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Recently, several spokesmen have advocated that psychological science be brought to bear on current 'social' problems. Apparently, it is believed that such 'secularization' of psychology can proceed independently of political, economical and social value judgements. For example, B.F. Skinner proposes that the preliminary success of operant training methods in dealing with certain clinical behavior problems justify interpretation and manipulation of social evolution with the same techniques. Kenneth Clark has urged that, in view of the value of modifying emotional behavior with drugs in clinical situations, massive support be given to research into drugs that might maintain the emotional stability of political leaders. Others like R. Herrnstein and H. Eysenck use the laboratory-based model of behavior genetics to determine a correlation between I.Q. score and income level, to make predictions about the social developments that will (and will not) occur if we invest heavily in opportunity-equalizing education.

Though these psychologists differ greatly in their scientific approach, they all seem to have faith in the essential ease with which secularization of psychology can proceed. In fact, they are responding to the same apparent socio-political quandary faced by all psychological science. If the problems in the world today are due to our lack of understanding of ourselves, is it not incumbent upon the science of humanity to rectify this lack of understanding? At last, it is hoped, laboratory and theoretical results conceived in scientific purity can come to the aid of a disabled society. Thus, these attempts to secularize psychology might be responses to apparent social demands.

The goal of applying our knowledge to social problems cannot be faulted. Nevertheless, these attempts are misleading in several ways. First, the experimental results are extremely narrow and their extension from one experimental or clinical situation to another is often not valid, and it is far more dubious to extend such findings to society as a whole. Secondly, the results of these investigations are tainted by the same political attitudes and preconceptions that may be the cause of the social problems that afflict us. It is an illusion to view psychological science as an independently nurtured way of understanding the human mind that can cure the problems that are due to our mis-

understanding of it. Thirdly, it must be realized that the ways in which a science is secularized are in themselves non scientific. The attempts to secularize psychology are necessarily guided by the value judgements that inevitably underly the process of making decisions about society. Only once the terrain has been cleared of unexamined prejudices and 'social principles' agreed upon, can scientific knowledge be of some social utility.

If we claim that psychology should be applied in a given manner to solve a given social problem it is difficult to see how such a judgement could be free of our varying systems of social values. Consider, for example, when professional psychologists may feel that the use of violence is justified. Some contemporary psychologists feel that *experimental violence* against human 'subjects' (by aversive stimulus or situation) is justifiable as a means of experimental discovery. Some feel that severe *therapeutic violence* against retarded and homosexual 'patients' is justified if it leads to improving their social acceptability. Others may argue that *revolutionary violence* is essential to achieve a better society and that its manipulation should be studied with that aim in mind. From this example it is easy to see how naive the claim is that applications of a science can be determined in a 'scientific' manner free of value judgements. Thus it is our duty to discuss not only the practical value of our scientific conceptions in light of the problems faced by people and societies but also to evaluate possible applications in the light of what we know about ourselves. This discussion is one that scientists cannot relinquish: if they claim that it falls outside their realm of competence, they side politically with views which they have not consciously examined.

We certainly share the hope that psychology can shed new light on the nature of humankind, and thereby on potential solutions to social and political difficulties. But one thing that is required to make this possible is a clearer understanding of the relationship between political theories and human psychology. For example, remarkably little research has been done on the psychological bases of humans as political animals. Conversely, the current technical literature offers little comparative study of psychological theories that emanate from different political and economic theories or systems. Until such studies have been carried out, the application of psychological research to social and political questions will be an art rather than a science, a matter of personal bias rather than of objective argument.

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