

The **Johns Hopkins**
• FOR THE SAKE OF THE YOUNG *Magazine*



*to a nation going soft
an educator hurls a challenge
and proposes some answers*

for the sake of the young

by F. CHARLES FROELICHER

THE SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD American boy who works a summer carrying groceries and spends the earnings on a used car has already accumulated material wealth six times greater than that of the average man in India. Should it come as a surprise to anyone if the boy is insensitive to the plight of the 92 per cent of the world's population not as rich as he?

That same boy has brought to completion a process of liberation from responsibility, to himself and to others, that began at his birth. Raised in a society in which, increasingly, government and the community supply his needs, keep him entertained, and assume — with limited success—the parental roles of discipline and moral training, he now throws off the last vestige of responsibility to his elders. The ignition key is his badge of independence, and with cash in his pocket he is now a man of the world.

The tragedy here is not his early independence, nor the premature cloak of sophistication that makes adolescents strangers even to their parents. The transition into the adult world is easy enough for him; he knows how to get along as a social being, how to increase his earning power, how to consume, how to be entertained. His place in society is guaranteed and ready for him, and he is welcomed as another buyer of refrigerators and television sets.

The tragedy, rather, is an omission in his experience—an omission so widespread in our society, and of such deleterious consequences, that the vitality of this nation is seriously imperiled. The omission can be simply stated: self-discovery. Drifting through an education in large urban schools where teaching is geared to the "average" student and where little attention is given to individual needs, lulled to passive interests and vicarious thrills by television and spectator sports, the modern youth has no chance to test himself to the very limits of his abilities. Denigrated as an individual by the impersonalizing influences of an urbanized, automated, mass-cultured society, he has little reason to try. And yet, without such tests, he cannot discover his true strength nor the deep resources of his character.

Without self-discovery, a person may still have self-confidence, but it is a self-confidence built on ignorance and it melts in the face of heavy burdens. Self-discovery is the end product of a great challenge mas-

tered, when the mind commands the body to do the seemingly impossible, when strength and courage are summoned to extraordinary limits for the sake of something outside the self—a principle, an onerous task, another human life. This kind of self-discovery is the effective antidote for the indifference and insensitivity we have bred into modern youth.

There was a time in our history when the antidote was built into the American way of life. The farm boy of a century ago, who arose at dawn for his round of chores, walked six miles to school then back again for more chores at dusk, and was accustomed to the emergencies and hardships that farming produces, grew to manhood with a firm and resilient spirit. To Jefferson and to many others, the landsman was the source of strength of the nation. Now his type, even on the farm, is disappearing, and his urban counterpart—to my Jeffersonian way of thinking—is a sad sight in comparison.

The erosion of the agrarian way of life has been going on for some time, and the observations I have made here have been made before by others more eloquent than I. It is apparent, too, that more and more Americans are becoming aware of our plight as a nation. And yet, the *Photo essay begins on the next page*
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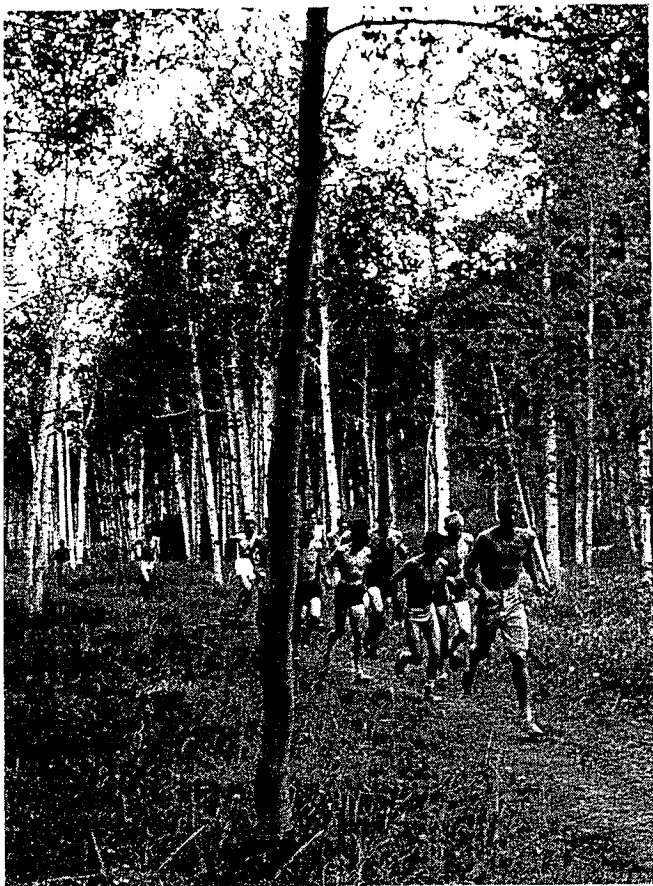


During a 26-day course, Outward Bound students meet challenges to strengthen courage and self-confidence. ➤

Charles Froelicher, B.A. '49, headmaster of Colorado Academy, is president of Colorado Outward Bound School.



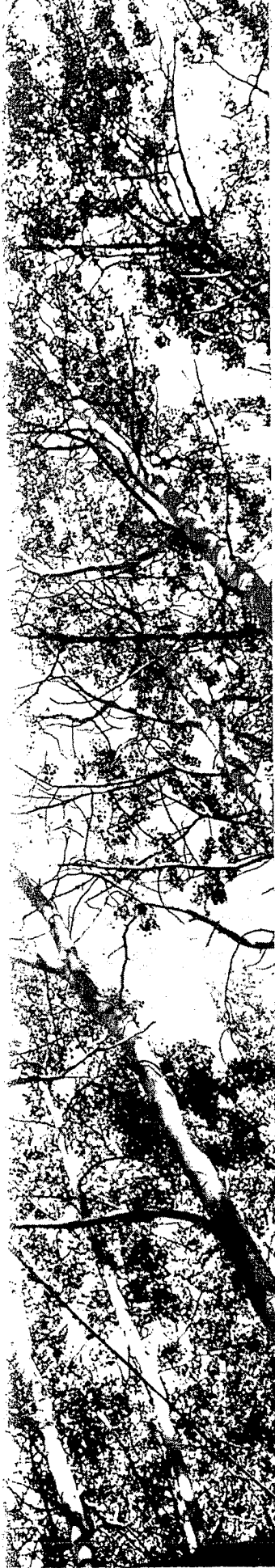
One of the first challenges faced by a student is the rope course through the trees, which includes climbs, swings, "Burma bridges," and other hazards.



Up before the sun, Outward Bounders run more than half a mile to an icy stream for a quick dip.



Sleepiness disappears magically under this shower.



Arduous living, the inspirer of self-confidence

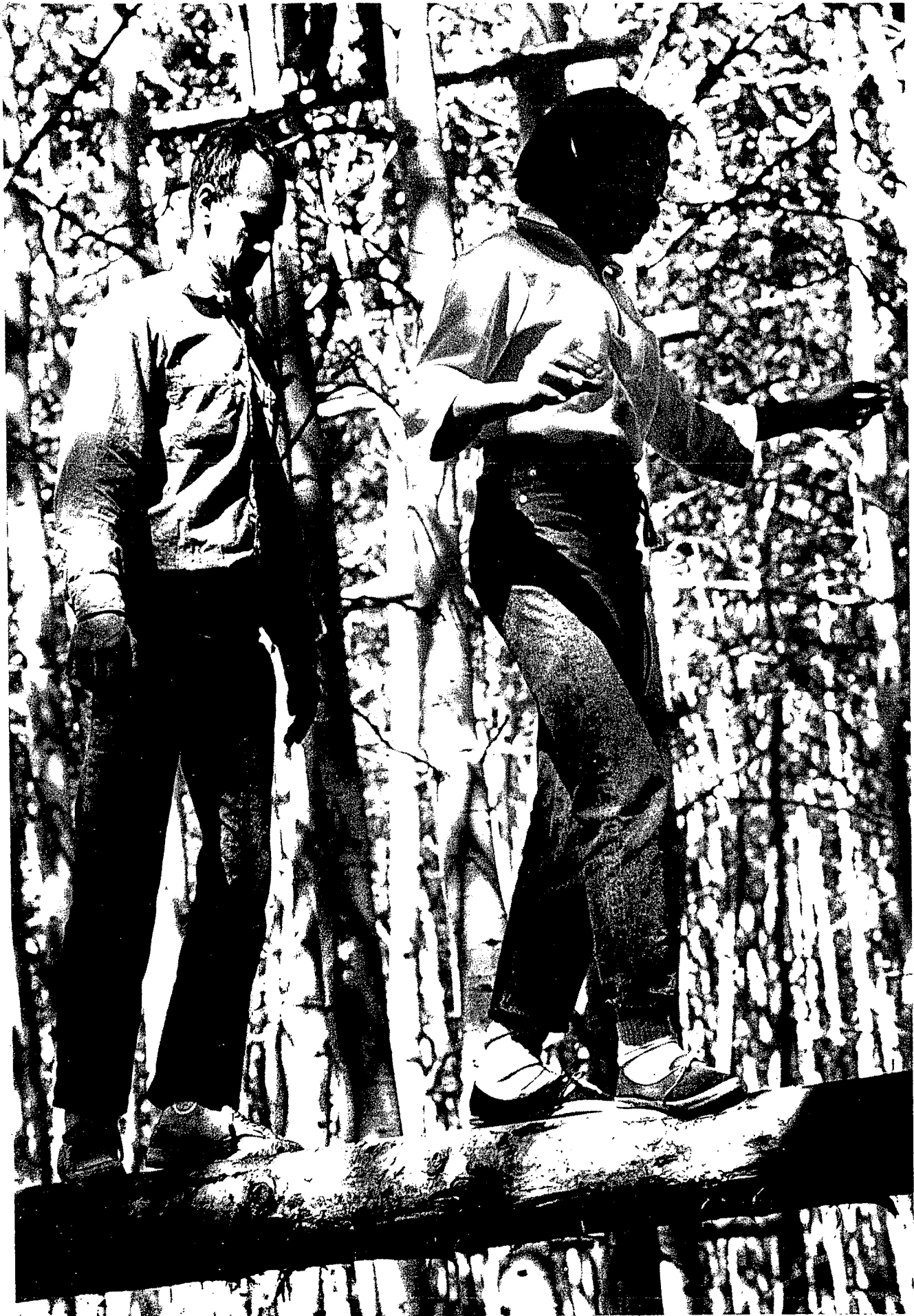
The Colorado Outward Bound School is a four-week course for boys from 16 to 22. Not quite a mountaineering school, not quite a camp, and not quite a "survival school," Outward Bound is a place where young men come face to face with awesome physical challenges, learn to survive and to help others in the mountains, and thereby gain faith in themselves. Beginning with calisthenics, running, and a rather terrifying rope course through the trees, the students build muscles and confidence for the rugged hikes and climbs later in the course. "To serve, to strive, and not to yield," reads the School's motto; each boy competes against his own past performance, cheered on by his teammates. The boys are trained to be mountain rescuers, and several times have put the training to use in the nearby mountains.

From a platform high in the trees, an Outward Bounder swings to the ground. ➤



In a test of stamina, students compete in a six-mile race up and down mountainous roads.

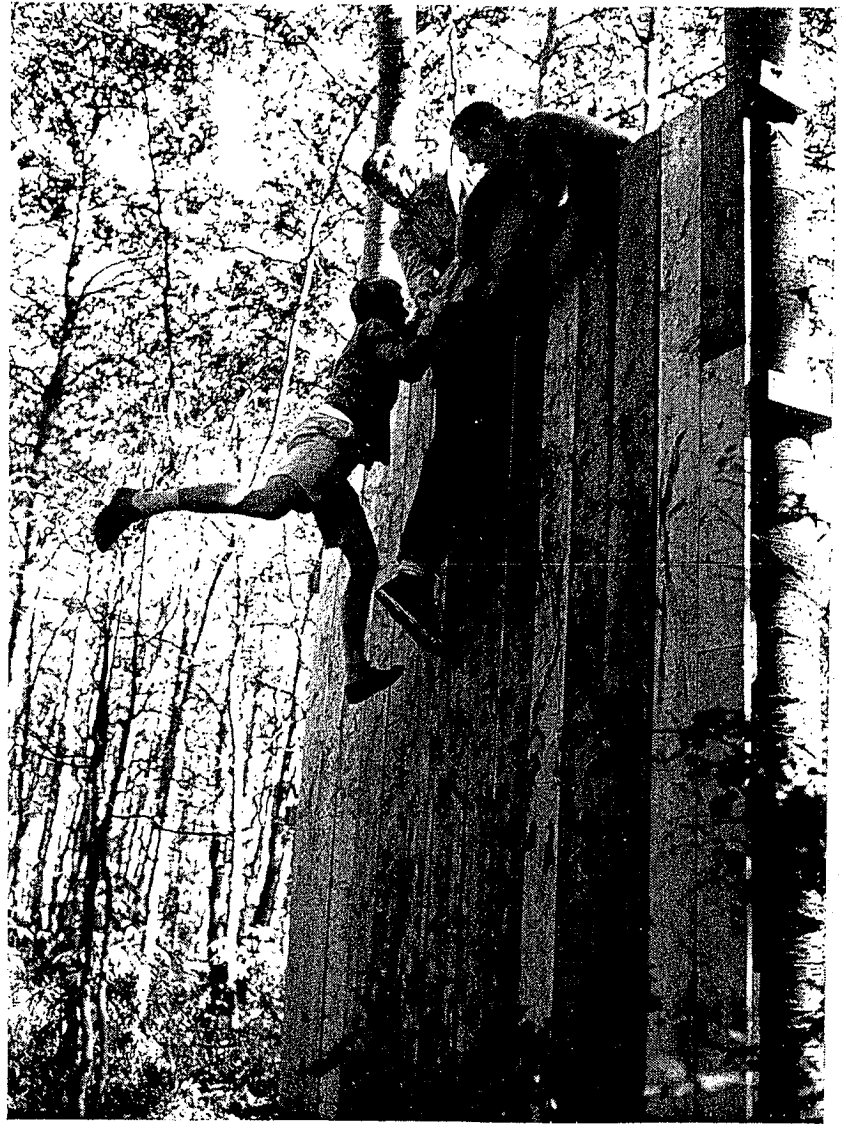




Tearful and frightened a Peace Corps girl summons the courage to cross a high log bridge. An instructor stays close behind.

*Valuable lessons
for the Peace Corps*

In mid-August, seventy-six members of the Peace Corps joined a regular contingent of younger boys for the four-week course at the Colorado Outward Bound School. This was their final stop enroute to Nepal; "After this," said one as he departed, "anything will be a picnic." Even the two dozen girls among them met the rugged challenges gamely and conscientiously, and passed with flying colors. Most of the Peace Corps members discovered, to their own surprise, new self-confidence. The presence of the Peace Corps at the Colorado school was fitting on two counts. As a group dedicated to helping others, the Peace Corps is the embodiment of Outward Bound principles; secondly, the training the Peace Corpsmen regularly receive in Puerto Rico is based on the Outward Bound model, thanks to a conference between Sargent Shriver and Charles Froelicher several years ago.



An exercise in cooperation: four Corpsmen help each other over a high wall.

Members of the Peace Corps offer encouragement to their teammates high above them.



When the going is rough, this young lady grins and bears it.

PHOTOGRAPHED FOR THE JOHNS HOPKINS MAGAZINE BY



Alone for two days in the aspen forests, an Outward Bound student puts to use the knowledge he has gained about survival.



To build his shelter for the night, a student strips the branches from a young tree.

*In the aspen forest,
a lonely adventure*

In no manner is the challenge of raw nature more demanding than face to face, alone. Late in the Outward Bound course, students are sent on a two-day "survival trip" without food or pre-arranged shelter. With nothing more than a camping pack, the boys put to use the thorough training they have received in survival techniques. Their chief instructor is Ernest "Tap" Tapley, formerly a climbing and skiing instructor with the U.S. Army. The physical hardships of the solo trip are obvious enough; what is important for the boy is the test to the mind and spirit the trip represents.



A student pauses for a drink during his lonely trek, while another (left) picks dandelions for a mid-day salad.



Outward bound to the rugged country

The culmination of the Outward Bound course is a three-day expedition into the rugged country surrounding the school. In teams of three or four, armed with map and compass, the Outward Bounders set out in different directions on a seventy or eighty mile trek along a predetermined route that takes them above the timber line into high elk country, rimming unspoiled mountain lakes, and into the wild gorges of the Crystal River. One of the students in each team is elected a leader; the others find that they have important contributions to make to the group undertaking.



Chief instructor "Tap" Tapley gives a final briefing to Peace Corps members as they begin a three-day expedition.

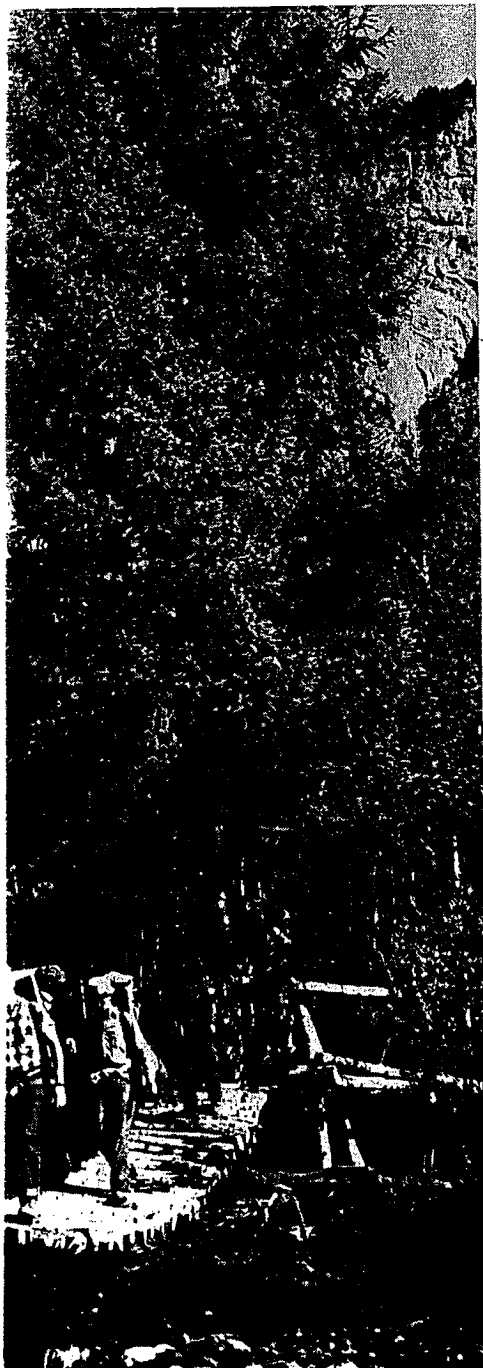


Three Peace Corps girls sample the results of new culinary skills.





An expedition team crosses a bridge built, in less than a day, by Peace Corps members earlier in the course.



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solutions we have tried are piecemeal and ineffective, and by and large miss the point completely.

As parents, we herd our children off to summer camps to master the game of tennis and learn about nature. The beautiful brochures set down in detail how nothing positive or beneficial can happen to the children during the summer. They get supervised sailing, supervised tennis, supervised nature study. Under the close watch of college boys, they learn how to do things but they learn nothing about themselves. The door to self-discovery is carefully kept shut.

With occasional first-rate exceptions, the Boy Scouts of America offer decreasing encouragement. What started with noble aims has become, in many parts of the country, just another organization to socialize teenagers. I have seen the Explorer Scout program perverted from its purpose of adventure and challenge to encompass the usual high school social activities and a set of rules to be memorized by every Scout as a catechism of gentlemanly conduct. There are twenty-two thousand occupations in this country, says a sober directive from regional headquarters, and we must make certain that Explorer Scouts learn all about the opportunities open to them.

To be sure, Boy Scouts still take hikes and learn first aid. But if they learn first aid for the purpose of saving lives, it is an accident; the important thing in scouting is to master the lesson as a step on the way to the next merit badge. Needless to say, if a boy orients his life to getting a badge every time he accomplishes something good, he's in trouble.

The same misguided approach characterizes many of our attempts to prepare the young for adulthood. "We make men out of boys," the school and camp catalogs proclaim.

Men cannot be manufactured. Character cannot be taught; people either have character or they don't. What is needed in our society is the opportunity for young people to discover their character. Becoming a man is a by-product.

WAR, of course, provides the opportunity. Bestial though war may be, it permits man to reach his highest peak in compassion, energy, generosity, and courage. There are many American men who, at Sasmolare or Corregidor or in the hills of Korea, discovered themselves. They found that they had, when the chips were down, the ability to move forward, despite extreme fear, despite heavy loads, both mental and physical, for distances and periods which had previously seemed impossible. They found that the instinct to help others was many times stronger even than the instinct for life itself. Some did not return because of the discovered capacity.

Mankind has always recognized the value of war as a cohesive force for a nation and an opportunity for self-sacrifice, but this romantic vision often clouds the remembrance of war's horror and atrocity. At the beginning of World War I, Thomas Mann praised the war for its "contempt of bourgeois security," for "its acceptance of life as danger," for the "absolute staking of the fundamental powers of body and soul." The sentiment for war seems alien to us now, yet here we are in 1962 reenacting the battles of the Civil War, glorifying the deeds of the men who fought at Bull Run and Gettysburg, little remembering the cost in human lives and suffering.

Perhaps the spiritual strength of many of our young people has eroded beyond the point of rescue by war. In the Korean conflict, 70 per cent of the American prisoners of war cooperated with the enemy and no soldier escaped from a prison camp. Apparently none tried. That tragedy was not due to lack of patriotism, as many have supposed, and it cannot be remedied by having troops memorize a Code of Conduct. The failure was, in part, an in-

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adequate appreciation of the individualistic values of our way of life; in part it was a failure of inner strength, endurance, and capacity for sacrifice. Its cure is not easy.

If ever war was a reasonable cathartic for a nation going soft, surely it is not now. Alexander and Ghengis Khan were small-time hoods when compared with the war lords of the past one hundred years. Hitler's gas chambers, unparalleled in history, made the Spanish Inquisition look like Sunday School. The last two wars have resulted in more deaths than all the wars in history put together. The next war must not happen.

What is needed, instead, is an alternative to war: something to preserve the same ideals of hardihood, to give our youth the strenuous kind of enterprise which will claim all their energies and abilities—in short, an effective means to self-discovery. William James recognized this need more than fifty years ago when he wrote an essay called "The Moral Equivalent of War." In it he said:

A permanently successful peace-economy cannot be a simple pleasure economy. In the more or less socialistic future towards which mankind seems drifting we must still subject ourselves collectively to those severities which answer to our real position upon this only partly hospitable globe. We must make new energies and hardihoods continue the manliness to which the military mind so faithfully clings. Martial virtues must be the enduring cement; intrepidity, contempt of softness, surrender of private interest, obedience to command must still remain the rock upon which states are built.

Why not an army with a mission of constructive purpose? James proposed that young people be conscripted for a period of several years into "an army enlisted against nature" and devoted to the elimination of many of the injustices by which some men, by accident of birth and

opportunity, live a life of ease and luxury while life for most others is toil and hardship.

The military ideals of hardihood and discipline would be wrought into the growing fiber of the people; no one would remain blind, as the luxurious classes now are blind, to man's real relations to the globe he lives on, and to the permanently sour and hard foundations of his higher life. To coal and iron mines, to freight trains, to fishing fleets in December, to dishwashing, clothes-washing, and window-washing, to road-building and tunnel-making, to foundries and stoke-holes, and to the frames of skyscrapers would our gilded youths be drafted off, to get the childishness knocked out of them, and to come back into society with healthier sympathies and soberer ideas.

I read that essay in 1958 when, as a teacher and after three years as headmaster of Colorado Academy, I was concerned about what our school could do to give students a sense of purpose and an involvement in something larger than themselves. James held the inspiration, but the answer for me came from a distinguished British educator who also had read James' essay, many years before.

Kurt Hahn, a German born Rhodes scholar, had founded the Gordonstoun School in Scotland in 1933. Here British boys were given, not only a demanding academic schedule, but ingenious means for helping them to discover themselves. Each was required to master a craft—carpentry, metalworking, farming—to learn to build with the hands. Each was also trained to serve others; boys at Gordonstoun ran a local fire department, served as foresters, mountain and sea rescue teams, and operated the coastal lighthouse. In these thirty years, Gordonstoun students have time and again proved themselves in danger and in need. Prince Charles is a Gordonstoun student, as was his father years ago.

On the eve of World War II, when packs of German submarines were sinking British merchant ships, Dr. Hahn was approached by Laurence Holt, owner of a shipping line. Mr. Holt was alarmed, not simply by the

tragic mortality rate of his crews, but by the pattern of the losses. Unless killed in an explosion, captains, first mates, and other top officers almost always survived. With the crews it was a different story. In spite of their youth and vigor, and in spite of an equal chance to survive, they were dying at an alarming rate with each sinking. Those who did survive a sinking usually refused to set foot on another ship.

With the financial support of Mr. Holt's company, Dr. Hahn established in the fall of 1941 a four-week course for apprentice seamen at Aberdovey, Wales. Mr. Holt gave the school the name of "Outward Bound," for, as he put it, the school "must be less a training for the sea than a training through the sea, and benefit all walks of life." Along the fog shrouded seacoast and wind swept mountains, Dr. Hahn went to work. His aims were several: to train the young men to handle themselves skillfully in the boats and in the mountains, to get them into the best physical shape in the shortest possible time; to have each student compete against his own earlier performance rather than against others, and to bring the students rapidly to the point where they could undertake a rugged three or four day expedition in groups of six or so. The boys were divided into teams of ten or twelve each; the teams competed against each other in marathon races, cliff-scaling, rope courses, and kindred tests of strength, endurance, and ingenuity.

The results of the Outward Bound School experiment were scarcely less than spectacular. It was apparent to Mr. Holt that the Outward Bound graduates proved far more cooperative and energetic than non-graduates. The performance of each boy at Outward Bound School also provided a reliable indication of his promise as an employee of the shipping firm. In time, Mr. Holt's firm was joined by eight hundred others who sent young men through the Outward Bound course and who gave the movement generous financial support. Other students have been sponsored by church groups, police constabularies, settlement houses, the Royal Air Force, private schools, youth clubs, and private individuals. Since 1941, 50,000 young

men have attended Outward Bound schools set up in Germany, Africa, Netherlands, Malaya, New Zealand, Australia, and the half-dozen now in Britain.

FOR SEVERAL YEARS I read everything that had been published about Outward Bound. I corresponded with British leaders of the Outward Bound Trust. But the idea of an Outward Bound school in the United States remained only a fond vision until two faculty members from Phillips Andover Academy—Gilbert Burnett and Joshua Miner—arrived in Denver to share their enthusiasm for Outward Bound schools and to discuss the steps to founding one on this continent. That was a year and a half ago; we have been running ever since.

Together, with the aid of John Mason Kemper, headmaster of Phillips Andover, we rounded up support from a few foundations and a few farsighted industries. We picked a 41-acre site in the Colorado mountains two hundred miles west of Denver, near the headwaters of the Crystal River. We brought consultants from England, sent student leaders from Phillips Academy and the Colorado Academy to Outward Bound schools in England to train as assistant instructors. In the summer of 1961, with the volunteer help of boys from Colorado Academy and schools all over the country, we began to build the school facilities. Those young people cleared the timber, mixed and poured cement, laid water lines, and began construction work on two staff houses, a large dining hall, and an equipment building. During their free time the young people were mountain climbing and practicing mountain rescue operations. When a climber on nearby Sheep Mountain was hit by some falling, loose rock and broke an ankle, the boys went swiftly and efficiently to work. Their rescue was the first dramatic instance in this country of Outward Bound's philosophy in action.

This summer past, more than one hundred boys, ranging in age from sixteen to twenty-two, attended the first three twenty-six day sessions of the Colorado Outward Bound School. (During the third session, they were joined by seventy-six

members of the Peace Corps.) They came from every part of the country and from every kind of background. There were wealthy boys from the suburbs, city lads who had never before left Hell's Kitchen in summertime, average American boys from middle-income homes, boys from the Juvenile Courts of Denver.

Like its foreign equivalents, the Colorado Outward Bound School is committed to the goal of making better, more self-reliant citizens by helping young men discover their real worth. The concept of service is all-important; at the outset, the boys are told, "You are the local mountain rescue team." To train for this mission they are presented with awesome challenges: a rope course through the trees made up of climbs, swings, "leopard crawls," traverses, "Burma Bridges," and similar hazards. Each student struggles with the trying problems and if, as not infrequently happens, he fails at first, with the help of his developing pride and the encouragement of his teammates—all strangers—he will conquer the course before he leaves.

After twenty-six days of these and other testing experiences, the student rarely returns home without a sense of rebirth both physical and spiritual, with an image of his own inner strength, and an understanding and compassion for his fellows far greater than when he came to Outward Bound.

NEVER IN THE history of our country have we had greater need for developing every conceivable mental, moral, and leadership trait within our young people. Outward Bound, I believe, is a start in the right direction. Though it is our long range aim to set up five schools in this country, it is hardly our intention to have every boy in the country go through the course. Rather, they will act as influence centers in their areas. The real pur-

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

THE OUTWARD BOUND approach to life is not for youngsters only. In a photo essay next month, a Swedish engineer who is a visiting assistant professor at Johns Hopkins demonstrates his devotion to physical fitness and zest for the rugged life.

pose is to set a standard to which the institutions of the country, both educational and industrial, can look for example.

I know no simple solutions for a nationwide effort to restore vigor to young life and open the way to self-discovery. Certainly the Peace Corps is the acme of the Outward Bound approach and the closest thing we have to full realization of William James' dream. At present the work that five thousand Peace Corps members can do to relieve the world's misery is miniscule. But we are the real gainers. The service these people are performing will have impact upon them; as they return to this country, they will bring with them a greater compassion and understanding, and a stronger sense of responsibility for the solution of the problems beyond our borders.

No doubt our present scheme of universal military training is necessary for national defense. There is some value in military life; I have seen it have a remarkable maturing effect on boys who had not found themselves or were foundering in their schoolwork. But how much more valuable it would be to train thousands to serve their fellow men instead of fighting them, to increase the size of the Peace Corps a hundred-fold and make it an effective influence, not only in international relations, but in the molding of our own youth.

We need also to consider the service opportunities for our young people at home. The injustices are here; there are still many Americans ill-housed, ill-clothed, and ill-fed. There are state and national parks where young people could serve—building trails, constructing and cleaning campsites, aiding foresters and rescue teams—so that the whole American citizenry can be encouraged to rediscover the outdoors, to take advantage of our parks and to use them safely. We need to give the old Civilian Conservation Corps a solid philosophical base and create a government-supported service group of real purpose. There are a million young people between the ages of seventeen and twenty-one who are unemployed: this is an army, an army capable of great accomplishments.

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I have a conservative's doubts about Federal programs that grow to leviathans. In an organization of a million people, much gets lost between thought and action. And yet, the task of providing our young people with a constructive purpose larger than themselves is too important to be left undone. The good works they can do are too great to ignore. I would hope that Federal involvement would be along the same lines as the highway program: matching funds for state operated and directed projects.

But surely there are grass roots solutions as well. It is up to all of us—the schools, the family, the camps, the youth groups, the communities—to make certain that our young people have the opportunity to discover their capacities for energy and endurance, for positive accomplishments, and for helping others. We need to restore ardor to life; we need to reinstate a sense of values.