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HISTORY MUST BE TOLD

(1954)

{ } = word or expression can't be understood {word} = hard to understand, might be this

I

1

A friend of mine happened to be made the chairman of a club of graduate students, most of them graduate students of history in a famous university. And he was good enough to invite me to meet his friends. So I went down. And during the evening, they talked of their doctors' theses. And 22 out of 25 future historians considered the writing of their theses as a chore. They said, in so many words, that they really were bored.

2

Bored by history? I did not trust my ears. As you know, we in this course have started on the assumption that there is indeed a -- kind of escape from history, among the ordinary people. And we have accepted this fact. The man in the street shrugs off history as dry bones. Only if he's polite, he may put the -- dry bones in a -- into a beautiful museum.

But now I have to accept a second lesson. The experts themselves are typical escapists from history. Indifference on both sides of the counter threatens history with meaninglessness.

3

Once such a chill has killed the flowering of the historical sentiment, argument will never do. An allergy is an allergy. I well know that our public feeds on historical fiction, on biographies. But two-thirds of these books are pure fiction. And these substitutes therefore can never give this -- experiences, which I feel in the face of true history.

4

Therefore, I do not recommend any doping by novels. I retreat. If I read Pandit Nehru's Glimpses of World History, I here see a very good man, and an honest man who gazes into the thousands of years behind us, and is hardly finding one interesting episode every 500 years; just glimpses into the dark, in an ocean of meaninglessness.

And then I can understand all the haters of history. They see too many histories, and never and nowhere one history.

II

1

I could only have respect myself for one single, whole, universal history of the human race. Until this universal history can be read again, I'm not going to sell history to anybody. Don't expect today any argument in favor of history.

No, I intend to find out for myself what history is, always has been, and will have to be again before it should be taught in any school of the land.

2

I shall put two signposts on the portals through which we now are going to descend into the hell of history.

One of the signposts relates to the fact; the other refers to the form. That is, one speaks of the events in history; and the other speaks of the people who tell the facts, or write them down, the men we call historians.

The first signpost, about the content of history, has been varied often. I do not know which variation may have reached your ear already. I shall quote in it -- in its oldest form, by an Italian, Beccaria -- 200 years back, who said, "Happy the nation without a history."

3

Could it be that there already we have the explanation, why little enthusiasm is felt among graduate students of history?

Happy we are without history. "Happy the people whose annals are blank in history," Carlyle has said. And the great German-American Carl Schurz has said, "Happy the people without history," and, added he, "We have even too much of it."

4

He who craves happiness, then, must not turn towards history. If the pursuit of happiness is a man's right, and a man's main theme, the pursuit of history can never be history. Not his wa- -- this way, happiness.

Proud Arthur Schopenhauer, this greatest educator of the middle classes, closed his rema- -- work with the remark, "Ninety-nine percent of the people assume that life is given them for their own benefit and satisfaction. To those," he said, "I have nothing to offer." To those who pursue happiness, history also offers nothing. They are then justified in shouting, "Down with history!"

II

1

The next shingle which I shall hang out concerns the form of history.

How do you or I come to know history, to witness history?

The answer given by a man like Carlyle is rather startling. And it probably again repels 99 percent of the ordinary, professional historians. Carlyle said, "In a certain sense, all men are historians."

2

My 22 bored friends of Harvard would certainly resent this dictum. Here they go out to become experts in history. And Carlyle s- -- tells them that it isn't necessary. Everyone can do just the same.

They wanted at least to become the experts to whom the laymen have to come, and whom they have to hire to learn anything about history. If we all are historians, much of the luster of the professional historian will vanish. Perhaps with this luster, the boredom too might vanish.

3

But it is not an insipid idea that these monumental -- monuments of -- but is this not an insipid idea that these monuments of erudition, of historical literature, these volumes should be built on the quicksand of a universal priesthood of all the believers in history? The professional historian must shudder and see all his authority crumble.

4

Here we have then two equally terrifying warnings. Right at the start of our descent into history.

The contents of history are not meant for the happiness of the many.

The form of history is not meant for the respect of the few.

III

1

Hush, hush, then. Let us inspect very privately now this monstrous dynamism -- mite to the -- happiness of the public, the thinner of the paint and {woad} of all professional pride.

What is history?

2

We now may be blunt about it as we have to pay now not to pay any regards to the happy many or the proud few. And we already know now two things:

history -- history -- and we now already know two things: history if it exists at all, must be going on in humanity without regard to your or my individual happiness.

And historians--that is, people conscious of history, we all may be without an academic degree.

3

Obviously, there is also a third fact about history which is known: it is not nature in its state of everyday recurrence. history brings in changes, newness. History then does not recur, but it occurs. It makes nobody particularly happy, but we all can testify to it.

4

From these three points, perhaps the riddle of the Sphinx becomes soluble.

IV

1

Let's be blunt. History is the story of how new qualities in the human race are created and handed over from generation to generation. It is the inheritance of acquired qualities, the transmission of new qualities.

It's the bettering of the times, as Shakespeare's sonnets call it.

2

It is the great story how you, for example, have become Americans.

Three hundred years ago, there were no Americans. And now we speak of "red-blood Americans." Now you take this for granted.

But obviously, this is a story.

3

How did it come about that there was a nation and is a nation on the globe that one time never existed?

History would have to contain, for example, the story of how being an American could ever enter the scene.

4

History is the story of the creation of new qualities.

How can any American deny that there is -- such a story? You can be spotted anywhere in the world. History tells us of the unbelievable creation of new events, because not only is it new, but it is unbelievable too before it has happened.

V

1

Our mind, our brain tries to deduce or reduce logically everything to its causes. Therefore really, for the brain, nothing new can ever enter the world.

You can always explain the Americans from their European roots. But can you? Obviously, there is some queer thing in America which forces us to say, "No. These people are Americans."

2

It is impossible by reason to prove that anything new ever can happen.

The Greeks and the Jews said that Christ could not have been born. And really, for the mind, it will always be un- -- impossible that a new thing can enter this tight system of forces, and energies, and masses, and quantities.

3

Everybody has said that people will not fly until Orville Wright did fly. Then, of course, they came and said, "We knew it all the time. It is so simple."

4

This is the firm tradition in human behavior.

First, when a new thing happens, they say it cannot happen, it is impossible. And they prove this logical-ly.

Then, the second thing, when they can't deny that it has happened, they say something else discovered it. And -- not the Wright brothers, for example.

And the third thing we always find in history is that the people at the end say, "We knew it all the time."

That is, today everybody believes that the Americans are just another race on the earth. Yesterday, they said, "These European emigr,s into North America are really nothing new, and they are no good." And before, they said, "There is no New World." The people at home in Spain said to Christo- pher Columbus there could not be another world -- a western way to India. And when they discovered it, they said, "Somebody else had discovered it." And as you know, they took all the honor from him and put him into chains. And Amerigo Vespucci got the name and the honor for his non-discovery of America. And so we call it America, instead of Columbia.

But by now, everybody has settled down and we say, "The people knew it all the time." And they even prove this. And they find on Cape Cod forged Viking runes, and so we say, "Everybody knew it all the time."

That is the story of everything new that happens in history.

VI

1

When Christ and His martyrs had just been killed in Palestine, there arose a famous sorcerer, Simon Magus, who said, "We don't need Jesus, and we don't need the Apostles. And we don't need any events in history. We have our brain. We have gnosis. The same wisdom, just on our own. Not -- no event like the Crucifixion is necessary for our salvation."

2

People will always act like this man Simon. They will not believe that even at this moment something new is happening in the world, because their logic says, "It cannot." A and B must lead to C, but then C is after all not independent, and therefore it is just the effect of two causes, and not very interesting in itself.

3

But history, certainly -- a certain instinct in all of us tells us that C must not be reduced to A and B. Christ must not be reduced to Judaism and Greek philosophy. America must not be reduced to the Chinese coolies and the Irish workmen who met in 1865 in the middle of the continent, when they finished the railroad. And a flight by Orville Wright cannot be reduced to the flight of the swallow or the flight of a kite. It is something new, one thing that has never been done before. You could have a glider before, and you could have a kite. But the ingenious idea of heavier than air, through movement, had to be hatched.

4

So this is the difficulty of history. History is no science, and shall never be a science, because science tells you how one thing follows out of the other. But this strange thing: history tells us how one thing came into light, despite all the reasons why it shouldn't.

All the others therefore, all the reasonable people -- always deny the new event before it happens. They state it, "It can never happen." And so we have this number of books, *It Can Happen Here*, sounding a warning that history is just the sequence of things that can happen here, because you do not expect them to happen.

VII

1

The result is, we now know history is the story of the unheard-of things. And science is the story of the deducible things.

2

History then is the story of new creations, or it is nothing. If you could reduce Hamlet to nothingness, to all the plays that were written before, then it wouldn't be worthwhile mentioning Hamlet.

We mention history, only the names that stand out and must be remembered for their own sake, because they cannot be reduced to names that existed before.

3

Take a very simple example. At Gettysburg, Mr. Everett from Harvard spoke for three hours. And he made an excellent speech, because he was a very famous orator. He represented Boston, and he talked so well that his speech today is forgotten. And it is forgotten, because you can analyze this speech into Harvard, into Massachusetts, into oratory, into the 19th century, into professors, into Aristotelian rhetorics. You can reduce it to all the elements that went into the making of this fine man and his three-hour speech. And that is all there is to this speech today.

And once you have analyzed this speech, you can write it yourself, and you perhaps improve on it.

And then, however, there was, as you well know, a three-minute speech at the same occasion, the Gettysburg Address, which was thrown into the wastepaper basket after it had been delivered.

4

Now not one of us could either think up, or compose, or reduce to logic, or rhetoric, or any such thing this speech. It is something unheard-of. And that is the reason why we commemorate the address by Lincoln, and why we have forgotten Mr. Everett.

And why Mr. Everett had the greatness of heart to defy his own brain, and to write to the president after both had spoken; and he said, he could only hope that his three-hour speech had not failed completely to convey some of the ideas which Mr. Lincoln had so masterfully conveyed in a few minutes.

This I call "greatness of heart" because this man recognized that something new had occurred.

VIII

1

Do you begin to understand that history can only consist of the things that cannot be rationally analyzed and deduced? Because otherwise there -- we would have no reason to speak of history. We would only speak of the laws of nature and their eternal recurrence.

2

If you think of chemistry, then you want to reduce the elements, or you want to reduce the mixture to its elements, and the elements to electrons.

But if you could reduce the -- Gettysburg Address to the 272 words out of which it is composed, and 172 of them are monosyllabic, then it would not be the Gettysburg Address.

3

That is, once you can reduce something great in life to something else, it ceases to be a topic of history. Anything that can be reduced to something else is historically -- nonexistent.

So if you can reduce the Declaration of Independence to the vested interests of the landowning class in this country, then you -- nobody any longer has any reason to learn the Declaration of Independence by heart.

4

And perhaps this is a help to understand our present-day plight.

There are, of course, a number of plush orations and of flag-waving memories which could be forgotten, and which are not historical. And many efforts of our present-day historians are very valuable, because they invalidate certain claims -- to be historical, to be monumental, to be memorable, and say, "No, this is not memorable, because it is just the poor digestion, or the financial interest, or the vanity of some little person, and he should not be remembered." But the tendency, which has been prevailing, to identify this kind of sifting process with history itself cannot be successful, because if you sift everything out of the sand and say, "There -- is no gold to be found in the sand," the gold-washing will stop.

IX

1

Take the Kinsey Report. Do you think that it is a new invention of Mr. Kinsey to prove that most of our efforts to love are abortive? That is the case since Adam and Eve. That is why we are not in paradise.

Of course. All the animals are much better off. They have a certain time in which to mate. They kill their rivals. But we can mate all the year around, and we can't kill all our rivals, so are very unhappy. We don't -- never know when it is time to love. 2

You may laugh, but please accept this as true. It makes true love all the more miraculous.

3

The Kinsey Report proves that marriage is a sacrament, because sacrament means always a free miracle by the grace of God. And it is all against the Kinsey Report's probabilities. Therefore, every marriage is really an unbelievable story, and it deserves to be told. Any courtship -- your parents have to tell you, or have to testify to the fact that they actually got married.

And everybody gets married in his own way. This is not just one story. But each courtship is an original story. Every marriage that is really a marriage is wrested from the statistics of the Kinsey Report as a miracle, as something absolutely unpredictable.

4

So then we now know that history is the record of the unheard-of, the improbable, the paradoxical, the thing that otherwise cannot be believed. History is the sum of the unbelievable things that become believable because they are told.

That two people should have emerged from the quagmire of mere sensuousness, and mere fear, and embarrassment, from their own prison--everybody knows how troublesome this prison is--that is miraculous. Your presence here, in this classroom, proves that long before you had the trouble yourself, your parents got out of trouble. And you are their legitimate offspring, and you make them forget all their troubles and sacrifices.

X

1

Once you understand that history should be sifted, and nothing -- contain nothing but the unbelievable facts, you will also understand the second dogma of history, that it is rather short.

2

This may come as a -- quite a shock to you. We have lengthened history in nature to 900 million years, or perhaps a little more. My answer is that when you sift the important events, the story of the past should never be much longer than the true promise of our own future.

If you want to control the validity of any historical outlook, please check the balance between the length of its future and the length of its past. And then you will find who understands much of history and who doesn't.

Because if you take the modern physicist, he has the shortest future and the longest past. Let him have his privilege to go back into millions of years. He has no relation to the future, and he has no relation to history, to tell you the truth. Only to recurrent nature.

3

Our two inscriptions on the portals into the gold mine of history read,

"No happiness, this way,"

and "Everybody is an historian."

Now you can understand easily why this must be so. New qualities for the human race have nothing to do with your or my private happiness. They go down through thousands of years as new qualities, and we inherit them. And this is the content of history.

And the other thing is: an unbelievable event, as we now know history to contain, an unbelievable event has the compulsion, the force to make us speak. An unbelievable story can only be known because it is told.

4

"Love had ripened into speech," William {Harnay} once wrote. Very beautiful line. A declaration of love is part of the love itself. A love story is no love story if the lover never tells the loved one that he loves her.

Therefore history itself produces its tellers, its tale-tellers. Somebody must be so impressed by the event that he cannot remain silent.

And it has been said that a great event is great because it compels somebody to speak of it.

XI

1

So we have bridged the gap, I think now, between the historian and the common people who want to be happy, and the real story of the acquisition of new qualities.

But I have to warn you against one more error.

The world is not divided into natural facts and historical facts, so that we leave one field to the physicist, and the other field to the historian. It is much more subtle. The same sun is new and is old. And the same sunrise therefore is a theme for the physicist and a theme for the historian.

If you look at the sunrise as repetitive and old, you go to the astronomer. If you look at it as unique, this Easter Sunday morning sunrise, then you go to the historian so that he may record it.

2

So we learn that history is an outlook on life, an approach to life, in which we take a fact and say, "It has never happened before. It is new." We may treat the trite recurrences as surprises that are sprung on us today for the first time, as long as you say, "I did not think that this would happen, before I have -- had read it."

That long, this story can become an event that is worthwhile to be remembered.

3

History then is an aspect. We can treat the founding fathers of this country, for example, not as caused by self-interest, but as causes that could be not deduced from the past. And therefore history is the encroachment of the free and creative future into the past. We look it -- into the past that it was at one time not there, and look to people as -- much as future as you and I now stare into the future and do not know what to expect.

4

Of this strange expectation of a different future, there are the clear vestiges in the past of our race. Men have already acted as free agents before us. And these traces of our own freedom, which we can trace in the past, we call "history."

History then is that very spotty path backwards which we try to find, because we have to go forward creatively ourselves. And there -- that's the reason why history always corresponds to the future. You have no more history -- genuine history of the past as you have faith -- not faith in the future.

The causeless facts are selected to form backward an avenue that looks as though it could start today.

XII

1

You can only understand any of the great founders of this country if you have the same free notion of your own future.

Well, you will say that you don't know anything of this kind of consideration, that your future is not very important to you. You live in the present.

Don't be mistaken. There is a kind of superstition about this word "present."

2

In nature, there is no present. It's as short as a razor-blade's edge, this present. There is only past and future, if you observe it from the outside. The present exists only in your own heart if you have this freedom to look at future things as though you could expect them as old, and if you look at old things as when they were new.

This sounds rather complicated, but is it?

3

Present is a kind of knot of two conflicting pressures on yourself.

You expect from the future that you must fulfill your duty, that you will have children, that you will be successful. And that's why you prepare at this moment for your future life.

And you have certain obligations towards the past. You have to be loyal to the school to which you belong, or to your parents. And this has to unfold and roll off. And as long as there is such a conflict between your background and your own aims, you have a present filled with problems, filled with work, filled with time.

The present then is the creation of a sound relationship between the future and the past.

4

You are here in this present hour. Why?

Because you want to prepare yourself for life. Therefore your life, your real future has created this present. It is a compromise between your past and your future. That's why you put in these four years in college.

And most of you treat these four years just as an in-between, or an appendix to your youth. And then they are wasting it.

But if you analyze this simple fact, which we express by the strange term, "preparation for life," you will admit that nobody can put the little syllable "pre" before an act, if he does not already begin by its completion, and date backwards the steps that shall lead up to this goal. And first therefore, you must know that there is a "post" before "pre" makes any sense.

How can anybody prepare unless the future is anticipated, believed in, certain? The present is then the conflict between our anticipated, or believed-in future and the experienced past.

XIII

1

For example, the four years of college -- are cut out of future, and the past. The past is arranging your present life financially, and -- by its regulations.

Still, this arrangement makes only sense if already you have a future and if you are filling in these four years with all the dreams and visions and promises of your own fulfillment. Otherwise, all the money invested in our educational process would be wasted. We would just bring up parrots.

2

So the present is a very wonderful creation. Com- -- take a worker and compare him to a student. Such a worker has a very short-lived present. He may be told Friday afternoon that he is not to come back Monday.

From this, you see how the worker's moment has shrunk. Two days' work, or two weeks' work, until he gets the next pay envelope. Therefore this man has no time to prepare. On Friday, he goes home, he tells -- or doesn't tell his wife, and he tries to find work on Saturday, which is a very bad day to find work indeed. But if he doesn't, he will begin a terrible existence the next Monday, by seconds, and minutes, and hours, because on Monday, he will have no job, and he had no time to look, and prepare, and learn a new trade -- as you all have at this moment.

And therefore, this man has less future, and no background, and so he's tossed around from second to second. And he has no present. He's rushed.

3

The insane person has no present. Anybody who's panicky lacks the present. The person whom you put in the straitjacket, the person who jumps out of a window, who is alone in a desert and breaks down among the sun's ra- -- and the cacti, the person who is alone, well, they all go mad.

Panic is a feeling that we have no time, that we have lost all time, that we are even a minus in time, that time has gone overboard.

4

We can lose time, and we can gain time. And the sense of time can be destroyed, or it can be cultivated. He has plenty of time who knows that innumerable generations already have prepared his future. And he has plenty of time who knows that the future has to be created freely and will not come about from outside, automatically.

XIV

1

I have experienced in my own life the fact of panic. I was on the Verdun front in the First World War. And perhaps it's worthwhile to tell you this story to expand on this unbelievably fact that the present has something to do with our sense of history.

2

I had to conduct a column of horses under fire into the front line. We carried ammunition. I was leading the column, therefore had no time to be nervous. But my men were very nervous indeed. And I had to fight this.

We did quite well. We got several horses killed, a man wounded, and we returned in relatively good order. But there was one man whom I had to court-martial, and there were some horses that shied. So I put down a panic. And that day, I think my people regarded me as a model of tranquillity.

3

Now let me oppose this little incident by the opposite event. It happened the next day. And it may show you how flexible the same person is.

The next morning, I was curious to see more of what was going on around the fortress of Verdun. So I went alone forward into the front lines and wanted to have a panorama. Certainly I did get it. I was out far enough to be in the midst of a tremendous cannonade, which went on there for a month, even a year. At a certain hour, both sides tried to show they were alive, and everybody fired his big gun. Now I was in the midst of it, and I really was panic-stricken. I had to throw myself -- down on the ground, and I couldn't move for five minutes. I seemed to be quite out of my senses.

4

What's the difference between the two days? After all, this was the same man at 24 hours' difference.

I was under orders the first time; I was in history. And I was not under orders the second time. I was covered with the inherited qualities of the race: discipline, obedience, fortitude--the first time. The second time, I was lying naked on the ground, just the animal-man in my- -- within myself. And that I think is the reason why I got panicky.

I really was alone the second time. Of course, I had donned my uniform the same way as the day before. But I still was actually alone with my curiosity. Curious people always are alone. Curiosity is the hallmark of the mere individual.

An officer who takes his of- -- soldiers to the front line is not alone. He is part of the whole outfit. More than this, he is at this moment creating the whole outfit. He is incorporating the outfit. He embodies it.

It is very easy then for officers then to be courageous. If you are a coward, become an officer. Then you will have courage. Privates have to be really courageous, because they have no official reason to be.

XV

1

The less we are alone, the less we are impressed by the moment. When I looked around the second day, I was all by myself. Poor me. Just me. What was I against a cannonade of thousand or more guns?

So my panic is easily explained.

2

If you take this example, you will also find that a man in an expedition on the North Pole, as long as he has one other man waiting for him in his hut, will not grow panicky. He is in the history of the Arctic expeditions, and he knows that he -- will be one step forward in this long sequence of heroic adventures. As soon as this lifeline, however, to the one ma- -- man in the tent would be broken, or -- take another case: as soon as you are at a first ascent in a mountain, and you know that you will never see your fellow again because he fell off, then panic is upon you.

3

Man has not been allowed to found the times under his own steam. No man has a present all to himself. In the present, we always take part in the march of time through our little selves.

Our times then are social creations. The great heresy of our time is that you think that any individual experiences time, and has a present, or a future, or a past. The individual has just -- is just a recurrent event of the past, a little cell, a little amoeba, an animal.

As individuals, we are panicky. But we experience real time--that is, the expectation of a free future, and the memory of a freely created past--only in relation to other people, former generations, future generations to come. Other-wise, we break down. The insane man -- insane man is the one who is so solip- sistic, as it is called, so completely alone that he says, "I have no time."

4

Our physical, biological organization seems to doom us to failure the moment we are truly alone.

That is why a monk in the desert must never be pictured by you as being alone. He is in solitude. But he is in solitude for your salvation. He serves you in the desert to prove that you must not depend on the luxuries of the big cities.

Buddha went into solitude in order that others might give up the vain struggle.

XVI

1

The most difficult thing today, therefore, to understand history comes from the fact that we make no distinction between solitude and aloneness, or isolation.

2

Not the physical appearance of aloneness drives a man out of time, out of the present, and out of his mind. It is the actual isolation that he is nothing but an individual which we cannot stand. We have to be inside the stream of history in order to remain sane.

3

For one instance -- to come back to my story, I had stripped myself of my discipline, of my uniform, of my role, of my duty. And since there was no duty, which made me be there, I found out that I shouldn't be there, that I wa- -- had simply been a fool, asking myself now, "What are you doing here?" The only answer that I could give was, "I shouldn't be here." And that's why I broke down.

4

In the panicky person, then, there is no time sense. The future, and the past, and the present collapse.

XVII

1

Now, you will say, "How do you prove that these unbelievable events are really free creations? That the future and the past are really basking us, and balancing us in a present time in which we have gained time to fulfill our destiny? That we really are the heirs of freedom?"

Well, compare the results of actions which you do under the influence of liquor to true inspiration. Compare the events that are done by hypnotism to the things that are done by genius.

2

You can hypnotize people to do anything. You can make soldiers drunk so that they attack, and go over the parapet with unheard courage. But you cannot rely on them. It's purely accidental. Somebody else -- the man who so -- gave the liquor to them is not sure that this fight, this courage, the event produced by this courage will last.

The great offensive in 1918 of the German army, the last they made -- near Amiens, trying to reach the British channel, broke down because the first attackers were so famished that they drank the liquor they found in the front line of the enemy, and out went the fight. They were too exhausted.

3

This then is to be said: every great event can be imitated mechanically.

That which you have done under inspiration and great courage, and heroically, you can imitate because you are made drunk, intoxicated. But this second event, which is mechanical would not figure in the history of mankind. It only becomes interesting if people without the influence of liquor do something extraordinary.

4

That proves something. Because it proves that there is a new quality, an unexpected quality in this man on which we may base now our future expectations. It hadn't been known that people could do such a thing.

XVIII

1

We are not very interesting in history as such, as individuals. And therefore we aren't made happy there. But it is interesting that our lives form the link that joins the generations together.

2

I always have asked myself, all my elders, about the unbelievable things of history that happened to them. I think I got quite a sting -- I got my faith from these stories of my elders. They usually were of the third generation backward, that I -- too might do my little bit of unbeliev- ability in my own time.

3

The chain of history consists of free acts of man. What we call "history" then is a sequence of acts that are freely done by people, and then in the end, miraculously fit together. If everybody acts freely in his own time, the miracle is that the whole makes sense.

Every step in history then is not chained before it happens. It occurs at the full risk of not being done. When you look back, however, all these steps look logical.

4

This is no proof that it looked logical before it was done. And this seems to me the general mistake today, that you think people knew beforehand what you know. XIX

1

Every one step in the history of the human race has therefore been creat- ed by free acts fitting into a logical sequence later. And the next step that must be taken in this generation with regard to the service of this country will have to be a free act.

2

What the function of the United States will have to be in the future, some people have to act out voluntarily. Somebody will have to get the beating, like {Billy} Mitchell, with the Air Force.

3

One man has foretold the last 50 years of the world's history very clearly. He has said that there would be a tremendous catastrophe, that the blind optimism, and the random thought, that the anarchy of thinking would be judged by a tremendous cataclysm. World wars would destroy the nations for their blind hatred, and for their wild passion of being just one nation or another nation, all by themselves. And he also said that by 2000 there have to be -- would have to be one world, with one faith, and a great, rigid discipline of life.

This man believed in what he said. He acted it out, and he exiled himself from his own times. Of course he was scorned and not listened to, just as {Billy} Mitchell was court-martialed. And the prophecy -- well, why do I dally?

It's Friedrich Nietzsche of whom I speak.

4

In some measure then, we have here a man who, all by himself, voluntarily already lived into the future.

Now believe me. Without him, the history of the 19th century would be inexplicable. It would look like a blind alley, all -- and everybody dooming themselves to the destruction of the two world wars. This one man who volunteered to anticipate the times after the catastrophe gives us some hope that there is still connection with what they have done.

Otherwise, we would be very suspicious, and it would have to reject most what the 19th century did, always saying, "But they led us into the catastrophe. Therefore, no good."

XX

1

And I think therefore that one volunteer, before the historical crisis, like Nietzsche, is more important than 10 million people who read the history books now on the decline of civilization and say after the event, "Ah, civilizations go down."

I therefore think we treat the past in order to enlarge the future.

2

If you can see the force of past events to make us speak, we all would like to do things that can be remembered, and can be told to our grandchildren.

3

The story of your marriage deserves to be told to your children, and then they'll understand that they form one body, and one unit, and they'll have parents, and they'll look up to you as a generation, and not just as individuals.

4

Any man then is a natural historian who can testify of one event in his life in which he, and s- -- one other person at least, have formed the link in the chain of new qualities of the human race.

EUGEN ROSENSTOCK-HUESSY

HISTORY MUST BE TOLD

(1955)

{ } = word or expression can't be understood {word} = hard to understand, might be this

I

1

What a change has come over this campus in the last 20 years!

Yet, if I talk to you about the changing college, you look rather incredulous. You say, "Oh, well. Dartmouth College is the same all the time." And everybody wants to think that Dartmouth College is more or less identified through the last 160 years.

But it isn't.

2

However, your story reminds me of a good remark of John {Crosby's} on television. He had to look, and look, and look; and see a dog run, and run, and run. And he got tired of all the animals, the chimpanzee. And he thought he had seen a horse run before, and he had seen a dog run before, and he had even a chimpanzee move before, and climb a tree. And so he burst forward and said, "Well, what's new about it? I've seen this since time immemorial--or what amounts to the same thing--since I was 12."

3

There you have it. Anything that has been this way since you have been 12--and that would be 1945, wouldn't it? -- be the end of World War II; by and large, you are 20 now--so everything that has existed after World War II for you is "since time immemorial." And you have no memory.

Because "immemorial" means not outside human memory, in the technical sense of not being able to be known; no, it just means that you don't remember any change.

4

And that's how we all live -- live day by day, and think that the world has existed as we see it, more or less, always.

It hasn't.

II

1

However, great men have held this opinion.

And let me tell you a -- story that's just as funny as John {Crosby's} remark.

2

A very great American jurist, Roscoe Pound, was invited by this college to tell us what to do with the college as a result of World War II. It was in the midst of this conflagration, and people were serious, because it wasn't quite sure that we might win easily over Hitler. It was in 1943.

And we asked him to tell us about the future of the liberal arts college, implying of course that perhaps the war should make a difference. Well, we were very much surprised when the mighty Roscoe Pound, the master of the common law, told us that "wars come and go. Don't change anything. Education will remain just the same."

3

Now you see, education, and history, and wars had very little to do with each other. Roscoe Pound did not think that we had to remember the war. He left it to the history departments to write the scientific history of World War II, as they had written the scientific history of World War I.

4

As soon as history is made into a departmentalized thing, obviously history must not be told. It can be told. It's a luxury. It's a very interesting sideline. It's a hobby. It's not as unimportant as to collect all the spiders. It is not unworthy of a great scholar to collect spiders. Sometimes it may even be important.

III

1

You remember perhaps the story of Lionel Rothschild, the last heir of the British great family of the Rothschilds, the bankers. Well, he became a zoologist and said he had to go to Tibet, to the Himalayas, north of India, to investigate a flea. Of all things, a flea. The family was so disgusted that they disinherited him. And they paid him out something. But he ceased to be a member of the banker -- trust -- of the corporation.

Well, he went to Tibet, and he found that flea which is responsible for the bubonic plague in India. Because it sits on the elephant, and so on and so forth--I don't know the details of the story.

But certainly Lionel Rothschild, by going off to investigate a flea, became a very useful member of the human family.

2

But on the other hand, you will admit: when he did it, he could not prove his point that it had to be investigated. The history of the fleas, perhaps, must not be told. And at least, you will admit, you and I can be satisfied with the result that there is no bubonic plague now imported into the ports of the United States.

But on the other hand, not everybody can study the flea.

3

Is history such a specialized thing, too? Is it able to confine it to the history department, and to the majoring -- majors in history, and to the people who take the Ph.D. in some special study on the housing conditions in Philadelphia in 1759?

4

I don't think so. I think that Roscoe Pound and you prove both, that history must be told.

We have to tell the people what an epoch-making event is that changes education.

IV

1

And I would therefore define in the first place that to me, history is all that which explains why education has to keep changing.

History are those events which make it dangerous, which make it intolerable that people should live as though they lived from time immemorial. They must live from time memorial-ized. And that's not a pun, because it means that they must be shocked out of their existence as of today.

And they must be told that today was not the result of yesterday. 2

One of the habits, of course, of that mind which thinks that history is just the Encyclopaedia Britannica, is just a register of facts--1066 and all that, well, one of their pet ideas is that history is everything that was yesterday, and that yesterday has produced today, and that we then automatically will land in some tomorrow.

3

Now obviously, this is not so, with World War II.

World War II makes epoch in education, because much more public spirit and much more public service will be required in five years from all of you.

On the other hand, we don't care to remember all the nonsense that went on and wasted the lives at cocktail parties under Prohibition. Better forget it. There are many, many unimportant things of yesterday which do not influence -- tomorrow, I hope. At least they shouldn't. And perhaps they could only be mentioned in -- with regard to "they shouldn't." They should not influence the future.

4

But in both cases, the past is dynamite. The past must be mentioned with regard to those things which have demanded and still demand our changing conditions, and those which we must not repeat, which we must only remember in order to make sure that they shall not return.

"I shall return," yes, but those things shall not return.

V

1

So all history is dualistic. It sits in judgment and eliminates certain things--like slavery--which we do not wish to have come back upon us after the Civil War, even if we find out that the result of the abolition of slavery is as difficult as the judicial opinion of the Supreme Court on segregation.

2

Obviously that's still one consequence. You either have to go back to slavery, or you have to follow it up by new decisions.

Then we learn a second thing about these strange, memorialized events which break our idea that everything is from time immemorial. We learn that they are still making

demands on us in the future, that what has been created in the past may have been just a starting point. And if we do not carry on, we deny the past.

3

That is now very strange, because we suddenly see: the past is still ahead of us. It is surrounding us in the sense that what we did at first, long ago, hasn't yet been finished, and that we can cancel everything that has been done by our forefathers if we do not stick to it. And how can we stick to their deeds, and how can we be loyal to what they have done if we have no memory of the times demanded from them what to do in a very unexpected way?

Always comes to me the story of a friend of mine, which shows how history can become very unpleasant, and how people really do prefer at times to forget it all. He was a professor of philosophy, and he wrote a wonderful book on Nietzsche -- before the Second World War, between the wars. He was already impressed by the crisis of our civilization and he devoted 10 years of his life to understanding the prophecy of this dark prophet of doom. Why had Nietzsche already left behind all nationalism, and all optimism, and all easy-go-lucky pleasantness of an existence, which gave the individual the security that if he only fulfilled his own demands of pleasure, or leisure, of ease, that that was all he was in this world for -- to do?

4

Well, my friend, in these 10 years, acquainted himself not only with Nietzsche, but of course absorbed the main lesson that you have to stand for what you teach.

And when the war broke out, he volunteered and became a private, at the age of 40, with two children at home and a wife. And he went out, and he passed his exam later than as an officer candidate with the highest number of points in the whole district of the army in which he was trained. And he was promoted of course to lieutenant. And he left the war as a captain.

And later on then, he came to me and said, "What a fool I've been. If I had gotten myself a commission, like one of these pleasant colonels who never saw battle, or action, but were just colonels on the staff of a general, I would have been now a person of influence. They would have perhaps listened to me in my ideas about the treatment of Europe -- in the aftermath of the war. But I'm a captain; and that's next to nothing, and I just have been a fool."

VI

1

And then I could take him up on his real faith, and I said, "This is the philosophy of the ashcan. The -- of course, you abolish the real history of your heart, and this is very decent on your part. You now look back and you say, 'Oh what a fool I have been.' But I certainly prefer the fool you have been in 1941 to the wise man you try to be now. It is one thing to know afterwards that the sacrifice was a sacrifice, and cost you some of your power and your influence. And it is another thing to be very grateful that some people in the first place have acted as you did in 1941 and 1942, because that, to tell you the truth, is the only reason why the United States of America won the war. If nobody had entered as you did, regardless of the consequences, just to set the example of the common man's duty to serve, we certainly wouldn't have had the spirit to go through with all the efforts which were demanded."

2

And so the philosophy of the ashcan abolishes the real history, always.

And you will understand that I'm not impressed by this idea that -- "Ah, don't tell me that these boys had spirit and that it took guts to go to war." At the end of war, even this is easily forgotten, what it took to win the war.

The dream world, which says, "Oh, from time immemorial has America been the leading power," is widespread in this country. You really, at this moment, believe that in 1850 the United States were more or less already in the prosperous position of a creditor nation. They weren't. They were debtors of Europe.

3

They were very much in danger to be invaded by the French--by the Spaniards, even, to a certain extent--but at least by the British, and the Germans; in Texas, there was a German settlement. And nothing was safe and sure. The Russians were in Alaska.

4

And you cannot abolish history with this philosophy of the ashcan, and say that all the fighting from Sam Houston to Gettysburg was good-for-nothing, and that it would have happened anyway.

VII

1

I've seen people argue of course in this line violently in this country that if we had had no immigration, and hadn't become the melting pot of the races, the number of people living in the United States would be just as numerous. By mere natural procreation of -- I don't know, of the first, probably, {Potacasset} lady and -- in Massachusetts. I don't know where they restrict white man's immigration. Probably to the Presbyterians from North Ireland, and to some families from England. And that would be the end of the pedigree, so to speak, of the people who had then the honor to fill now this continent with 200 million people.

2

You see, this is arbitrary. Whenever you try to stop history at one point, you suddenly catch yourself, that you do not understand the spirit of man.

The spirit which induced my friend, the writer of Nietzsche, to enter the army as a private is the only spirit which enables you and me to say that Nietzsche may have also saved the United States from going Communist, and from having a future. Because if you follow the philosophy of the ashcan, you separate all the sacrifices that have made man who he is today from your own existence.

3

You say that you could exist without my friend volunteering, without Nietzsche going mad, without anybody doing anything as a free man and in an extraordinary manner. And you have then nothing to go on for your own future: the abolition of slavery, then you do not know whether to carry on the equality of the races.

You may be impressed by the South African policy of complete segregation. You may say, "Well, why not?" You cannot say this in the United States. The die is cast. If you do not wish to deny the terrible years from Fort Sumter to Appomattox, you have to say, "We have now to go on. We are committed."

4

And it is better to do one thing straight, and really, and thoroughly, than to halt halfway and to do nothing. To be divided will produce nothing, because it will only produce suspended animation, lukewarmness, and certainly no children. The fecundity of the human race is based on the white heat of decision and the good conscience that we are in harmony with past action, and for this reason, have a future.

VIII

1

Now this is very practical.

If I see the signs of the times right, not only do you think that this college has existed always, you also are very doubtful about the prospects of a happy life for your grandchildren. You hear it said very often, "Oh, my! The bomb will explode, and the war will go -- down and perish in fire."

And Jonathan Edwards, as a matter of fact, in his history of the human race, called the "economy of salvation" in 1758 -- the man in Northampton, and Connecticut dearly did predict that we would perish, as now the prophets of doom tell us we must.

2

In other ways, I'm trying to say very simply: he who has no past also has no future. If you think that this campus has lived from time immemorial, you are very uncertain immediately how long it will last, because you have made no arrangements for the future yourself. You will depend on the accident of somebody else throwing a bomb or not throwing a bomb.

3

That's unworthy of a man, and unworthy of a nation, of any group; you want to be sovereign. We are only sovereign if we can dispose of the means of the future. Let somebody throw a bomb; we'll rebuild it if you know that the thing you have to rebuild is worth it.

Nobody would dare to say this in -- at this moment, that we would have to rebuild New York and stand up today once it is destroyed by bombs. Perhaps everybody feels already that we should build better cities, fewer cities, more country.

4

That's just an example of how our future very much depends on accident, as long as we have no past to show the way.

IX

1

A man has as much future as he has past.

A nation, as the United States, lost its sense of telling a certain and a glorious future as soon as it dissociated itself from its own founders, and laughed at the Puritans, and even thought that the founding fathers -- that Jefferson and Washington lived under such different conditions that they certainly could not at all help us in our emergency today.

2

They say, "Well, conditions have changed, therefore man must change."

Gentlemen, conditions do change, because we are free agents. All men of the past who deserve to be remembered have changed conditions or have met changed conditions in the right fashion. But changing conditions are nothing new in this world. They are the condition under which man can only express his own sense of response, his own sense of appetite for living.

3

History is as short as the future you have.

You can talk and talk about millions of years in the past. If you do not feel you have plenty of time to enact certain things which shall bear fruit a thousand years from now, I'm afraid you are out of luck. This isn't history which you then mention as having happened 900 years--900 million years, of course, I mean--before Christ. This is not history. These are just unrelated facts.

4

I cannot, even if I try, have any interest in facts of 900 million years ago as a rule for my own behavior. Make history short, and you'll have a future. Make history long, and the future will just be the one explosion which is assigned to happen in some island around the Antarctic. The next test with the fallout, and all this stuff which we have seen over the last year.

X

1

I'm afraid that the last year was not a very convincing year for the morale of historians, or of people who have a history, and therefore have a future. I think the change has already been sensed. People can't carry on this feeling of living for the moment. And I think that day by day we shall gain more certainty that it is worth preparing the future of, let me say, the year 2100.

2

This, however, depends on your and my power, and your and my courage to break up the frozen ice of this phrase, "from time immemorial," with regard to the past. Future and past are in equilibrium.

3

That's a very mysterious human law. But it's as safe to call it a law as the law of gravity. The future is not the product from the past or the present. But it is that amount of faith which allows us to select from the past those events which still guarantee us our future.

4

In other words, past and future are both alive. They are both created at any one moment. There is no mere history.

XI

1

Historians have been called "prophets turned backward." But they are only good historians if they still are prophets. And if what they s- -- tell you and tell me, out of history, is meant to grow into the future, that much they know of the future-- those who are good historians--that nothing which has been bought by real human investment of heart and courage must vanish from this earth.

2

Well, I'm merely quoting the Gettysburg Address, and that would be faulty, because I'm not going to try to betray you by emotions. I'm not going to try to tell you something by which the blood pressure is enhanced.

I'm trying to tell you that to live by accident is just not good -- a good way of living, and that we live by accident as long as the past is blocked out by our complete devotion to the moment of -- as of today. That only when yesterday and tomorrow are looked upon as a unity do you and I really live the full life at this moment.

3

And you will admit that the general atmosphere is averse to this. The moment, the today, the present--they really think that this present moment, this today stands between the past and the future.

Nothing of the kind. There is only a happy, a blessed, a potent present for anyone who first lives in the future -- and in the past as well, and is very glad to bring the two together, and to bind them together. The bridge between the two shores of a river obviously comes after the two shores demand our effort to intervene.

4

So my dear interventionists, we all intervene between the future and the past, and we can only decide: which future? The future of -- of accident, of doom, of mere nature? Or the future which continues, that which already has been created as a demand on you and me?

XII

1

I've learned this the hard way, myself: the difference between today -- lived really, and today lived by accident. And perhaps I may tell the story to make clear why a real history has to be told as different from accident.

2

It was in the First World War, on the French-German front, around the city of Verdun. I was in charge of all the ammunition trains and all the transports going up to the first lines, and the trenches. And I had to bring ammunition. And our troop was under heavy fire.

When we moved forward, we lost several horses. We -- at that time, we weren't yet motorized. It was in 1917, you must think--1916, I should say--and in -- this time, the men broke discipline. The panic seemed to become general, and I had to court-martial a man on the spot, which I did. And we came out of it very well in the end. The discipline was restored right away, and my men seemed very satisfied with the way we had come out of this terrible situation, which a panic in an army always is. Our losses were very moderate, and next day we could march out again without any inkling of any such incident.

Two days later, after I had, so to speak, gone on record of being quite cold-blooded, and what people would call "courageous," I had a day off. By -- I don't remember now how it came about. In a -- what I did was, to make use of my few hours, to crawl

forward into the artillery line, and to have a look around the fortress of Verdun, which lies deep on the Meuse River. And in German hands, most of the {forth} at that time were, already. And in the midst of my crawling there, a cannonade began, and I was struck down by a panic. I threw down myself on the ground, totally. And I can tell you that for five minutes, I must not -- may not have lost consciousness, but I did not budge. I felt I couldn't move one limb.

3

I've asked myself very often how it happened that in the first place I was without any fear, and knew to do the right thing, and that the second time, I had absolutely nothing to offer as an excuse for my cowardly behavior.

The simple reason, if I come to think of it now, is that at the first action, I was in charge of men. I was an officer. And an officer has great difficulties of being a coward. His men look upon him as their leader. I think a private has more reason to run away than any man who is leading other men. Their confidence and their trust puts him in this historical role. They expect from him that he brings about the future which is constituted in the war effort, in his command, in the name of his charge, of his commission, in the rank, in his uniform, and in the whole prospect of this effort which keeps the men under his command--which we call "discipline," "loyalty," "faithfulness," "patriotism," what-not.

The second time, I was just the animal-man who had--without any good reason, being curious--to look for himself. I was the naked self, outside my relation to the past and the future. I was the accident of the naked worm.

4

And accident is not good for a man's soul. He loses his soul. He has no soul, as a matter -- matter of fact, as soon as he considers himself -- and must himself consider as accidentally there. I was there accidentally, arbitrarily. I shouldn't have been there. And therefore I was out of line with the great, meaningful effort by which our actions bridge the past and the future, and tie them together.

And so -- I think my own experience bears out my contention that you must never allow the present become that accident which blocks the yearning of the future for the fulfillment of the past, and the yearning of the past to grow into the future.

XIII

1

The gist of history then is: this, which has to be told, lest you take every- thing around you as existing from time immemorial. This, which does not exist from time immemorial, fills the records of history.

Now many things do exist from time immemorial. Our flesh and blood, our muscles, our legs, our brains, our eyes, our noses, obviously they are al- -- old. There is nothing new about the animal-man.

So history only contains what once has been new.

2

And it has to be told so that you gain the impression that at one time it could not possibly have existed. Or, to put it more bluntly, that at one time, it was thought as absolutely impossible.

History then is the story of those things which have to be told be- cause at one time they appeared to be impossible. And we tell the story of things that were so new that the old-timers and the young, who saw around them something from time immemorial, would not admit that it can come to pass.

3

When we then speak out and tell the story, we do something to the men around us. We break their dream-world of timeless, unhistorical, daily routine. We break it, and we shock it.

And so history is very different from any descrip- tive story told about the behavior of a beaver, or the behavior of things in the sky. When you talk of the men who live differently, and when you tell the man who lives today that it was very difficult to make him live as he lives today, we shock him of his com- -- out of his complacency. We threaten him with the end of his existence.

4

Because obviously, if those brave people who introduce the new life, and made him live as he does now, had not risked their skin, his whole standard of living and his whole life would disappear rapidly, and he would slink away into the state of nature out of which those people got him, whom he has forgotten.

XIV

1

So history is told as a threat.

There have been people who did not leave the line of our own routines on this campus. And they changed our own education. They forced upon us a change because -- well, because they did not stop to consider the consequences of their acts, of their demands. They lived the good life, regardless of the cost, regardless of the consequences.

2

To live regardless of the consequences is one way obviously of making a good story which deserves to be told. The people who always want ahead of time what comes of it, obviously are slaves of the past. Freedom cannot be achieved as long as you ask, "But what will be the result?" Because the result mostly is very unpleasant. And certainly it is very uncertain.

And anybody who wants to know ahead of time that his bride will look beautiful when she is 70 is quite incapacitated to marry. She won't look beautifully -- or as beautiful as she looks now. But perhaps she and he may remain healthy. They can only hope for the best.

Freedom is action without regard to the consequences.

3

Now gentlemen, people today think that masses will produce a sound reaction, a response to events, and the necessary things will be done, let's say, in civilian defense, or in air power, or what-not. I don't believe that 10 hundred people who accommodate to the pressure of circumstance achieve anything of lasting memory. But the one free man who does it without pressure, and before the pressure is on, he changes the world.

Think of {Homer Lee}. {Homer Lee}, who, according to western standards, couldn't become a soldier because he was a hunchback, and -- who described in great detail the attack of the Japanese on Pearl Harbor and on the Philippines 20 years -- 30 years ahead of time. He became a Chinese general, because these people had not the prejudices we have about standards of physical ability. {Homer Lee}, in his free and tremendous bravery, saved many generals of this country the complete confusion which would have ensued if nobody had thought out the attack long before it happened.

4

Similar, you may say that the Europeans now survive the First and Second World War because of the great prediction of prophecy made by Nietzsche, who left the academic and the complacent world of his time and said, "There must be this tremendous collapse, this catastrophe," just as Marx said it. And because Nietzsche said it, besides Marx, we don't have now to believe in the complete victory of Marxism.

If the Marxians had been the only ones to predict the great clash of 1914, '17, '39, '41 in our century, I'm afraid we might have the idea that we were doomed, because the prophets would all be on the side of Communism.

Fortunately, we have on the side of anti-Communism as great and as free a prophet. and therefore I do not believe that the future is one-sidedly with Russians, or Soviets, or Bolsheviks, at all. But the global constrictions, the global compulsion which is on us today, the end of nationalism, all this was predicted by this man Nietzsche, who has been qualified as a madman by all the people who were inconvenienced by his free ideas.

So his name must be mentioned in order to get us into hope, into perspective, to say to us, "Well, since he saw it coming, and had the guts to foretell us, we can follow his line, and we don't have to believe in the final victory of the party line in Moscow."

XV

1

But there is another thing why history has to be told.

You live this wonderful -- life, day by day, here on this campus; seemingly no big change is to be expected. History is rhythmical. It breaks up the history of a college, even, into definite chapters. There is a college after the Revolution in this country; and there is a college after the Civil War; and now there is a college after the two world wars. And these are three epoch-making events.

2

So history is destroying the second myth of modern man, that time is homogeneous, that--as in physics--one days is like the other. No. Time of man, the time of history consists of tremendous epochs. In great moments, there is condensed the resolution and the decision of man to enter a new day, or to end an old day. We usually call them "wars."

3

There may be other events. In an -- a family, a wedding is such a catastrophic event. A catastrophe is nothing bad, but it is tremendous. It is immense. It creates woe and wail. It is both: a wealth of new events made possible by such a catastrophe, and a story of old family routines ended. Perhaps happily ended.

So a wedding day is sublime, because you cannot weigh what is better, or what is worse. It's just different, completely different. A new chapter opens in the life of this family.

That is, in the life of the human race.

4

And if you would celebrate more gaily the wedding feast, you would also understand the march of history, its -- in great rhythms, in cataracts.

That even the slumbering colleges get their changes into their bones.

XVI

1

Now there is one more thing why history has to be told.

The rhythm, obviously, would not be felt if not the chapter heading would give the beat to you, the rhythm. You have to hear "Civil War," and the "period after the Civil War" to understand the liberal arts college, with their physics laboratories, their biology courses, their cessation of hostilities with God Almighty in daily chapel, et cetera.

2

Today we have military training, and we have all kind of wartime preparations. People take part in civilian defense, or in military defense in one way or other. And again, it has to be said that the -- United States of America have gotten -- involved into the global war.

And I think if we would speak of "the planet" and "the globe" more often than we speak of "the world," the situation would become clearer to us, why the indivisible unity of the human race now has to be enforced in our colleges -- much more purposively.

3

It is not a luxury now to insist that the Arabs and the Jews both must remain our friends. It's a very practical issue that we have to talk to the Zionists, and to talk to the Arabs about the indivisible peace in the Near East, because whether it's the Near East or the Far East, whether it's Europe or South America, the peace between men has become indivisible.

It wasn't, before. You could have a nice war in Africa, or you could have a nice war in Asia. And not only wouldn't the newspaper not report anything, we wouldn't know that it happened; it wouldn't -- make no dent elsewhere.

And the -- war of the United States of America against the Bay of Tunis I think is totally forgotten today. It was just elsewhere, on a very dark shore of the Mediterranean.

4

We cannot say this now. There is no war which doesn't threaten the tissue, the texture, the fabric of all peace in all places.

XVII

1

On the planet and on the globe, the two world wars have made epoch, because now we can no longer afford to speak of the world wars, but we must begin to -- think of a planetary peace. "World" is an old word, and we learn that in the rhythm of mankind's life, the terms change.

2

There have been wars of revolution, there have been wars of liberation, there have been religious wars. Now we get world war.

And just as the national wars of the 19th century were all followed by a liberal era of free enterprise within a nation--high tariffs, integration of history teaching in any school of the land in the traditions of this one country--so now with the world war, we suddenly have great interest, practical interest in understanding the march of life on the whole planet, on the globe, in order to find our place inside this one great society, or this one great nucleus into which we have been led through the new inventions of science.

3

We are either part of the whole nucleus of mankind, or this race will explode and annihilate itself. Nuclear physics are only a metaphor. It isn't the atom that -- whose explosion makes us shudder.

4

The human race has become indivisible. The human race has become one molecule. And if it is not allowed to stay together, every particle of it must be destroyed.

XVIII

1

Now you understand that my story of Roscoe Pound, and my criticism of your unconscious life on this campus is really one and the same thing. He could not see the connection of an epoch-making event with the boring process of teaching people the A, B, C, and the three R. And you cannot see that at one day, one -- there was introduced into the life of the community the necessity for teaching you what the liberal arts college tries to teach you.

2

Now you'll say, "Oh, still, history. Just too much of it. 1066 and All That. We can't stand it. After all, there are thousands of years, hundreds of countries, battles, kings, inventions, defeats. It's a nasty story. Most things are not very alluring in history: assassinations, conspiracies, defeats, famines, floods. Why should we learn all these things? What do you call an epochal event? We are overwhelmed by history. Then we have to split history."

3

Ah, let me answer immediately. I'm speaking of history. History must be told. I'm not speaking just of histories.

In as far as there are so many countries, and -- so many lands, and many continents, perhaps this history has not to be told. But history, as you will have to experience, and as you will have to try to teach the next generation at least, if you haven't learned it yourself, history is highly selective.

You see, history is so selective because it only has to mention the impossible. That which has become possible after it has appeared to be impossible.

4

History does not mean that we must now reprint every document ever written. It would be as stupid as if you would have to record every word you ever said. In a way, our modern ways of having archives, and of having big magazines of -- and libraries--storehouses of the past--has led the layman to believe that history is just the knowledge of everything that has been.

Now, I would side with you: let's destroy all the mere storehouses of the past, because they would be a burden on my memory, as on yours. Memory is a promise. Memory holds out only promises for me. And I try to store in my memory only those things that are yet unfulfilled.

XIX

1

Now any event which belongs into history gives us tremendous courage, because it tells us that new things have been created. And those new things which once seemed impossible, you and I have to guarantee, to warrant, to vouchsafe for in the future.

2

So in history, we learn which events, which deeds, which accomplishments must not be forgotten. They are our program for the future in the first place.

3

This is the comfort for the selective historian. The historian has not to know everything, except perhaps for the purpose of discarding those things which his readers need not know. He is the sift -- the percolator, the selector. And when he acts as an historian--and all great historians have done this--he will omit those things which might happen at any time.

4

History only contains those elements which could only happen at one time, and at no other. And any such step, which is limited to one time really, strangely enough is fecund, is fruitful, is of infinite importance for the rest of all times.

XX

1

And the last thing, only those things that are selected as free acts in rhythmical, epoch-making events, only those can be articulated persuasively, and eloquently. Only those things deserve our love.

2

They are the things of which William {Harnay} has said,

"Love has ripened into speech. Where we do not love, let's be silent."

3

But those events which have made our present-day college, our present-day country, they must be told.