

## Alfred Korzybski Memorial Lecture, 1986

EVALUATIONS: PROPER AND IMPROPER

Beads in Search of a String

by

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I dedicate this lecture to Posy Lombard, 1943-1985.

I have added a small amount of material to this printed version of the 35th Annual Alfred Korzybski Memorial Lecture, delivered at the Harvard Club of New York on Friday evening, November 7th, 1986. A little of the data and some of the other material was presented as part of a panel discussion at the International Conference on General Semantics, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, March 18, 1977. Had I given this talk a few weeks later than November 7, after information about the Iran arms -- Contra aid scandals had become public, a plethora of examples of misevaluations in foreign affairs, other than the ones I use, would have been available. Some of the examples would give special emphasis to my remarks, but would not otherwise change my conclusions.

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What I am presenting to you tonight is not organized as a proper after-dinner talk. By analogy, it is like a collection of beads and a string from which one could make a necklace. The beads are examples of evaluations that I have come across in my personal and professional life and studies. The concept of evaluation is the string that holds them together.

In my collection I have a variety of beads. Some of them are gems; as illustrations of the concept of evaluation, they are accurately cut and vivid. They have a sparkle that so attracts me that I want to apply the meanings I have derived from them to situations that I read or hear about in the news, events going on in the world today. I have no direct knowledge of or expertise about these problems -- problems such as nuclear disarmament, but as a husband, father, grandfather, and citizen I find I cannot put them aside. As I evaluate the ways in which these problems are being handled in the light of my understanding of the processes by which people make evaluations, I keep coming to different, sometimes unexpected, conclusions from those of the persons in our society who have the responsibility to act in respect to them. This situation is uncomfortable for me. For one thing, it leaves me uncertain about whether my beads make the beautiful necklace that I think they do.

I would like to tell you about my beads and the string and the thoughts I have about them, for I suspect that many of you, perhaps all of you, share the concerns I have about the world in which we live. I hope that some of you will have better answers for, or at least better ways of thinking about, the problems than I do.

### Problems with My Choice of Topic

When Bill Exton and Bob Straus first invited me to speak to you tonight, I had no hesitation in deciding what topic I wished to discuss with you. The topic concerns the processes we use in assessing the world around us, the events that occur therein, how we respond and react to these events, and how we initiate action in respect to them. Alfred Korzybski called these processes the processes of evaluation. When I mentioned this topic to Bill and Bob, one of them said, "Well, that's the name of the game," and the other, "That's what it is all about." Bill told me that Korzybski used to say to his students, "Don't think; evaluate!" That puts the topic in a nutshell. I won't be saying more or less than that, though I will take longer.

The concept of evaluation as I refer to it is not limited to the kinds of evaluations that professors and other teachers provide to their registrars as grades for students' work. Neither am I speaking about evaluations, in the comparable sense, in business and in other organizations, when administrators evaluate the efficiency of the units for which they are responsible. Though I will be treating the subject of evaluation more broadly than these familiar applications, I will not be treating it as broadly or abstractly as Korzybski did when he wrote about a natural order of evaluation. Rather I will be borrowing the term from Irving Lee's work (1941), as I came to know it during the time he spent with us at the Harvard Business School in 1951.

Both Korzybski and Lee distinguished between proper evaluations and improper or misevaluations. Proper evaluations are ones that correctly reflect the structure and meaning of events as they occur. Improper evaluations are ones made in other schemas, often in terms of what is important to the evaluator rather than in terms of the values controlling the event or happening in the world outside himself. Both Korzybski and Lee pointed out that it is easy for a person to confuse what is important to him with what is important in the world. Both also recognized that, in practical affairs, what is important is not the capacity to make absolutely correct evaluations, if such there be, but the capacity to make ones that reflect, with increasing accuracy, the structure of happenings taking place outside and within us. Thus, though it leads to bad grammar, the capacity they esteemed was the capacity to make more proper evaluations. In Korzybskian general semantics, then, in which the map is not the territory and is not all of it, an evaluation -- an abstraction -- need not and cannot be "absolutely" accurate regarding the object, the person, or the event. One envisions, rather, a series with an infinite number of evaluations, each more properly depicting the structure of the object, person, event, or idea. I will come to some examples shortly.

One of these examples will be a study which I helped carry out (1955) of saleswomen in a department store who sold little girls' dresses. These women had problems of evaluations, as they say, in spades. They had to evaluate customers' wants not once or twice, but dozens of times a day, day after day.

Though Bill Exton and Bob Straus approved my choice of topic, one of them worried about my choice of this example and expressed the hope that I would relate whatever I had to say about saleswomen's evaluations of customers to questions of interest at higher levels of organizational hierarchies, including questions of management and administration. The concern has merit, which I intend to recognize, not by addressing questions of policy at managerial levels of department stores or other business organizations, but by commenting on problems recognized as important in the world today, including ones of leadership and its failure at national and international levels.

My troubling thought is that today there is no consensus around the world that the leaders of our organizations and institutions are settling the problems that most concern us. They spend millions of dollars telling us that they are doing so and hundreds of millions to defend us against the similar expenditures of the "evil empire" they tell us is our enemy. The result is an escalation of rhetoric, dollars, and weapons -- from ABCMs, to MIRVs, to MXs, and now to Star Wars. The level of the arguments and the potential of the weapons escalate, but the form of the debate remains the same. It has been pointed out many times that each nation acts in terms of its own interests in ways that raise the anxieties of the other, so that it is provoked to respond in a similar manner, thereby perpetuating a vicious spiral of responses. Instead of acting in terms of the values that underlie and control the other nation's anxieties, we act in terms of our own values and irritate and exacerbate the other's.

If you think that such topics are far removed from the problems of saleswomen selling little girls' dresses in a department store on Fifth Avenue, I agree. But I would stress that in the territory, encounters between people and nations have a characteristic in common: the need for one person or group to evaluate what is important to others. If we freed our perceptions of these events from the effects -- may I say, of the distortions -- of differences of scale and the assumption that what is small is less important than what is large, studying them on a scale at which they may be understood may yield us some conclusions that throw light on the larger problems. Tonight I want to push the limits of what I think I have learned about processes of evaluation to see if these thoughts make sense to you. I ask you to suspend your disbelief that I can achieve the improbable, if not the impossible, and to have this fun with and even at me, if in your view I fall flat on my face. In this kind of game, that, too, can be a valuable outcome from which we all can learn.

I need to speak of one other preliminary matter; it will not delay me long. The last 50 years have seen a proliferation of new terms. The trend is especially rife today in the field of computers, but it has been apparent in many other fields as well, including the social sciences. Some terms that were once found useful have also disappeared from sight. I particularly miss a set which I wish to recall to you.

We used to speak of logic and illogic, of rationality and irrationality, meaning by the second term in the one case bad logic and in the other bad rationality. We also had the terms "nonlogic" and "nonrational", meaning, in the study of behavior, not behavior that was governed by logic -- whether good or bad -- but behavior that was sui generis, of its own kind. Similarly, we did not confuse irrational behavior -- that is, behavior that was bad

rationality -- with nonrational behavior -- behavior that was neither rational nor irrational, that followed its own laws and development. Surely Korzybski's emphasis on non-Aristotelian logic is a powerful statement, familiar to all of you, of the same point. In my talk to you tonight, when I speak of logic and of rationality, I will be thinking of each in terms of three categories: logic, illogic, and nonlogic; and the rational, the irrational, and the nonrational.

Similarly, when I come to speak of violence, I will also speak of nonviolence in the sense of nonlogic and nonrational, not simply as the absence of violence, zero violence, or pacifism, but as behavior of a different kind that has its own goals and dimensions and follows its own paths of development. I find these characteristics of the idea of nonviolence well established in the literature of the field, but not clearly recognized outside of it.

### Counseling and Interpersonal Communication

I first encountered the notion of evaluation in association with a different but related concept, that of communication. Let me tell you a little about these experiences, for they had close connections with the early years of these lectures. Roethlisberger's lecture, the second in the series, was entitled The Administrator's Skill: Communication (1953). Earlier, Lee had brought Carl Rogers and Roethlisberger together for talks on the importance of listening in achieving good communication. Under the title Barriers and Gateways to Communication (1952), these talks received wide circulation.

During this period, these ideas were developed primarily in the context of counseling, that is, when one person, the client, comes to another, the counselor, for help. Through the work of such men as Hayakawa (1949), Wendell Johnson (1946), Roethlisberger and Dickson (1939), Rogers (1942), and their colleagues, the subject area known variously as Human Relations and Interpersonal Communication was rapidly fleshed out. One of Lee's doctoral students, Thomas R. Nilsen, developed some of Lee's ideas in his thesis and later wrote an article about them entitled, "Some Assumptions That Impede Communication", published in the General Semantics Bulletin [# 14/15, 41] in 1954.

During the 1950s, the dynamics of the two-person relationship were spelled out in the field of interpersonal communication in the context of nonevaluation. I think the interest these men had in counseling was at least partly responsible for the concept of evaluation dropping almost from sight. In counseling, it is entirely appropriate for the counselor, at least in his early responses, to withhold evaluations of the client's situation. The 'nonevaluative' response is in such sharp contrast to the responses that are customary in other kinds of social and organizational contexts that there was much discussion of it. I think this discussion resulted -- unintentionally, to be sure -- in reduced attention to the concept of evaluation in other situations.

At this stage in my topic, I faced another dilemma. I could assess for you the conceptual advances that have been made within the framework of communication, in which communication is conceived of as a two-party

interaction or as a variation, multilateral negotiation, when more than two parties take part. I updated myself on progress in these fields, especially in respect to negotiation, by reading the best of the newer work, particularly that of Roger Fisher (1981) and Howard Raiffa (1982) at Harvard; Gerard Nierenberg (1973), who is here tonight; and Donald Straus (1986) of the American Arbitration Association. I was encouraged by the amount of new work, the progress it is making conceptually, and the recognition it is receiving.

Raiffa's work, it seems to me, is especially applicable to large and complex issues that corporate and governmental bodies face, though it has other applications as well, especially but not only where the issues and their outcomes can be quantified.

Nierenberg's work is outstanding for its wealth of concrete examples and for its practical suggestions and advice.

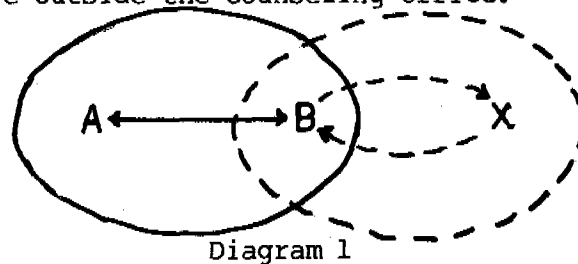
The inventions that Fisher describes are also strikingly useful. His insistence on separating the people from the problems; on focusing on interests, not positions; of inventing options for mutual gains; and on using objective criteria are all excellent. So, too, are his ideas about the Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement, the One-Text Procedure, negotiation jujitsu, and so on. I agree with him and with Donald Straus, who point out that sitting side-by-side is a better posture for cooperative problem solving than sitting face-to-face across a table, since the latter has confrontational implications. It is easier for one person, be it man or woman, to put his or her arm around the other's shoulders when they are on the same couch than when they are on opposite sides of a table. Yet there is still something missing. Bob Straus said the other day, "Side-by-side is not yet heart-to-heart."

To put it another way, I cannot tell you that our understanding of the world, of other people in it, and of ourselves, is better today than it was 50 years ago. And this in spite of the marvelous new communication technologies that we have that make it possible for us to do so. Perhaps the amount of information that these technologies provide us, the geographic and cultural diversity that they make available in our living rooms, overwhelms us. We are not able to assimilate it, so quickly has it come upon us.

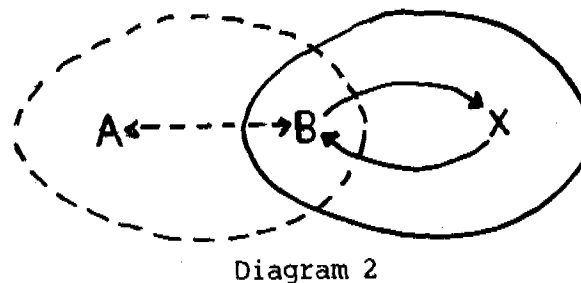
Yet I cannot think that this is the entire problem. There is something about the perspective from which the information is prepared for us and with which we receive it that is missing. We evaluate it too much from our point of view and not enough from the point of view of those about whom we are hearing and with whom we must interact. This is where further attention to the concept of evaluation may help. Understanding cannot proceed far without more proper evaluations being arrived at and vice versa. Communication, evaluation and understanding are different but complementary aspects of a totality. On the basis of that possible relationship, let me proceed from talking about communication to talking about evaluation in the hope that the second added to the first will help to reestablish a totality that was inadvertently split some 25 years ago.

I can contrast the two contexts in the following diagrams. The first one highlights, as an example, the interpersonal communication aspects of a counseling situation, that Wendell Johnson, in a broader context, called "The Fateful Process of Mr. A Talking to Mr. B" (1953). The purpose of counseling

is not simply to have the counselor (A) understand the client (B). It is, rather, for B to better understand his or her own situation, so that when he is not talking with the counselor, he can make more proper evaluations of situations (X), represented by the space enclosed by the broken lines, that he encounters in his life outside the counseling office.



The aim of counseling is clearly to improve the client's capacity to make more proper evaluations of his or her situation. However, it is entirely possible that these practitioners' orientation to the subject of communication -- from the perspective of counseling -- resulted in their neglect of the topic of evaluation. Diagram 2 attempts to correct this oversight by emphasizing (with the solid lines) B's situation outside the counseling office (here represented by the broken lines) while encountering new experiences (X) in his life.



### Lee's Views About Evaluation

For both Korzybski and Lee, the terms 'proper' and 'improper' or 'misevaluation' had a double referent. For Lee especially the terms did not refer only to the correctness or incorrectness of an evaluation. His use of them also referred to the processes by which a person arrives at an appraisal, often expressed in actions rather than words, of an object, event or purpose as well as of the evaluation itself. Lee's point was that if an evaluator was not aware of his process of evaluating, he could not correct its outcome, so that even if his evaluation was right, so to speak, it was right for an inadequate reason. In a modern, post-industrial world of change, Lee said, this is not enough. In order to correct his improper or misevaluation, a person needs to understand the process by which he or she arrives at his or her appraisals. Thus, for Lee, the concept referred both to the map, evaluation, or appraisal of the object, event, or purpose being evaluated and to the character of and steps in the evaluator's process in arriving at his or her conclusions.

I hope that this use of these terms does not give you trouble. It may, if you happen to believe, as I did at one time, that words should have clear referents and that a single referent is part of being clear. I still believe the former but not necessarily the latter. In any case, Lee and I have plenty of company. Recall how frequently all of us use words like 'uncle,

father, son, husband, and brother' or 'aunt, mother, daughter, wife and sister' to refer to one person from the point of view of different relationships. This seems to cause us little confusion, indeed sometimes less so than if we used some term such as 'ego', as technical journals do, to refer to a person without implying a relationship.

Lee's schema for the analysis of the process of evaluation will be familiar to many of you. He said that a person's behavior or action in a situation is a function of his or her perceptions of it as affected by his or her feelings and assumptions about it.

Thus, for example, if a student came late to class and read a newspaper in the back row and the teacher assumed that the student did this because he or she thought the course was lousy, the teacher would feel angry at the student, whose behavior threatened the teacher's concept of him or herself as a good teacher giving a good course. The teacher would perceive the student as disrespectful and punish him or her in some way appropriate to the teacher's assumptions, perceptions, and feelings.

It is possible, of course, that the student meant to be disrespectful; but in these circumstances it was unlikely that, on the basis of the teacher's assumptions, perceptions, and feelings, the teacher would find this out. If the teacher punished the student, it is unlikely that the student would be motivated to tell the teacher what was on his or her mind.

To continue the example, it might be that on the way to class that day, the student, who I will now say was a male, had picked up his hometown newspaper from his campus mailbox, and had read that the girl he hoped to marry had announced her engagement to someone else. In these circumstances, from the student's point of view, his even coming to class, in view of his feelings, perceptions, and assumptions at that point might be an act of respect for the teacher and the course. Or, more likely, he might just be numb. His coming to class might express nothing about his attitude toward the course and its professor.

Nevertheless, because the teacher was unaware of the student's process of evaluation, the teacher would not be able to correct his initial evaluation. Without this awareness, the teacher would perceive the student's behavior as rude. The rudeness would be a fact to the teacher, however relevant or irrelevant that evaluation was to the values controlling the student's behavior.

The following diagram, together with the preceding example (1977) from Roethlisberger's account of his discussions with Lee (1977), shows these ideas arranged schematically:[1]

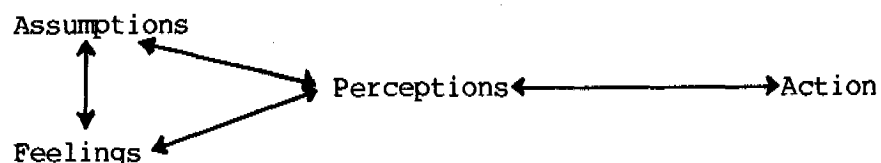


Diagram 3

I used Lee's example and schema many times in class when I was teaching and always with interesting results. Somehow, interest and tension in the class picked up. If there was a student in the back row reading or doodling, he would put down his book, paper, or pencil and with a somewhat guilty look, he would make a visible effort to involve himself in the class discussion. Students who had tended to come to class at the last minute or even late began to arrive on time. Others moved from the sides of the room to those center-front seats that are so often empty. I began to get more requests from students for appointments in my office to discuss problems, sometimes personal ones, of importance to them. Students began to see what the course was up to and to get more personally, deeply, and helpfully involved in learning from it.

I think these things happened because my use of Lee's example communicated to them that I understood and accepted that their systems of evaluations were not necessarily the same as mine. They felt that I might have a potential for understanding them, and, perhaps for the first time, that there might be something valuable for them to learn from the course, rather than merely having it fill a spot in the requirements for their degree.

I have come to associate such unpredicted positive outcomes with processes of proper evaluation. The presence of such results contrasts with their absence in connection with processes of miscalculation. We easily lose track of them; since we do not expect these positive results, we do not record them and soon forget them. I note them now because I wish to make a further remark about them later.

#### Evaluating an Illness: A Family Experience

During the 1950s, I had two experiences that highlighted for me the application of these ideas about the concept of evaluation. The first concerned an incident in my family; the second concerned the research study to which I have referred.

My family spent the summers on the coast of New England. We had a small sailboat and frequently went for a picnic on a sandy beach on an island that formed part of our community's harbor. On this particular day, the wind changed and came up fairly quickly while we were sailing over. It got a bit rough, and one of our children, a boy about four years old, became sick. Once on the beach, he recovered, and we thought no more about it, except that he did seem unusually sleepy and even took a nap on the beach. On our return, he seemed to have recovered.

The next day we noticed that he was walking unevenly, in an unbalanced way, and that one arm seemed stiff. Those of you who recall the communities along the New England beaches in August in those years will have no difficulty in knowing the concerns that were immediately in our minds. Did he have polio, infantile paralysis?

We took him to the local hospital, where the diagnosis of the respected and highly competent general practitioner, who was head of the hospital, quickly confirmed our fears. He suggested that we take the boy to the Children's Medical Center in Boston, for, if in the course of the disease his breathing became affected, the Center had the iron lung that he would need.



Upon our arrival in Boston, I had to carry Mike into the hospital, for by that time he was unable to move a leg and an arm. After the resident who was examining him had spent a few minutes with him, he turned to me and said, "If this is polio, it is the strangest case we have had all summer. I don't think we will put him in the contagious ward." That night, a leading Boston specialist in unusual childhood illnesses, he told me later, got out his medical textbooks and came up with a Greek name for what Mike had. Freely translated, the name meant, "If we leave him alone, we think he'll get better." And that is what happened.

This story illustrates two points. First, it shows clearly how our and the local doctor's setting and the assumptions about it that we took for granted provided the basis of our diagnoses and evaluations of the biological events that were happening in Mike. When he was sick in the boat but recovered afterwards, what else could it be but seasickness? Similarly, given the time of year and the symptoms that Mike had, what else could it be but polio?

The second point that the story illustrates is how relatively successful the practitioners of medicine have been in developing processes of evaluation to correct their evaluations and diagnoses. Of course doctors do make mistakes, but, by and large, I would evaluate their profession -- through judicious mixtures of clinical and laboratory methods, of observation, judgment, and experiment, and of skill and theory -- as being ahead of administration and management in this respect. I sometimes think in those fields we spend more time trying to find ways to defend conclusions we have already reached than in trying to improve them.

And of course in the case of polio, medicine has gone on to develop the Salk vaccine, a treatment that makes iron lungs and the worries and concerns that we went through out of date. Medicine has indeed reached a more proper evaluation of the biological microevents that make up the illness that we call infantile paralysis and of the prevention and cure for it.

#### Evaluation Among Saleswomen and Customers: A Research Study

I come now to the research project which I have mentioned. It was part of a broad study of the consequences, at the level of salespeople and customers, of the store's executive structure. Under Roethlisberger's general direction, we selected two departments for intensive study. John B. Fox conducted interviews and observations in one and I in the other. We were each ably assisted by a student from the New School for Social Research. Fox studied the hardware department, which also sold canary birds and goldfish in the store's basement. Many employees considered this department an excellent one in which to work. Many of the salespeople were old-timers who had developed remarkable insights about selling. For example, some of them had extensionalized their perceptions of customers and their skills of selling to the point that they treated a customer differently at the time when he or she was buying a hammer or a screwdriver from the time when he or she was buying a canary bird or a goldfish, with hopes perhaps that it would fill the void created by a beloved child who had grown up and flown from home.

The merchandise in the department I studied included dresses for girls from age two to six, infants' dresses, boys' clothes, and sport clothes for both boys and girls in the same age range. The merchandise was displayed on counters and kept in cases and drawers on, under, and behind the counters. The counters, behind which the saleswomen stood, were arranged in squares.

There were many processes of evaluation going on in the department. To make a purchase, customers had to evaluate the available merchandise. To serve the customers and to make sales, the saleswomen had to evaluate their customers' needs. Company executives evaluated the saleswomen's work. In our study, we concentrated attention on the saleswomen's systems of evaluation.

I need to describe briefly the executives' expectations of saleswomen in order to provide a framework for the description of the saleswomen's relations with each other and with their customers. The executives expected the saleswomen to move all around the department, wherever the flow of customers dictated. Since they were paid according to how much they sold, the women who moved around and kept busy would sell the most and therefore, earn the most.

We quickly found out, through interviews and observations, that things did not operate according to the executives' assumptions. As the saleswomen told us, they had their own laws. Each of them had a counter where she felt at home, and only two or three of them moved frequently from these locations. The rest of them needed an explicit request from a customer or a direct order from an executive if they were to move from their counter. One or two did not move even then; their response was, "I don't go over there; you'll have to get someone else."

The saleswomen also had a clear idea of a good day's work. When the total that they had sold approached the amount that they thought right, they told us, they made up excuses to go off the floor or busied themselves straightening and folding the merchandise. This way, the women who had not sold as much would have a chance to wait on customers. The saleswomen who moved around were called grabbers. If a new woman moved around too much, the others punished her. For example, one of them would pull out the drawer under the counter behind which the new woman was standing, so that the drawer hit her across the shins. Most new women quickly got the point.

A set of rules governing the saleswomen's behavior was central to their system of values. These rules stated how much a saleswoman should sell, how she should move around the department, and how she should behave in relation to the other saleswomen. In other words, the saleswomen had a small society with rules and regulations that governed its members' behavior. The rules were different, to be sure, from those that the executives thought should govern the saleswomen's behavior, but not too different from those in the small societies of other work groups that have been studied in factories, banks, and insurance companies here and abroad. As in many of these groups, the saleswomen's society was age-graded, with three classifications. We called these groups the Old Ladies, the Middle-Aged Women, and the Young Women.

The Old Ladies were the seniors in the department. There were three of them. They were among the oldest who worked in the store. They sold the infants' dresses at the counters directly in front of the elevators, where

there were customers at almost all times. Even when there were no customers, the Old Ladies did not leave their posts.

Things were different across the department at the counters where sports clothes were kept. This was home base for the Young Women. There were five of them. To them, being able to talk with one another was important. Leaving their square was an interruption of these conversations; they did it as infrequently as they could and, on the whole, only in response to being asked.

The Middle-Aged Women thought of themselves as experts. Typically, each of them had raised a family, been divorced or widowed, and had returned to work. They had strong ideas about what was right for children to wear. They behaved as though they knew what customers should buy and showed them what they -- the saleswomen -- felt were the right clothes. They tended either to stay near the counter where the expensive dresses were, where it was relatively easy to build up a large sales check quickly, or to move around the department to where customers were standing. They did this more than any of the other saleswomen, though they seldom went to the Infants square. The other saleswomen called the ones in this group "grabbers." They were the only saleswomen in the department whose behavior resembled what the executives thought a saleswoman's behavior should be.

After we had completed our study and I was working on my thesis, I remember that when I had described the saleswomen's society in detail, I went to Roethlisberger and said, "I guess I am about ready to hand in my thesis." He said, "Oh, no. You have not dealt with the saleswomen's relations with customers. Until you do that, you do not have a thesis." I said, "How do I do that?" His answer was, "I don't know," but he suggested that I talk with Lee, who he thought might have some useful suggestions. I got in touch with Lee, sent him a sample of what I had accomplished, and described the problem I was up against. We met soon afterward. He suggested I go through the data again, this time focusing on the saleswomen's relations with customers-- rather than on their relations with one another -- and describe the uniformities, the differences and similarities, that I had found just as I had done in describing their relations with one another. He also suggested that I arrange the data about the saleswomen's relations with customers according to his ideas about proper evaluation and misevaluation. Though I was somewhat dismayed at the prospect of going through the data again, several hundred pages of single-spaced field notes, there was nothing else to be done, so that is what I did. What I found, in brief, was as follows:

The Old Ladies said that customers returned to buy clothes for a second or third baby and even occasionally returned with their grown-up daughters, when the latter were about to have their babies. On the basis of their experiences, the Old Ladies could talk to the customers about what clothes they wanted. Because of these conversations and the repeated visits of some of their customers, these saleswomen came to know a good deal about their customers. In a limited way, the Old Ladies made friends of their customers. We judged that the Old Ladies were able to make correctable and therefore proper evaluations of their customers' needs more frequently than the other saleswomen in the department. Their sales records, which showed relatively high sales and low returns, were consistent with this view.

In the extreme instance, the Young Women viewed customers as the "enemy" who interrupted their conversations with each other. More typically, the Young Women, who were without children of their own, felt that they did not know what to say to customers. Some customers, ones who knew what they wanted, did not mind this. It gave them a chance to describe what they wanted, and if the department had it, a Young Woman could eventually find it.

A Young Woman could also ask questions, inept as some of the questions might be, so that with a little time a customer learned what merchandise was available and sometimes felt that her saleswoman had helped her find what she wanted. The saleswoman had probably been patient and had asked questions that helped the customer describe what she wanted. The process, though well short of self-service, did not regularly consist of the Young Women making proper evaluations of their customers' needs. Nevertheless, in these ways a good proportion of the customers who came to the Sports square made purchases and left feeling that on the whole their needs had been met. A Young Woman's "book" -- her total sales volume at the end of the day -- was average or below, and her returns were average.

Some customers -- including a large proportion of the men who came to the department -- wanted the kind of help the Middle-Aged Women gave their customers. These customers were ones who wanted their children to be dressed in the "right" styles. The Middle-Aged Women felt grateful to such customers for giving them the opportunity to show off their knowledge about clothes.

Other customers knew what they wanted and were not particularly interested in a saleswoman's suggestions. If the customer's wants and the Middle-Aged Woman's opinions happened to agree, there was no problem. The customer was likely to leave having made a purchase, though whether she felt she was well served was uncertain. But if the saleswoman and the customer did not agree, then there could be trouble. The customer might leave the department without making a purchase, dissatisfied to the extent that she felt she had been badly served and would not return to the store.

Or the customer and the saleswoman might have an argument. I remember one argument in which the saleswoman maintained that pink was just as nice a color for a girl's dress as yellow. In an abstract sense, perhaps it is; but from the point of view of a particular customer with a particular small girl in mind, whose hair might be red, this was by no means clear. But a Middle-Aged Woman's way of evaluating a customer's needs, her assumptions, perceptions, and feelings, gave the saleswoman no way of correcting her evaluations. Even if the customer left having made a purchase and feeling that she had found the dress she wanted, this had happened through a process of evaluation that was not correctable. As a result, although the Middle-Aged Women sold a lot, when a customer got the merchandise home, she might find that she did not like it. The Middle-Aged Women's returns were the highest in the department.

The assumptions of the saleswomen's society about how they should behave did more than regulate their relations with one another. These values also provided the basis for the evaluations that the saleswomen made of customers and for the service which they gave them. In some instances, particularly among the Old Ladies, the discussions that took place could be called processes of proper evaluation, for as the Old Ladies and their customers

talked with one another, the Old Ladies found out what the customers wanted. Any wrong initial impressions that the Old Ladies had could be corrected, and a sale and a satisfied customer resulted. The ineptitude and shyness of the Young Women sometimes produced the same results, but not with the same consistency. When this occurred between the Middle-Aged Women and their customers, it was because their values chanced to agree, not because the saleswomen used a consistent method to gain an understanding of what their customers wanted.

Since the saleswomen's values, rather than the customers', governed these processes, it is fair to call them processes of misevaluation. When, however, the saleswomen made correct evaluations of the customers' preferences, it is fair to call these processes of proper evaluation.

Both processes were deeply rooted in the events and values of the saleswomen's lives and also in the facilities and arrangements for selling with which the store provided them. The number of saleswomen assigned to the department determined, in part, how quickly one of them would be available to wait on a customer. The arrangement of the counters, storage drawers, and showcases and the selection of merchandise determined whether a customer could find something she wanted. But within these limits, the saleswomen's values controlled the service that a customer received.

If you have been shopping in department stores over the last 50 years, I would be pleased to hear that, as a result of our study, you had found an improvement in the service that salespeople give customers. I doubt, though, that you would have much to tell me. Writing in the Business History Review in 1981, Benson referred to the study as the "definitive assessment" of the development of selling skill on the part of sales personnel in institutions of mass merchandising.[2] She pointed out that in recent years and for various reasons mass merchandising has turned away from developing the selling skills of sales personnel. Instead it has moved toward self-service, letting customers examine and choose merchandise for themselves, aided when feasible by point-of-purchase promotions.

I have always been grateful that I had the opportunity early in my professional career to study the processes of evaluation of which I have been speaking in a small society, where I could observe how these processes functioned as a totality. The processes of evaluation through which we interpret the world around us are so commonplace that we seldom stop to study them. When we do, it should not be surprising to us to find that the processes include patterns of both misevaluations and proper evaluations.

The point that I take from these illustrations will not be new to you. It is that the process of evaluation is different from an entirely rational process, not restricted to thought alone: "Don't think! Evaluate!" Not reason alone, but the experiences and circumstances of life provide the framework for the evaluations we make. Within that framework, the reasoning may be good or bad. But the experiences and circumstances provide the premises, the preassumptions, and preconditions that limit it.

### Evaluations of Foreign Affairs

In turning now to events in the world around us, the decisions that we make, and the actions that we take with respect to them, let me select two or three assumptions basic to our culture that we customarily take for granted and that underlie our perceptions of happenings in the world around us. Just as the setting at the seashore affected the doctor's diagnosis of Mike's illness and the experiences of the saleswomen provided the framework for their evaluations of customers, these assumptions are basic to our evaluations of events.

One of these assumptions in a society that is organized, as ours is, with a hierarchical structure is that we look to its higher levels, to the leaders of our organizations and institutions, to make decisions and run things for us. There are many occasions where we assume that it is inappropriate for us to take action ourselves. When problems go unsolved, we sometimes say to ourselves, if only a leader would come along to take care of that for us. Since we perceive the problem and its solution as the prerogative of the leader, we ourselves do little or nothing. Many of us think that that is the way things should be. We thus justify our inaction and, in effect, give implicit consent to the leaders' programs by allowing them to continue. In the modern day, these beliefs and their consequences prevail especially in foreign affairs. There are, of course, good reasons for our inaction, for it is obvious and taken for granted that you cannot have everyone making policy for the nation. Even having two factions, let alone many, in a government leads to problems and confusions enough.

Our political leaders act, understandably enough, in terms of their interests in maintaining themselves and their parties in office. What influences them are the headlines in the media -- in newspapers, on television, and radio -- that tell them of their constituents' reactions. The reactions of people in Libya, Managua, Kampuchea, and Kabul -- that is, the people whose behavior prompts our leaders' actions -- are often of no more than secondary importance, if that. Our leaders and the media have elaborate bureaucratic and organizational mechanisms to provide themselves and us with more and better information about their constituents' reactions than about the reactions of the peoples in these other lands. They will give columns of newspaper and magazine space and minutes of TV and radio time, to the results of polls of their constituents' opinions, but little coverage -- beyond perhaps an interview with an "expert" in the United States who has some familiarity with the scene overseas -- of the views of the other countries' people.

When you think about the setting in which leaders make decisions, it is easy to understand that many of their decisions will be misevaluations, that is, evaluations based on their values, which may or may not be the values controlling the events to which they wish to respond. Whichever commentator or columnist coined the sentence "How does it play in Peoria?" in describing the Administration's approach to last spring's raids on Libya gets full marks from me for capturing, in a phrase, the essence of what seems accurately to characterize the processes of evaluation -- that is, misevaluation -- used to arrive at our nation's decisions about foreign policy.

I must add a caveat at this point. I have no direct knowledge of the ways in which decisions about foreign affairs are made at the top of our society. It may well be that the Administration gets excellent information about its acts based solely on its assessment of conditions in Libya, let us say, to the disregard of reactions in Peoria. If this is so, the misevaluations I am speaking of are in the media's reports of the Administration's decision-making processes, not in the Administration's processes themselves. Though it would be comforting to me to believe this, I think that the competitiveness of the media's investigative reporting would have uncovered the fact. My guess is that, though Administration officials receive more reports of conditions in Libya, for example, than they tell us about, when the decisions are settled, the framework of assumptions, perceptions, feelings, and thoughts within which they are made are frequently dominated by what reactions in Peoria are likely to be.

A recent interview in the Harvard Business Review with Helmut Schmidt (1986), Chancellor of West Germany from 1974 to 1982, illustrates the contrast. The interviewer asked, "So your standard of judgment [before taking action] is not, how does it appeal to public opinion?" "At least, in my little personal history," Schmidt said, "that was not the first question before acting. The first question was, what is necessary?... And then secondly, how do you make it acceptable? How do you get consensus? There are political leaders in the world, gifted opportunists, who ask the questions the other way around. Their first question is, how do I make myself popular and stay popular? And the second, how do I, in making myself popular, avoid the greatest mistakes in regard to substance? That's the wrong order. But there are quite a few people who do it by that rule. Most of them I call politicians... rather than statesmen." [3]

The tendencies, at the top of our society and in its political institutions, towards misevaluations of events in our external environment by assessing them in the framework of values in our internal environment are reinforced in many ways. Take, for example, the lobbying efforts on both Congress and the departments of the executive branch by the institutions of the military-industrial complex. [4] Include in that complex not only the military and civilian employees of the Department of Defense but also the employees of the other departments of the government, such as the Treasury, that serve them. On the industrial side, there are the giant manufacturers and their subcontractors who make the weapons systems and military equipment that supply our armed forces, and also the workers for whom they provide jobs, the labor unions and the financial institutions allied with them, the laboratories that do their research, the investors for whom they provide profits and capital gains, the media and communication agencies that report their news, the not-for-profit organizations that receive donations and grants from them, and the state and local governments to which they pay taxes. When you consider the scope of these institutions, you begin to realize the extent of the bias built into our evaluating and decision-making processes.

Both the electoral aspects of our political processes and the lobbying aspects of the military-industrial complex are further supported by other important value predispositions in our culture. Many of us, for example, wait for a leader who, by standing outside of and above both sides of the struggle, will help us out of the problems. Such a leader would rightly be regarded as a hero or heroine. The role of heroes in our culture has a long tradition.

The original heroes of Norse sagas overcame storms, and fires, and other disasters in the environment, and dragons and other terrifying creatures. With such heroes and heroines I have no problem -- and no aspirations to be one. My problem is with the concept of heroes and heroines in the context of the encounters of our society's organizations and institutions with those of another society. In this context, for every hero and heroine, there is also a villain.

If, on both sides of the struggle, we agree that one person was the hero or heroine and another the villain, there is no problem. The problem comes because it is likely that the person who is perceived as the hero in one society or culture is the villain in the perceptions of the other. What better examples could we have than Reagan and Qaddafi or Carter and the Ayatollah Khomeini?

If one country's hero is another's villain, there is an element of instability built into the relationship that does nothing to assist the settlement of whatever problems exist between them. On the contrary, as Fisher's work on negotiations points out, this instability exacerbates the difficulties of settling the problem. It is interesting to ponder where one would go today to find heroes and heroines of multilateral stature. Jacques Cousteau would be one of my candidates; also Martin Luther King, Jr., and perhaps Mother Teresa. It has been well said, though I would not have thought of it myself, that heroes and angels -- at least angels of the variety found here on earth -- have many characteristics in common.

Some claim that the social, cultural and perceptual forces working against the emergence of recognizable multilateral and multicultural heroes are so strong that we need not take time to look for such heroes. Others argue pointedly that we should not do so, for, even if we were to find them, they would provide the wrong kind of role model. The role models we should look to in today's world, they tell us, are those of negotiator, mediator, compromiser, conciliator, and communicator. We have such roles in our society, of course, but who, they say, would mistake a person who fills one of them for a hero, especially in the United States, where our culture is oriented so strongly toward the values of confrontation, machismo, and the quick fix? As much as persons in this other set of roles are needed, I suspect that it will be some time before one of them plays the central role à la Rambo in a television series that attracts millions of viewers. An interesting series of articles in The Christian Science Monitor on peacemakers last spring and summer stands out against this trend. And the Peace Corps, after 25 years and many vicissitudes, seems to be established and accepted and to be performing valued work. No doubt there are many relatively unsung bilateral, even multilateral, heroes and heroines in its ranks as well as in the administrative agencies of the United Nations; but are they heroes whose stories would hold the attention of millions of persons in many cultures around the world? I doubt it; at least not yet.

I see little chance that changes will occur at the top of our society in these processes that I call processes of misevaluation. They are ingrained social processes with deep roots in our culture. They are relatively impervious to changes in personal or party leadership. These processes are



more likely to affect the persons or parties who come into positions of leadership in them than the processes are likely to be affected by the persons.

We should not overlook the fact that these processes offer our society a degree of stability that cannot be lightly dismissed. As much as we may decry the poverty, hunger, terrorism, regional conflicts, and fear of nuclear holocaust that characterize the present scene, World War III has not broken out and nuclear winter, contrary to our fears, has not engulfed us. Thus, although these patterns produce fears and frustrations, a sense of injustice and lack of progress, it is difficult to judge the balance of their positive and negative outcomes from our positions of advantage on the privileged side of the haves and have-nots divide. Clearly, though, the failure to alleviate the negative results does not decrease the risks of nuclear winter. Indeed, it makes it imperative that we consider alternatives.

#### Nonviolent Civilian-Based Defense as an Unconsidered Strategy

It is thus legitimate to ask what difference it would make in our perceptions of events and how we would act with respect to them if we changed our assumptions about the locus of initiative and action in society. Ancient wisdom, after all, admonishes us, when leadership falters, to look to the people. It is also said that opportunities to initiate change are greater at the periphery than at the center. At the center, the needs to renew stability, continuity, ceremony, and sentiments of togetherness may be overwhelming to the extent that they stifle instincts for innovation. At the periphery, one can experiment with change on a small scale. Failures are not catastrophic and successes can build momentum with a social dynamic that goes beyond that of reason and rationality. The question is whether we would discover new opportunities for action with respect to the problems of our times if we based our evaluations on the assumption that the source for change lies with the people at the periphery of society rather than with their leaders at its center.

With respect to the problems of today's world, I find that the possibilities have been provocatively stated in connection with the defense of Western Europe from invasion by Russia. In The Functions of the Executive (1938), Barnard wrote, in his well-known chapter[5] on the nature of authority, that the authority of a leader rests on the consent and willingness of the people to follow the leader's initiatives. Gene Sharp, director of the Program on Nonviolent Sanctions in Conflict and Defense at Harvard University's Center for International Affairs and president of the Albert Einstein Institution, a foundation devoted to research on nonviolent struggle, has written in his most recent book, Making Europe Unconquerable (1985), "Political power is rooted in and continually dependent upon the cooperation and obedience of the subjects and institutions of the society. That cooperation and obedience can be withdrawn. It is an insight which may have political consequences wider and deeper than the idea -- which nuclear physicists were pondering in 1939 -- that the power locked in atoms could be released ... With effort, risks, and costs it is possible for ... peoples ... to make themselves politically indigestible to would-be tyrants." [6] "When citizens ... withdraw the support they customarily give their leaders, their leaders cannot lead, their rulers cannot rule." [7]

Sharp reaches his conclusions after examining what nonviolent civilian-based defense has accomplished in European and other settings. The evidence is neither complete nor fully conclusive, for with few exceptions, nonviolent civilian-based defense has been invented and organized spontaneously, as it were, under the most difficult conditions, after invasion has already occurred, rather than being planned and organized ahead of time. For this reason and because of the conditions under which it has been carried out, the historical record is not complete. Much of what has happened has had to be recalled, sometimes years later, by participants who, because of the nature of the conflicts, may have had access to no more than a partial view of events.

Sharp points out that traditional thinking about defense in Europe emphasizes the defense of a country's territory and equates the defense of its cultural values and institutions with the defense of its land, especially by means of strong defense at its borders. But the mobility provided by the technology of modern weaponry has made these strategies, such as the Maginot Line, out of date. Border defenses are quickly overrun by tanks, airplanes, and helicopters, not to mention rockets.

The strategy of civilian-based defense does not operate on the basis of these assumptions and evaluations. It does not attempt defense at the frontier. It assumes that a country's cultural values and its institutions can be defended more effectively by different means than the military defense of its land mass.

Clearly, civilian-based defense is to be distinguished from civil defense, which is concerned with protecting people from nuclear attack through the construction of bomb shelters, the delineation of evacuation routes, and the like. In contrast, civilian-based defense seeks to make the control and use of a nation's economic and cultural institutions so costly that an invader will decide that invasion is not to his advantage. If the methods of denial are sufficiently organized and are publicized in time, it is pointed out, the invader will be deterred from attempting the invasion.

Sharp writes, "The invasion forces [would be] allowed, as in an ambush, to enter the country in order to engage them in struggle at closer range in ways more likely to defeat them without the massive casualties and destruction of military warfare." [8] And he concludes, "Civilian-based defense aims to deter and defeat attacks by making a society ungovernable by would-be oppressors and by maintaining a capacity for orderly self-rule even in face of extreme threats and actual aggression." [9]

Gregg (1946) states the objective of nonviolent action as follows: "The aim of the nonviolent resistor is not to injure or crush and humiliate his opponent or to break his will as in a violent fight. The aim is to counsel the opponent, to change his understanding and his sense of values so that he will join wholeheartedly with the resistor in seeking a settlement truly amicable and truly satisfying to both sides." [10]

Gregg's definition suggests both the strengths and weaknesses of nonviolent methods. Its strength lies in its clearly stated goals. In all likelihood, however, the aggressor will not be offering himself for counseling nor will he be easily willing "to change his understanding and his sense of values." Without such willingness, it will be difficult and, at least within

a short period of time, perhaps impossible to engage him "wholeheartedly ... in seeking a settlement truly amicable and truly satisfying to both sides." Nevertheless, the a priori conclusion, that securing the aggressor's cooperation will be difficult, does not make it impossible. For the aggressor's self-interest, the reasons why he believed it would be advantageous to invade in the first place, are at stake. If the costs of reaching his goals by his methods at higher costs and by alternate methods at lower costs are clearly enough revealed, it is not foregone that he will fail to change his methods. Then negotiations of the kind I referred to earlier, the ones being studied by Nierenberg, Raiffa, Fisher, Straus, their colleagues, and others, can begin. Such negotiations are sure to be difficult and protracted, but these are not reasons to believe that they will fail.

In these circumstances, to induce an aggressor to negotiate requires revealing the will of the persons attacked to make it costly for the attacker to reach his goals by his methods. One way to bring these costs to his attention is through acts of nonviolent noncooperation with the persons or institutions that have put themselves in positions of authority. Failure to register, making errors in filling out registration forms, nonattendance at meetings, writing a poem or a song that parodies acts of those in positions of formal authority, designing a poster or banner with a derogatory slogan, passing on false information and rumors, as well as many other acts that symbolize the existence of a different system of order than the invader's and that slow down or disrupt the imposition of his, are all acts of civilian-based defense.

The record shows that individuals, even those in prison, who are well enough prepared and are committed to withholding their consent from persons in positions of authority, can influence events. Hunger strikes are one form that such acts take. Writing is another. Adam Michnik's Letters from Prison and Other Essays is a recent example. Let me read you some brief excerpts from Jonathan Schell's preface to Michnik's book. Schell writes, "At large, Michnik stirs up so much trouble for the regime that it finds it must lock him up; but once he has been locked up he starts to write, and his letters, smuggled to the outside, are read all over Poland and abroad, and cause, if anything, even more trouble for the regime." [11]

Schell goes on: "Michnik's analysis of the failure of the efforts to change the system from within leads him to make a pivotal recommendation: 'I believe that what sets today's opposition apart [from the proponents of reform in the past] is the belief that a program for evolution ought to be addressed to independent public opinion, and not to totalitarian power. Such a program would offer advice to the people regarding how to behave, not to the government regarding how to govern itself.'" [12]

Cousteau makes much the same point when he speaks of his failures to get governments to change their ways that waste our natural resources: "I have found that governments can do very little. The economic facts are there; the technical facts are there, but the wheels keep running.... It's frightening when a new, aware government comes in, and still nothing is done.... You have to lobby the people, not the governments. It is up to the people to force the government to do something. That's what I am trying to do through films, through the Ocean Centers, through hundreds of lectures and magazine articles." [13]

The present situation in Poland is, of course, tragic. There has been much suffering and many freedoms have been lost, but the hordes of the Russian army, massed on the northeast border, have not invaded. The country has not been overrun. The churches are still open. Though the Roman Catholic Church's attempts to start an international fund for the support of small- and middle-sized farms have collapsed, the government has unexpectedly granted a general amnesty to all political prisoners, the first such amnesty ever granted by a Communist-oriented government. Though Solidarity is no longer effective as a formal organization, it has not disappeared as an organization, and its spirit lives in the hearts and minds and actions of many people. This has happened without Solidarity resorting to violence. The situation in Poland could be and may still become worse, but that is not a foregone conclusion.

In the Philippines, the pattern of recent events is at least as dramatic in terms of nonviolence. I hope you have not forgotten that a group of citizens sat down in front of a squadron of government tanks whose crews had orders to take a fort held by anti-Marcos forces. The crews of the tanks refused to fire on their fellow citizens and eventually withdrew. It has been pointed out that for a time the Army was protected from shedding blood by the citizens whose lives it was supposed to protect.

One does not get far in thinking about the strategy of nonviolence without encountering the work of its premier practitioner of our times, Gandhi. Although in his earlier writing Sharp draws heavily on Gandhi's campaigns (1979) for illustration, his later work is sometimes criticized for not giving more prominence to the Christian values which played such an important part in them. But Sharp's intent is to discover whether nonviolent action has an intellectual and scientific basis in knowledge that transcends a particular culture. To make progress he must seek uniformities in a variety of cultural settings, rather than incorporate the values of one culture in the design of his search. Sharp's question is worth asking because, if his hypothesis is right, his findings and the methods of nonviolent struggle will have wide application.

Some say that the people of the United States will be the last to whom the idea of civilian-based defense will appeal. It is pointed out that, as long as the people of this country (in search of the quick fix) regard "Rambo", "Dallas", and "Dynasty" as popular programs, we will not be ready for the methods of civilian defense and heroes who remain unsung. I think this writes us off too quickly, for we have a long and distinguished tradition of overcoming unwanted authority. In recent times, we have experienced the effectiveness of nonviolent protests in achieving the withdrawal of troops from a tragic and devastating war in Vietnam and in connection with civil rights, especially in the work of Martin Luther King, Jr. and SNCC, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

I can report that my children and their classmates understood the process of withholding cooperation from authority figures by the time that they were in second and third grade -- and this without any coaching from me. In their classrooms, the chairs, tables, and desks were not screwed to the floor, as they were in my day. Someone in education had heard about or discovered for him- or herself, the effectiveness of spontaneously formed small groups for learning. The children took advantage of this mobility to play a game they

called "Creep." The object of the game was to see how far they could move their chairs toward the front of the room without the teacher noticing. They did this in unison, perhaps an inch at a time, so that if the teacher did notice, she or he would have to punish or otherwise deal with the whole class, a much more forbidding undertaking than dealing with one student.

Perhaps some of you know whether this game is still being played. I suspect that in those classrooms where it is, important lessons for today's and tomorrow's world are still being learned, though they may not be the lessons the teachers, principals, and school committees of our cities and towns intend. What an opportunity the students are presenting to their teacher for a discussion of such topics as their membership in organizations, their relations with assigned tasks and with authority figures, and their own satisfactions, growth, and learning.

#### Contrasts in the Outcomes of Violence and Nonviolence as Instruments of Political Action

Let me contrast the patterns of evaluation and behavior that I find interesting in connection with violent and nonviolent methods of defense. Violence, as an instrument of political action, seems to elicit escalating and reciprocal responses that tend to become fixed, so that it is difficult to induce change in them. Witness U.S. and Soviet relations, especially the disarmament talks, and the Iran-Iraq war. Furthermore, modern technology has made the methods of deterrence associated with violence both expensive and deadly to the point of the possible annihilation of the human race. Decisions about the use of these methods are necessarily made only by the formal leaders of our institutions and organizations and, if they are to be effective, they must be made largely in secret. It is thus difficult to determine the extent to which these decisions are based on how they play in Peoria -- that is, how effective they are at keeping the leaders in power. To the extent that they are based on values important in Peoria and not, for example, in Patagonia where the hypothetical problem may lie, these decisions result in miscalculations that lock us into preexisting patterns of behavior. It becomes difficult to correct these patterns and to initiate actions based on more proper evaluations. Finally, the use of violence appears to divert attention from the issues underlying the dispute and to become itself the center of controversy. Attention is thus drawn away from issues concerning hunger, poverty and population, race and religion, and the ownership of land and water. These issues, in their unresolved state, continue to fuel the dispute, as is happening in Ireland and in the Near East, among other places.

In contrast, deterrence based on the methods of nonviolent civilian-based defense seems to elicit responses that are less predictable, more varied, and that sometimes include a reduced resistance to change, which, to state it positively, means an increased willingness to accept it. The methods are relatively inexpensive to carry out and do not have to be conducted in secrecy, as the decisions at the top of a bureaucracy often are. Sharp gives an example from Liddell-Hart: "The evidence of German generals showed the effectiveness of nonviolent resistance as practiced in Denmark, Holland, and Norway.... Even clearer was [the German generals'] inability to cope with it. They were experts in violence and had been trained to deal with opponents who used that method. But other forms of resistance baffled them -- and all the

more in proportion as the methods [though often not the time and place] were subtle and concealed. It was a relief to them when resistance became violent and when nonviolent forms were mixed with guerrilla action, thus making it easier [for them] to combine action against both at the same time." [14] The extra expense and manpower which Hitler's Germany had to devote to Norway when, among other incidents, her athletes would not participate in such seemingly irrelevant activities as the contests that the Nazis organized for them, became a significant diversion of resources from other fronts.

Nonviolence as a response to attacking troops sometimes results in a loss of morale among the attackers, in the sense that troops previously committed to achieving the goals their officers have set for them become reluctant to do so. Sometimes the troops respond in this way to the extent that they put down their weapons, side with the attacked, and turn over their arms to the enemy. Events of this sort occurred among the Soviet troops that invaded Hungary in 1956, although -- predictably -- given the evaluations and assumptions that determine our media's perceptions about what is news, they have been ignored and forgotten by the media in their recent pieces recalling those events on the occasion of their 25th anniversary. Though the Soviet troops who first encountered the nonviolence of the Hungarian people were quickly replaced by tougher troops from Central Asia, the respite gave the Hungarians several weeks in which to lay foundations for the networks and other organizations that have, over the years, made Hungary the most economically and socially advanced of the Communist-bloc countries. Though the country still has its eastward-leaning Kadar, it also has important westward-leaning economic and cultural institutions, some of whose roots go back to the respite gained by the Hungarians in 1956.

Sharp quotes Gregg, "When both sides rely on violence, despite their disagreement, in reality they conduct their fight on the basis of a strong fundamental agreement that violence is a sound basis of procedure." The use of nonviolent means against a violent opponent, however, creates a condition of disequilibrium within the dynamics of the conflict which operates to the benefit of the nonviolent group." [15]

Such patterns of divergent change in social affairs need more study and clarification than they have had. Langmuir called attention to them in an article in Science (1943) that some of you may recall. These patterns are also well known from ancient wisdom: "For want of a nail, the shoe was lost; for want of the shoe, the horse was lost; for want of the horse..." You know the rest of it, a statement of a pattern of change we should recognize and understand better than we do.

My hunch is that the strengths of the responses that nonviolent methods call forth lie in the opportunities they present for members to gain improved understanding of their relations with one another and with persons in positions of authority. Perhaps the nonviolent response does at the level of organizational encounters what the nonevaluative response does at the level of interpersonal communication in counseling. Both seem to present opportunities that would not otherwise arise for communication between the parties and for better understanding and more proper evaluations of their own and each other's situations. Just as the teacher in my children's classrooms had the opportunity to discuss these topics with the students when they played Creep, the planning and practice of nonviolent acts of civilian-based defense

generate opportunities for new understandings and evaluations of relationships that we customarily take for granted. It is encouraging to note that these ideas are receiving attention in Europe. Some countries have departments in their governments making plans for civilian-based defense, and some of their political parties are giving attention to the subject in party statements and organizations.

### An Application to Business

I was talking the other day with a wise and experienced man who has thought deeply about the world's current problems and who is actively trying to do something about the ones he considers most pressing. Even so, he said, were he the head of a factory employing, say, 750 people -- the number is not important -- and were he offered a defense contract to produce a part vital to the operation of a nuclear rocket, he would accept the contract. I understand this hypothetical businessman's situation and sympathize with the moral dilemmas inherent in the decisions he has to make. Were I in his shoes, I would probably do the same, but I think I would also do two other things.

First, I would start a search to see what alternative products, processes, and markets might be available to employ the resources of my factory, its workers and managers. My goal would be to have other choices available for them in the future.

Second, I would begin to gather information and to think about what kinds of civilian-based defense activities I could organize with the help of people in my firm and its community and environment. I would try to assess what talents and opportunities they offered for acts of civilian-based defense. If I had suppliers or customers in Europe, I would look for ways to begin discussion of these topics with them. Could I assist and support any efforts they had started? What could I learn for application at home from efforts they had made?

I think what appeals to me about the idea of civilian-based nonviolent defense is that it would allow me to participate directly and actively in something that I evaluate as important. Without this, I feel relatively helpless to do anything about the problem that most concerns me in the world today. I know that I can vote, write my representatives in Congress, sign petitions for Common Cause, the Union of Concerned Scientists, and other organizations that espouse good government or nuclear disarmament and send them a check to let them do the work for me. I do not find these activities very satisfying. I also think that they are not very effective. I know that sending a check to support an organization that has access, as it is called, to those in positions of power that private individuals do not have is considered the right way to do these things. I find the method vaguely dissatisfying, because it seems consistent with the materialistic values of our society that many who espouse it decry in other circumstances. Is there not an alternative? I know of no way I can directly affect decisions about Star Wars and the control and use of nuclear arms, nor am I competent to do so. The technology of modern armaments and the structure of government make it difficult for me to become involved. Yet were some men and women in business to plan nonviolent civilian-based defense activities, I believe that their example would convey a statement to leaders in the military-industrial

complex, perhaps even to political leaders in Washington and Moscow, that would be more effective in terms of action at the top than any checks or petitions I could send to lobbying organizations.

In the literature of nonviolence, one finds the term "principled nonviolence." In his study of dissent in contemporary America (1986), Gwaltney defines principled dissent as "the willingness to suffer the consequences necessarily attendant upon taking unpopular stands." [16] Gwaltney appropriately uses the term "unpopular" loosely to refer to a variety of circumstances, especially the reactions of colleagues, but also occasionally the reactions of persons in positions of authority. One of his examples, for instance, is Maude DeVictor, sometimes referred to as the "Mother of Agent Orange." [17] Her efforts to secure redress for veterans and others who had suffered from the effects of the chemical, clearly brought the wrath of those in positions of organizational authority on her, but she nevertheless persevered. The distinction between principled and unprincipled dissent is an important one and is relevant to this discussion. I am not advocating acts of unprincipled nonviolence.

I also want to point out that nonviolent civilian-based defense is as much concerned with the deterrence of nuclear warfare and the preservation of national security as the threat of violent military-based defenses. The differences between them are in the methods of achieving these goals, not the goals themselves. Nonviolent civilian-based defense would add a string to our bow by establishing a network of persons and activities within the military-industrial complex and elsewhere that would counterbalance the economic, technological, and military products and processes of its host organizations. At the start, it would be much smaller and less influential. Perhaps for many years the two systems would coexist with some degree of competition between them. If a system of civilian-based defense developed and proved itself, its activities, organizations, and networks might some day -- due to its substantially lower costs and drastically lower potential for destruction of catastrophic proportions -- reshape its host organizations into something like a peace-keeping militia. The time and the setting in which such a different system of defense might come into being are sadly so far in the future that it is difficult to speak of them concretely.

#### Choices That the Concept of Evaluation Presents to Us

Tonight, the purpose of my remarks is not to sell you on the ideas and methods of nonviolence and noncooperation. If some time I do that, you will have fair warning. Tonight I am referring to these matters as a way of bringing out the differences that proper and improper evaluations make in connection with the concerns that influence our lives and how we live them. I think our society would be stronger with open exploration and discussion of those differences. We might learn to make better evaluations of our situation on a worldwide basis and of the problems we encounter in it. If I am advocating anything tonight, it is that we do the research and hold the discussions. I think they can best occur, not at the center of our society, where so many matters compete for attention and time that scarcely exist, but in meetings such as this one. I know of no audience to whose members I could have spoken so directly about my concerns. For I know of none who have your sophistication in and understanding of the processes of evaluation. I thank



you for the attention you have given me and for the care and intensity with which you have listened. For many of you, it cannot have been easy, for, as I warned you, my thoughts about evaluations, proper and improper, have led me in directions I did not expect. I am sure that this may be so for some of you as well.

As I see it, we cannot escape making evaluations in our thoughts and actions. But we have a choice, if we wish to avail ourselves of it, of making these evaluations with or without awareness of the processes we use in making them. If we make them without awareness, a fact will be a fact and forever. If, as inevitably happens, events outside ourselves are controlled by values other than the ones to which we have become accustomed, our evaluations and actions will be miscalculations that we will be unable to change. If, on the other hand, we are aware of our processes of evaluation, we will be able to make more proper evaluations of the situations in which we find ourselves. We will be able to make better evaluations of these situations, including, when appropriate, better evaluations of ourselves, and we will be able to change our actions. Our understanding of the situations in which we find ourselves, and of ourselves, may thus improve; so also will our capacity to communicate with others, to make effective decisions, and to take effective actions.

Thus, as I am presenting the topic of evaluation to you tonight, understanding, communication, and evaluation are three aspects of a totality that is important in our lives at personal as well as organizational and even multinational levels. It has been well said that there are many cultures but only one civilization. If, as I believe, civilization results from the application of knowledge to the development of a culture, then I am confident that the concepts of understanding, communication, and evaluation, concepts important in the field of general semantics, will have prominent places in that development.

#### NOTES

1. Pages 133-134.
2. Page 23.
3. From an interview conducted by Alan M. Webber, page 69.
4. See President Dwight D. Eisenhower's Farewell Radio and Television Address to the American People, January 17, 1961.
5. Chapter XII.
6. Page 151.
7. From an interview with Sharp by Brook Larmer.
8. Sharp, Europe, page 86.
9. Ibid., page 44.

10. Page 54.
11. Page xxi.
12. Page xxvi.
13. From an interview with Cousteau by Arthur Unger.
14. Quoted by Sharp, Politics, page 586.
15. Quoted by Sharp, Politics, page 588.
16. Page xx.
17. Pages 106-124.

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George F. F. Lombard was born in Newton, MA, in 1911. He received his A.B., M.B.A., and D.C.S. degrees from Harvard University. His teaching positions at Harvard ranged from Instructor in Industrial Research to Professor Emeritus of Human Relations, and his administrative posts from Assistant Dean to Senior Associate Dean, all in the Graduate School of Business Administration. During World War II he was a consultant to the National Research Council and the Office of Naval Research. After his retirement he served as Faculty Chairman for the Introduction to Business Program for Ph.D.s in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. In 1985 he received the Distinguished Service Award of the Harvard Business School Association.

Dr. Lombard has long had an interest in general semantics and in introducing it into the curriculum at Harvard. He was editor of The Elusive Phenomena, by F. J. Roethlisberger (reviewed in GSB # 46, (1979) pp. 67-78). He has co-authored Interpersonal Behavior and Administration, with Arthur N. Turner (New York: The Free Press, 1969), and Sons of the Machine, with Charles H. Savage, Jr., (MIT Press, 1986), and written many papers on research and education.