell in an important way; (3) has made a distinctive contribution to Russell scholarship; (4) has supported a cause or idea that Russell championed; (5) has promoted awareness of Russell or Russell's work. Send your nomination to Harry Ruja, Chairman of the BRS Award Committee, 4664 Troy Lane, La Mesa, CA 92041.

BRS BOOK AWARD

(18) * Nominations requested. If you wish to submit a candidate for the 1987 BRS Book Award, please send it to Dr. Gladys Leithauser, Chairman of the Book Award Committee, 122 Elm Park, Pleasant Ridge, MI 48069. It should be a recent book, not necessarily this year's, but probably not more than 5 years old. Tell why you think it deserves consideration.

BRS DOCTORAL GRANT

(19) A conditional gift of $500 toward the $1000 Doctoral Grant has been offered anonymously, the condition being that we raise another $500 ourselves.

As you may recall: we awarded Doctoral Grants in 1982,1983,1984, and 1985. The early Grants were for $500, raised to $1000 in 1985. However, no Grant is offered this year (1986) because we didn't have the money. And unless something is done about it, there will be no Grant in 1987 either. That would be a pity, because such grants are clearly a means of promoting Russell scholarship, which is one of the aims of our Society.

We now have a real opportunity to have a 1987 Grant. In a sense we are already half way there IF we can come up with the other half, the other $500. That shouldn't be impossible; we ought to be able to meet that condition. If 100 members each give $5, that will do it. Haven't we got 100 members who can spare 5 bucks? Some can spare even more than that; some will send $25 or more. Send more if you can, to make up for those who can't.

* Please send your tax-deductible Grant Contribution c/o the newsletter (address on Page 1, bottom). Contributions will be acknowledged.

ON NUCLEAR WAR STRATEGY

(20) Star Wars software. This article, for which we are indebted to MIKE TAINT, appeared in American Scientist (Sept-Oct 1984, pp. 433-440) under the title,"On Software Aspects of Strategic Defense Systems." It was written by David Lorge Parnas, whose credentials appear at the very end.

The following are excerpts. The headings are the author's. Three dots ("...") indicate that text has been omitted. If an occasional term is unfamiliar,it won't matter; read on.

WHY SOFTWARE IS UNRELIABLE.

People familiar with both software engineering and older engineering disciplines observe that the state of the art in software is significantly behind that in other areas of engineering. When most engineering products have been completed, tested, and sold, it is reasonable to expect that the product design is correct and that it will work reliably. With software products, it is usual to find that the software has minor "bugs" and does not work reliably for some users. These problems may persist for several versions and sometimes worsen as the software is "improved." While most products come with an express or implied warranty, software products often carry a specific disclaimer of warranty. The lay public, familiar with only a few incidents of software failure, may regard them as exceptions caused by inept programmers. Those of us who are software professionals know better; the most competent programmers in the world cannot avoid such problems.

Analog systems form the core of the traditional areas of engineering. The mathematics of continuous functions is well understood. When we say that a system is described by continuous functions, we are saying that it can contain no hidden surprises. Small changes in inputs will always cause correspondingly small changes in outputs. An engineer who ensures, through careful design, that the system components are always operating within their normal operating range can use a mathematical analysis to ensure that there are no surprises.

When combined with testing to ensure that the components are within their operating range, this leads to reliable systems.

Before the advent of digital computers, when discrete state [ie, non-continuous] systems were built, the number of states in such systems were relatively small. With a small number of states, exhaustive testing was possible. Such testing compensated for the lack of mathematical tools corresponding to those used in analog systems design. The engineers of such systems still had systematic methods that allowed them to obtain a complete understanding of their system's behavior.

...With the advent of digital computers, we found the first discrete state systems with very large numbers of states...The mathematical functions that describe the behavior of these systems are not continuous functions, and traditional engineering mathematics does not help in their verification. This difference clearly contributes to the relative unreliability of software systems and the apparent lack of competence of software engineers. It is a fundamental difference that will not disappear with improved technology.

...Logic is a branch of mathematics that can deal with functions that are not continuous. Many researchers believe that it can play the role in software engineering that continuous mathematics plays in mechanical and electrical engineering. Unfortunately this has not yet been verified in practice. The large number of states and lack of regularity in the software result in extremely complex mathematical expressions. Disciplined use of these expressions is beyond the computational capacity of both the human programmer and current computer systems. There is progress in this area, but it is very slow, and we are far from being able to handle even small software systems...

WHY THE SDI SOFTWARE SYSTEM WILL BE UNTRUSTWORTHY

In March 1983, the President called for an intensive and comprehensive effort to define a long-term research program with the ultimate goal of eliminating the threat posed by nuclear ballistic missiles. He asked us, as members of the scientific community, to provide the means of rendering these nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete. To accomplish this goal we would need a software system so well-developed that we could have extremely high confidence that the system would work correctly when called upon. In this section I will present some of the characteristics of the required battle-management software and then discuss their implications on the feasibility of achieving that confidence....

1. The system will be required to identify, track and direct weapons toward targets whose ballistic characteristics cannot be known with certainty before the moment of battle. It must distinguish these targets from decoys whose characteristics are also unknown.
2. The computing will be done by a network of computers connected to sensors, weapons and each other, by channels whose behavior, at a time the system is invoked, cannot be predicted because of possible counter-measures by an attacker. The actual subset of system components that will be available at the time that the system is put into service, and throughout the period of service, cannot be predicted for the same reason.
3. It will be impossible to test the system under realistic conditions prior to its actual use.
4. The service period of the system will be so short that there will be little possibility of human intervention and no possibility of debugging and modification of the program during that period of service.
5. Like many other military programs, there are absolute real-time deadlines for the computation. The computation will consist primarily of periodic processes, but the number of those processes that will be required and the computational requirements of each process, cannot be predicted in advance because they depend on target characteristics. The resources available for computation cannot be predicted in advance. We cannot even predict the "worst case" with any confidence.

Each of these characteristics has clear implications on the feasibility of building battle-management software that will meet the President's requirements.

Fire-control software cannot be written without making assumptions about the characteristics of enemy weapons and targets....If the system is developed without the knowledge of these characteristics, or with the knowledge that the enemy can change some of them on the day of battle, there are likely to be subtle but fatal errors in the software.

...No large-scale software system has ever been installed without extensive testing under realistic conditions...The inability to test a strategic defense system under field conditions before we actually need it will mean that no knowledgeable person would have much faith in the system.

It is not unusual for software modifications to be made in the field. Programmers are transported by helicopter to Navy ships; debugging notes can be found on the walls of trucks carrying computers that were used in Vietnam. It is only through such modifications that software becomes reliable. Such opportunities will not be available in the 30-90 minute war to be fought by a strategic defense battle-management system.

Conclusion: All of the cost estimates indicate that this will be the most massive software project ever attempted. The system, has numerous technical characteristics that will make it more difficult than previous systems, independent of size. Because of the extreme demands on the system and our inability to test it, we will never be able to believe, with any confidence, that we have succeeded. Nuclear weapons will remain a potent threat.

WHY CONVENTIONAL SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT PRODUCE RELIABLE PROGRAMS

The easiest way to describe the programming method use in most projects today was given to me by a teacher who was explaining how he teaches programming. "Think like a computer," he said. He instructed his students to

begin by thinking about what the computer had to do first and to write that down. They would then think about what the computer had to do next and continue in that way until they had described the last thing the computer would do. This,in fact, is the way I was taught to program. Most of today's textbooks demonstrate the same method, although it has been improved by allowing us to describe the computer's "thoughts" in larger steps and later to refine those large steps to a sequence of smaller steps.

This intuitively appealing method works well -- on problems too small to matter. We think that it works because it worked for the first program that we wrote. One can follow this the method with programs that have neither branches nor loops. As soon as our thinking reaches a point where the action of the computer must depend on conditions that are not known until the program is running, we must deviate from the method by labeling one or more of the actions and remembering how we would get there. As soon as as we introduce loops into the program, there are many ways of getting to some of the points and we must remember all of those ways. As we progress through the algorithm, we recognize the need for information about earlier events and add variables to our data structure. We now have to start remembering what our data mean and under what circumstances are meaningful.

As we continue in our attempt to "think like a computer," the amount we have to remember grows and grows. The simple rules defining how we got to certain points in a program become more complex as we branch there from other points. The simple rules defining what the data mean become more complex as we find other uses for existing variables and add new variables. Eventually, we make an error. Sometimes we note that error, sometimes it is not found until we test. Sometimes the error is not very important; it happens only on rare or unforeseen occasions.In that case, we find it when the program is in use. Often, because one needs to remember so much about the meaning of each label and each variable, new problems are created when old problems are corrected.

[The author continues to examine his subject, discussing, among other things, "The Limits of Software Engineering Methods." "Artificial Intelligence and the Strategic Defense Initiative."("Artificial intelligence has the same relation to intelligence as artificial flowers have to flowers. From a distance they may appear much alike,but when closely examined, they are quite different.")]

At one point the author says:

> I am not a modest man. I believe that I have as sound and broad an understanding of the problems of software engineering as anyone that I know. If you gave me the job of building the system, and all the resources that I wanted, I could not do it.I don't expect the next 20 years of research to change that fact.

Here are his credentials:

> *David Lorge Parnas is Lansdowne Professor of Computer Science at the University of Victoria, in British Columbia, and Principal Consultant for the Software Cost Reduction Project at the Naval Research Laboratory in Washington, DC. He has taught at Carnegie-Mellon University, the University of Maryland, the Technische Hochschule Darmstadt, and the University of North Carolina. His special interests include programming semantics, language design, program organization, process structure, process synchronization, and precise abstract specifications. He is currently leading an experimental redesign of a hard real-time system, and is also involved in the design of a language involving new control structures and abstract data types. Address: Department of Computer Science, University of Victoria, P.O. Box 1700, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada V8W 2Y2.*

But the story of Star Wars software is not the whole story. There's a story behind that story. It is the story of a man heeding the promptings of conscience. Parnas tells that story in Common Cause Magazine (May-June 1986, p. 32.) under the title, "Why I Quit Star Wars." Here are excerpts:

In May 1985 I was asked by the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization (SDIO), the group within the Office of the U.S. secretary of Defense that is responsible for the "Star Wars" program, to serve on a $1,000 a day advisory panel, the SDIO Panel on Computing in Support of Battle Management. The panel was to make recommendations on a research and technology development program to solve the computer-related problems inherent in a space-based defense system. We were told that there were substantial resources available (billions of dollars over the next few years) and advised to consider large (expensive) programs.

Like President Reagan, I consider the use of nuclear weapons as a deterrent to be dangerous and immoral. If there is a way to make nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete and end the fear of nuclear weapons, there is nothing I would rather work on. However, two months after joining the panel I resigned. Since then I have become an active opponent of the Star Wars program.

My decision to resign from the panel was consistent with long-held views about the individual responsibilities of a professional, which I believe go beyond an obligation to satisfy the demands of an immediate employer. As a professional:

- I am responsible for my own actions and cannot rely on any external authority to make my decisions for me.
- I cannot ignore ethical and moral issues. I must devote some of my energy to deciding whether the task that I have been given is of benefit to society.
- I must make sure that I am solving the real problem, not simply providing short term satisfaction to my supervisor.

Many opponents of the Star Wars program, or the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), oppose all military development. I am not one of them. I have been a consultant to the Department of Defense and other components of the defense industry since 1971. I am considered an expert on the organization of large software systems and I lead the U.S. Navy's Software Cost Reduction Project at the Naval Research Laboratory. Although I have friends who argue that "people of conscience" should not work on weapons, I maintain that it is vital that people with a strong sense of social responsibility continue to work within the military industrial complex. I do not want to see that power completely in the

hands of people who are not conscious of their social responsibilities.

My own views on military work are close to those of Albert Einstein. Einstein, who called himself a militant pacifist, at one time held the view that scientists should refuse to contribute to arms development. Later in his life he concluded that to hold to a "no arms" policy would be to place the world at the mercy of its worst enemies. His later writings supported limited arms development with strong limitations on how arms should be used. Neither a ceaseless arms race nor nuclear weapons are consistent with Einstein's principles. One of our greatest scientists, he knew that international security required progress in political education, not science.

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From the beginning I wondered whether technology offered us a way to meet the president's goals. My own research has centered on computer software and I have used military software in some of my research. My experience with computer-controlled weapon systems made me wonder whether any such system could meet the requirements set forth by President Reagan.

I also had doubts about conflict of interest. I have a project within the U.S. Navy that could profit from SDI funding and I suggested to the panel organizer that this conflict might disqualify me. He assured me quite seriously that if I did not have such a conflict, they would not want me on the panel. He pointed out that the other panelists, employees of defense contractors and university professors dependent on Pentagon funds for their research, had similar conflicts. Citizens should think about such conflicts the next time they hear of a panel of "distinguished experts."

The first meeting of the panel increased my doubts. In spite of the high rate of pay, the meeting was poorly prepared; presentations were at a dismayingly unprofessional level. Technical terms were used without definition; numbers were used without supporting evidence. The participants appeared predisposed to discuss the many interesting but soluble technical problems in space-based missile defense while ignoring the basic problems and "big picture." Everyone seemed to have a pet project of their own that they thought should be funded.

At the end of the meeting we were asked to prepare position papers on the problems that we saw. I spent the weeks after the meeting writing up my views and trying to convince myself that SDIO-supported research could solve the technical problems I had identified. I failed!

I could not convince myself that it would be useful to build a system that we did not trust. And if SDI is not trustworthy, the U.S. will not abandon the arms race. Similarly the USSR could not assume that SDI would be completely ineffective; seeing both a "shield" and missiles, it would feel impelled to improve its offensive forces to compensate for the defense. The U.S., not trusting its defense, would feel a need to build still more nuclear missiles to compensate for the increased Soviet strength. The arms race would speed up. Even worse, because we would be wasting an immense amount of effort on a system we couldn't trust, we would see a weakening of our relative strength. Instead of the safer world that President Reagan envisions, we would have a far more dangerous situation. Thus, the issue of our trust in the system is critical; it is important that Americans understand why responsible leaders would never trust a "Star Wars" shield.

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Before resigning I solicited comments from others and found nobody who disagreed with my technical conclusions. Instead, people told me the program should be continued, not because it would free us from the fear of nuclear weapons, but because the research money would advance the state of the art in our field. As it happens, I disagree with that notion, but I also consider it irrelevant. Taking money allocated for developing a shield against nuclear missiles—while knowing that such a shield is impossible—felt like fraud. I did not want to participate.

My next realization had to do with the way Star Wars is being sold to the public. Democracy can work only if the public is accurately informed, yet some of the statements made by SDIO supporters seem designed to mislead the public. For example, one SDIO scientist told the press that there could be 100,000 errors in the software and it could still work properly. Strictly speaking this statement is true: If one picks one's errors very carefully, they won't matter much. However, let's remember that a single error caused the complete failure of a Venus probe many years ago. I find it hard to believe that the SDIO spokesperson made his statement without being aware that it was misleading. Because of such disinformation, I decided to explain to the public that technology offers no magic that will eliminate the fear of nuclear weapons.

I have discussed my views with many individuals who work on SDIO-funded projects, and most of them do not disagree with my technical conclusions. In fact, since the story of my resignation became public, two SDIO contractors and two Pentagon agencies have sought my advice. In other words, they do not doubt my competence.

Those who accept SDIO money, given its technical contradictions, make a variety of excuses. "The money is going to be spent anyway, shouldn't we use it well?" . . . "We can use the money to solve other problems." . . . "The money will be good for computer science."

The issue of SDI software was recently debated at a computer conference. While two of us argued, on the basis of software engineering theory and experience, that SDI could not be trusted, the two SDI supporters argued that this doesn't matter. Rather than argue about the computer science issues, they tried to use strategic arguments to say that a shield need not be considered trustworthy. One of them argued, most eloquently, that the president's "impotent and obsolete" terminology was technical nonsense, then suggested that we ignore what "the president's speechwriters" had to say and look at what was actually feasible. I had to remind myself that he was arguing in favor of SDI.

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I believe in research; I believe that technology can improve our world in many ways; I also agree with Israeli scientist Prof. Makowski who wrote, "Overfunded research is like heroin, it leads to addiction, weakens the mind, and leads to prostitution." Many research fields in the U.S. are now clearly overfunded, largely because of Pentagon money. I believe we are witnessing the proof of Prof. Makowski's statement.

A man who gives up a $1000-a-day job because of principle is — how shall we put it? — uncommon?

PHILOSOPHERS CORNER

(21) Somewhat good news for philosophers. In 1979 we reproduced the New York Times' story on how hard it was for a professional philosopher to find a job as a full-time teacher of philosophy (RSN22-7). There were 135 applicants for a 2-year appointment, at $13,000 a year, with no assurance of reappointment. The odds against getting the job were 135 to 1.

Be of good cheer, philosophers! Here's somewhat good news, from The Economist (4/26/86,p. 95):

> Ever since 423 BC, when Aristophanes caricatured Socrates and his logic factory in"The Clouds", philosophers have been good for a laugh. They may now be good for other things, too. Philosophers are merging into the workaday world. Hospitalsin New York State employ philosophers to advise doctors on life-or-death decisions. Philosophers have been hired to advise the state legislature in New Hampshire and prison authorities in Connecticut. They look at questions such as the disposal of nuclear waste and the problems of genetic engineering. Congress has four philosopher-interns to help senators crack conundrums.
>
> Ethics — particularly medical ethics — has become a growth industry and, in America pre-eminently, it is linked at every point to the wider world. The links start at the universities, and run on into companies. Academic journals have titles like "Philosophy and Public Affairs" (Princeton) or the "Journal of Applied Philosophy" (University of Surrey). The Illinois Institute of Technology has its Center for the Study of Ethics in the Professions, the University of Maryland its Center for Philosophy and Public Policy.
>
> Around such centers of learning, courses and conferences are multiplying. During the 1970s, 322 courses in business ethics sprang up at American universities and colleges, At Harvard's graduate school of business, for instance, philosophers lecture on pollution, consumer safety, the rights of employees and international business ethics.

It is not just that academic philosophers are profiting from a kind of luxury-goods market in ethics. Their pupils are finding that analytic training in philosophy can be an asset in business and this success in turn reflects back on the teachers of the world's oddest academic subject. Philosophy students do better in examinations for business and management schools than anybody except mathematicians -- even better than those who study economics, business or other vocational subjects. Between 1964 and 1982, philosophy students scored at least five percentage points above average in admission tests for professional and graduate schools in America. No other subject matches that. Etc.

(Thank you, ELEANOR VALENTINE)

RELIGION

(22) Hypocrisy, as described by "Critic" in the "London Diary" column of the New Statesman (9 May 1959):

When I write my classical "History of Hypocrisy" (the first of a trilogy of which the others will be "The Anatomy of Vanity" and "The Gentle Art of Fishing"), Exhibit A will be the South African government's reason for banning Bertrand Russell's "Why I Am Not A Christian." According to the government's handout (reported in the Johannesburg Star), the reason for the ban was that the book 'violated the principles of Christianity upheld in South Africa'.

(Thank you, TOM STANLEY)

(23) "Biblical versus Secular Morality" is the theme of Free Inquiry's Fifth Annual Conference, held this year at the University of Virginia on 10/31 and 11/1."The State of Virginia is fundamentalist territory, the stomping ground of Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson...who want to use the Bible to remake America. They quote from the Bible daily, maintaining that it and it alone is the source of all knowledge and moral virtue," says Free Inquiry's Editor,Paul Kurtz. The topics to be discussed are: "The Origins and Impact of Biblical Ethics", "Biblical and Contemporary Views of Morality", "Religious vs. Secular Morality",and "Religion and Morals". The Conference will have taken place before this newsletter reaches you, but we thought you might like to know about it. Free Inquiry, a quarterly, $18 a year: Box 5, Buffalo, NY 14215-0005.

NEWS ABOUT MEMBERS

(24) Neil Abercrombie. Is the BRS on its way to becoming a Powerful Political Force in the USA? Consider:
. Item #1: a BRS member runs for Congress, and is elected.
. Item #2: the member becomes an ex-member.
Where does that leave the BRS as a Powerful Political Force? Back in Square One.
The member: Neil Abercrombie. He won a Special Election to fill a vacancy in Hawaii's First District. He'd like you to help him pay off his campaign debt of $30,000. 2721-A Puuhonua St., Honolulu, HI 96822-9972.

(25) Don Jackanicz deserves great credit -- TOM STANLEY reminds us -- for organizing the June 86 meeting on short notice, and doing it superbly well. David Hart had bowed out because of a sick infant, and Don stepped into the breech.

(26) Robert Jay Lifton's new book, "The Nazi Doctors" (NY: Basic Books, 1986), was featured on Page 1 of the Sunday Book Review Section of the NY Times (10/5/86). These doctors reversed the doctor's role -- killing instead of healing. The review appeared under the heading, THEIR SPECIALTY WAS MURDER. Page 1 of the Washington Posts's Sunday Book Section also featured the book.

HONORARY MEMBERS

(27) Linus Pauling. We were too low key last issue when we listed Professor Pauling among the New Members for the period (RSN51-32). Although we did include his name on the list of Honorary Members (RSN51,Page 25), we gave no evidence of our great delight in his acceptance of the title.

We are enormously pleased. The world's most eminent living scientist has honored Bertrand Russell's memory and the Society that bears his name. He is the winner of two Nobel Prizes, one of them the Nobel Peace Prize, and countless other honors. Clearly, his stature is not confined to the scientific community, as the following entry in "Who's Who in America" (1984-5) indicates (next page).

PAULING, LINUS CARL, chemistry educator; b. Portland, Oreg., Feb. 28, 1901; s. Herman Henry William and Lucy Isabelle (Darling) P.; m. Ava Helen Miller, June 17, 1923 (dec. Dec. 7, 1981); children: Linus Carl, Peter Jeffress, Linda Helen, Edward Crellin. B.S., Oreg. State Coll., Corvallis, 1922, Sc.D. (hon.), 1933; Ph.D., Calif. Inst. Tech., 1925; Sc.D. (hon.), U. Chgo., 1941, Princeton, 1946, U. Cambridge, U. London, Yale, 1947, Oxford, 1948, Bklyn. Poly. Inst., 1955, Humboldt U., 1959, U. Melbourne, 1964, U. Delhi, Adelphi U., 1967, Marquette U. Sch. Medicine, 1969; L.H.D., Tampa, 1950; U.J.D., U. N.B., 1950; LL.D., Reed Coll., 1959; Dr. h.c., Jagiellonian U., Montpellier (France), 1964; D.F.A., Chouinard Art Inst., 1958; also others. Teaching fellow Calif. Inst. Tech., 1922-25, research fellow, 1925-27, asst. prof., 1927-29, asso. prof., 1929-31, prof. chem., 1931-64, chmn. div. chem. and chem. engring., dir., 1936-58, mem. exec. com., bd. trustees, 1945-48; research prof. (Center for Study Dem. Instns.), 1963-67; prof. chemistry U. Calif. at San Diego, 1967-69, Stanford, 1969-74; pres. Linus Pauling Inst. Sci. and Medicine, 1973-75, 78—, research prof., 1973—; George Eastman prof. Oxford U., 1948; lectr. chemistry several univs. Author several books, 1930—, including, Cancer and Vitamin C, 1979; Contbr. articles to profl. jours. Fellow Balliol Coll., 1948, NRC, 1925-26, John S. Guggenheim Meml. Found., 1926-27; Numerous awards in field of chemistry, including; U.S. Presdl. Medal for Merit, 1948; Nobel prize in chemistry, 1954; Nobel Peace prize, 1962; Internat. Lenin Peace prize, 1972; U.S. Nat. Medal of Sci., 1974; Fermat medal; Paul Sabatier medal; Pasteur medal; medal with laurel wreath of Internat. Grotius Found., 1957; Lomonosov medal, 1978; U.S. Nat. Acad. Sci. medal in Chem. Scis., 1979; Priestley medal Am. Chem. Soc., 1984; award for chemistry Arthur M. Sackler Found., 1984. Hon., corr., fgn. mem. numerous assns. and orgns. Home: Salmon Creek Big Sur CA 93920 Office: Linus Pauling Inst Sci and Medicine 440 Page Mill Rd Palo Alto CA 94306

RECOMMENDED READING

(28) "The Harvard Guide to Influential Books", Devine,Dissel, Parrish, eds. (NY: Harper & Row, 1986). Subhead:"113 Distinguished Harvard Professors Discuss the Books That Have Helped to Shape Their Thinking." This is an exciting book. If you want to find books worth reading, this is the place to look. The professors tell why particular books were important to them.

Occasionally a second-rate book will have first-rate consequences: "I read this [book] early in high school... In retrospect, it is an outrageously romanticised description of important distinguished scientists, written in a familiar style for young impressionable highschool students." He was young and apparently impressionable. The book led him into medicine and science. He wound up as Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, after having worked on the molecular biology of cancer, and been Dean of Harvard's School of Public Health. "For me it was an important book in my decision to go into medicine [and]....research in medicine." The book? "Microbe Hunters" by De Kruif.

About 500-600 books are listed, in all. Professor Quine's list includes BR's "Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy" and "Our Knowledge of the External World". B. F. Skinner's list includes BR's "The Problems of Philosophy".

NEWSLETTER MATTERS

(29) Future RSN Editor sought. Editor Lee Eisler has this to say:

I am not stepping down as editor of Russell Society News...yet. But I am not immortal. Some thought must be given to my successor. Who will be the next editor? There are 3 requirements for the job: you must really want it, you must be able to write, and you must be able to afford the time. The possession of a word processor makes the job easier; however, it can be done with a typewriter; that's how I did it for many years.

* If you are interested in exploring the possibility, write or phone me [RD 1, Box 409, Coopersburg, PA 18036. (215)346-7687]. If you could come and visit me, that would be even better; much better, in fact. (I can put you up overnight.) Perhaps you would like to be editor for for a single issue, to try it out, to see how it goes. Perhaps we can figure out a way for you to do part of an issue. Let us discuss it.

NEW MEMBERS

(30) We welcome these new members:

MR. CLIFFORD W. ALLAN/86/523 WENTWORTH CRESCENT/THUNDER BAY,ONT.///CANADA/P7A 7S6
MR. KEVIN P. BYRNE/86/PSC 1 BOX 1804/FAIRCHILD AFB/WA/99011//
MS. DOROTHY FISHBEIN/86/73 HARVARD AV. 5/BOSTON/MA/02134//
MS. RHEA M. GOODWIN/86/750 GLENVIA ST.,#101/GLENDALE/CA/91206//
MR. ROSS M. GUFFY/86/2713 S.W. 322ND PL./FEDERAL WAY/WA/98023//
DR. THOMAS E. HARRIS/86/1805 N. HARRISON ST./FRESNO/CA/93704//
MS. BARBARA L. HARVEY/86/1366 LAFAYETTE ROAD, J/CLAREMONT/CA/91711//
MR. J. E. KELLEY/86/1128 CHEROKEE AV./WEST ST. PAUL/MN/55118//
MR. NATHANIEL LEWIS/86/PO BOX 6592/PHILADELPHIA/PA/19138//
MR. LEO MCCAULEY/86/AMERICAN RIVER COLLEGE/SACRAMENTO/CA/95841//
MS. ROSALYN C. MOTT/86/4326 N. WALNUT ST./KANSAS CITY/MO/64116//
MR. WILLIAM J. MOTT/86/4326 N. WALNUT ST./KANSAS CITY/MO/64116//
MR. WILLIAM M. RIPLEY/86/1341 DIXBORO ROAD/ANN ARBOR/MI/48105//
MR. DON SCHMIEGE/86/1800 EVERGREEN AV./JUNEAU/AK/99801//
MS. MONICA M. TAYLOR/86/117 KENMORE ROAD/UPPER DARBY/PA/19082//
MR. EDWARD J. WILDING/86/P.O. BOX 87/LEROY/TX/76654//
MS. MARY F. WILK/86/4384 VIA PRESADA/SANTA BARBARA/CA/93110//
MR. RICHARD B. WILK/86/4384 VIA PRESADA/SANTA BARBARA/CA/93110//

NEW ADDRESSES

(31)

DR. JEAN ANDERSON/75/1414 S.W. THIRD AV. APT 3002/PORTLAND/OR/97201//
DR. DENNIS C. CHIPMAN/84/PO BOX 5668/TEXARKANA/TX/75505 5668//
MS. KAREN COKER/86/202 CLAWSON/BISBEE/AZ/85603//
MR. WALT H. COKER/84/202 CLAWSON/BISBEE/AZ/85603//
MS. GLENNA STONE CRANFORD/79/205 SIMMONS PLACE/AUGUSTA/GA/30907 3798//
DR. PETER G. CRANFORD/74/205 SIMMONS PLACE/AUGUSTA/GA/30907 3798//
DR. JUSTIN DUNMORE LEIBER/76/16 CAVENDISH ROAD/OXFORD///ENGLAND/OX2 7TW*
MR. LESLIE M. MARENCHIN/85/2323 DE LEE #31/BRYAN/TX/77802 2816//
MR. WARREN ALLEN SMITH/77/130 W. 42ND ST. (ROOM 551)/NY/NY/10036 7854//
MR. WAYNE D. SMITH/83/PO BOX 66/LIGHTFOOT/VA/23090 0066//
CAPT. MICHAEL H. TAINT/82/2141 W. 177TH ST./TORRANCE/CA/90504//
DR. KATHARINE RUSSELL TAIT/74/PO BOX 518/SALISBURY/CT/06068//
MR. JAMES E. WOODROW/85/4285 M72W/TRAVERSE CITY/MI/49684//
*temporary address till 12/19/86

BOOK REVIEW

(32) "Bertrand Russell" by PAUL GRIMLEY KUNTZ (New Haven,CT: Twayne, 1986), reviewed by MARVIN KOHL. This review appears in Choice (October 1986, p. 322).

Elizabeth R. Eames, in "Bertrand Russell's Theory of Knowledge" (CH, Jan '70) argues that the underlying principles which have remained constant in Russell's thought from the time of his abandonment of idealism are his analytic method, empiricism and realism. In this Twayne publication, Kuntz (Emory University) develops the latter theme. Although there is the antimetaphysical Russell who believes that knowledge about the ultimate nature of reality cannot be obtained, the author suggests that Russell was a fascinating kind of metaphysical realist. In "Bertrand Russell: The Passionate Sceptic", Alan Wood maintained that Russell was a passionate sceptic because he wanted to be a passionate believer. According to Kuntz, Russell was both a passionate sceptic and a passionate believer, a man who thought that belief ought to be suspended when there is a lack of evidence, but who, nonetheless, waged a fierce and neverending war against what he believed to be evil, sought to achieve impersonality in both reason and emotion, and was absolutely devoted to truth. Russell also has his failures: he does not proceed (like Whitehead) to finish his metaphysical system; he believes in real good as contrasted to real evil, yet consistently maintains that all normative questions are beyond the realm of knowledge; he outlines a new theory of virtue but fails to fill in the necessary details. Although he maintained that "the most valuable aspect of any person is his personal religion," Russell will probably be remembered as one of the great patron saints of secular humanism. A beautiful book for academic readers describing the Janus-faced genius as well as his limits.

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(33)

THE RUSSELL SOCIETY LIBRARY
Tom Stanley, Librarian

Audio-Visual:

The Society has purchased a VHS cassette of Russell's 1959 appearance on the CBC's "Close-Up" television program. Interviewed by Elaine Grand, Russell discusses his childhood, the threat of nuclear war, democracy, Einstein, the emancipation of women and his religious views. Very little of the material is covered in the other films in our collection. I expect we'll be screening this at the 1987 annual meeting. Run time: 29 Minutes

We are indebted to the archivist of Suddeutscher Rundfunk in Stuttgart for an audio cassette of Katharine Tait's broadcast, " Portrait of the Father as Philosopher ".(#230, 29 Minutes). An English transcription was published in Russell: N.S., Vol. 5, no.2. In German.

Professor Costigan's 1986 lecture on Russell is available on audio cassette #229. (100 Minutes). This is an excellant introduction to Russell's life and work.

Print:

We've received a review copy of THE PHILOSOPHY OF LOGICAL ATOMISM AND OTHER ESSAYS, Volume 8 in The Collected Essays of Bertrand Russell. We need a reviewer for this volume as well as for the previous title in this project, CONTEMPLATION AND ACTION 1902-1914.

* Any volunteers?

Peter Cranford gave the Library 15 copies of his BERTRAND RUSSELL ON COMPOSSIBILITY. A few have been reserved for circulation; the remainder have been sent to various organizations in the U.S. and Canada. Peter is particularly interested in getting the booklet noticed in the press and the word 'compossibility' into the language. If you have any suggestions please write to him at 205 Simmons Place, Augusta, GA 30907.

Our copy of the videotape, "The 'People For' Story" was a gift from Lee.

Videotapes:

Videotapes may be borrowed for $4 per cassette. Canadian members should direct their orders to Rick Shore, 3410 Peter Street., Apt. 305, Windsor, Ontario, Canada N9C 1J3.

260 Donahue Interviews Gore Vidal. Also, A Jonathon Miller Interview
261 Steve Allen's " Meeting of the Minds ". (Bertrand Russell, Thomas Jefferson, St Augustine, Empress Theodora)
262 BBC's " The Life and Times of Bertrand Russell " (1962)
NBC's " Bertrand Russell " (1952)
263 Bertrand Russell Interviewed by Woodrow Wyatt (1959). Four short discussions on the Role of the Individual, Happiness, Power and The Future of Mankind.
264 BBC's " Bertie and the Bomb " (1984)
265 Professor Costigon's lecture on Russell (1986)
266 The 'People For' Story
267 CBC's "Close-Up" Interview (1959)

Books for sale:

By Other Authors

BERTRAND RUSSELL AND HIS WORLD by Ronald Clark.....	12.00 H
BERTRAND RUSSELL, 1872-1970.....	1.50
THE LIFE OF BR IN PICTURES AND HIS OWN WORDS.....	4.75
BERTRAND RUSSELL, THE PASSIONATE SCEPTIC by Alan Wood.....	2.00
MR. WILSON SPEAKS 'FRANKLY AND FEARLESSLY' ON VIETNAM TO BR.....	1.50
ESSAYS ON SOCIALIST HUMANISM IN HONOR OF THE CENTENARY OF BR, edited by Ken Coates.....	9.00 H
ESSAYS ON SOCIALIST HUMANISM IN HONOR OF THE CENTENARY OF BR, edited by Ken Coates.....	4.00
THE INCOMPATIBLE PROPHESIES: BERTRAND RUSSELL ON SCIENCE AND RELIGION by Louis Greenspan.....	4.00
INTO THE TENTH DECADE: A TRIBUTE TO BERTRAND RUSSELL.....	3.25
THE TAMARISK TREE, MY SEARCH FOR LIBERTY AND LOVE, Volume I by Dora Russell.....	5.25 H

By Bertrand Russell

APPEAL TO THE AMERICAN CONSCIENCE	$ 2.25	
AUTHORITY AND THE INDIVIDUAL	3.75	
THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BR (in one volume)	7.50	
THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BR, Volume I	16.00	H
THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BR, VOLUME II	13.00	H
THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BR, Volume III	11.00	H
BERTRAND RUSSELL ON GOD AND RELIGION, edited by Al Seckel	10.00	
EDUCATION AND THE SOCIAL ORDER	4.25	
HAS MAN A FUTURE?	8.00	H
HISTORY OF THE WORLD IN EPITOME	1.00	
ICARUS OR THE FUTURE OF SCIENCE	3.00	
IN PRAISE OF IDLENESS	3.75	
THE IMPACT OF SCIENCE ON SOCIETY	3.00	
AN INQUIRY INTO MEANING AND TRUTH	6.00	
JUSTICE IN WARTIME	8.00	H
MY PHILOSOPHICAL DEVELOPMENT	3.00	
AN OUTLINE OF PHILOSOPHY	16.00	H
POLITICAL IDEALS	3.75	
POWER: A NEW SOCIAL ANALYSIS	5.50	
THE PRACTICE AND THEORY OF BOLSHEVISM	3.75	
PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION	3.75	
ROADS TO FREEDOM	4.00	
SCEPTICAL ESSAYS	4.25	
THE SCIENTIFIC OUTLOOK	5.50	

How to order:

Prices are postpaid. Books are paperback unless otherwise indicated. Please send check or money order, payable to the Bertrand Russell Society, to Russell Society Library, Box 434, Wilder, VT 05088.

WANTED

(34) A BR Correspondence Course? Tom Stenson wondered whether there were university courses on BR by correspondence. Tom Stanley checked this in Peterson's Guide; the answer is No. Would any of our professional philosophers undertake to write a correspondence course on Russell? Or, alternatively, how about a Home Study * Course on Russell? — on his views on a variety of topics...citing specific readings where Russell's views on this and that can be found. This sounds like a good idea. Doesn't one of our learned friends in philosophy wish to undertake it?

CORRECTIONS

(35) KUNTZ, not KURTZ. In the new-books-to-lend section of the Library report (RSN51-29), we listed the author of"Bertrand Russell" as Paul Kurtz. It should have been Paul Kuntz. Apologies to both. With thanks to eagle-eyed KEN BLACKWELL.

ABOUT OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

(36) Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security issues a handsomely printed periodical.Its name is "Peace and Security"and there are 12 pages of text in English. Turn it over, so that what had been the back cover is now the front cover, and its name is "Paix et Securite" and there are 12 pages of text in French. Articles in the Autumn 1986 issue include "India and the Bomb","After Grenada","Canada's Press," as well as "L'Inde et la Bombe","Les Lendemains de la Grenade", "La Presse Canadienne". Upcoming Events for October and November include: Consultative Group on Disarmament; Colloquium:"La paix est possible"; Workshop on Peace Education; International Youth for Peace and Justice Tour; Author's Workshop on Comprehensive Test Ban; Journee nationale de la paix; Roundtable on El Salvador; The True North Strong and Free? Apparently well-financed, the Institute lists 30 Public Program Grants, totaling $213,000, and 5 Research Grants totaling $27,000, for the First Quarter 1986-87. Their address:307 Gilmour St., Ottawa, Ontario K2P 0P7.

(37) Fundamentalists Anonymous, inspired by Alcoholics Anonymous, seeks to liberate individuals (who wish to be liberated) from stunting and stultifying beliefs. PO Box 20324, Greeley Square Station,, NY NY 10001. (212) 696-0420. [The address is supplied by Freedom Week, "a militant freethinkers' newsletter, circulated at no charge to all who request it, supported by donations from well-wishers." PO Box 84116, San Diego, CA 92138.]

NUCLEAR AFFAIRS

(38) This ad ran on the Op Ed page of the New York Times (7/27/86), with thanks to CORLISS LAMONT and BOB DAVIS:

ARE NUCLEAR WEAPONS KILLING US ALREADY?

Even if we never use the bomb again, with the continued production of nuclear weapons we are poisoning ourselves with radioactivity leaking into the earth, the water, and the air.

The Hanford Nuclear Reservation in southeast Washington State is one of the largest and oldest nuclear facilities. Hanford produced the plutonium for Trinity, the world's first nuclear bomb, and for thousands of nuclear weapons since.

■ *Much of Hanford's 570 square miles has become thoroughly contaminated by radioactive and chemical waste.* By 1982, 12 million cubic meters of the nuclear reservation's soil had become so contaminated with plutonium that the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) own guidelines required that the soil be transferred to an underground waste facility. Rather than dispose of the contaminated soil, the DOE raised *by ten times* its own guidelines for allowable plutonium concentrations in the soil. With the stroke of a pen, plutonium-contaminated waste became low-level waste, and plutonium continues to accumulate in Hanford's soil.

■ In 1984, a Washington State official estimated the amount of plutonium in Hanford's defense waste to be approximately 3,030 pounds. If a mere teaspoon of plutonium, about three ounces, were spread among the entire population of the earth, it would exceed the DOE's "permissible" lifetime body-burden limits for all five billion of us.

■ Radioactively and chemically contaminated ground water is seeping from the Hanford Reservation into the Columbia River. Although Hanford is 300 miles inland, by 1978 radioactivity from its plutonium reactors had been detected on the Pacific continental shelf *from southern Canada to northern California.*

■ Over the past four decades Hanford has released into the atmosphere over 1 million curies of thyroid-seeking iodine-131, a known carcinogen. Until this year, these releases were never announced to the American public. On December 2, 1949, Hanford officials intentionally released 5 thousand curies of iodine-131 in a "planned experiment," details of which are still being withheld. By comparison, the Three Mile Island accident released an estimated 15 curies.

■ An independent panel has studied Hanford's 23-year-old N-Reactor and concludes that "the similarities between Chernobyl and Hanford are substantial and make a Chernobyl-type accident at Hanford a distinct possibility, while the differences tend in general to make the N-Reactor more, rather than less, dangerous than its Soviet counterpart."

The silent, gradual radioactive contamination of the earth already threatens us with disease and potential genetic destruction – dangers that may, in the end, be as harmful as nuclear war itself.

These and many other facts about the Hanford Nuclear Reservation are being brought out and publicized by the Hanford Education Action League (HEAL), a group of research scientists, investigative reporters, and concerned citizens in Washington State.

HEAL is supported by the Peace Development Fund and the Pacific Peace Fund, public foundations that raise money and grant it to hundreds of citizen groups throughout the U.S. working for a safe and peaceful world. We urge you to become fully informed about *all* the risks of producing, deploying, and potentially using nuclear weapons, and we invite you to support the Funds' effort to bring the nuclear arms race to a halt. **You can help make a difference.**

For more information and suggestions for how you can help, please write:

Margaret E. Gage, *Executive Director*

PDF PEACE DEVELOPMENT FUND
P.O. Box 270
Amherst, MA 01004
413-256-0216

Your tax-deductible contribution is welcomed. Checks should be made out to the Peace Development Fund.

(39) On Descartes. In 1942-43, CBS had a weekly radio program called "Invitation To Learning," which consisted of unrehearsed conversation among 3 people, Mark Van Doren and two others. On this particular occasion the two guests were Jacques Barzun and BR. What follows is a transcript, from "New Invitation To Learning," Mark Van Doren, ed. (NY: Random House, 1942):

Van Doren: The full title of Descartes' essay, you remember, is *Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting the Reason and Seeking Truth in the Sciences,* but one notices immediately upon starting to read the essay that it has narrative form; it is cast, as Descartes himself says, in the guise of a tale. Mr. Russell, does it seem to you that this fact is purely accidental in its interest, or has Descartes been assisted in saying what he wants to say by assuming the posture of a narrator?

Russell: I think it assists him very greatly to say what he has to say. It helps the reader to be interested, and it helps the reader to be able to follow the chain of thought. Most philosophers are extraordinarily dry and very dull; Descartes is neither dry nor dull, and that is very largely because he doesn't confine himself to strict logic, but puts in picturesque material of a biographical sort.

Barzun: I should go farther, Mr. Russell, and say that for me the autobiographical element is the only value I find in the essay. It is interesting to note that the present title is a second choice. The essay was first called *History of My Mind,* and it was the preface to three purely scientific essays. I've often thought that if authors kept to their first titles less dangerous consequences would follow. In the present case we are misled into thinking that here is a discourse on method. I, for one, find no method whatsoever propounded in the essay.

Van Doren: Doesn't he at least propound a method which, according to him, came to him while he was lying in bed?

Russell: I disagree radically with what you say. A great deal of what he has to say about method is extremely good; I have found it valuable myself.

Barzun: But perhaps it's only the putting into somewhat rigid form of rather ordinary and self-evident rules: how to avoid mistakes. Certainly the account he gives of how he arrived at his method is unconvincing to me. I don't believe that he went through this process at all.

Russell: Oh, I dare say not! A great deal of that is just picturesque talk. But it's talk of a sort that helps you to understand what he means; therefore it's justifiable.

Barzun: It helps us to understand, but it formed a school of Cartesians who really believed that all this had happened.

Van Doren: I take the narrative form to be more than accidental. It seems to harmonize with the method itself. The impression finally given by the essay is that there is a truth about things which can be discovered in time. At first there is nothing and then there is something—the discovery of a principle of philosophy becomes in Descartes by implication almost a creation of the world.

Russell: You're both very unfair to Descartes.

Barzun: Well, you go ahead.

Russell: He says he's going to have nothing except what is clear and distinct. That is not having nothing.

Barzun: Well, he does say that after his education, for which he was properly grateful, he found that he had to undo it all. That is a common enough experience, but then he goes on to say that the first step was the achievement of a *tabula rasa.* Unlike Locke, who started the infant with a *tabula rasa,* Descartes achieved his with great effort, and then came the clear and distinct ideas. Why are those ideas valid, according to Descartes, Mr. Russell?

Russell: Because he was a mathematician. Of course it won't do as a method in empirical matters at all. But it does do in mathematics, and he was primarily a mathematician; all his remarks are those of a mathematician, and in mathematics it is, after all, the clear and distinct that the mathematician trusts to.

Barzun: That's where my objection comes in, because after setting aside the truths of poetry and literature and art and morals he leaves us only with mathematical truth, which, as I hope you'll admit, is truth about something conceived and not something existent. Yet at the end of the essay he invites us to consider physiology and medicine and the practical arts.

Russell: All that historical explanation is also historical justification. In his day mathematics was the chief machine for discovering facts about nature, and it did discover the most important facts, as in the case of Galileo who was a mathematician. He discovered things about the world, and mathematics was his instrument for doing it.

Barzun: But isn't there a kind of misleading uniformity in the attempt to make a very successful science in one realm apply to other realms?

Russell: It certainly is, and we see that now. Now, I think, his method isn't the right one, because on the whole the mathematical part of the job has been to a great extent done. But in his day it hadn't.

Barzun: But it has taken us three hundred years to get over this little essay of sixty pages. That's where my animus originates.

Russell: It goes back further than that. It goes back to Plato. The undue emphasis on mathematics goes back, in fact, further than Plato. It goes back to Pythagoras; Pythagoras is the villain of the piece.

Barzun: You are admitting then that there is a villain in the piece!

Russell: Well, he's become a villain. For two thousand years he was a saint.

Barzun: In other words, Descartes must have the credit of repeating a great error—is that your position?

Russell: Well, the thing has become an error. It was not an error in his day.

Barzun: I'm afraid I must agree with you there, but there is a further objection in my mind, and that is the tone and temper of the man and the *Discourse.* He was a singularly unamiable, vain, malicious, timid person whose ideas could appeal only, it seems to me, to the narrowest and most sectarian of philosophic minds.

Van Doren: You say he was both vain and timid. Would there be any difficulty in reconciling those two terms, or do you mean both?

Barzun: I hadn't thought of it, but I mean both.

Russell: They are quite easy to reconcile. Newton was both, obviously. But I don't agree with you. When one reads most philosophers they're mostly much worse than he is in all these respects. Philosophers are perhaps a narrow-minded sect.

Barzun: Oh, I don't know! I think if you take a man like Berkeley or Locke you find a fuller, richer atmosphere. I suppose we can overdo this point of the atmosphere of a philosopher, but I think it has a great influence historically.

Van Doren: I find Aristotle to be less vain, if vain at all, than Descartes, and for this reason. He seems to begin with the assumption that a world already exists, a world which is very thick and full about him, a world that he did not create and did not conceive himself. Descartes has the air of being the first, or at any rate the only man. Nothing shall be before him; he wants to clear away all former conceptions and all former ways of talking, so that there will be complete barrenness and emptiness and dryness in the world.

Russell: Well, I wish he'd done it more subtly. The trouble was merely that he didn't do it enough. The world was encumbered with rubbish in his day, intellectual rubbish, and the first thing was to be a scavenger, to get it all out of the way.

Van Doren: When the world is full of rubbish, which it always is, of course, thank God—I much prefer a world full of rubbish to an empty one—isn't the wisest thing to do to order that rubbish?

Barzun: Or a corner of it!

Van Doren: If you can.

Russell: Well, it isn't the custom, if you want to build a fine public building, to leave all the ruins of some previous buildings there; you clear them away.

Barzun: Now we fall back into one of Descartes' metaphors—

Russell: We do!

Barzun:—in the introduction, and we come upon one of his major inconsistencies. First he divides the world into thought on the one hand and matter on the other, and that is a cleaning-up process in itself, since his matter is simply extension and his thought is whatever he finds by the test of clarity and distinctness. But then on top of that he brings in the established social order and a curious set of mixed morals—ethics—partly stoical, partly epicurean. At bottom he is profoundly indifferent, it seems to me, to everything except his few leading principles, which can lead in any direction without producing much result.

Van Doren: His morals, incidentally, he explicitly calls provisory. That is to say, they are temporary morals which he will adhere to until the moment when he knows everything. In Part Three of the *Discourse,* you will remember, he says: pro tem, I shall observe the following rules, not because I think they conduce necessarily to right living but because they are the safe ones to follow; they are the rules that will get me into the least trouble. First, I shall obey the laws and customs of my country if only to escape notice and be left free to think. Then I shall be as firm and resolute in my action as possible; that is to say, not knowing yet what is true, nevertheless, when I do see a course of action or a course of thought, I shall take it straight away—here is the metaphor once again—as a man lost in a forest should do. A man lost in the middle of a forest should keep going in one direction, because anything is better than remaining in the middle of the forest. Then, third, I shall be something of a stoic: I shall try to conquer myself rather than fortune, I shall not ask for things which I cannot have. He is nowhere more contemptuous of morals than here where he assumes that they are but ways of being safe.

Russell: But, look, I must stand up to this. When you come to what he really does feel you learn that he has the most passionate desire to be of use to the human race—to be of use through the discovery of knowledge, which was the way in which he could be most useful. I very much doubt whether any other manner of life that he could have adopted would have made him as useful as he was.

Barzun: But wouldn't you admit that he was perhaps a little bit too adroit and diplomatic, not only in his relations to life but in his writings? For example, many of his contemporary critics said that it is very well to divide thought from matter for purposes of science, but that surely they must unite in the human organism: the mind and the body are connected. There is then a third original idea, which is the union of soul and matter and we feel it or sense it through the senses; but we have to go to his letters to a princess who was interested in philosophy in order to learn that, just as we have to go to other letters and other writings to discover that he believed in the value of the emotions and the passions, that he thought they were all perfectly good, provided that they were used in moderation—which contradicts his stoicism. We have to go again to his letters to discover that he was—oh, almost a Christian Scientist. He said that he had been cured of early tuberculosis by looking on the bright side of things, which simply does not go with the image of Descartes as we see him historically.

Russell: I quite agree, of course, but that is so with any man. Any man, if you take him in his letters, where he's discoursing more or less accidentally, doesn't have the same statuesque appearance that he does when he writes his great works; that's just common humanity.

Van Doren: We don't mean to be as savage as we sound. We're expecting you to annihilate us within the next few minutes. Descartes' claim that he is doing good in the world interests me a great deal. He says, to me if you please, that he is doing me good. Well, that reminds me of my failure ever to believe a scientist when he tells me that he is in the world to do me good. I do not find that he is very much interested in me. I am not, you understand, being personal now; I am putting myself in the place of any human being. I find a curious lack of warmth in his voice as he says he wants to do me good. What he really wants me to believe is that if I shall agree with him—

Barzun: He will tolerate you!

Van Doren: He will tolerate me.

Russell: Let's take this up. It's perfectly true that the pure man of science, as such, is not actuated by philanthropy directly, but he knows perfectly well that the outcome of what he does is likely to be beneficial. Let's take, say, a man who is doing medical research. He is not interested in patients because he's not dealing with them; he is engaged in discovering a method by which others can deal with patients.

Van Doren: I wonder how much good a man like Descartes could do medicine in view of the fact that he distinguished body and mind as sharply as he did? It strikes me as possible that all the good one could do in medical experiment might not balance the harm done by that distinction.

Barzun: And I, for one, am certainly not requiring philanthropy in scientists. They should do things for the ordinary, good enough human reason that they're interesting and ultimately valuable, without any particular love for this or that group of human beings. But the reason I feel so strongly against Descartes—I might as well reveal it—is that his insistence on method has had a bad influence on science and more particularly on French education. It has led, it seems to me, to an over-emphasis on the formal side of all thinking, to organization on a mechanical basis, rather than on the organic unity of thought and the capacity for insight. Now, Descartes was not without insight but he trampled it underfoot. His four rules are simply scaffolding, of very little importance in actual use and of very great harm in the sequel.

Van Doren: What are those four rules, by the way? Have you found them useful, Mr. Russell?

Russell: His four rules may as well be set forth. Never accept anything not known to be true or clear and distinct. Divide difficulties into as many parts as possible. Proceed from the simple to the complex. Make complete enumerations to be sure that nothing is omitted. Now, the second and third especially—divide difficulties into as many parts as possible and proceed from simple to complex—I personally have found it always necessary to insist upon with advanced students who were beginning research. Unless they were very able they tended to take vast problems far beyond their powers, and I find Descartes' rules exactly what one has to tell them.

Barzun: Of course, simple and complex are terms relative to almost any single subject matter, and it is possible to lose the view of the whole through looking at detail. I can take an example from Descartes' own life. He wrote his *Meditations,* of which

the full title was *Meditations in Which Are Proved the Existence of God and the Immortality of the Soul,* and, as usual, he sent the manuscript to his friend and critic, Father Mersenne, who read it and said: "It's splendid, but there isn't a word in it about the immortality of the soul!" So that Descartes's enumeration there was imperfect. I don't blame him for that. Geniuses have often made those silly errors. But it shows that he didn't use his method.

Russell: He proved the soul was immaterial and forgot to stick in that what was immaterial is immortal.

Van Doren: Possibly, Mr. Russell, the greatest defect of the higher learning today is that students are too much discouraged from considering hard subjects. If I were going to reform graduate schools, for instance, in the United States, I should begin by insisting that students be encouraged to begin in a very large field and then refine it. There is too much suspicion of the capacities of students. This seems to be a direct result of Descartes's own thought, whose scorn of anything except the clear and the distinct, which often became in his mind the small, means that the capacities of students have actually diminished with the failure to occupy them with larger things.

Russell: There is a compromise at that point, which I think is important. When one is engaged upon a smaller matter it should always be in its relation to a large one and because of its relations, not in itself.

Van Doren: That is precisely, it seems to me, where we can see one unfortunate result of Descartes. Take his discussion of God, which might be considered unessential to an explanation of his method, but which I think is very interesting. He pays all sorts of lip service to God, insists that God exists, and indeed spends time proving that He exists; yet what he is really proving is that after one has said all that one can forget God. God started the world, to be sure, and it is now working as He started it going, or as any mathematician might have started it going; Descartes almost says: "I could have done the same thing. I have proved the world to be exactly what it ought to be because it is intelligible to me." That is his test of existence, namely, intelligibility.

Barzun: It is a reduction of experience to something much more abstract and limited.

Van Doren: I don't want to be fantastic, but why wouldn't it be a good thing to expect students to begin with the contemplation of God? We act as if we thought they should begin with a worm.

Russell: Supposing you do begin with the contemplation of God—I should still uphold Descartes, and say that here he sees a large subject that can be divided into heads which can be taken one at a time.

Barzun: I should be perfectly willing to arrive with Descartes at any conclusions that seem to be useful in physics and mathematics, if he would be wholly candid. But, for example, he never tells us except in letters that the main ideas of his philosophy occurred to him when he was twenty-three in a dream, in a series of dreams on one single night in the year 1619. Instead of that, he gives us the wholly false and "public" view that you can arrive at truth by sitting down in a porcelain stove, as he did, and excogitate truth.

Van Doren: That's curious behavior for a scientist, isn't it?

Russell: I don't think it is. He confesses once that you may happen to hit upon the truth in dreams, especially, he says, in matters that are purely intellectual, and I think that's as much as you can expect of him. If he had come before the public and said that something was revealed to him in a dream it wouldn't have had the right effect.

Barzun: No, but he wouldn't have had to say that. He would have had to say that upon the basis of glimmerings acquired in a dream, his ideas were thought out and verified. I'm comforted, however, by the fact that history took its revenge upon him. When he died in Stockholm, since he was an infidel in a Protestant country, he was buried first in the cemetery devoted to children who die before attaining the age of reason.

Van Doren: How did he happen to die, by the way?

Russell: He died of getting up early! He never used to get up till twelve o'clock, in the middle of the day. Then he went to teach Queen Christina of Sweden, and she insisted on his getting up at five in the morning in the Arctic winter. The poor man died of it.

Van Doren: How soon? How many mornings?

Russell: Oh, in a little time. He died the first winter.

Van Doren: Mr. Russell, I wonder if Mr. Barzun and I have not exaggerated the influence of Descartes and rendered too malicious an account of his thought.

Russell: I do not think Mr. Barzun has exaggerated his influence in France. I, too, if I were French, might agree with all he says But in other countries his influence has been less, and I think one may say of any man, however great and good, that his influence is bad—everybody's influence is bad if it's great.

Barzun: A very philosophical principle!

Van Doren: Will you go on to elaborate that?

Russell: Yes. It produces a set of disciples who repeat what the man has said instead of thinking. And so Descartes, by the mere fact that he had a great influence, undoubtedly became harmful in France. So would anybody else who had a great influence, but, if you contrast him with the scholastics who went before, I think he was better.

Barzun: And he did start Locke on his path. It was a very different path, but Descartes was the necessary stimulus. And the *Discourse*—I don't want to be misunderstood—remains a wonderful piece of autobiographical writing. Wonderful if only in this: that every sentence has at least two or three intentions and must be deciphered before one quite gathers where Descartes stands and what he wants his readers to believe.

Van Doren: What kind of sentence does he write, Mr. Barzun?

Barzun: In France he is considered one of the first modern prose writers. He writes a rather long and tortuous and complex sentence, but one perfect in its fulfillment of hidden meanings. He's a malicious writer.

Van Doren: But also delicate.

Barzun: A very delicate writer.

Van Doren: Do the translations manage to convey all that is there?

Barzun: They tend to break it up into smaller units of prose that spoil his rhythm.

Van Doren: I have not read him in French, although it is clear to me, as I read him in English, that he must have these qualities. However, I suspect them rather than find them.

Barzun: It is interesting that at the end of the autobiography he says that he wants a subsidy. He was thinking ahead to the large foundation, I think, that supports scientists without asking them to produce anything definite.

Russell: I'm not sure that he didn't want them to produce anything. He certainly wanted a subsidy. He wanted it solely for the purpose of experiments.

Van Doren: I think it would be fair, Mr. Russell, to ask you to read something from Descartes.

Russell: I'll read the last paragraph of his *Discourse on Method,* which will give one, perhaps, a better all-around picture of him than what we've been saying. He says:

"In conclusion, I am unwilling here to say anything very specific of the progress which I expect to make for the future in the sciences, or to bind myself to the public by any promise which I am not certain of being able to fulfil; but this of me I will say,

that I have resolved to devote what time I may still have to live to no other occupation than that of endeavoring to acquire some knowledge of Nature, which should be of such a type as to enable us therefrom to deduce rules in medicine of greater certainty than those at present in use; and that my inclination is so much opposed to all other pursuits, especially to such as cannot be useful to some without being hurtful to others, that, if, by any circumstances, I had been constrained to engage in such, I do not believe that I should have been able to succeed. Of this I here make a public declaration, though well aware that it cannot serve to procure for me any consideration in the world, which, however, I do not in the least affect; and I shall always hold myself more obliged to those through whose favor I am permitted to enjoy my retirement without interruption than to any who might offer me the highest earthly preferments."

(Thank you, TOM STANLEY)

ABOUT BR'S VIEWS

(40) Russell's Delight" is the title of an article in the New Statesman, 24 November 1961, by David Marquand. It presents a point of view about the way BR thought about people. With thanks to TOM STANLEY.

'What delighted me about mathematics', Bertrand Russell writes in one of the autobiographical essays in *Fact and Fiction**, 'was that things could be proved'. A few pages earlier, in an essay on the way in which he was taught English history, he tells us:

> The instruction that I had in this subject was unadulterated indoctrination with as little attempt at impartiality as under any totalitarian regime. Everything was treated from the Whig point of view, and I was told, only half in joke, that history means 'hiss-Tory'.

These two passages contain the essence of Lord Russell's politics.

By inheritance and chikdhood training, he is a Whig; by intellectual inclination and habit, a mathematician. As a Whig, justly proud of belonging to one of the greatest of the great Whig houses, he conceives it his duty to defend his version of the Good Old Cause against the clamour of the mob and the machinations of its rulers. As a mathematician, he cannot shake himself free of the assumption that the cause is to be discovered by a process of abstract reasoning, set out as logically and as precisely as possible. Like most pure scientists, he assumes that the most important and difficult aspect of a problem is the discovery of its theoretical solution, and he imagines that once the theoretical solution has been found only stupidity or malevolence can prevent its being put into effect. Like his great Whig ancestors, he unconsciously postulates as his model of political behaviour an assembly of equals rationally discussing problems of common concern. Both inclinations are profoundly undemocratic. Both unfit him for the manoeuvres and compromises of mass politics. Both seem to me, in certain ways, salutary.

Perhaps as a result of his Whig upbringing, Lord Russell has little sympathy for those in a different tradition; and, as he showed in his *History of Western Philosophy*, he is apt to treat those for whom he has little sympathy with monstrous flippancy. Worse still, his failure to sympathise with those in a different tradition leads to a failure of understanding. At bottom, he believes that all political leaders should behave like Lord John Russell or, failing that, like Lord Palmerston. He is prepared to admit that most contemporary leaders do not, in fact, behave in this way; but one never feels that he realises why they behave as they do, or even that he is particularly interested in finding out. When they fail to reach the standards he sets for them, he writes them off as wicked or irrational, without trying to understand them in their own terms or even to guess what they are likely to do next. In spite of his magisterial attempt to do the Russians justice, he shows little sign of understanding how men who believe that history is on their side are likely to behave. As a result, in spite of the verve and wit with which it is described, his world is curiously two-dimensional – inhabited by ghosts with anecdotes attached to them, not by men.

In part, this may be due to his mathematical education. Indeed, the disadvantages of a pure scientist's approach to politics have rarely been shown more clearly than in the pieces on nuclear disarmament in *Fact and Fiction* and in his new book, *Has Man A Future?*† In both, the argument is clear and logical, presented with icy calm. Russell's case is a surprisingly moderate one. He admits that it would be unfortunate if either the Soviet Union or the United States were to give up nuclear weapons before the other had done so; he recognises that in the long run, peace can only be preserved by a world government possessed of overwhelming force, and in the short run by a multilateral disarmament agreement; he wants Britain to give up her nuclear weapons not only because nuclear weapons are in themselves evil, but because he estimates that Britain would be marginally safer as a result and because he believes that she would have greater political influence as a neutral than she has at present. In other words, Lord Russell differs from the official leadership of the Labour Party on one item alone. He believes that Britain would have more influence as a neutral than she has now; Mr Gaitskell and his colleagues believe the opposite. This is an empirical question which can, at least in principle, be decided by looking at the facts.

Yet Lord Russell does not examine the facts. Indeed, he does not even examine the arguments of those who disagree with him. To him, Macmillan and Gaitskell are simply wicked or stupid. He is no more prepared to argue with them than a professor of mathematics would be prepared to argue with a student who denied that two and two make four. This, I think, explains why Russell, whose arguments are more moderate than those of many orthodox supporters of the CND, should have adopted such immoderate methods. To him, the case for British unilateralism and neutralism is self-evident. If others do not accept his argument, it can only be either because they are deliberately perverse or because they have been systematically bamboozled. It is irrelevant that his own position is in fact separated from that of the official leadership of the Labour Party by a relatively slim margin, to say that two and two make four and a half is as bad as to say that they make 18. Thus even the tiniest differences are exaggerated into fundamental points of principle, so much so that one doubts whether Lord Russell would admit that there is much to choose between Canon Collins and the Pentagon. The world is divided into those who see that two and two make four, and those who don't.

This mathematical approach to politics also robs Russell's positive arguments of much of their value. In *Has Man a Future?*, for example, he argues that peace can only be preserved by a world government, and that a multilateral disarmament agreement offers the most hopeful path towards a world government. This seems to me to make perfect sense; and I doubt whether any leading politician in the West, with the possible exception of President de Gaulle, would disagree. But the really important, and supremely difficult, aspect of disarmament is not the remote prospect of a comprehensive disarmament agreement but the working out of acceptable first steps which would put neither side at a military disadvantage. This aspect does not seem to interest Lord Russell. What excites him is the goal; the path towards it is a secondary matter. In politics, however, it is the first steps which count. It is true that Lord Russell would himself admit this, in theory. In *Has Man A Future?* he lists a number of useful first steps: stopping nuclear tests, stopping the spread of nuclear weapons, an

agreement to stop manufacturing nuclear weapons, the control of satellites, and so on. All of these are sensible proposals, and if they were adopted the world would be a far safer place. But all of them involve immense difficulties – technical difficulties as well as lack of goodwill. Yet in Russell's book the proposals are dismissed in a few pages. Russell would probably reply that this is a short book, and that he could not cover the whole field adequately. But in that case why not omit the platitudes about world government, and concentrate on the really important question of how limited disarmament agreements can be reached in a climate of suspicion and hatred?

These are sizable faults, and they have deprived Lord Russell of serious influence as a politician. In the long run, however, it is not as a politician that he must be judged but as a moralist. Here his influence has been almost entirely beneficial. His intellectual intolerance and ruthlessness, and the imaginative audacity which accompany them, have inspired generations of young people; the over-simplification of his arguments, even his refusal to take his opponents seriously, have immense educational value. Russell's systems for putting the world to rights have little practical influence in the short run, since they never take sufficient account of the difficulties. But they do at least set people thinking.

Most salutary of all, it seems to me, is his Whig attitude to authority. The greatest achievement of the Whig aristocracy was to strip Power of its magic. The Crown was transformed from a symbol of divine right into a political convenience; the Church ceased to be God's vicar on earth and became a prosaic piece of social machinery. The Whigs were frequently corrupt, but at least they never cloaked their rule in supernatural trappings. Their attitude to authority can be narrow and selfish, but it is never in the slightest degree reverent. To the Tory, the State is a mystic communion between the dead, the living and the unborn. To a certain kind of democrat, it embodies the majesty of the sovereign people. To the Whig, it is merely a useful device. Those set in authority are men like himself, to be treated with respect only if they earn it, and with bland derision if they do not.

These attitudes pervade Lord Russell's political writings. They derive, as he makes clear in the autobiographical sections of *Fact and Fiction*, from his upbringing. Nineteenth-century history, he tells us, was not something one read about in books; one learnt it from those who had taken part in it. As a result, he escaped the sense of 'individual impotence' that mass society engenders.

> Great events had not the impersonal and remote quality that they have in the books of historians. Throughout the nineteenth century these events intimately concerned people whom I knew, and it seemed to me a matter of course that one should play some part in the progress of mankind . . . I believed, in my very bones, hardly consciously but all the more profoundly, that one should aim at great achievement in the full conviction that such achievement is possible.

These are, of course, intensely, almost offensively, aristocratic attitudes. It seems to me that the real task of socialism is to democratise them. A world of Bertrand Russells would, no doubt, be intolerable; but a world in which his attitude to authority was general would be a great deal better than the present one.

BY BERTRAND RUSSELL

(41) Limerick, from "The Penguin Book of Limericks,' Parrott, ed. (NY: Viking, 1986):

There was a young girl of Shanghai,
Who was so exceedingly shy,
She undressed every night
Without any light
Because of the All-Seeing Eye.

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(42) DIRECTORS OF THE BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY, INC.
elected for 3-year terms, as shown

1985-87: JACQUELINE BERTHON-PAYON, BOB DAVIS, ALEX DELY, ALI GHAEMI, HUGH MOORHEAD

1986-88: LOU ACHESON, KEN BLACKWELL, JOHN JACKANICZZ, DAVID JOHNSON, JUSTIN LEIBER, GLADYS LEITHAUSER, STEVE REINHARDT, CARL SPADONI TOM STANLEY

1987-89: JACK COWLES, WILLIAM FIELDING, DAVID GOLDMAN, DON JACKANICZ, STEVE MARAGIDES, FRANK PAGE, MICHAEL ROCKLER, CHERIE RUPPE, PAUL SCHILPP, WARREN SMITH, RAMON SUZARA

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(43) OFFICERS OF THE BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY, INC.

Chairman, Harry Ruja; President, Marvin Kohl; Vice-President, John Lenz; Treasurer, Dennis J. Darland; Secretary, Don Jackanicz; Vice-President/Information, Lee Eisler

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THE MEMBERS VOTE

(44) 11 Directors elected. The following candidates were elected or re-elected Directors, for 3-year terms starting 1/1/87: JACK COWLES, WILLIAM K. FIELDING, DAVID GOLDMAN, DON JACKANICZ, STEVE MARAGIDES, FRANK PAGE, MICHAEL ROCKLER, CHERIE RUPPE, PAUL ARTHUR SCHILPP, WARREN ALLEN SMITH, and RAMON SUZARA.

Originally there were 12 candidates for 11 openings. One of the candidates withdrew for personal reasons, leaving 11 candidates for 11 openings. All 11 have been elected.

Only about 1 member in 6 used the ballot -- not a good showing. We thank those who did use it: RUBEN ARDILA, WALTER BAUMGARTNER, VIVIAN BENTON-RUBEL, HAROLD BLAIR, ROBERT CANTERBURY, HARRY CLIFFORD, BOB DAVIS, WILLIAM FIELDING, TING-FU HUNG, DON JACKANICZ, JOHN JACKANICZ, TED JACKANICZ, ADAM JACOBS, KEN KORBIN, SCOTT KURHAN, JOHN LENZ, PAUL LOGEMAN, STEVE MARAGIDES, CARL MILLER, LUCIO PRIVITELLO, STEVE REINHARDT, SIGRID SAAL, CAROL SMITH, CARL SPADONI, PHILIP STANDER, RAMON SUZARA, MIKE TAINT, JOSE VELASCO, CAROLYN WILKINSON, VINCENT WILLIAMS + 15 UNSIGNED BALLOTS.

We expect to see many more members voting next year.

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