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Anthropologists have debated the idea of whether or not man is innately nasty or whether this is a learned characteristic universal to most, if not all men. Bohannan (1967:xii) would have us believe that conflict is both useful and necessary, although it must be controlled. Konrad Lorenz (1966:242-3) argues that a human equivalent of phylogenetically ritualized animal fights is needed. Ardrey (1961:318) states that "man is a biological invention evolved to suit the purpose of the weapon." Halloway (1968:35,36) speaks of man's aggression as adaptive to threats to his existence. Montagu (1968:16) refuses to accept the innate nastiness of man and suggests that there is no reason to suppose that conflict occurred before the development of agricultural-pastoral communities. Gorer (1968:32) states that evidence can be multiplied that man as a species "has no inhibitions against killing his fellow men who do not belong to the same pack."

But despite theories and rhetoric, many intellectuals, including anthropologists, are alarmed at the technological progress that has been achieved for the purpose of destruction and the lack of concomitant progress in devising methods to resolve these conflicts that threaten to engulf the human race. The topic has come to resemble the old cliché about the weather: everyone talks about it, but no one does anything about it.

Anthropologists, of course, have written about the problem. Berreman (1968:393) quotes both Gouldner and Chomsky to rally

support for anthropology to abandon the "myth of a value-free social science" and to accept their responsibilities: technology is not value-free. He quotes Wilhelm's charge that "ethical neutrality is a veneer for irresponsibility." Although the power of the pen is not to be despised, I don't believe that these rallying calls can substitute for the kind of action that is needed today.

Anthropologists have of course passed resolutions denouncing racism, expressing opposition to the inhumanity and cruelty of both napalm and other bombing in the Vietnam war, and spent invective on traders, officials and missionaries who lack cross-cultural insight and who are hopelessly bogged down in varying degrees of ethnocentrism. We have bemoaned the genocide perpetrated on native Americans in North America in the past, and still practiced in some areas of South America. It is also true that some anthropologists have spent time and energy to improve the treatment given to minority people. But in spite of these exceptions it is my impression that verbiage is the rule, and action the exception as a method of expressing our concerns about bigotry and exploitation.

Not all anthropologists agree that as a discipline we have any responsibility beyond recording facts we observe. As intellectuals, as specialists in the study of man, and as members of the human family, I think we should concur with the opinions expressed so well by C. Wright Mills about our responsibility:

"Everytime intellectuals have the chance to speak yet do not speak, they join the forces that train men not to be able to think and imagine and feel in morally and

politically adequate ways. When they do not demand that the secrecy that makes elite decisions absolute and unchallengeable be removed, they too are part of the passive conspiracy to kill off public scrutiny. When they do not speak, when they do not demand, when they do not think and feel and act as intellectuals - and so as public men - they too contribute to the moral paralysis, the intellectual rigidity, that now grip both leaders and led around the world." (1960:151)

But the responsibility to speak out and to dissent is only one facet of the kind of action we might take, and is only indirectly related to the problems of conflict. We have, in the United States, large populations who have suffered through the discriminatory practices of the majority for centuries. The blacks have, in recent years, brought their case dramatically to the attention, if not to the conscience, of the American people. The case of the native American and the Spanish-American is still largely unheard. Is anthropology not in a position to give some guidance and leadership in finding solutions to these problems? What processes can be invoked that will reconcile man with man when exploitation has divided and hatred has polarized them into positions that appear to be feeding upon themselves from crisis to crisis?

As a relative newcomer to the field of anthropology, I must admit that I have but a short acquaintance with a portion of the theoretical work that has been published. But I have not come across any theory which addresses itself to the problem of how the wounds that fester as a result of racial and class exploitation can best be healed. Marx calls for revolution, which will destroy, rather than cure. Christianity says love God and neighbor, but on the other hand, the greater part of

Christianity has repudiated the teachings of Christ and blesses Christians for killing rather than denouncing them. In any event, anthropologists have, by and large, written off the Christian message as a viable solution to the problems of man. But in this time of spreading conflict, there is an urgent need for a method which will effectively bring a reconciliation.

In my opinion, there are two ingredients necessary for reconciliation. One of these is that the wronged party be given an effective forum to air his grievances; the other is that a method for restitution to the wronged party be instituted. Anthropology has studied conflict in many cultures; we have observed how conflicts are perpetuated or resolved, or when a truce is called; how these methods have been used or disregarded by many diverse peoples, from the Eskimos and their song duels to the courts of the Ashanti. The American courts are designed to settle disputes and to administer justice impartially. But the current record of the American judicial system demonstrates that it is inadequate for conflict resolution in many of today's stress situations. When it deals with riots, rioters and the National Guard, chances are that the judicial process will incite more riots instead of resolving conflict. Does not the study of man include a quest for the answer to this problem? Are there any methods of restitution, any principles for reconciliation, that anthropologists could propose to the nation? If the anthropological study of conflict does not address itself to these stress and conflict problems at home, it can hardly be deemed to be a relevant

science in today's world.

America, of course, does not hold a monopoly on conflict. Conflict is generated on the basis of at least two movements, both of which should be of concern, and within the realm of competency of anthropological theory. One of these is the rise of nationalism and the conflictual interests of tribalism and other ethnic groups in many of the nations of the 'third world'. The other is the movement, often by revolutionary means, towards a more equitable distribution of economic resources.

Both of these movements are influenced by the American presence, whether it involves the U. S. Marines, the U. S. diplomatic corps, the foreign aid program or U. S. private enterprise. The record of American involvement indicates a good deal less altruism than appears on the surface, a great many more benefits to private American enterprise than is usually acknowledged, and a surprising amount of naivete and ethnocentrism on the part of Americans abroad. Instead of alleviating conflict, American policy seems often to have provided an incendiary spark to a stressful situation. If anthropology has expertise in fathoming and interpreting the functioning of "primitive" nations, their economies, their loyalties and their dreams for the future, then I believe it should provide guidance and, where necessary, ruthless criticism of government and private industry in their approach to these situations.

If anthropology were to address itself to these problems, and if some practical solution to the conflictual situation

existing in the nation and in the world should be developed, a procedural problem would still exist. Should anthropologists coyly sit on the sidelines like wallflowers at the dance, or should they brazenly, with loud emphatic voices proclaim their expertise to government and industry who may not even recognize their own needs?

In my opinion, we do not have the time, nor do we have the moral right to sit back and wait to be asked to the next dance while America and the world burns. The only excuse for quietly classifying burins and end scrapers to the nth millimeter and not addressing ourselves to current conflict situations is that these problems are outside the realm of anthropology. And if this is so, then let us also frankly admit that anthropology is not relevant in today's world.

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