HOW NOT TO SOLVE ETHICAL PROBLEMS

by

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The Lindley Lecture
The University of Kansas
1983

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The Lindley Lecture, University of Kansas, March 10, 1983

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I.

Philosophers today are as fond as ever of apriori arguments with ethical conclusions. One reason such arguments are always unsatisfying is that they always prove too much; when a philosopher 'solves' an ethical problem for one, one feels as if one had asked for a subway token and been given a passenger ticket valid for the first interplanetary passenger-carrying space ship instead. Conservatives, for example, often temper their praise for Robert Nozick's *Anarchy, State and Utopia* a tiny bit. Nozick, they say, should not have come out against absolutely *all* welfare spending. But either Nozick's book proves that orphanages and public hospitals are not legitimately to be supported by public revenue or it proves nothing at all. It is characteristic of a great deal that is published under the name of moral philosophy that even the reader who thinks that part of what is proved is reasonable is put off by the fact that the philosopher 'proves too much'.

Nozick's libertarianism is by no means the only, or even an unusual, example of this kind of philosophical extremism. Bernard Williams has pointed out that a particular moralistic argument against nuclear deterrence—the argument that depends upon the two premisses that (1) effective deterrence depends upon a genuine intention to use nuclear weapons under certain conditions, and (2) it is immoral to intend to use a weapon that it would be immoral to actually employ—has the property that, if the argument is correct, then it makes no difference what the *facts* are. It makes no difference, according to this reasoning, whether we do or don't have good reason to think that the threat posed by the deterrent will save millions of lives, or even whether it will or will not save millions of lives. Moreover, according to the argument, it is as much an instance of absolute immorality to possess a credible nuclear deterrent as to actually use atomic missiles to incinerate the entire population of North America. Anyone familiar with the literature of moral philosophy can supply further examples of arguments that 'prove too much'.

To remind ourselves just how much Nozick's claim, that taxation for *any* purpose beyond the 'minimal' purpose of protection of the property right amounts to state theft, contradicts the moral outlook of the whole Western tradition, let us recall that public orphanages are at least as old as the Eastern Roman Empire, while community charity is

enjoined in the Old Testament (leaving grain for widows and orphans) as are many other violations of the Nozickian 'right to property' (return of alienated land every fifty years, for example). The idea that there are trade-offs between rights to property, protection of the poor and helpless, and other interests of the community has long been central to our moral practice. Against both our practice and our intuitions, what Nozick has to offer is a brilliant series of analogies. If the analogies constrained our thought and transformed our lives, Nozick would be a great political leader (for better or for worse); as it is, he is only a tremendously ingenious philosopher.

Part of what makes moral philosophy an anachronistic field is that its practitioners continue to argue in this very traditional and aprioristic way even though they themselves do not claim that one can provide a systematic and indubitable 'foundation' for the subject. Most of them rely on what are supposed to be 'intuitions' without claiming that those intuitions deliver uncontroversial ethical premises, on the one hand, or that they have an ontological or epistemological explanation of the reliability of those intuitions, on the other. (Nozick's new book, *Philosophical Explanation,* provides an epistemology for ethics that is so abstract as to provide no reason for accepting the particular ethical intuitions underlying *Anarchy, State and Utopia* as opposed to any other.) With a few conspicuous exceptions, they are proud of giving ingenious arguments—that is what makes them 'analytic' philosophers—and curiously evasive or superficial about the relation of the premises of these arguments to the ideals and practices of any actual moral community. One conspicuous exception to this is John Rawls, whose Dewey Lectures discuss exactly this question. (Another is Bernard Williams.)

Still, it may be said, and with justice, that we do have to use our heads as best we can with our ethical problems. Those who conclude, on whatever grounds, that we should stop reasoning in ethics throw us back on unexamined prejudices and selfish interests as often as on fairness and community. Must not we, then, go on trying to find solutions using whatever principles seem best to us, and arguing carefully from those principles, just as the moral philosophers urge us to do?

Yes and no. We should reflect on principles—not only our own, but those of the persons with whom we disagree. But the way *not* to solve an ethical problem is to find a nice sweeping principle that 'proves too much', and to accuse those who refuse to 'buy' one's absolute principle of immorality. The very words "solution" and "problem" may be leading us astray—ethical 'problems' are not like scientific problems,

and they do not often have 'solutions' in the sense that scientific problems do. The extreme deductivism of much contemporary analytic philosophy may reflect the grip of the problem/solution metaphor.

I suggest that our thought might be better guided by a different metaphor—a metaphor from the law, instead of a metaphor from science—the metaphor of *adjudication.*

I shall give an example—one that is bound to be cntroversial. (But it is part of the metaphor of adjudication that a good example must be controversial.)

My favorite example of a wise adjudication of a difficult dispute is the Supreme Court's decision on abortion. Since I regard it as wise, I am obviously not a partisan of one of the strong views we have all heard in the dispute—we may have souls, but they are not invisible objects which join our cells at the moment of conception (we become *ensouled,* rather than being souls-plus-bodies); and we may have rights over our own bodies, but they do not extend to an absolute privilege. In calling the Supreme Court decision 'wise', I am *not* saying it is the 'last word' on the abortion issue. If it were the last word, it would be a solution and not an adjudication. What I say is that reasonable men and women should agree that it would have been decidedly *un*wise for the Court either to (1) read Roman Catholic theology into the Constitution; *or* (2) grant that persons have the right to receive and perform abortions even in the ninth month of pregnancy.

That we cannot 'solve' the abortion problem should not be surprising. The issues most discussed in connection with the problem, the issue of when personhood begins and the issue of the extent of rights to privacy as they affect the termination of one's own pregnancy, are ones we cannot see to the bottom of. We do not have clear criteria of personhood; and this is connected with our lack of even the faintest shadow of a genuine theory of such things as intentionality and value. (I have argued in a recent series of books and lectures that current 'physicalist' speculations about intentionality and value are wholly incoherent.) The Supreme Court decision—that a first trimester foetus does not have legal protection; that abortion of a second trimester foetus is something to be regulated, primarily in the interest of the mother's health, though not forbidden; and that a third trimester foetus must be amply legally protected—is not a 'theory', but a reasonable stance in the absence of a theory. Even if we could settle the issue of 'when one becomes a person', there are other issues connected with when a person's life may be taken (or allowed to be lost) which are also controversial. The expectant woman's right to privacy figured in the

supreme court decision. There is a well known argument for an *absolute* right to abortion in *any* trimester, due to Judith Thomson, which turns on rights with respect to one's own body, and not at *all* on the issue of the personhood or non-personhood of the foetus. Even if reasonable persons can be sure that Judith Thomson's argument 'proves too much', we do not have a set of principles with which to 'solve' all the problems in this area either. We need adjudications precisely in cases such as this—cases in which we cannot find a non-controversial principle or application of a principle which settles what we should do.

A very different metaphor may be of help here—the metaphor of *reading*. Consider the following two interpretations of Hamlet (they are not meant to be 'exhaustive'). (1) An interpretation—an unsophisticated reader might give this—in which Hamlet's 'uncertainty' is *merely* epistemic, merely a belief that there is not enough evidence on which to act against the King, and on which Hamlet feigns madness *merely* to buy time to find out what the facts are; (2) an interpretation in which Hamlet's hesitation reveals a 'conflict'. One need not go as far in this direction as to 'buy' a psychoanalytic interpretation of the play to contrast Hamlet's ability to act decisively when he brings about the deaths of Rosenkrantz and Guildenstern, or when he struggles with pirates, with his inability to act in the case of greatest concern to him; nor is it implausible that the phenomenon of finding oneself to be unable to act (for reasons one cannot understand) would be one with which a dramatic genius would be acquainted, without having read Freud, and would find rending, and thus of great potential interest. A sensitive reader will see that the second interpretation is better than the first. (A still better reading might include both perspectives.) Yet very few readers today think there is such a thing as the 'final' interpretation of Hamlet, the one that contains all the perspectives on the play in all its dimensions. We do think that there are such things as better and worse interpretations—otherwise what is the point of discussing at all? What we have given up is the belief that the existence of better and worse interpretations commits us to the existence of an 'absolute perspective' on the work of art.

Seeing that an adjudication of an ethical dispute is reasonable (at a given time, for a given purpose, for a given group of people) and that another is unreasonable is like seeing that one 'reading' is better than another. We are not committed to the existence of an unimaginable 'absolute perspective' in ethics, an ethical theory that contains and reconciles *all* the possible perspectives on ethical problems in all their dimensions; we *are* committed to the idea of 'better and worse opinions'.

Reading great works of art and reading life are different but not unrelated activities.

A common feature of both metaphors—the metaphor of adjudication and the metaphor of reading—is openness or non-finality. Accepting the Supreme Court's adjudication of the abortion issue, its 'reading' of the situation, is accepting something that is by its very nature provisional—not in the sense that there must be a better perspective, a 'true' reading (or a *truer* reading) which we will someday get to if we are lucky, but in the sense that (for all we know) there may be. Some things which were once problematic are now issues for condemnation or approbation and not adjudication. Human slavery is no longer problematic; it is just plain wrong. Racism and male chauvinism are simply wrong. Someday there may be a better perspective on the abortion issue—things may come into better focus. Both metaphors leave this open.

The second metaphor—the metaphor of reading—also has a place for the special role of philosophical imagination. New perspectives on moral issues, new 'readings' of moral situations, have often come from philosophy. One thinks of the role that Lock's combination of moral vision and argument played in defeating the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings, or of the origin of the great idea of the French revolution—the Rights of Man—in the writing of the *philosophes*. Like readings of a literary text, philosophical perspectives may be rich or impoverished, sophisticated or naive, broad or one-sided, inspired or pedestrian, reasonable or perverse (and if the latter, brilliantly perverse or merely perverse). Like readings of a great novel, philosophical perspectives never succeed in capturing their 'text' in all its dimensions; and (as the 'deconstructionists' claim is the case with literary works) they are always to some extent 'subverted' by the very 'text' they are reading, defeated by the complexity of life itself.

If the lecture thus far were to be reviewed in a professional journal, I can predict exactly what the reviewer would say. He would mention my metaphors, and then say, "But the author himself admits that all this is just metaphor. Does he believe that there are objective ethical facts or doesn't he? And if he does, what account does he have of their nature?"

The question assumes what is not the case—that there *is* a workable philosophical notion of an 'objective fact'. In the books I mentioned a few minutes ago, I argue that the *philosophical Subjective/Objective* distinction is today in total collapse.

Philosophy has tried to draw this distinction in two quite different ways: *ontologically,* by making an inventory of the 'furniture of the Universe', and banishing from the realm of the 'objective' whatever cannot be reduced to what the philosopher takes to be the 'basic' building blocks of Reality (material objects and sense data being the two favorite candidates in recent philosophy); *epistemologically,* by making an inventory of the possible modes of 'verification', and banishing from the realm of the 'objective' whatever cannot be 'verified' by what the philosopher takes to be the 'scientific' means of verification. The ontological approach has ended up in a precritical materialism which has no account of such epistemological properties as *confirmation,* of such semantic relations as *synonymy* and *paraphrase,* of such intentional relations as *reference,* or even of its own favorite notions of *explanation* and *causation,* while the epistemological approach is immediately self-refuting: the criteria of 'objectivity' proposed by the epistemologists are self-violating. It is not that I have *better* criteria of objectivity and subjectivity to offer, let me add: it is the whole conception of philosophy as a Master Science, a discipline which surveys the special activities of natural science, law, literature, morality, etc., and *explains* them all in terms of a privileged ontology or epistemolgy that has proved to be an empty dream. The 'scientific realists' are right about this much: if there *were* such a discipline, it would be natural science itself and not philosophy. The days when philosophy had a right to *such* grand pretensions are long past. But they are wrong in thinking that natural science can play this role. In this epoch, at least, we are left without a Master Science.

In addition to the philosophical distinction, there is an 'ordinary' or vernacular distinction between objective and subjective. In the vernacular, to call something 'objective' is to say that it is uncontroversial, or to suggest that it would be if folks weren't so *dumb;* while to call something 'subjective' is to dismiss it as mere *affect.* In these terms, as they stand when they are not infected (as they often are) by the projects of the ontologists and the epistemologists, most of the facts that are important for our lives, including most of the important ethical facts, are *neither* 'objective nor 'subjective'. They are facts concerning which there are relative truths even if we don't know what an 'absolute' truth would be; and among these relative truths there are, as has been said, better and worse.

II.

To successfully adjudicate ethical problems, as opposed to 'solving' them, it is necessary that the members of the society have a sense of

community. A compromise that cannot pretend to be the last word on an ethical question, that cannot pretend to derive from binding principles in an unmistakeably constraining way, can only derive its force from a shared sense of what is and is not reasonable, from loyalties to one another, and a commitment to 'muddling through' together. When the sense of community is absent or weak, when individuals feel contempt or resentment for one another, when the attitude becomes that any consensus that isn't the one oneself would have chosen isn't binding on one, then fantasy and desperation have free reign.

Concern with a 'moral crisis' is not new. Writing in his great work, *De la division du travail social,* Durkheim succinctly described the crisis as it appeared in the nineteenth century:

"It has been said with justice that morality—and by that must be understood, not only moral doctrines, but customs—is going through a real crisis . . . Profound changes have occurred in the structure of our societies in a very short time; they have been freed from the traditional type with a speed and on a scale that has never before been seen in history. As a result, the morality that corresponds to [traditional society] has regressed, but without another developing rapidly enough to take the place that the former left empty in our consciences. Our faith has been troubled; tradition has lost its sway; individual judgment has been freed from collective judgment." Every word in this description will be recognized as applying perfectly to present conditions.

Durkheim thought that part but not all of the malady can be ascribed to the fact that there has not been sufficient time for a new moral code to take shape: one adapted to the division of labor, the fact that many persons do work that most people can never understand in detail and are confronted with moral issues of unprecedented sorts, and to the fact that "the collective consciousness is more and more becoming a cult of the individual"—something that Durkheim regarded as a *humanization* of society and not something to be deplored. He rejected the idea, which is still put forward ninety years later, that we can or should go back to a morality justified by the forces of tradition and myth. But he did not think that giving ourseves more time will rectify matters by itself. Quite simply and quite strikingly, Emile Durkheim found the root cause of our 'crisis' to be—*injustice.*

Let us look at this idea with present-day conditions in mind—at Durkheim's remark that "the remedy for the evil is not to seek to resuscitate traditions and practices which, no longer corresponding to present conditions of society, can only live an artificial, false existence.

What we must do to relieve this *anomie* is to discover means for making the organs which are still wasting themselves in discordant movement harmoniously concur by introducing into their relations more justice by more and more extenuating the external inequalities which are the source of the evil."

A few years ago I had occasion to visit Peru, and I got to know a fine philosopher and a truly wonderful human being—Francisco Miro Casada. Miro Casada has been an idealist all his life, while being, at the same time, a man of great experience (a former member of several governments and a former Ambassador to France). I found him a man who represents the social democratic vision in its purest form. Talking to him, and to my other friends in Peru (who represented quite a spectrum of political opinion), I heard something that was summed up in a remark he, Miro Casada, made to me, "Whenever you have a Republican president, we get a wave of military dictatorships in Latin America". Out of context, this remark might suggest that the Republican Party is the cause of all the evils in Latin America; but that was not the tenor of the conversation. The willingness of Republican administrations to impose what they are pleased to describe as "authoritarian' (as opposed to 'totalitarian') regimes is only the most extreme manifestation of the evil, not the evil itself.

If Jesse James had had the effrontery to tell the victims of one of his train robberies that he was holding them up for 'their own good', the rage and frustration he would have produced could hardly have been greater than the sense of outrage and frustration produced when our administrations, both Democratic and Republic, and our great corporations as well, dictate economic policy, foreign policy, and internal 'security' arrangements to Latin American governments with precisely this unctuous excuse—'it's for your own good'—and any knowledgeable Latin American can cite horrifying examples of such dictation. Nor is this combination of selfishness with hypocrisy confined to Latin America—Oriana Fallaci's autobiographical novel, *A Man,* gives a 'thicker' description of the horrors of life under an 'authoritarian' regime, including the complicity of our C.I.A. in the maintenance of the regime, than any journalistic report could possibly do, and the regime she describes—the regime that ultimately killed her husband—was that of *Greece* (under the colonels). I am not talking of the rage produced in leftist students or in Marxist guerrillas, which can be taken for granted. I am talking of the sense of outrage that fills democratically minded people all over the Third World.

A democratic world society, a "Parliament of Man", is a long way off, and there is no guarantee that it will ever be realized. But the divisions which make it so far from realization are not just the divisions between the superpowers. We cannot do anything about the division between us and the U.S.S.R. except try to keep those divisions from destroying the world. But the divisions between us and the Third World are divisions produced, in significant measure, by injustices for which we are responsible and which we *are* in a position to do something about, if we will.

But injustice, like charity, begins at home. The same hypocrisy and greed that characterize so many of our actions in Latin America appear more and more in our relations to poor people, our relations to women asking for equal pay and professional recognition, our relations to those concerned about saving our atmosphere, lakes, and national forests, and, for that matter, in our relations to our middle western blue-collar workers in steel and the auto industry. Every issue of *Common Cause* reports a disgusting flood of special interest legislation, while the news reports on the radio and the TV include stories of hunger and malnutrition, for the first time in years, stories of unemployment rates in excess of 10%, stories of over a million "discouraged workers", stories of a teen-age unemployment rate in excess of 50% and a black teen-age unemployment rate described as 'off the chart', stories of black gains in the 60s and 70s which are now being eroded, and much more. Granted that often the justice or injustice of specific policies and programs is controversial, there are two values to which Americans of almost every political persuasion have long paid lip-service: that every person who is able to work and wants to work has a 'right to a job', and the value of 'equality of opportunity' (as opposed to equality of *result,* which is highly controversial). Yet both of these 'lip service' values are openly flouted.

When we take the stand that nothing can be done about high unemployment rates, and that a whole generation of young people in their teens and twenties will have to simply wait for better times before they can hope to have better than a dead-end job (or, in many cases, any job at all) we are flouting our professed commitment to a 'right to a job'. Unemployment did not come about by accident, after all: government decisions to raise interest rates and 'wring out' the economy in order to bring down the rate of inflation *predictably* had the effect of throwing millions out of work and causing the disappearance of entry-level jobs. If it is right for government to regulate the rate of employment at all (and 'wringing out' the economy *is* regulating it—regulating it *downwards*),

then the government, which is supposedly acting in the interest of the majority who still have jobs, has a moral obligation to protect and help the minority which is asked to suffer for the sake of the community. To ask young people who are unemployed to give up their life chances by deferring entry into real jobs for five, or ten, or however many, years so that the middle class won't have to worry about inflation is to ask too much.

Viewed in these terms, it is not to be wondered at that a young black, or a working-class white teenager, who is unempoyed or washing dishes or employed in a car-wash place (if there are any car-wash places that have not replaced their employees by machines) should experience the combination of total loss of social solidarity and loss of a sense of moral purpose in life that Durkheim called "anomie". As Durkheim put it, our society "has not been organized in a way to satisfy the need for justice which has grown more ardent in our hearts." And to seriously ask the question, what has happened to our professed commitment to equality of opportunity? is already to answer it. Today the question can, sadly, only be a rhetorical one.

It is not by chance that Durkheim came to view our 'illness' as 'not of an intellectual sort'. Durkheim worked from the very interesting hypothesis that the human need from which the moral codes spring is the need for social solidarity. Even if this is not the only need from which morality springs (and Durkheim himself mentions an increasing need for 'development of the personality'), it cannot be doubted that it is a need, and a central one. Viewing morality as the expression of a deep-seated human need, one which was fulfilled in one way by traditional societies, and which must now, because of the change in the conditions of our common life, be fulfilled in a different way, at once pushes the issue of social solidarity, or, as we would say today, the issue of *community,* into the center of attention. It shifts the focus from the question of helping 'others' and bettering individual life chances—the focus of traditional New Deal liberalism—to a focus in which we see the quality of our *common* life as the subject of concern. As Michael Walzer has emphasized, it requires a change in our model of politics from a model in which interest groups form coalitions and fight over the division of the pie to a model in which we think of ourselves—of all of us—as a community and of our social, and cultural life as public business.

There are many different responses that such a perspective of community must confront, ranging from Nozickian (or, more moderately, Friedmanian) libertarianism and 'unfettered capitalism' perspec-

tives through New Deal liberalism to Marxism-Leninism. I have time to say something—something very brief—about just two: the perspectives of Marxism-Leninism and of 'neo-conservativism'.

Marxism-Leninism I have to say something about for an autobiographical reason. I hope I will be forgiven, especially on this occasion, for autobiography. I was twice in my life—in my high school days, and again, for several years, during the Vietnam war—a Marxist. The Marxism of my high school days was largely a reflection of my father's views at that time, but the Marxism-Leninism of my mature years was a reaction to the very injustices I have been citing. It seemed to me, at that time, in my despair over the behavior of this country both in Latin America and in Vietnam, that only a revolution could put an end to injustice. I finally abandoned my Marxist-Leninist views when I realized—this was in 1972—that I would rather be governed by Nixon than by my own 'comrades'.

What is wrong with the argument that 'it will take a revolution' to end injustice is that revolutions *don't* mean an end to injustice. A Marxist-Leninist revolution—here I follow the advice of Raymond Aron and look at actual history and actual regimes, and not just at ideals—replaces one ruling party by a different ruling party—one with terrible powers, and one which brooks no elections and no opposition political party. As Djilas told us, such a party becomes in its turn a new ruling class. The idea that all this will 'wither away' is an empty promise. The Gulags, the political prisoners in Cuba, the boat people, and the Reform Through Labor camps in China are the reality.

"Why didn't you know all this in 1968?" I will be asked, especially by my social democratic friends who were never tempted by the vision of Marxism-Leninism. Well, I did know about the Gulags. That is why I joined a group that supported no existing state. But I found within the group itself the same contempt for genuine discussion, the same manipulation, the same hysterical denunciation of anything that attempted to be principled opposition, that my father had found in the Communist Party U.S.A. back in the forties. Perhaps I was just dumb. Certainly I was depressed and desparate.

There is something to be learned from such experiences. Certainly there is much greed and hypocrisy in our public life. But, when I look today, I do not find that the blame lies with any one group of people. I do not find that, individually, the economically and politically powerful are much worse, morally, than most people are in their private lives (of course the *actions* of a powerful person who also happens to be immoral can hurt a lot more people than the actions of a bad person who is only a

father, or a teacher, or a husband or wife). I do not find that there is some blueprint, or some sketch of a blueprint, which we only have to impose on society to put an end to injustice, or that the supreme proof of the greed and hypocrisy of the 'ruling class' is their unwillingness to implement any such blueprint. The millenial optimism of the Marxist—his belief in the inevitability of progress—coupled with his belief that the solution is at hand—the truth is transparent, and only 'false consciousness' keeps us from seeing it—together lead to a terrible religion, it seems to me, the religion of *hatred in the name of love.*

Neo-conservativism is much more civilized and much less extreme an ideology than Marxism. Yet, as set forth in the pages of *Commentary,* it shares a certain number of premises with Marxism. I don't mean the antidemocratic premises, I hasten to explain. But a certain deference to economic theory, and to what economic theory is supposed to show (Friedman, rather than Marx, is the economist of choice, of course), and a certain doctrine of inevitability are as characteristic of neoconservativism as they are of Marxism. Neo-conservativism, in its standard disenchanted we-have-to-live-without-our-old-liberal-illusions form, holds that unemployment and inequality of opportunity and racial discrimination *are* injustices, but not injustices we can do anything about. There is a cost side to every social program that might be conceived of to ameliorate them (this is, of course, true) and the costs *always* outweigh the benefits, is the argument. (Sometimes it is said that this wasn't true at the time of the New Deal; it is just that it is true in present conditions.)

Now, I don't claim to be an economist. I don't know how to secure full employment without inflation. But if economists tell us, "It's impossible. If you don't want inflation you will just have to put up with unemployment for a few years", then I think we should reply, "People wouldn't accept your pessimism during the Depression, and Keynes came along. Keynes may not be the answer today. But we *need* an answer—a way of avoiding both disastrous levels of inflation and disastrous levels of unemployment, and especially of avoiding youth unemployment. Human experience suggests that if we, the public, insist long enough that this is what we want and need then, surprise!, it will turn out that there is a way to do it after all." If sociologists, or economists, or whoever, tell us that there is no way to extend equal opportunity to blacks and Chicanos and other disadvantaged groups, or that any attempt would involve a politically unacceptable 'reverse discrimination', then we should similarly insist that a way be found—not all at once, of course, but that progress, not regress, be what takes

place. We are far too ready today to think that we have 'discovered' that progress was an illusion, and that we have to simply give up. But as Kant wrote a long time ago, we must live with an "antinomy of practical reason". We cannot prove that progress is possible, but our action is "fantastic, directed to empty, imaginary ends" if we do not postulate the possibility of progress.

The similarity between Marxism and neoconservativism might be expressed in the following way: both perspectives say that certain injustices can't be cured under our present system of political democracy and mixed economy. The Marxist concludes that we have to overthrow the present system and the neoconservative concludes that we have to live with the injustices. But they are both wrong.

I have already said why the Marxist is wrong. The neoconservative is wrong because living with the injustices isn't a *real* option. Even if *we* can shut our eyes to the injustices, those who suffer from them cannot. Social solidarity is falling apart, and the effects—an exponentially increasing rate of youth suicide in the last fifteen years, to cite just one statistic—are everywhere apparent. The *fin de siecle* wisdom that says that progress is an illusion is the fad of the moment—even Rorty warns us against trying to be "constructive and progressive". But the fact is that we do not know that progress is impossible, any more than we know that progress is inevitable, and we never shall know either thing. A great Jewish sage once wrote that "It is not given to us to finish the task, but neither are we permitted not to take it up." Emerson or Thoreau might well have said the same. At our best we have always been a nation with an unfinished task and an unfashionable faith in progress. Let us return to our best. Then, perhaps, we may appreciate the wisdom of Durkheim's concluding words in the book I cited, his answer to the question where a moral code is to come from: "Such a work cannot be improvised in the silence of the study; it can only arise by itself, little by little, under the pressure of internal causes which make it necessary. But the service that thought can render is fixing the goal we must attain. That is what we have tried to do."

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The E. H. Lindley Memorial Lectureship Fund was established in 1941 in memory of Ernest H. Lindley, Chancellor of the University of Kansas from 1920 to 1939. In February 1941 Mr. Roy Roberts, the chairman of the committee in charge, suggested to the *Graduate Magazine* that

> the Chancellor should invite to the University for a lecture or a series of lectures some outstanding national or world figure to speak on "Values of Living"—just as the late Chancellor proposed to do in his courses "The Human Situation" and "Plan for Living."

In the following June Mr. Roberts circulated a letter on behalf of the Committee, proposing in somewhat broader terms that

> the income from this fund should be spent in a quest of social betterment by bringing to the University each year outstanding world leaders for a lecture or series of lectures, yet with a design so broad in its outline that in the years to come if it is deemed wise, this living memorial could take some more desirable form.

The fund was allowed to accumulate until 1954, when Professor Richard McKeon lectured on "Human Rights and International Relations." The next lecture was given in 1959 by Professor Everett C. Hughes, and has been published by the University of Kansas School of Law as part of his book *Students' Culture and Perspectives: Lectures on Medical and General Education*. The selection of lecturers for the Lindley series has since been delegated to the Department of Philosophy. The following lectures have been published in individual pamphlet form and may be obtained from the Department at a price of one dollar and fifty cents each:

*1961 "The Idea of Man—An Outline of Philosophical Anthropology."
By José Ferrater Mora, Professor of Philosophy, Bryn Mawr College.

1962 "Changes in Events and Changes in Things."
By A. N. Prior, Professor of Philosophy, University of Manchester.

*†1963 "Moral Philosophy and the Analysis of Language."
By Richard B. Brandt, Professor of Philosophy, Swarthmore College.

*†1964 "Human Freedom and the Self."
By Roderick M. Chisholm, Professor of Philosophy, Brown University.

†1965 "Freedom of Mind."
By Stuart Hampshire, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton University.

*†1966 "Some Beliefs about Justice."
By William K. Frankena, Professor of Philosophy, University of Michigan.

†1967 "Form and Content in Ethical Theory."
By Wilfrid Sellars, Professor of Philosophy, University of Pittsburgh.

†1968 "The Systematic Unity of Value."
By J. N. Findlay, Clark Professor of Philosophy, Yale University.

1969 "Baber and Babeism—A Critical Evaluation."
By Paul Edwards, Professor of Philosophy, Brooklyn College of the City University of New York.

1971 "What Actually Happened."
By P. H. Nowell-Smith, Professor of Philosophy, York University.

†1972 "Moral Rationality."
By Alan Gewirth, Professor of Philosophy, University of Chicago.

†1973 "Reflections on Evil."
By Albert Hofstadter, Professor of Philosophy, University of California, Santa Cruz.

†1974 "What is Dialectical?"
By Paul Ricoeur, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris and University of Chicago.

†1975 "Some Confessions About Subjectivity."
By R. M. Hare, White's Professor of Moral Philosophy at Oxford University and Fellow of Corpus Christi College.

1976 "Self-Defense and Rights."
By Judith Jarvis Thomson, Professor of Philosophy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

1977 "What is Humanism?"
By Georg Henrik von Wright, Research Professor of Philosophy, The Academy of Finland.

1978 "Moral Relativism."
By Philippa Foot, Senior Research Fellow, Somerville College, Oxford, and Professor of Philosophy, University of California, Los Angeles.

1979 "The Idea of the Obscene."
By Joel Feinberg, Professor of Philosophy, University of Arizona.

1980 "Goods Beyond Price and Other Apparent Anachronisms."
By Warner Wick, Professor of Philosophy, University of Chicago.

1981 "Morality, Property and Slavery."
By Alan Donagan, Professor of Philosophy, University of Chicago.

* Pamphlet out of print.
† Reprinted in *Freedom and Morality*.
†† Printed text in *Freedom and Morality*.