

# AP Activities

## CHANGE

Something happened on the evening of Friday 17 May which may add a whole new dimension to what the AHP is and does in this country.

At a meeting in London the speakers were Jerry Rubin (Yippie Leader, one of the Chicago 7, now active in the growth movement), Stella Resnick (Gestalt therapist), Denny Yuson (ex-addict, founder of Phoenix House in London), Brian Dempsey (ex-addict, therapeutic community leader) and Rick Carlson (radical lawyer and author).

The purpose of the meeting was to bring together people who believe that a radical perspective today must embrace both political and personal awareness. Most of us, it has been said, seek change on only one level: we pursue political change on crutches, unwilling to face the change needed within the immediate personal environment; or we go in for endless self-development which turns more and more inward, and ignores the political realities which daily produce more and more pain. As Jerry Rubin has said (in *Psychology Today* for September 1973):

*My definition of 'political' has now expanded to include the food we eat, the excitement in our bodies, how we raise our children. People out of touch with their bodies cannot make a revolution. The political battles of the 1960s included too many crazy meetings, bureaucratic hassles, ideological wars because people were not aware of their own need for personal growth. In the 1970s we are going inward and discovering that we are the creators of our experience. Soon the spiritual and political revolutions will be joined: the inner and the outer.*

*To love your body, to accept yourself, to know your own personal rhythm, to go inward, gives you better control of your own life, and makes you better able to change the oppressive economic and political structure. Awareness of self is the first step to awareness of cultural oppression.*

*In fact, true self-awareness leads to the realisation that full self-growth is impossible in a corrupt, repressed and polluted society. Therapy by itself can become very narrow and result in an over-whelming absorption with one's self. The final therapy is a social revolution.*

About 300 people turned up for the meeting, and each of the speakers opened up for a short period, introducing themselves, their experience and their point of view. One of Brian Dempsey's sentences in this early part summed up a great deal of what came out of the whole meeting:

*It's not about bringing the growth movement into politics, so much as bringing politics into the growth movement.*

What became clearer and clearer as the audience participation progressed was that many political people - particularly those working in community politics and action at the grass-roots level - already have a lot of appreciation of what the growth movement has to offer, and merely resent the money involved in the work at present. But people in the growth movement seemed much more reluctant to see the necessity of political action.

It may be that people in the human potential movement are less willing to go in for political activities because of a misconception of what political activity means. The old dogmatic left built up a reputation for boring meetings, unreadable pamphlets, hierarchical organization, alienated social relations and a refusal to face the Fascist in oneself - and this is still many people's image of what politics is all about. But the developmental left is not like this. The women's movement showed that it was possible to have meetings which really meant something; that pamphlets did not have to be unreadable (see Shrew Vol.5 No.3, for example); that organization did not have to be hierarchical; that social relations could be warm and human - and *more* political at the same time; and that one could open oneself up to the hurt and anger within oneself without weakening one's militancy in any way. And other groups on the left have now learned from this - this kind of approach is now not peculiar to the women's movement any more, though they did pioneer it.

This means that there is now a real opportunity for the growth movement and political activists to come together - and particularly for people who have learned something from the growth movement to become more active politically. A follow-up meeting is being arranged, and it is hoped that some more concrete ideas will come out of this as to what may be done. If you would like to keep in touch with this new development, write to '17 May', c/o AHP, 57 Minster Road, London NW2.

It is also hoped that Self & Society will carry articles, cartoons, etc., about these changes. In the past, Self & Society has been more Self than society - maybe it is about time that the balance changed a bit. Contributions are wanted now.

## **AHP International Newsletter**

Members of the AHP are now advised that they are now entitled to receive the monthly International Newsletter, if they want it. Address requests to Helen Davis, AHP Secretary, 57 Minster Road, London NW2.

**Carl Rogers Workshop**

Carl Rogers will be coming to Britain in October, and will conduct a workshop 18-20 October at the Post House, Allesley, Near Coventry. Details and application forms from Dave Mearns, 9 Annan Glade, Motherwell ML1 2BT, Lanarkshire.

**Albert Ellis Lectures And Demonstrations**

Albert Ellis will be giving 5 lectures and demonstrations on rational emotive therapy on the 9-10 July at the Windeyer Building, Cleveland Street, London W1. Details and application forms from The Programme Secretary, Institute of Behaviour Therapy Ltd., 38 Weymouth Street, London W1.



You are invited to find out how humanistic psychology helps to generate a way of life, not only for the person himself in his own private psyche, but also for the same person as a social being, a member of society.

The subscription is £6 per year, which includes a subscription to Self & Society, or £4 for mailing members. Mailing members receive Self & Society and all communications from the AHP and will be entitled to attend all meetings but without discounts.

To: The Treasurer, Association for Humanistic Psychology,  
62 Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 0AU.

I would like to join the AHP in Britain, and enclose my first year's subscription.

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