

something new? Copernicus's discoveries must have had a much more shattering effect on his contemporaries. Was not castration, probably the oldest known biomedical technology, even more dehumanizing than slavery in a world deeply committed to fertility-oriented religion? There has always been a "morality gap." "We could justly accuse the whole human race, since we became human, of a morality gap; and this gap has been growing wider as technology has been making cumulative progress while morality has been stagnating" (1).

What is to be done? Plato, in presenting a history of Socrates' life, quotes his teacher as saying: "When I was young, I was interested in the current fashionable philosophy, which was physical science, physics and astronomy, and geology. I came to realize that the important thing in the universe is human beings, not non-human nature, not the movements of the stars and not the nature of the chemical elements. What is important is the human spirit, so I decided that I would turn away from the study of non-human nature and would study why it is that men know what is good, but do what is bad." Toynbee (1) calls this a turning point in Greek morality. This same search has to become the turning point of our times. But by new institutions only? By properly educated people who are wiser and more clever? This is only a small and unsatisfying part of the total answer. It is more important, if not essential, to revise the orientation of mankind and the definition of man's location in the universe and his fate—individually and as a race. This orientation has to be religious in nature. Science, since the age of enlightenment, has been dedicated to, or fond of, atheism. Science, despite its secular traditions, should accept religion as a prerequisite for survival. Teilhard de Jardin presented a model for the possible marriage of modern science and the religious craving that is inherent in man. The fact that Albert Einstein was a deeply religious man, convinced of the existence of God (2), only shows that the torchbearers of scientific progress might also be the new saints, giving guidance to the essence of all great religions; egocentricity, man's fundamental problem and the cause of the morality gap of yesterday, today, and tomorrow, can be conquered by surrendering to spiritual, nonpossessive love, a task which philosophies only rarely and pseudo-religions, like Lenin-

ism and Maoism, never have achieved. Individual awareness of man's dignity in this religious sense, acceptance of the individual's responsibility toward mankind, and education devoid of short-sightedness and close-mindedness toward tolerance and mental stability, seem to hold the key to at least partial avoidance of "the accidents of our hasty, biased, ephemeral judgments." Let us never cease hoping that enough time is granted to reach these goals before it is too late for the victims of those hasty, biased, and ephemeral judgments.

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1. A. J. Toynbee, *Surviving the Future* (Oxford Univ. Press, New York, 1971).
2. H. K. U. von Kessler, *In the Twenties: The Diaries of Harry Kessler*, trans. by C. Kessler (Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, New York, 1971).

Chest X-rays

Science is to be commended for its attention (see News and Comment, 10 Dec. 1971, p. 1114) to the ineffectual use of mass chest x-ray screening programs which result in unnecessary and avoidable x-ray exposure to the general population. In this connection, the U.S. Public Health Service, in cooperation with the American College of Radiology and the American College of Chest Physicians, issued a policy statement on 18 February 1972 that recommended discontinuance of the use of the chest x-ray screening procedure for detecting cardiopulmonary disease.

The Bureau of Radiological Health of the Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, took the lead in developing the policy as a part of its continuing efforts over many years to reduce unnecessary and unproductive radiation of the public from all sources. In particular, the statement on chest x-ray screening policy resulted from activities which the bureau initiated over 3 years ago, evolving through consultations with interested individuals and groups in addition to the two groups which co-sponsored issuance of the statement. This fact should be reassuring to those readers of *Science* who were not aware of our efforts.

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