

**RULES
FOR**

RADICALS

**A Pragmatic Primer
for Realistic
Radicals**

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The Purpose

The life of man upon earth is a warfare . . .

— JOB 7:1

WHAT FOLLOWS IS for those who want to change the world from what it is to what they believe it should be. *The Prince* was written by Machiavelli for the Haves on how to hold power. *Rules for Radicals* is written for the Have-Nots on how to take it away.

In this book we are concerned with how to create mass organizations to seize power and give it to the people; to realize the democratic dream of equality, justice, peace, cooperation, equal and full opportunities for education, full and useful employment, health, and the creation of those circumstances in which man can have the chance to live by values that give meaning to life. We are talking about a mass power organization which will change the world into a place where all men and women walk erect, in the spirit of that credo of the Spanish Civil War, "Better to die on your feet than to live on your knees." This means revolution.

The significant changes in history have been made by revolutions. There are people who say that it is not revolution, but evolution, that brings about change—but *evolution is simply the term used by nonparticipants to denote a*

particular sequence of revolutions as they synthesized into a specific major social change. In this book I propose certain general observations, propositions, and concepts of the mechanics of mass movements and the various stages of the cycle of action and reaction in revolution. This is not an ideological book except insofar as argument for change, rather than for the status quo, can be called an ideology; different people, in different places, in different situations and different times will construct their own solutions and symbols of salvation for those times. This book will not contain any panacea or dogma; I detest and fear dogma. I know that all revolutions must have ideologies to spur them on. That in the heat of conflict these ideologies tend to be smelted into rigid dogmas claiming exclusive possession of the truth, and the keys to paradise, is tragic. Dogma is the enemy of human freedom. Dogma must be watched for and apprehended at every turn and twist of the revolutionary movement. The human spirit glows from that small inner light of doubt whether we are right, while those who believe with complete certainty that they possess the right are dark inside and darken the world outside with cruelty, pain, and injustice. Those who enshrine the poor or Have-Nots are as guilty as other dogmatists and just as dangerous. To diminish the danger that ideology will deteriorate into dogma, and to protect the free, open, questing, and creative mind of man, as well as to allow for change, no ideology should be more specific than that of America's founding fathers: "For the general welfare."

Niels Bohr, the great atomic physicist, admirably stated the civilized position on dogmatism: "Every sentence I utter must be understood not as an affirmation, but as a question." I will argue that man's hopes lie in the acceptance of the great law of change; that a general understanding of the

principles of change will provide clues for rational action and an awareness of the realistic relationship between means and ends and how each determines the other. I hope that these pages will contribute to the education of the radicals of today, and to the conversion of hot, emotional, impulsive passions that are impotent and frustrating to actions that will be calculated, purposeful, and effective.

An example of the political insensitivity of many of today's so-called radicals and the lost opportunities is found in this account of an episode during the trial of the Chicago Seven:

Over the weekend some hundred fifty lawyers, from all parts of the country, had gathered in Chicago to picket the federal building in protest against Judge Hoffman's [arrest of] the four lawyers. This delegation, which was supported by thirteen members of the faculty of Harvard Law School and which included a number of other professors as well, submitted a brief, as friend of the Court, which called Judge Hoffman's actions "a travesty of justice [which] threatens to destroy the confidence of the American people in the entire judicial process . . ." By ten o'clock the angry lawyers had begun to march around the Federal Building, where they were joined by hundreds of student radicals, several Black Panthers, and a hundred or more blue-helmeted Chicago police.

Shortly before noon, about forty of the picketing lawyers carried their signs into the lobby of the Federal Building, despite the notice posted on the glass wall beside the entrance, and signed by Judge Campbell, forbidding such demonstrations within the building. Hardly had the lawyers entered, however, than Judge Campbell himself descended to the lobby, dressed in his black robes

and accompanied by a marshal, a stenographer, and his court clerk. Surrounded by the angry lawyers, who were themselves encircled by a ring of police and federal marshals, the Judge proceeded to hold Court then and there. He announced that unless the pickets withdrew immediately, he would charge them with contempt.

This time, he warned, there could be no question that their contempt would occur in the presence of the Court, and would thus be subject to summary punishment. No sooner had he made this announcement however, than a voice from the throng shouted, "Fuck you, Campbell." After a moment of tense silence, followed by a cheer from the crowd and a noticeable stiffening among the police, Judge Campbell himself withdrew. Then the lawyers, too, left the lobby and rejoined the pickets on the sidewalk.

—Jason Epstein, *The Great Conspiracy Trial*,
Random House, 1970.

The picketing lawyers threw away a beautiful opportunity to create a nationwide issue. Offhand, there would seem to have been two choices, either of which would have forced the judge's hand and kept the issue going: some one of the lawyers could have stepped up to the judge after the voice said, "Fuck you, Campbell," said that the lawyers there did not support personal obscenities, but they were not leaving; or all the lawyers together could have chorused, with one voice, "Fuck you, Campbell!" They did neither; instead, they let the initiative pass from them to the judge, and achieved nothing.

Radicals must be resilient, adaptable to shifting political circumstances, and sensitive enough to the process of action and reaction to avoid being trapped by their own tactics and forced to travel a road not of their choosing. In

short, radicals must have a degree of control over the flow of events.

Here I propose to present an arrangement of certain facts and general concepts of change, a step toward a science of revolution.

All societies discourage and penalize ideas and writings that threaten the ruling status quo. It is understandable, therefore, that the literature of a Have society is a veritable desert whenever we look for writings on social change. Once the American Revolution was done with, we can find very little besides the right of revolution that is laid down in the Declaration of Independence as a fundamental right; seventy-three years later Thoreau's brief essay on "The Duty of Civil Disobedience"; followed by Lincoln's reaffirmation of the revolutionary right in 1861.^o There are many phrases extolling the sacredness of revolution—that is, revolutions of the past. Our enthusiasm for the sacred right of revolution is increased and enhanced with the passage of time. The older the revolution, the more it recedes into history, the more sacred it becomes. Except for Thoreau's limited remarks, our society has given us few words of advice, few suggestions of how to fertilize social change.

From the Haves, on the other hand, there has come an unceasing flood of literature justifying the status quo. Religious, economic, social, political, and legal tracts endlessly attack all revolutionary ideas and action for change as immoral, fallacious and against God, country, and mother. These literary sedations by the status quo include the threat that, since all such movements are unpatriotic,

^o Lincoln's First Inaugural. "This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it."

subversive, spawned in hell and reptilian in their creeping insidiousness, dire punishments will be meted out to their supporters. All great revolutions, including Christianity, the various reformations, democracy, capitalism, and socialism, have suffered these epithets in the times of their birth. To the status quo concerned about its public image, revolution is the only force which has no image, but instead casts a dark, ominous shadow of things to come.

The Have-Nots of the world, swept up in their present upheavals and desperately seeking revolutionary writings, can find such literature only from the communists, both red and yellow. Here they can read about tactics, maneuvers, strategy and principles of action in the making of revolutions. Since in this literature all ideas are imbedded in the language of communism, revolution appears synonymous with communism.^o When, in the throes of their revolutionary fervor, the Have-Nots hungrily turn to us in their first steps from starvation to subsistence, we respond with a bewildering, unbelievable, and meaningless conglomeration of abstractions about freedom, morality, equality, and the danger of intellectual enslavement by communistic ideology! This is accompanied by charitable handouts dressed up in ribbons of moral principle and

*U.S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, "The U.S. and Revolution," Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions Occasional Paper No. 116: "On trips to Asia I often asked men in their thirties and forties what they were reading when they were eighteen. They usually answered 'Karl Marx', and when I asked them why, they replied, 'We were under colonial rule, seeking a way out. We wanted our independence. To get it we had to make revolution. The only books on revolution were published by the communists.' These men almost invariably had repudiated communism as a political cult, retaining, however, a tinge of socialism. As I talked with them, I came to realize the great opportunities we missed when we became preoccupied in fighting communism with bombs and with dollars, rather than with ideas of revolution, of freedom, of justice."

"freedom," with the price tag of unqualified political loyalty to us. With the coming of the Revolutions in Russia and China we suddenly underwent a moral conversion and became concerned for the welfare of our brothers all over the world. *Revolution by the Have-Nots has a way of inducing a moral revelation among the Haves.*

Revolution by the Have-Nots also induces a paranoid fear; now, therefore, we find every corrupt and repressive government the world around saying to us, "Give us money and soldiers or there will be a revolution and the new leaders will be your enemies." Fearful of revolution and identifying ourselves as the status quo, we have permitted the communists to assume by default the revolutionary halo of justice for the Have-Nots. We then compound this mistake by assuming that the status quo everywhere must be defended and buttressed against revolution. Today revolution has become synonymous with communism while capitalism is synonymous with status quo. Occasionally we will accept a revolution if it is guaranteed to be on our side, and then only when we realize that the revolution is inevitable. We abhor revolutions.

We have permitted a suicidal situation to unfold wherein revolution and communism have become one. These pages are committed to splitting this political atom, separating this exclusive identification of communism with revolution. If it were possible for the Have-Nots of the world to recognize and accept the idea that revolution did not inevitably mean hate and war, cold or hot, from the United States, that alone would be a great revolution in world politics and the future of man. This is a major reason for my attempt to provide a revolutionary handbook not cast in a communist *or* capitalist mold, but as a manual for the Have-Nots of the world regardless of the color of their skins

or their politics. My aim here is to suggest how to organize for power: how to get it and to use it. I will argue that the failure to use power for a more equitable distribution of the means of life for all people signals the end of the revolution and the start of the counterrevolution.

Revolution has always advanced with an ideological spear just as the status quo has inscribed its ideology upon its shield. All of life is partisan. There is no dispassionate objectivity. The revolutionary ideology is not confined to a specific limited formula. It is a series of general principles, rooted in Lincoln's May 19, 1856, statement: "Be not deceived. Revolutions do not go backward."

THE IDEOLOGY OF CHANGE

This raises the question: what, if any, is my ideology? What kind of ideology, if any, can an organizer have who is working in and for a free society? The prerequisite for an ideology is possession of a basic truth. For example, a Marxist begins with his prime truth that all evils are caused by the exploitation of the proletariat by the capitalists. From this he logically proceeds to the revolution to end capitalism, then into the third stage of reorganization into a new social order or the dictatorship of the proletariat, and finally the last stage—the political paradise of communism. The Christians also begin with their prime truth: the divinity of Christ and the tripartite nature of God. Out of these "prime truths" flow a step-by-step ideology.

An organizer working in and for an open society is in an ideological dilemma. To begin with, he does not have a fixed

truth—truth to him is relative and changing; *everything* to him is relative and changing. He is a political relativist. He accepts the late Justice Learned Hand's statement that "the mark of a free man is that ever-gnawing inner uncertainty as to whether or not he is right." The consequence is that he is ever on the hunt for the causes of man's plight and the general propositions that help to make some sense out of man's irrational world. He must constantly examine life, including his own, to get some idea of what it is all about, and he must challenge and test his own findings. Irreverence, essential to questioning, is a requisite. Curiosity becomes compulsive. His most frequent word is "why?"^o

Does this then mean that the organizer in a free society for a free society is rudderless? No, I believe that he has a far better sense of direction and compass than the closed-society organizer with his rigid political ideology. First, the free-society organizer is loose, resilient, fluid, and on the move in a society which is itself in a state of constant change. To the extent that he is free from the shackles of dogma, he can respond to the realities of the widely different situations our society presents. In the end he has one conviction—a belief that if people have the power to act, in the long run they will, most of the time, reach the right decisions. The alternative to this would be rule by the elite—either a dictatorship or some form of a political aristocracy. I am not concerned if this faith in people is regarded as a prime truth and therefore a contradiction of what I have already written, for life is a story of contradictions. Believing in people, the radical has the job of organizing them so that they will have the power and opportunity to best

^o Some say it's no coincidence that the question mark is an inverted plow, breaking up the hard soil of old beliefs and preparing for the new growth.

meet each unforeseeable future crisis as they move ahead in their eternal search for those values of equality, justice, freedom, peace, a deep concern for the preciousness of human life, and all those rights and values propounded by Judaeo-Christianity and the democratic political tradition. Democracy is not an end but the best means toward achieving these values. This is my credo for which I live and, if need be, die.

The basic requirement for the understanding of the politics of change is to recognize the world as it is. We must work with it on its terms if we are to change it to the kind of world we would like it to be. We must first see the world as it is and not as we would like it to be. We must see the world as all political realists have, in terms of "what men do and not what they ought to do," as Machiavelli and others have put it.

It is painful to accept fully the simple fact that one begins from where one is, that one must break free of the web of illusions one spins about life. Most of us view the world not as it is but as we would like it to be. The preferred world can be seen any evening on television in the succession of programs where the good always wins—that is, until the late evening newscast, when suddenly we are plunged into the world as it is.^o

Political realists see the world as it is: an arena of power politics moved primarily by perceived immediate self-interests, where morality is rhetorical rationale for expe-

^o With some exceptions. In one of America's Shangri-Las of escape from the world as it is, Carmel-by-the-Sea, California, on the coast of the beautiful Monterey Peninsula, radio station KRML used to broadcast the "Sunshine News—which headlines the positive, only the good news of the world!"

Intellectuals, who would scoff at "Sunshine News," are no exception to the preference for already-formulated answers.

dient action and self-interest. Two examples would be the priest who wants to be a bishop and bootlicks and politicks his way up, justifying it with the rationale, "After I get to be bishop I'll use my office for Christian reformation," or the businessman who reasons, "First I'll make my million and after that I'll go for the real things in life." Unfortunately one changes in many ways on the road to the bishopric or the first million, and then one says, "I'll wait until I'm a cardinal and then I can be more effective," or, "I can do a lot more after I get two million"—and so it goes.^o In this world laws are written for the lofty aim of "the common good" and then acted out in life on the basis of the common greed. In this world irrationality clings to man like his shadow so that the right things are done for the wrong reasons—afterwards, we dredge up the right reasons for justification. It is a world not of angels but of angles, where men speak of moral principles but act on power principles; a world where we are always moral and our enemies always immoral; a world where "reconciliation" means that when one side gets the power and the other side gets reconciled to it, then we have reconciliation; a world of religious institutions that have, in the main, come to support and justify the status quo

^o Each year, for a number of years, the activists in the graduating class from a major Catholic seminary near Chicago would visit me for a day just before their ordination, with questions about values, revolutionary tactics, and such. Once, at the end of such a day, one of the seminarians said, "Mr. Alinsky, before we came here we met and agreed that there was one question we particularly wanted to put to you. We're going to be ordained, and then we'll be assigned to different parishes, as assistants to—frankly—stuffy, reactionary, old pastors. They will disapprove of a lot of what you and we believe in, and we will be put into a killing routine. Our question is: how do we keep our faith in true Christian values, everything we hope to do to change the system?"

That was easy. I answered, "When you go out that door, just make your own personal decision about whether you want to be a bishop or a priest, and everything else will follow."

so that today organized religion is materially solvent and spiritually bankrupt. We live with a Judaeo-Christian ethic that has not only accommodated itself to but justified slavery, war, and every other ugly human exploitation of whichever status quo happened to prevail:

We live in a world where "good" is a value dependent on whether we want it. In the world as it is, the solution of each problem inevitably creates a new one. In the world as it is there are no permanent happy or sad endings. Such endings belong to the world of fantasy, the world as we would like it to be, the world of children's fairy tales where "they lived happily ever after." In the world as it is, the stream of events surges endlessly onward with death as the only terminus. One never reaches the horizon; it is always just beyond, ever beckoning onward; it is the pursuit of life itself. This is the world as it is. This is where you start.

It is not a world of peace and beauty and dispassionate rationality, but as Henry James once wrote, "Life is, in fact, a battle. Evil is insolent and strong; beauty enchanting but rare; goodness very apt to be weak; folly very apt to be defiant; wickedness to carry the day; imbeciles to be in great places, people of sense in small, and mankind generally unhappy. But the world as it stands is no narrow illusion, no phantasm, no evil dream of the night; we wake up to it again forever and ever; and we can neither forget it nor deny it nor dispense with it." Henry James's statement is an affirmation of that of Job: "The life of man upon earth is a warfare . . ." Disraeli put it succinctly: "Political life must be taken as you find it."

Once we have moved into the world as it is then we begin to shed fallacy after fallacy. The prime illusion we must rid ourselves of is the conventional view in which things are seen separate from their inevitable counterparts.

We know intellectually that everything is functionally inter-related, but in our operations we segment and isolate all values and issues. Everything about us must be seen as the indivisible partner of its converse, light and darkness, good and evil, life and death. From the moment we are born we begin to die. Happiness and misery are inseparable. So are peace and war. The threat of destruction from nuclear energy conversely carries the opportunity of peace and plenty, and so with every component of this universe; all is paired in this enormous Noah's Ark of life.

Life seems to lack rhyme or reason or even a shadow of order unless we approach it with the key of converses. Seeing everything in its duality, we begin to get some dim clues to direction and what it's all about. It is in these contradictions and their incessant interacting tensions that creativity begins. As we begin to accept the concept of contradictions we see every problem or issue in its whole, inter-related sense. We then recognize that for every positive there is a negative,^o and that there is nothing positive without its concomitant negative, nor any political paradise without its negative side.

Niels Bohr pointed out that the appearance of contradictions was a signal that the experiment was on the right track: "There is not much hope if we have only one difficulty, but when we have two, we can match them off against each other." Bohr called this "complementarity,"

^o For more than four thousand years the Chinese have been familiar with the principle of complementarity in their philosophical life. They believe that from the illimitable (nature, God or gods) came the principle of creation which they called the Great Extreme and from the Great Extreme came the Two Principles or Dual Powers, Yang and Yin, out of which came everything else. Yang and Yin have been defined as positive and negative, light and darkness, male and female, or numerous other examples of opposites or converses.

meaning that the interplay of seemingly conflicting forces or opposites is the actual harmony of nature. Whitehead similarly observed, "In formal logic, a contradiction is the signal of a defeat; but in the evolution of real knowledge it marks the first step in progress towards a victory."

Everywhere you look all change shows this complementarity. In Chicago the people of Upton Sinclair's *Jungle*, then the worst slum in America, crushed by starvation wages when they worked, demoralized, diseased, living in rotting shacks, were organized. Their banners proclaimed equality for all races, job security, and a decent life for all. With their power they fought and won. Today, as part of the middle class, they are also part of our racist, discriminatory culture.

The Tennessee Valley Authority was one of the prize jewels in the democratic crown. Visitors came from every part of the world to see, admire, and study this physical and social achievement of a free society. Today it is the scourge of the Cumberland Mountains, strip mining for coal and wreaking havoc on the countryside.

The C.I.O. was the militant champion of America's workers. In its ranks, directly and indirectly, were all of America's radicals; they fought the corporate structure of the nation and won. Today, merged with the A.F. of L., it is an entrenched member of the establishment and its leader supports the war in Vietnam.

Another example is today's high-rise public housing projects. Originally conceived and carried through as major advances in ridding cities of slums, they involved the tearing down of rotting, rat-infested tenements, and the erection of modern apartment buildings. They were acclaimed as America's refusal to permit its people to live in the dirty shambles of the slums. It is common knowledge that they have turned into jungles of horror and now confront us with the problem of how we can either convert or get rid of

them. They have become compounds of double segregation—on the bases of both economy and race—and a danger for anyone compelled to live in these projects. A beautiful positive dream has grown into a negative nightmare.

It is the universal tale of revolution and reaction. It is the constant struggle between the positive and its converse negative, which includes the reversal of roles so that the positive of today is the negative of tomorrow and vice versa.

This view of nature recognizes that reality is dual. The principles of quantum mechanics in physics apply even more dramatically to the mechanics of mass movements. This is true not only in "complementarity" but in the repudiation of the hitherto universal concept of causality, whereby matter and physics were understood in terms of cause and effect, where for every effect there had to be a cause and one always produced the other. In quantum mechanics, causality was largely replaced by probability: an electron or atom did not have to do anything specific in response to a particular force; there was just a set of probabilities that it would react in this or that way. This is fundamental in the observations and propositions which follow. At no time in any discussion or analysis of mass movements, tactics, or any other phase of the problem, can it be said that if this is done then that will result. The most we can hope to achieve is an understanding of the probabilities consequent to certain actions.

This grasp of the duality of all phenomena is vital in our understanding of politics. It frees one from the myth that one approach is positive and another negative. There is no such thing in life. One man's positive is another man's negative. The description of any procedure as "positive" or "negative" is the mark of a political illiterate.

Once the nature of revolution is understood from the dualistic outlook we lose our mono-view of a revolution and

see it coupled with its inevitable counterrevolution. Once we accept and learn to anticipate the inevitable counterrevolution, we may then alter the historical pattern of revolution and counterrevolution from the traditional slow advance of two steps forward and one step backward to minimizing the latter. Each element with its positive and converse sides is fused to other related elements in an endless series of everything, so that the converse of revolution on one side is counterrevolution and on the other side, reformation, and so on in an endless chain of connected converses.

CLASS DISTINCTIONS: THE TRINITY

The setting for the drama of change has never varied. Mankind has been and is divided into three parts: the Haves, the Have-Nots, and the Have-a-Little, Want Mores.

On top are the Haves with power, money, food, security, and luxury. They suffocate in their surpluses while the Have-Nots starve. Numerically the Haves have always been the fewest. The Haves want to keep things as they are and are opposed to change. Thermopolitically they are cold and determined to freeze the status quo.

On the bottom are the world's Have-Nots. On the world scene they are by far the greatest in numbers. They are chained together by the common misery of poverty, rotten housing, disease, ignorance, political impotence, and despair; when they are employed their jobs pay the least and they are deprived in all areas basic to human growth. Caged by color, physical or political, they are barred from an opportunity to represent themselves in the politics of

life. The Haves want to keep; the Have-Nots want to get. Thermopolitically they are a mass of cold ashes of resignation and fatalism, but inside there are glowing embers of hope which can be fanned by the building of means of obtaining power. Once the fever begins the flame will follow. They have nowhere to go but up.

They hate the establishment of the Haves with its arrogant opulence, its police, its courts, and its churches. Justice, morality, law, and order, are mere words when used by the Haves, which justify and secure their status quo. The power of the Have-Nots rests only with their numbers. It has been said that the Haves, living under the nightmare of possible threats to their possessions, are always faced with the question of "when do we sleep?" while the perennial question of the Have-Nots is "when do we eat?" The cry of the Have-Nots has never been "give us your hearts" but always "get off our backs"; they ask not for love but for breathing space.

Between the Haves and Have-Nots are the Have-a-Little, Want Mores—the middle class. Torn between upholding the status quo to protect the little they have, yet wanting change so they can get more, they become split personalities. They could be described as social, economic, and political schizoids. Generally, they seek the safe way, where they can profit by change and yet not risk losing the little they have. They insist on a minimum of three aces before playing a hand in the poker game of revolution. Thermopolitically they are tepid and rooted in inertia. Today in Western society and particularly in the United States they comprise the majority of our population.

Yet in the conflicting interests and contradictions within the Have-a-Little, Want Mores is the genesis of creativity. Out of this class have come, with few exceptions, the great world leaders of change of the past centuries:

Moses, Paul of Tarsus, Martin Luther, Robespierre, Georges Danton, Samuel Adams, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, Napoleon Bonaparte, Giuseppe Garibaldi, Nikolai Lenin, Mahatma Gandhi, Fidel Castro, Mao Tse-tung, and others.

Just as the clash of interests within the Have-a-Little, Want Mores has bred so many of the great leaders it has also spawned a particular breed stalemated by cross interests into inaction. These Do-Nothings profess a commitment to social change for ideals of justice, equality, and opportunity, and then abstain from and discourage all effective action for change. They are known by their brand, "I agree with your ends but not your means." They function as blankets whenever possible smothering sparks of dissension that promise to flare up into the fire of action. These Do-Nothings appear publicly as good men, humanitarian, concerned with justice and dignity. In practice they are invidious. They are the ones Edmund Burke referred to when he said, acidly: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." Both the revolutionary leaders, or the Doers, and the Do-Nothings will be examined in these pages.

The history of prevailing status quos shows decay and decadence infecting the opulent materialism of the Haves. The spiritual life of the Haves is a ritualistic justification of their possessions.

More than one hundred years ago, Tocqueville commented, as did other students of America at that time, that self-indulgence accompanied by concern for nothing except personal materialistic welfare was the major menace to America's future. Whitehead noted in *Adventures of Ideas* that "The enjoyment of power is fatal to the subtleties of life. Ruling classes degenerate by reason of their lazy indulgence in obvious gratifications." In such a state

men may be said to fall asleep, for it is in sleep that we each turn away from the world about us to our private worlds.^o I must quote one more book pertinent to this subject: in *Alice in Wonderland*, Tiger-Lily explains about the talking flowers to Alice. Tiger-Lily points out that the flowers that talk grow out of hard beds of ground and "in most gardens," Tiger-Lily says, "they make the beds too soft—so that the flowers are always asleep." It is as though the great law of change had prepared the anesthe-sization of the victim prior to the social surgery to come.

Change means movement. Movement means friction. Only in the frictionless vacuum of a nonexistent abstract world can movement or change occur without that abra-sive friction of conflict. In these pages it is our open po-litical purpose to cooperate with the great law of change; to want otherwise would be like King Canute's command-ing the tides and waves to cease.

A word about my personal philosophy. It is anchored in optimism. It must be, for optimism brings with it hope, a future with a purpose, and therefore, a will to fight for a better world. Without this optimism, there is no reason to carry on. If we think of the struggle as a climb up a moun-tain, then we must visualize a mountain with no top. We see a top, but when we finally reach it, the overcast rises and we find ourselves merely on a bluff. The mountain continues on up. Now we see the "real" top ahead of us, and strive for it, only to find we've reached another bluff, the top still above us. And so it goes on, interminably.

Knowing that the mountain has no top, that it is a per-petual quest from plateau to plateau, the question arises, "Why the struggle, the conflict, the heartbreak, the danger, the sacrifice. Why the constant climb?" Our answer is the

^o Heraclitus, *Fragments*: "The waking have one world in common; sleep-ers have each a private world of his own."

same as that which a real mountain climber gives when he is asked why he does what he does. "Because it's there." Because life is there ahead of you and either one tests oneself in its challenges or huddles in the valleys in a dreamless day-to-day existence whose only purpose is the preservation of an illusory security and safety. The latter is what the vast majority of people choose to do, fearing the adventure into the unknown. Paradoxically, they give up the dream of what may lie ahead on the heights of tomorrow for a perpetual nightmare—an endless succession of days fearing the loss of a tenuous security.

Unlike the chore of the mythic Sisyphus, this challenge is not an endless pushing up of a boulder to the top of a hill, only to have it roll back again, the chore to be repeated eternally. It is pushing the boulder up an endless mountain, but, unlike Sisyphus, we are always going further upward. And also unlike Sisyphus, each stage of the trail upward is different, newly dramatic, an adventure each time.

At times we do fall back and become discouraged, but it is not that we are making no progress. Simply, this is the very nature of life—that it is a climb—and that the resolution of each issue in turn creates other issues, born of plights which are unimaginable today. The pursuit of happiness is never-ending; happiness lies in the pursuit.

Confronted with the materialistic decadence of the status quo, one should not be surprised to find that all revolutionary movements are primarily generated from spiritual values and considerations of justice, equality, peace, and brotherhood. History is a relay of revolutions; the torch of idealism is carried by the revolutionary group until this group becomes an establishment, and then quietly the torch is put down to wait until a new revolutionary group picks it up for the next leg of the run. Thus the revolutionary cycle goes on.

A major revolution to be won in the immediate future is the dissipation of man's illusion that his own welfare can be separate from that of all others. As long as man is shackled to this myth, so long will the human spirit languish. Concern for our private, material well-being with disregard for the well-being of others is immoral according to the precepts of our Judaeo-Christian civilization, but worse, it is stupidity worthy of the lower animals. It is man's foot still dragging in the primeval slime of his beginnings, in ignorance and mere animal cunning. But those who know the interdependence of man to be his major strength in the struggle out of the muck have not been wise in their exhortations and moral pronouncements that man is his brother's keeper. On that score the record of the past centuries has been a disaster, for it was wrong to assume that man would pursue morality on a level higher than his day-to-day living demanded; it was a disservice to the future to separate morality from man's daily desires and elevate it to a plane of altruism and self-sacrifice. The fact is that it is not man's "better nature" but his self-interest that demands that he be his brother's keeper. We now live in a world where no man can have a loaf of bread while his neighbor has none. If he does not share his bread, he dare not sleep, for his neighbor will kill him. To eat and sleep in safety man must do the right thing, if for seemingly the wrong reasons, and be in practice his brother's keeper.

I believe that man is about to learn that the most practical life is the moral life and that the moral life is the only road to survival. He is beginning to learn that he will either share part of his material wealth or lose all of it; that he will respect and learn to live with other political ideologies if he wants civilization to go on. This is the kind of argument that man's actual experience equips him to understand and accept. *This is the low road to morality. There is no other.*

Of Means and Ends

We cannot think first and act afterwards. From the moment of birth we are immersed in action and can only fitfully guide it by taking thought.

— ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD

THAT PERENNIAL QUESTION, "Does the end justify the means?" is meaningless as it stands; the real and only question regarding the ethics of means and ends is, and always has been, "Does this *particular* end justify this *particular* means?"

Life and how you live it is the story of means and ends. The *end* is what you want, and the *means* is how you get it. Whenever we think about social change, the question of means and ends arises. The man of action views the issue of means and ends in pragmatic and strategic terms. He has no other problem; he thinks only of his actual resources and the possibilities of various choices of action. He asks of ends only whether they are achievable and worth the cost; of means, only whether they will work. To say that corrupt means corrupt the ends is to believe in the immaculate conception of ends and principles. The real arena is corrupt and bloody. Life is a corrupting process from the time a child learns

to play his mother off against his father in the politics of when to go to bed; he who fears corruption fears life.

The practical revolutionary will understand Goethe's "conscience is the virtue of observers and not of agents of action"; in action, one does not always enjoy the luxury of a decision that is consistent both with one's individual conscience and the good of mankind. The choice must always be for the latter. Action is for mass salvation and not for the individual's personal salvation. He who sacrifices the mass good for his personal conscience has a peculiar conception of "personal salvation"; he doesn't care enough for people to be "corrupted" for them.

The men who pile up the heaps of discussion and literature on the ethics of means and ends—which with rare exception is conspicuous for its sterility—rarely write about their own experiences in the perpetual struggle of life and change. They are strangers, moreover, to the burdens and problems of operational responsibility and the unceasing pressure for immediate decisions. They are passionately committed to a mystical objectivity where passions are suspect. They assume a nonexistent situation where men dispassionately and with reason draw and devise means and ends as if studying a navigational chart on land. They can be recognized by one of two verbal brands: "We agree with the ends but not the means," or "This is not the time." *The means-and-end moralists or non-doers always wind up on their ends without any means.*

The means-and-ends moralists, constantly obsessed with the ethics of the means used by the Have-Nots against the Haves, should search themselves as to their real political position. In fact, they are passive—but real—allies of the Haves. They are the ones Jacques Maritain referred to in his statement, "The fear of soiling

ourselves by entering the context of history is not virtue, but a way of escaping virtue." These non-doers were the ones who chose not to fight the Nazis in the only way they could have been fought; they were the ones who drew their window blinds to shut out the shameful spectacle of Jews and political prisoners being dragged through the streets; they were the ones who privately deplored the horror of it all—and did nothing. This is the nadir of immorality. The most unethical of all means is the non-use of any means. It is this species of man who so vehemently and militantly participated in that classically idealistic debate at the old League of Nations on the ethical differences between defensive and offensive weapons. Their fears of action drive them to refuge in an ethics so divorced from the politics of life that it can apply only to angels, not to men. The standards of judgment must be rooted in the whys and wherefores of life as it is lived, the world as it is, not our wished-for fantasy of the world as it should be.

I present here a series of rules pertaining to the ethics of means and ends: first, that *one's concern with the ethics of means and ends varies inversely with one's personal interest in the issue*. When we are not directly concerned our morality overflows; as La Rochefoucauld put it, "We all have strength enough to endure the misfortunes of others." Accompanying this rule is the parallel one that *one's concern with the ethics of means and ends varies inversely with one's distance from the scene of conflict*.

The second rule of the ethics of means and ends is that the judgment of the ethics of means is dependent upon the political position of those sitting in judgment. If you actively opposed the Nazi occupation and joined the underground Resistance, then you adopted the means of

assassination, terror, property destruction, the bombing of tunnels and trains, kidnapping, and the willingness to sacrifice innocent hostages to the end of defeating the Nazis. Those who opposed the Nazi conquerors regarded the Resistance as a secret army of selfless, patriotic idealists, courageous beyond expectation and willing to sacrifice their lives to their moral convictions. To the occupation authorities, however, these people were lawless terrorists, murderers, saboteurs, assassins, who believed that the end justified the means, and were utterly unethical according to the mystical rules of war. Any foreign occupation would so ethically judge its opposition. However, in such conflict, neither protagonist is concerned with any value except victory. It is life or death.

To us the Declaration of Independence is a glorious document and an affirmation of human rights. To the British, on the other hand, it was a statement notorious for its deceit by omission. In the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Particulars attesting to the reasons for the Revolution cited all of the injustices which the colonists felt that England had been guilty of, but listed none of the benefits. There was no mention of the food the colonies had received from the British Empire during times of famine, medicine during times of disease, soldiers during times of war with the Indians and other foes, or the many other direct and indirect aids to the survival of the colonies. Neither was there notice of the growing number of allies and friends of the colonists in the British House of Commons, and the hope for imminent remedial legislation to correct the inequities under which the colonies suffered.

Jefferson, Franklin, and others were honorable men, but they knew that the Declaration of Independence was

a call to war. They also knew that a list of many of the constructive benefits of the British Empire to the colonists would have so diluted the urgency of the call to arms for the Revolution as to have been self-defeating. The result might well have been a document attesting to the fact that justice weighted down the scale at least 60 per cent on our side, and only 40 per cent on their side; and that because of that 20 per cent difference we were going to have a Revolution. To expect a man to leave his wife, his children, and his home, to leave his crops standing in the field and pick up a gun and join the Revolutionary Army for a 20 per cent difference in the balance of human justice was to defy common sense.

The Declaration of Independence, as a declaration of war, had to be what it was, a 100 per cent statement of the justice of the cause of the colonists and a 100 per cent denunciation of the role of the British government as evil and unjust. Our cause had to be all shining justice, allied with the angels; theirs had to be all evil, tied to the Devil; in no war has the enemy or the cause ever been gray. Therefore, from one point of view the omission was justified; from the other, it was deliberate deceit.

History is made up of "moral" judgments based on politics. We condemned Lenin's acceptance of money from the Germans in 1917 but were discreetly silent while our Colonel William B. Thompson in the same year contributed a million dollars to the anti-Bolsheviks in Russia. As allies of the Soviets in World War II we praised and cheered communist guerrilla tactics when the Russians used them against the Nazis during the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union; we denounce the same tactics when they are used by communist forces in different parts of

the world against us. The opposition's means, used against us, are always immoral and our means are always ethical and rooted in the highest of human values. George Bernard Shaw, in *Man and Superman*, pointed out the variations in ethical definitions by virtue of where you stand. Mendoza said to Tanner, "I am a brigand; I live by robbing the rich." Tanner replied, "I am a gentleman; I live by robbing the poor. Shake hands."

The third rule of the ethics of means and ends is that in war the end justifies almost any means. Agreements on the Geneva rules on treatment of prisoners or use of nuclear weapons are observed only because the enemy or his potential allies may retaliate.

Winston Churchill's remarks to his private secretary a few hours before the Nazis invaded the Soviet Union graphically pointed out the politics of means and ends in war. Informed of the imminent turn of events, the secretary inquired how Churchill, the leading British anti-communist, could reconcile himself to being on the same side as the Soviets. Would not Churchill find it embarrassing and difficult to ask his government to support the communists? Churchill's reply was clear and unequivocal: "Not at all. I have only one purpose, the destruction of Hitler, and my life is much simplified thereby. If Hitler invaded Hell I would make at least a favorable reference to the Devil in the House of Commons."

In the Civil War President Lincoln did not hesitate to suspend the right of habeas corpus and to ignore the directive of the Chief Justice of the United States. Again, when Lincoln was convinced that the use of military commissions to try civilians was necessary, he brushed aside the illegality of this action with the statement that it was "indispensable to the public safety." He believed

that the civil courts were powerless to cope with the insurrectionist activities of civilians. "Must I shoot a simple-minded soldier boy who deserts, while I must not touch a hair of a wily agitator who induces him to desert . . ."

The fourth rule of the ethics of means and ends is that judgment must be made in the context of the times in which the action occurred and not from any other chronological vantage point. The Boston Massacre is a case in point. "British atrocities alone, however, were not sufficient to convince the people that murder had been done on the night of March 5: There was a deathbed confession of Patrick Carr, that the townspeople had been the aggressors and that the soldiers had fired in self defense. This unlooked-for recantation from one of the martyrs who was dying in the odor of sanctity with which Sam Adams had vested them sent a wave of alarm through the patriot ranks. But Adams blasted Carr's testimony in the eyes of all pious New Englanders by pointing out that he was an Irish 'papist' who had probably died in the confession of the Roman Catholic Church. After Sam Adams had finished with Patrick Carr even Tories did not dare to quote him to prove Bostonians were responsible for the Massacre."° To the British this was a false, rotten use of bigotry and an immoral means characteristic of the Revolutionaries, or the Sons of Liberty. To the Sons of Liberty and to the patriots, Sam Adams' action was brilliant strategy and a God-sent lifesaver. Today we may look back and regard Adams' action in the same light as the British did, but remember that we are not today involved in a revolution against the British Empire.

Ethical standards must be elastic to stretch with

° *Sam Adams, Pioneer in Propaganda*, by John C. Miller.

the times. In politics, the ethics of means and ends can be understood by the rules suggested here. History is made up of little else but examples such as our position on freedom of the high seas in 1812 and 1917 contrasted with our 1962 blockade of Cuba, or our alliance in 1942 with the Soviet Union against Germany, Japan and Italy, and the reversal in alignments in less than a decade.

Lincoln's suspension of habeas corpus, his defiance of a directive of the Chief Justice of the United States, and the illegal use of military commissions to try civilians, were by the same man who had said in Springfield, fifteen years earlier: "Let me not be understood as saying that there are no bad laws, or that grievances may not arise for the redress of which no legal provisions have been made. I mean to say no such thing. But I do mean to say that although bad laws, if they exist, should be repealed, still, while they continue in force, for the sake of example, they should be religiously observed."

This was also the same Lincoln who, a few years prior to his signing the Emancipation Proclamation, stated in his First Inaugural Address: "I do but quote from one of those speeches when I declared that 'I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so.' Those who nominated and elected me did so with full knowledge that I made this and many similar declarations and have never recanted them."

Those who would be critical of the ethics of Lincoln's reversal of positions have a strangely unreal picture of a static unchanging world, where one remains firm and committed to certain so-called principles or positions. In the politics of human life, consistency is not a virtue. To

“This country’s leading hell-raiser . . . has set down some of the rules of the game. No one has had more experience or has been more successful at it than Alinsky.”

—*The Nation*

First published in 1971, *Rules for Radicals* is Saul Alinsky’s impassioned counsel to young radicals on how to effect constructive social change and know “the difference between being a realistic radical and being a rhetorical one.” Written in the midst of radical political developments whose direction Alinsky was one of the first to question, this volume exhibits his style at its best. Like Thomas Paine before him, Alinsky was able to combine, both in his person and his writing, the intensity of political engagement with an absolute insistence on rational political discourse and adherence to the American democratic tradition.

“Alinsky’s techniques and teachings influenced generations of community and labor organizers, including the church-based group hiring a young [Barack] Obama to work on Chicago’s South Side in the 1980s. . . . Alinsky impressed a young [Hillary] Clinton, who was growing up in Park Ridge at the time Alinsky was the director of the Industrial Areas Foundation in Chicago.”

—*Chicago Sun-Times*

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