

4th intern. conv., Essen, Germany (Secretary General, Bemeroder Strasse 61, Hannover-Kirchrode, Germany.)

11-15. Salinity Problems in the Arid Zones, UNESCO symp., Tehran, Iran. (UNESCO, 19, avenue Kleber, Paris 16<sup>e</sup>, France.)

12-17. American Acad. of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology, Chicago, Ill. (W. L. Benedict, 100 First Ave. Bldg., Rochester, Minn.)

13-15. Association of American Medical Colleges, 69th annual, Philadelphia, Pa. (W. Darley, AAMC, 2530 Ridge Ave., Evanston, Ill.)

13-15. National Electronics Conf., Chicago, Ill. (L. W. Von Tersch, Michigan State Univ., East Lansing.)

13-16. Society of Exploration Geophysicists, 28th annual intern., San Antonio, Tex. (C. C. Campbell, Box 1536, Tulsa 1, Okla.)

13-17. American Soc. of Civil Engineers, annual conv., New York, N.Y. (W. H. Wisely, ASCE, 33 West 39 St., New York 18.)

15-17. American Ceramics Soc., Glass Div., Bedford, Pa. (C. S. Pearce, 4055 N. High St., Columbus 14, Ohio.)

19-22. Land and Water, Soil Conservation Soc. of America, 13th annual, Asheville, N.C. (H. W. Pritchard, 838 Fifth Ave., Des Moines 14, Iowa.)

19-24. American Soc. of Anesthesiologists, Pittsburgh, Pa. (J. E. Remlinger, 802 Ashland Ave., Wilmette, Ill.)

(See issue of 15 August for comprehensive list)

## Letters

### Human Rights and Society

In T. Dobzhansky's article, "Evolution at work" [*Science* 127, 1091 (1958)], which in general I found most interesting and instructive, there appears an incautious phrase or two which stands in need either of clarification or correction. I refer to his brief mention of the relation of biological to cultural evolution, wherein he makes the claims that "all men are equal in rights, but they are most certainly not biologically uniform," and that genetic diversity "does not make some of us superior and others inferior; no human being should ever be used as a means to an end" (1).

The first of these two claims as to the rights of man is rather obviously an assertion more easily stated than demonstrated, and the second claim runs head-on into some of the disturbing practicalities of man's sociocultural existence. I do not wish to belabor my point—in part because I do not believe my own and Dobzhansky's personal sympathies and orientations are too diverse. But there is need to call attention to the embarrassing and readily available evidence for the claims made: in all cultures to date, despite verbalizations at

times to the contrary, men have not had equal rights, and the evidence would seem to indicate that it is rather dubious that such a state could ever be realized in human social affairs. The second claim, that no human being should ever be used as a means to an end, is an expression of an ideal that hardly takes into account the nature of man or of his social existence—past or present, or what conceivably might be realized in the future. Aside from the issue of claims such as these appearing in their unsubstantiated form, it is of interest to note that with such claims, I fear, Dobzhansky tends to place himself in the moral position occupied by Christianity. As Whitehead once said: "a sense of responsibility for the continuance of a social system is basic to any morality. Now this form of responsibility is almost entirely absent from Christianity. Jesus hardly mentions it, except for one or two remarks. . . . A society run on strictly Christian principles could not survive at all" (2).

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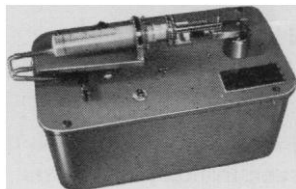
#### References

1. T. Dobzhansky, *Science* 127, 1097 (1958).
2. L. Price, Ed., *Dialogues of Alfred North Whitehead* (Mentor, New York, 1954), p. 212.

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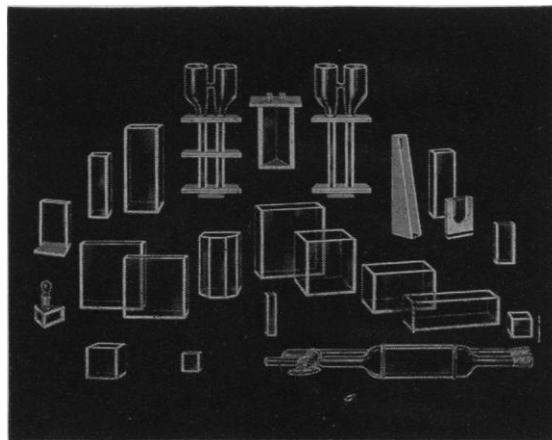


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