

public workshops in Denmark, the Netherlands and Italy and are being taught how to design and administer their own workshops.

Gestalt can be understood easily when regarded as an educational scheme. The Gestalt trainer frustrates awkward and dull styles of behaviour or consciousness. He observes the wisdom of his or her trainees, encourages this wisdom to flow gracefully and clearly, and accepts and delights in the discovery of this treasure sleeping ignored within them.

The elements of the Gestalt educational scheme remain hidden by appearing obvious, which make them difficult to discover by independent investigation.

Larry Isaac Bloomberg

For Humanistic Psychology - a reply

Barbara Moore

Barry Richards presented his case 'against' in the August issue of 'Self and Society'; (*Against Humanistic Psychology*) he made a stern appeal for political and social commitment rather than the self-centred introversion of which he accuses Encounter. Apparently we are all sitting contemplating our psyches, instead of working for the revolution (an external one, of course).

It is not so long that the Russian Revolution was followed by Stalin's rise to power; this showed all too clearly what can happen to a Left-wing political revolution. There was little to choose between the excesses of Stalin and those of Hitler. People are only too willing to abnegate responsibility for themselves, and to follow, even to their own destruction, some powerful, authoritarian Father-figure, subjugating self to an ideal-the Fatherland, the State. If Stalin and Hitler are too remote, we need only look at the near-deification of Chairman Mao, with the Little Red Book taking the place of Holy writ.

I would argue, along with Reich, that a political revolution is foredoomed without a social and personal revolution, and I will return to this point.

However, I must agree with Barry Richards when he says that Encounter is largely a middle-class occupation for those with spare time and money. I don't see anything here like Reich's free Vienna clinic, where people in thousands came to ask advice on social and sexual problems. All the same, I don't think it's quite fair to assume, as Barry Richards seems to in his rather disparaging reference to them, that the academics, social workers, clerics and so on who go to Encounter groups are *not* socially committed. They may well be as committed as Barry Richards himself. Many

of the people I have met in groups are in fact, working like a leaven in the societies to which they return. Teachers, for example, are teaching children to read newspapers with a critical eye; to sort fact from opinion; to see through the claims of advertising and other kinds of propaganda, to question authority, and to set up their own democratic institutions.

In his final paragraph, Barry Richards says that Encounter encourages 'The ideology of personal adjustment *as opposed to* political commitment and organisation; of self-fulfilment *as opposed to* social change, and of serving self and not others.'

Are these aims so incompatible? I don't see why we can't aim for personal *as well as* social change, political commitment *and* self-fulfilment. In fact, I would argue, with Reich, that unless these do go hand-in-hand, the political revolution that Barry Richards is committed to will fail, and the people will flock to leaders with feet of clay, if not bloody hands. Power politics does seem to attract psychopathic personalities.

In so far as Encounter is helping us towards self-responsibility, and away from infantile and neurotic dependence on authority, it is working on the side of change and progress. It's worth remembering that, arguably, the most popular politician in this country today is Enoch Powell; and that his support is not just middle-class. He has a considerable following among dockers and other workers; and they can be as bigoted and bloody-minded as any Colonel Blimp. Barry Richards and other left-wing writers sometimes assume that you have got to be working-class to be saved! I wish that from time to time they would remember that the Nazi party had massive popular support - the workers flocked to Hitler in their thousands. Here today Enoch talks about 'financing Commonwealth immigrants' re-patriation', but it is the workers who translate this as 'Wogs go home' - quite forgetting about the brotherhood of man! Enoch appeals to deeply-seated irrational feelings, common to all classes of people; such feelings as the fear of the Negro supposedly superior sexuality. You have only to look at attitudes towards mixed marriages, and behind such phrases as 'they breed like rabbits', to realise this. Social and political solutions which attempt to ignore this kind of irrationality do so at their peril. There will always be those who will seize on irrationality do so at their peril. There will always be those who will seize on it for political advantage. And it is not only bad social conditions, such as shortage of housing or jobs, that give rise to these attitudes; such problems may aggravate the situation, but the feelings are already there.

So, the quest for personal adjustment is not merely the selfish, introverted occupation that Barry Richards seems to believe. If you still don't believe this, ask yourself this, Barry - wouldn't the world have been spared a great deal of suffering if Hitler and Stalin had gone in for self-fulfilment and personal adjustment, instead of political commitment and organisation?
