

THE MORAL EQUIVALENT FOR AGGRESSION

by *Everett R. Clinchy*

Borrowing from William James the suggestion that there are moral equivalents for war, our inquiry in this paper will raise questions about possible moral expressions of man's aggressive impulses, as a substitute for immoral, destructive extensions of the energy, power, and drive of our lives.

Aggression in its popular meaning is an offensive invasion into the territory and rights of others in a spirit of hostility—a militant and destructive intrusion. The word "aggression," however, derives from the Latin *aggredi (ad gradi)*, meaning to step ahead, to go forward. There is the phrase "*gradus ad Parnassus*"—step to Heaven. In this sense, creative thrusts, thoughts, and acts in our very best moments are *moral* aggressions; individual innovations and socially beneficial inventions can be moral steps forward, progressive aggressions for growth. My thesis is that parallel to these two meanings of the word "aggression" there are in fact dual forms of aggressive behavior: bad and good, destructive and constructive. There stirs in each of us a necessary disposition to express our emotional drives to grow, to go forward, to create, to get power, to be enterprising, to gain, to be victorious, to compete, to win, to attack problems, and to live. One kind of expression of this urge thrusts crudely toward the abusively exploitive, the immoral and the violent, using means which are destructive. The other kind of expression steps imaginatively and creatively toward the moral and ethical, using means which are constructive. Both kinds of aggression are part of nature. Like the Chinese *yin* and *yang*, sunlight and shadow, night and day, masculine and feminine, love and hate, good and evil, joy and sorrow, life and death, so desirable and undesirable aggressions are components of reality for all of us. Nature is replete with both.

Let us look at the paradox psychologically, politically, militarily, legally, and religiously.

Psychologically, aggression can be authoritarian, selfishly assertive, pathological, and offensive. Psychologically, however, aggression also

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can be reverent of the reverences of others, considerate, courteous, helpful, and just.

Politically, aggression can manifest expansion at the expense of others, greedy power exertion in the pecking order, arrogant exclusiveness of an elite, and leadership which seeks domination over others. Or it can be a continuous self-renewal, making and aggressively maintaining "one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." The aggressive work of the American Civil Liberties Union illustrates this. In local, political terms, aggressive town-meeting procedures can ensure an open society, with democratic governing by consent of the governed, and open-ended freedom for all.

Militarily, aggression need not be a ravaging march of a Genghis Khan, or a Hitlerian blitzkrieg, or an American invasion of Vietnam, overriding the Geneva accords and suppressing the wishes of Ho Chih Minh's supporters, whom Eisenhower estimated as 85 percent of the Vietnamese people. Why not speed up the metamorphosis of the military from fighting soldiers into aggressive peace keepers? We need a military not to deal death but to guard life—a world authority which polices agreements reached in conferences and courts. Legislation, agreed to via a democratic process, requires heroes of peace—warriors who can be called justices of the peace. In Madrid a residential block has a *serano*, a peace keeper with a rod or staff, who contributes to the serenity of the night by walking his street, helping those in need, protecting all against evil doers, cooling off agents of explosive disorder whether pathological, drunk, or simply hell-raising. A *serano* is a moral equivalent for aggression. Let us work aggressively for a world police force as a moral equivalent for national armies, navies, and air forces.

Legally, aggression is violation of an obligation. Most individuals in principle act on their lawful commitments. But, as yet in the course of moral evolution, *societies* often act immorally in illegitimate, collective aggressions—acts of aggression from which individuals normally would shrink. The U.N. Charter's Article 39 is an agreement not to resort to war, just as countries outlaw violence among individuals. But the U.N. Charter was violated by Egypt, then by France, England, and Israel in the Suez aggression, by four U.S. administrations in Vietnam, and by Russia in controlling its satellite nations, to mention a few cases. A legal, moral equivalent for governmental aggression is possible: witness the Peace Corps philosophy and program, the U.S. Marshall Plan, the British Commonwealth cooperation, the World Bank, aid to poorer countries by the USSR, Israel, and other technologically advanced nations, U.N. Development Agencies—World Health Organi-

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zation, Food and Agriculture Organization, International Labor Organization, and UNESCO.

Religiously, aggression is manifested in both moral and immoral ways. The murder of alien cultures in the name of God has been a long and horrible missionary chronicle, with conversion attempts by the sword and proselytizing activities nihilistically blind to the values, beliefs, morals, and reverences of weaker religious systems. The cruelties of Islamic conquests were matched by the butchery and scorched-earth practices of Christian Crusaders against both Jews and Muslims. The hideous genocide of both Muslims and Hindus over the Pakistan Partition was frightful. In contrast, in the last two generations, cultural pluralism among Western religions has gained ascendancy over religious warfare and genocide. Modern missionaries are accomplishing splendid work in medicine and education without killing the cultures or the religions they serve. The point here is that dialogue among Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and adherents of other Asian religions, concomitant with practical work for justice, amity, understanding, and cooperation, is a moral equivalent for religious aggression. Indeed, the creative, building, cooperative implementation of the natural aggressive element in the psyche is essential for the individual's spiritual fulfillment as well as for human survival in this age of nuclear weapons.

AGGRESSION AN INGREDIENT OF EVOLUTION

Evolution is the vantage point which best reveals the importance and, indeed, the inevitability of aggressive moral thrusts.

Our lives, our institutions, and our environment at this moment in history comprise the growing edge of evolution. You and I are part of evolution. We live at the frontier of space and time in the total stream of evolution, a continuity of dynamic, evolving change flowing from the universal system of stars, planets, and life.

About five or ten billion years ago, nature exerted an aggression right here in our celestial home. In a region of one galaxy of the universe, far from the center of things, gaseous particles intruded to give birth to our solar system and our planet, earth. A chain reaction of splendid aggressions was triggered.

A few billion years later, nature again stepped ahead (aggressed) and introduced *life* on earth. Restless, complex, chemical molecules stepped forward to new combinations, some of which proved to be stable and homeostatic. The dawn of the biosphere marked a unique development of the emergent evolution in this solar system—the aggression of life.

First, single-cell organisms in the surface waters; then organizations of many cells acquiring the ability to turn toward light and propel themselves toward food. A hundred million years ago, nervous systems were stepping forward in some species. The fins of fish evolved into feet as amphibia climbed out of the sea to walk on land—another fantastic aggression. Birds and mammals evolved. In the last million years, a higher degree of consciousness appeared in mammals who could walk upright on their hind legs, who could manipulate between thumb and fingers, who could symbolize the world and solve puzzles in a complex brain, with ingenious capacities for cultural aggression and evolution.

In the past century new developments are combining to produce a new phase in evolution. Advances in the sciences and technologies have revolutionized man's ways of thought, his ways of life, and his habitat; and instantaneous, global communications systems have brought into being worldwide collective consciousness. One can call it nature's latest major aggression—an emerging new sphere above the geosphere and the biosphere. Teilhard de Chardin called this a noosphere, a sphere of human consciousness—the evolutionary aggression of interrelated minds of all men. A network of consciousness is enveloping this planet as men communicate, somewhat as cells communicate in a human brain. We said that mankind is a part of evolution. You and I are also part of cultural creativity.

You and I are miniatures of the evolutionary processes of the cosmos. In our mother's womb we repeated the general outlines of the whole process from the single cell to joined cells, to a vertebrate fish stage, to mammal, to man. After birth, we took our places as conscious parts in social systems elaborating the structures of ongoing (adgressing) evolution of cosmic energies in cultural patterns of faith and hope. We now can be conscious participants cooperating in the aggressive design of further steps in the advance of life.

Anything that we think, and say, and do to thwart, block, stifle, or suppress the broad sweep of evolution is bad aggression. Every way in which we can facilitate advances of life, knowledge, and higher forms of consciousness that are stable or viable under cosmically established circumstances is good aggression.

One word of caution about aggressive evolution. Evolution is not necessarily a pleasant process. The physical universe can be merciless to living species. In man, misery is as actual as happiness. Cruelty is as real as love. Human apathy is as widespread as concern; blindness to the wonders of existence is more prevalent than appreciative understanding. Disappointments of unfaithfulnesses offset kept promises.

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Many humans do not see beyond the walls of their daily food and drink and the related instincts for basic organic pleasures. Nor are they curious. A minority, however, look through these walls to see more deeply into the meaning of life. They use imagination with regard to the mysteries of themselves, the world, and the wonderful possibilities of evolution. This is the minority who can do something about undesirable forms of aggression.

The notion of a moral form for aggression is not new. The earliest characteristics of humans, anthropologists find, included love and cooperation. The family, clan, village, and tribe required this sublimation of undesirable aggression in cultural creativity. Charles Darwin saw man's evolution progressing from the bloody acts of tooth and claw to ever higher forms of conscious cooperation, love, and brotherhood. Some social scientists attribute the extinction of earlier human societies to their inability to cultivate moral equivalents for destructive aggression. If ever more concentration on fear, hostility, and overkill preparations are to determine the course we will take in international relations, the extinction of the human species may lie ahead.

But do not make the mistake of putting human encounter, confrontation, tension, and conflict in the category with undesirable behavior. Tensions and encounters are the essence of nature, from electrons to persons, and from lowest to highest forms of life. These are the ways in which corrections in direction and purifications of substance take place in cultural evolution, including political, technological, economic, and ideological history. Innovations emerge from encounters. New insights and fresh combinations result from confrontations. Reconsideration and self-renewal can be made to emerge from tensions. Cultural competitions between technologies, ideologies, and individual ideas, when properly managed, may lead to personal and social gains without loss of life.

AGGRESSION AS "ANTITHESIS LEADING TO SYNTHESIS"

Hegel taught that every thesis soon or late is challenged by an emerging antithesis. Struggle ensues. Eventually synthesis of thesis and antithesis takes place. This is the history of Establishments throughout the ages, forever being challenged by rebels. To annihilate all rebels, or to ignore them, or to imprison them is to deny the Establishment its necessary stimuli for change and growth. The overriding conflict today is the challenge to the thesis of twentieth-century Western capitalism by the antithesis of communism. Those in both blocks who ask for war to settle this dispute are ignorant as well as evil. Those willful war makers of

either ideology are victims of Hitler's stupid illusion, "It is we or they: there is not room for both." Arnold Toynbee's study of history revealed that the ways in which a people respond to challenges determine its destiny.

The Communist antithesis to America's thesis has been a fantastic blessing to us. Thus far, except for the Joe McCarthy era's hysterical, irrational freeze, and the current dangerous overresponse of the military-industrial complex, our country has been stimulated by the challenge of communism to make amazingly constructive progress in science, technology, industrial production, cybernetics, social legislation, economic transformation, space exploration, race reforms, and fresh relevance in education and religion. The Communist challenge has done wonders for us, to the extent of our creatively aggressive responses. In turn, the Communists are being vastly stimulated and influenced by our thesis—witness the Sakharov statement of 1968; notice the changes in students' thinking and fashions in Russia; watch the emerging individual-enterprise experiments, the increasing range of free choices for Communist peoples, Czechoslovakia notwithstanding; and witness the number of communities being formed among scientists, poets, artists, and philosophers in societies bridging West and East. The reality today is an evolving Western capitalism in friendly competition with an evolving Eastern communism. The older thesis and the newer antithesis are relating to one another in a pluralistic, rich, varied, interesting, promising human synthesis. War would be idiotic. This process of synthesis illustrates what we mean by a moral equivalent for destructive aggression.

CONSTRUCTIVE AGGRESSION WITH CHINA

Perhaps mankind's most dangerous challenge lies in the chasm which exists between the rest of the world community and the largest nation on earth, China. The United States' response to China's potential aggressiveness is much more than an affair involving adjustment to a changing Communist regime. We must cope with the problem of healing the hurt inflicted on China by all of the great Western powers, in addition to humiliation by Russians of Czarist years and Japan in the East. Let us take the China story as a case in point.

What would be a moral equivalent for destructive aggression with regard to China? If the dictum is true that understanding and love draw similar dispositions from others (as fear begets fear, hate draws forth hate, appreciation generates appreciation), then genuine efforts to understand China and to communicate as equals will in time dispose

China also to exercise moral equivalents for destructive aggression. Bear in mind that from Peking's point of view the United States is the antithesis of China's ancient civilized thesis. In Chinese eyes, we Americans are the number one threat to China's values, the menace to China's system, the danger to China's security.

What the fear symbols of hammer and sickle on a red flag are to the American Legion, so the Stars and Stripes are to the veterans of the Chinese communist revolution.

China's remarkable civilization and pacific record justify betting our lives on a course in which we would lower our guns toward these magnificent Chinese people and their culture. Chinese minds are nourished by Confucius, Mencius, Lao-tzu, and Moti. Mao Tse-tung, while significant, is a relatively temporary enthusiasm. Confucius died just a few years before Socrates was born. The threads of his teachings were humanity and love; the highest virtue was personal excellence through self-cultivation. Confucius taught that the state should strive for moral order and maintain political integrity. Inter-people struggles, confrontations, and tensions should be managed nonviolently through rational dialogue. The ethics, education, wisdom, and ceremonies which the followers of Confucius stress, together with the doctrine of leadership by example rather than coercion, were strengthened by Mang-tzu, called Mencius. The human nature of every child is originally good, Mencius taught, and his faith was that the enlightened mind can prevail throughout life over the dark side of human nature. With a modern ring, Mencius pled: "Feed the mind. Fully develop the potentialities of one's nature." Lao-tzu urged freedom for the individual in society. Well over twenty-five centuries after this amazing Chinese philosopher created his *Way of Life*, Thomas Jefferson adopted a page of Lao-tzu's *Tao* when the Virginia revolutionary insisted on the God-given right to revolt against injustice and tyranny in every generation.

Moti, in the fourth century B.C., asked that every institution be submitted every generation to the pragmatic test: "Is this institution of benefit to society?"—a splendid precept for the 1970s! Central in the Chinese tradition is the moral equivalent for destructive aggression. If Heaven is universal love, Moti argued, is it not required of all humans that they love one another? To the Chinese, love must be related to conduct, and for the followers of Confucius the Eight Steps became the discipline.

The verb "to love" might be translated "to understand," in this search for mankind's moral aggression toward China. To understand

this great people, bear in mind what the Chinese have suffered from debasing aggressions. In 1895 Japan's military invasion was victorious. Czarist Russia, Germany, France, and England aggressively exploited China for selfish economic and political gains. You know the history of the unsuccessful Boxer Rebellion against the colonialists. You are aware of modern nationalism under Sun Yat-sen, the emergence of Chiang Kai-shek, his coalition with communists against the Japanese after Mao Tse-tung's Long March, the split, Mao's takeover in Peking in 1949, and Chiang's move to Formosa. There are those who believe that hostile aggression accompanied by a threatful military posture against China is our best course. Some escalate this immoral nonsense by saying that the U.S. military is using Vietnam to test weapons and techniques for "the inevitable war to come with China." Many of our actions ominously foreshadow militant aggressiveness. The United States (because of Chiang Kai-shek and our China lobby) has refused to recognize the Peking government, which has administered China for twenty years. The United States has been the main power ostracizing China from the United Nations, has used our navy arrogantly for constant patrol of China's coast, and has refused to trade with China and pressured other countries not to buy or sell in China. Most recently, during the last five years, the United States has had five hundred thousand fighting troops on China's border. Imagine how we would feel if China had five hundred thousand Chinese fighting a shooting war in Mexico.

Is there a moral equivalent for military aggressiveness in our steps ahead with regard to China? Certainly, yes. Our course is complicated, to be sure, by the growing strain between China and Russia. Harrison Salisbury returned from Manchuria in 1969 with reports of mounting propaganda by both governments for war between Russia and China. Each threatens the other with nuclear weaponry. This could terminate civilization on all five continents. Are we good enough and great enough to admit our sins of commission and omission, and then to lead the United Nations to intervene, negotiate across the board, arbitrate, moderate antagonisms and fears through world law, strengthen the World Court, and introduce collective U.N. peace-keeping guards?

RESOLUTION OF DOMESTIC FAULTS BY CONSTRUCTIVE AGGRESSION

Let us look at another specific illustration of a moral equivalent for aggression. In 1928 the first American Roman Catholic ever to be nominated for the presidency, Governor Alfred E. Smith of New York, was smashed unmercifully by the Ku Klux Klan and the insecure masses

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of voters the Klan influenced. In the weeks after the conclusion of that campaign, Al Smith showed me his file of the aggressive hate literature which blew up his candidacy. Some of us proposed that the white Protestant sector of the United States could cultivate moral equivalents for ignorant, biased, and destructive aggressiveness against Catholics and Jews. The evil aggressions against Negroes can be overcome. We estimated that these simply would take longer. Programs which were imaginative and relevant were introduced and taken up gradually by the trunkline institutions which people join and heed: religious, educational, civic, industry and labor, press, films, radio, and later television. A coast-to-coast educational campaign was carried forward for thirty years. Moral equivalents for interfaith aggressions changed communities from fear and hate to appreciation and confidence. Competition in excellence and rivalry in good works superseded war, one culture against the other. John Dewey's philosophy of a community issued in a pragmatic cultural pluralism among Protestants, Catholics, and Jews. A community, said Dewey, is a conglomerate of individuals with diverse objectives, values, and ways of living, who recognize some goals which they share in common. They form a community to the degree that they become conscious of each other's aims, accept some differences, and recognize that they share some purposes in common, agree to work together on these joint aspirations, and then actually cooperate aggressively in action. Conferences and cooperation among Protestants, Catholics, and Jews emancipated Americans from prejudices which had disfigured and distorted business, social, and political relations across the centuries. The climate of human relations in America was changed, as constructively moral equivalents of aggression displaced destructively immoral aggressions. Pope John's ecumenical steps forward (aggressions) were made possible by this American precedent. Indeed, thirty-two years after Al Smith's debacle, Catholic John F. Kennedy was elected to the presidency by a majority of Americans. And a restructured country was measurably immunized against anti-Semitism.

Currently the fear of student revolts on college campuses and in high schools, and the rebellions of blacks in urban ghettos, are alarming the majority of American citizens. Youth, both white and black, ask for change. Many alarmed citizens cry for aggressive clamping on of the lid of "law and order."

A conserving instinct in persons and social systems is normal and necessary; otherwise past insights, values, and achievements would be lost. But when we freeze our lives against all change we are in for trouble. Rigid intransigence builds up the pressures for disastrous

revolutions to the point of explosive violence by blocking the changes of evolution.

In all fairness, this is a time when responsible authorities must say "No" to leaders who would violently destroy the colleges, the cities, and the nation. Our Constitution leaves plenty of room for revolt through due process of law, and through constitutional channels splendid gains are being made by student reformers and black-power dissenters. But overthrow of the democratic republic by guns is aggression of quite another nature. The American Revolution of 1776 is not a parallel: the British tolerated no representation, no participation, no avenue of redress of wrongs. The British tragically made explosive, destructive revolution the only course for change. Having said that, the fact must be added that dissent and rebellion are constitutional, too. Aggressive protests against poverty, injustice, color ostracism, and other wrongs are necessary for our nation's well-being. Aggressive struggles against denials of representation in decision making are essential.

Because of the unprecedented accumulation of science and the revolutionary effects of technology since World War II—electronics, computers, automation, atomic energy, systems planning, biochemical miracles, industrial-production increases at an exponential rate, medical achievements—the dynamics of changes are disturbing and distressing. In self-protection, many dream of stopping the world and crying "I want to get off." Many others turn established institutions into idols which they hope will remain the same, yesterday, today, and forever. In fear and desperation people's negative aggressions against new conditions take forms of overreaction, overkill, violent striking out against agents of change, and attempts to identify order with immobility and containment. As that happens, rebels are aroused to iconoclastic aggressiveness, as sealed-off boiling lava seeks volcanic eruption. The ways are clear in which those who fail to facilitate evolution contribute to aggressive revolution. Newton D. Baker, the pacifist who became secretary of war in Woodrow Wilson's cabinet, defined statesmanship as the art of dealing with a situation while the factors are still manageable. This is the kind of moral equivalent for aggression which college administrators, mayors of cities, governors of states, and presidents of nations must learn to exercise.

The hypothesis of this paper is that every person experiences emotions for action, for outreach, for achievement—everyone is aggressive because life is aggressive. Emotion means "to move," and the expression of everyone's desire to move, to step ahead, can be channeled morally or immorally. The suggestion was made that you and I are part of the

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expanding wave front of evolution and its continuation in the history of cultural advancement, that every person alive is at the cutting edge of creation. Relations with China were presented as a case of evil aggression and possible good aggressiveness. So, too, was an illustration of moral aggressiveness in response to the Ku Klux Klan. Then other problems and issues were referred to which currently present conflicting aggressions—the youth, poverty, and black protests.

Let us turn to enumerations of further possible moral equivalents for aggression in our time, fully aware that if humans do not channel man's step-forward instinct in creative, ethical ways, the chances are that the dark destructive drives will prevail in all of us. That is, oppressive, hostile, nihilistic forms of aggression will take over.

The generalized virtues of love and understanding are not by themselves sufficient: they must be aggressively implemented by moral action. The Jewish prophets made clear that prayers of adoration and burnt offerings signify nothing unless accompanied by ethical conduct: do justice, be merciful, live humbly, fully conscious of the infinite cosmic power in every one of us, both for good and for evil. *Understanding*, which is science, and *love*, which is religion, must be joined with the use of power that is potential in everyone, as a part of the evolutionary sweep for ever more awareness and for righteous action. What are the important issues today calling for moral aggressiveness? What are the basic problems demanding righteousness to correct the vital wrongs in our systems?

Here are eight. The solution of each calls for imaginative, constructive aggression. (1) How can mankind control the trend toward overpopulation of this planet, fully aware that the insistently destructive forces of nature emerge when any species exceeds the limits of nature? (2) In what ways should we be aggressive to end poverty, remembering that injustice, hunger, and suffering explode like Langston Hughes's rotting raisins in the sun? (3) What aggressive steps will correct the pollution of our land, air, and water, as we recognize the danger of pollution to human survival? (4) What are the moral equivalents for war in the 1970s, recalling that science and technology can provide abundance for a limited number of the earth's population as well as nuclear holocausts? (5) Are there creative substitutes for racial, status, religious, and economic injustice? (6) How shall older people assure society of the advantages to be gained from youth's idealism and dreams for the world they want to live in? This calls for radical innovations and new, constructive aggressions by those over thirty. At the same time, will the rebel youths face squarely the shadow in themselves,

the shady side of their own natures, and with self-restraint refrain from planting, in scapegoat fashion, on their elders their own subconscious, unworthy, destructive aggressions? (7) If profit making as the sole consideration for the production and distribution of goods and services is irrational in an affluent society, to what additional motivations should appeal be made for enterprising work and aggressive effort? What truth lies in the argument that the evil aggressiveness in urban exploitation of destitute blacks and poor whites will never be corrected by an unmitigated profit system? (8) Does emphasis on material values and carnal pleasures have clear limits, and what would be satisfactory equivalents for aggression in pursuit of things of the mind and spirit?

CONCLUSION

Before closing, we cannot dodge one basic question: Why bother about cultivating a moral or constructive pattern of aggression? A strong argument can be made for a *laissez faire* policy with regard to mankind's aggressiveness. According to this argument, progress is for the birds. Man is from the dust of an earth which in glacial age, storm, earthquake, volcanic explosion, and pestilence has shown no mercy. Mankind is integral with a natural order in which big fish eat little fish, the snake consumes the mouse, the hawk gets the weaker fowl, and the fox preys on the rabbit. Cynically speaking, it is natural for wolves in business to waste and pollute natural and human resources, for political sharks to manipulate others and to fleece the taxpayers, for hypocritical clergy to exploit gullible worshippers, for cagey philanthropists to burlesque their giving. You say you can abolish vicious aggression? What about the son's hate of his father? What about the military generals who avidly direct draftees to maim, burn, gas, and kill other humans, with the flag flying and the politicians calling it "our finest hour"? What about the subconscious death wish in every one of us? As for the illusion of universal brotherhood in a Family of Man—poppycock! Much family life is more quarreling, rancorous hell than blessed bliss. Man has been a hating, perverse, predatory aggressor from Cain's murder of his brother Abel to the Pentagon's scorecard of daily killings in Vietnam and to the Kremlin's skulduggery in the Middle East. The whole universe is amoral, viciously aggressive, and without meaning.

That is one line of the cynics.

Well, let's face it. The dark side of nature cannot be denied. But that is not the whole story. Indeed, only in responding to such a challenge can life's meaning be gained. Shakespeare found man a forked, divided creature subject to the mischances of the beasts, and subject to hardships in overcoming direful forces and tendencies. The human

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struggle is a tragic one. A poet found "truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne." Then he hastened to add: "But that scaffold sways the future." John Keats concluded that it takes aggressive struggle against evil and injustice to make a soul. Pain and trouble, Keats observed, comprise the school of intelligence in forming character. This struggle was John Milton's explanation of the human drama where, in open-ended freedom with responsibility, every person may exert effort. It seems to me that Milton was calling for creative aggressiveness against destructive aggressions.

Man does not understand the mysteries about the giant forces struggling within himself and throughout the universe. Man cannot completely comprehend a nature which never sleeps or a universe that never dies. But man does find and grasp the balance in the dynamics of change. Exploding stars and other cosmic forces have produced this beautiful earth. Man does know that our earth is a spaceship whirling around the solar system, which in turn is flying at enormous speed in an ever expanding universe. Man knows also that the surface of this planet is being lifted up as well as eroded; that after struggle, disappointment and grief, the heroic and the serene can shine; that the scars of immoral aggressions can be covered by rebirth and growth. Creative evolution never stands still. The moral equivalent of aggression is man's salvation: one can always begin again.

One must believe. Believe that the human spirit can step beyond self-centered possessiveness, beyond destructive aggression against others, beyond cruelty begotten by inner insecurity, insufficiency, and fears.

One must believe, and one can at least dimly see, that there is a grand design in evolution like the threads in a tapestry. Happiness is a by-product of courage, honor, and loyalty to one's aggressive striving to advance the design of the tapestry of evolution.

One must believe, and one can at least dimly see, that we are living through a stage from which a new kind of human being will emerge. In this stage the advances of science are boosting human intelligence; unprecedented machines and technologies are multiplying the production of mankind's hands and minds. The human community is mastering the energy income to earth from the universe. Society can afford to do everything needed for the good life of individuals.

One must believe, and one can at least dimly see, that, rather than using our allotment of the divine life force for destruction of self or of the web of life in which we are enmeshed, our life and glory may be in an imaginative perception of the way, and a constructive aggression in the further unfolding, of the Almighty's universal evolution. This is the moral equivalent for aggression, to which we can contribute.