

SURVIVAL SURVIVAL SURVIVAL SURVIVAL SURVIVAL

The survival of mankind is being threatened on all sides. There are enough nuclear, chemical, and bacteriological weapons in existence to kill every human being on the planet many times over. Our atmosphere, our soil, our inland waterways, and even our oceans are being poisoned at an astonishing rate - some of the poisons (such as DDT and Strontium 90) are scarcely thirty years old. Many vital non-renewable resources (for example oil) are being used up so fast that they are expected to give out within a few decades. The earth is presently groaning under the weight of more than three billion people - yet in thirty years time there will be seven billion or more if current rates continue. As the competition for limited resources grows keener, the prospect of all-out war becomes increasingly likely.

All of these threats are closely linked to the advance of scientific technology and the unexamined preconceptions of technological society. For this reason, scientists have both a special responsibility and a special role to play in this crisis. The aim of the SURVIVAL movement is to forge an alliance between scientists and the people to fight for the survival of the human species and for all life, which for the

first time in the four-billion year history of evolution faces the threat of utter extinction as a result of an irreversible degradation of the biosphere brought about by contemporary industrial society or by massive military conflicts. Scientists must wake up to the great moral concerns of today and to their own obligations towards humanity. We can no longer afford the luxury of disinterested research at the expense of social responsibility; the problems are too pressing, the prospects are too uncertain, and the time is too short.

One of the absolute principles governing all action of the SURVIVAL movement is its educative and auto-educative value. Scientists are going to have to educate themselves so that they can help to educate others. They can have a powerful influence in provoking a spirited public dialogue based on factual information and creative critical principles. They can perform a vital service by gathering and assessing what information is available, and communicating this information to the public in easily understandable terms. Science has to be "demystified", stripped of the aura of "black magic" which it has assumed among the general public (and even among many scientists),

so that the man-in-the-street has the essential scientific facts at his disposal and realizes that he is as competent as anyone else - including the top scientists and the top politicians - to make the rational choices which will vitally affect his own daily life and the survival of the species. Without such a development, it is difficult to see how the public can come to a full realization of the enormous threats facing us until it is too late to do anything about them.

Importance of Personal Action

We are convinced that mankind will not survive without a profound transformation of the existing social and political structures on the national and international level. Any realistic appraisal of alternatives will necessarily involve a thorough analysis of the socio-political causes of armies, wars, pollution, waste, etc. By the same token, the fight for survival will automatically include a political fight. However no common platform has been worked out, and it seems premature to do so now; it is hoped that such a political platform will emerge in the course of positive action and an ongoing dialectical process.

But the problem is not solely a social and political one. Far-reaching changes on the part of the individual will be necessary, based on different values than those prevailing today. We are so steeped in the belief that Growth is Progress that we can no longer recognize cancerous growth for what it is. If we are to survive, we must think in terms of stability and equilibrium rather than unlimited expansion. We must overcome the foolish notion that conspicuous waste, planned obsolescence, and exponential growth can bring about a sustained improvement in the quality of life, when in fact the quality of life is visibly deteriorating all around us. Radical changes in life-style, a dramatic reordering of priorities, a creative reassessment of what "progress" means, a profound rethinking of man's place in nature - not as exploiter, but as fellow-creature - these are some of the psychological changes that are required. The economic counterpart of such a change in mentality will be manifested in the suppression of waste of all kinds, recycling and reclamation of reusable materials, and the limitation of agricultural and industrial production to the satisfaction of genuine human needs rather than artificially created ones. All these transformations - social, political, psychological and economic - will have to take place step by step and simultaneously, for none of them can be accomplished independently of the others.

Quality of Life Deteriorating

The most important task at present is to inform ourselves and others on the scope of the problems confronting mankind, and to promote and encourage new approaches to these problems. One means for doing this is our journal Survival, which currently appears in two editions: one in French (write to A. Grothendieck, 2 Avenue de Verrières, 91 Massy, France), and one in English (write to G. Edwards, 952 Portsmouth Avenue, Kingston, Canada). Un-

fortunately the English edition has fallen considerably behind schedule because of editorial and publishing difficulties. A subscription price at \$6 will bring you 12 issues of Survival, which may cover a period of more than a year because of the difficulties alluded to. We are also contemplating as soon as possible a series of monographs of 40 to 50 pages each, giving a systematic treatment of patricular aspects of the survival problem? Nuclear Armaments; Who is Polluting?; Overpopulation; The Worker: First Victim of Pollution; Radioactive Pollution; Bio-chemical Weapons; etc. Details on the production of such SURVIVAL monographs have appeared in issue no. 4 of the journal. The main problem now is to get at least one first-rate text for such a monograph; for this we greatly need the collaboration of scientists who are knowledgeable in these areas. So far the SURVIVAL movement is small. Half of the members are scientists, but they are almost all mathematicians. We are trying to involve other scientists - biologists, chemists, economists, physicists, etc. - by various means: writing letters, contacting other organizations, preparing a brochure on SURVIVAL to be sent out to various science departments and institutes, etc.

Membership in SURVIVAL is open to all; it is an international and interprofessional movement, having members currently in France, Spain, Canada, USA, Germany, Switzerland, and England. We do not want to create a movement of scientists alone, but rather a vehicle of common action between scientists and the people. Scientists have a great deal to learn from non-scientists, especially in matters of down-to-earth practicality and in organizing effective action. Academics often approach workaday problems from an overly theoretical point of view. They are seldom inclined toward action, as they are so used to indulging in purely speculative or intellectual activity. Working with people from other stations in life can be very beneficial in shaking scientists out of their

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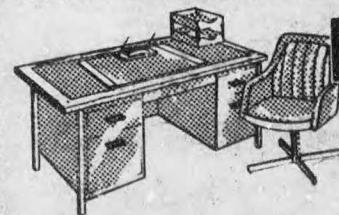
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