

# Outward Bound

Address by Dr. Kurt Hahn  
at the Annual Meeting of the  
Outward Bound Trust on 20th July, 1960



Mr. Chairman. Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sir Spencer has referred to the day we first met. I regard it as a propitious day and I ought to say right away if I hadn't met him the story of Outward Bound would have been very different. If the Outward Bound Trust had not been formed in 1946, thanks to his undefeatable tenacity, Outward Bound would have floundered on the recruiting problem which we went unable to solve. Since then Outward Bound here developed in many and various ways and I consider it a sign of health that it is different from what it was originally. I want to talk today less about the contribution of Outward Bound in the past but about what I hope will be its contribution in the future.

At the end of the nineteenth century William James, the philosopher, threw out the challenge to educators and statesman: discover the moral equivalent to war. . . . James hated war but he admits that war satisfies a primitive longing of men which will never be extinguished, to lose yourself in a common cause, which claims the whole man.

*The Moral Equivalent of War:* At the end of the nineteenth century William James, the philosopher, threw out the challenge to educators and statesman: discover the moral equivalent to war. James hated war but he admits that war satisfies a primitive longing of men which will never be extinguished, to lose yourself in a common cause, which claims the whole man. War, so he says, shows human nature at its highest dynamic. "If peace tempts men and women to unmanly ease, if gain and pleasure become their absorbing goals." This longing may be driven underground. There it remains in unconscious

readiness to break forth in an international crisis, often weighting the scales of public opinion in favor of war. Now there is plenty of supporting evidence for this statement. I recall Tennyson's unseemly jubilation at the beginning of the Crimean War, which he welcomed as a release from an unworthy peace. I refer to the words written by the great individualist Thomas Mann at the beginning of the 1914 War: he 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."

I quote Rupert Brooke who wrote at the beginning of the war "honor has come back as King to earth, nobleness walker-in our way, we have come into our heritage." Richard Hillary, in his wonderful book *The Last Enemy*, writes "superficially we were selfish and egocentric without any Holy Grail in which we could lose ourselves. War provided it in a delightfully palatable form." His biographer goes so far as to speak of Hillary's experience and that of his contemporaries as a new birth through war. I refuse to arrange world wars in order to bring about this re-birth. I would like to sum up this line of argument like this: The "peace with the broken wing," as Tennyson called it, with its inevitable accompaniment of frustration, this peace with the broken wing is itself a menace to peace, it creates the readiness to greet war with a sigh of relief. George Traveyan delivered a memorable speech in 1943, standing on the pier at Aberdovey, baptizing your good ship *Garibaldi*. He said "without the instinct for adventure in young men, any civilization, however enlightened, any state, however well ordered, must wilt and wither." Now many a youngster refuses to wilt, many of them grow to be lawless, those who wilt are the listless. I personally prefer the law breaker. But there is a cross-breed between the two, between the listless and the lawless, the so-called angry young men. I prefer to call them cantankerous young men. They generally have the redeeming quality of ruthless sincerity. I asked one of them once "will you tell me, are you quarreller or are you fighter?" and he answered, "if you put it like that I'm a quarreller."

Now James calls on educators and even more on statesmen to heal this peace with the broken wing. I claim that Outward Bound, and not only Outward Bound, but kindred institutions like Brathay Hall, Glenmore Lodge, The Public Schools Exploring Society, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, and Voluntary Service Overseas have made an important advance towards the discovery of the "moral equivalent to war." I hope for an even greater contribution in the future.

Will you be satisfied to increase at a slow and safe rate the number of new schools, or will you hear the cry for help from bewildered and frustrated youths all over the world and accept a missionary assignment?
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*Outward Bound and Human Nature:* Mr. Chairman I consider that Outward Bound is at the crossroads today. Will you be satisfied for your five schools to continue improving their practices as they are doing? Will you be satisfied to increase at a slow and safe rate the number of new schools, or will you hear the cry for help from bewildered and frustrated youths all over the world and accept a missionary assignment? The assignment of giving advice and guidance wherever it is wanted and wherever other institutions want to introduce those health-giving activities which you have helped to develop.

I would like to say right away, while I am in total agreement with the Outward Bound Trust about almost everything that has happened in the past, I'm not so sure that my views about the future are not at variance with the Trust and I would ask you, ladies and gentlemen, if you don't like what I'm saying, to blame myself and not the Trust. Before I justify the claim that Outward Bound deserves to make a far more ambitious contribution and is capable of doing so, I would like to put before you the reading of human nature on which this claim is based.

But let me first guard against a misunderstanding. Do not regard me as the originator either of the diagnosis or the cure which I advocate. Perhaps I can best illustrate what I mean by telling you of a remark which my late Chief Prince Max of Baden once made when he was guiding an over-enthusiastic American through his school. I apologize to all those who have heard this story more than once. The American said to the Prince, "Would you mind telling me what are you proudest of in these beautiful schools?" And Prince Max said, "If you go the length and breadth of them, there's nothing original in them. That is what I am proud of. We have stolen from everywhere, from the Boy Scouts, from Plato, from Goethe and from the public schools." And the American said: "Ought you not to aim at being original?" and Prince Max answered, "No, it is in education as in medicine. You must harvest the wisdom of a thousand years. If ever you come to a surgeon and he wants to take out your appendix in the most original manner possible, I would strongly advise you to go to another surgeon."

The reading of human nature I am going to put before you is harvested from certain experiences, many of them were not my own. The harvest would not have been brought in if it had not been for my vigilant friend Geoffrey Winthrop. He not only accompanied all our enterprises with his severe and sympathetic criticism, he never tired of bringing home to us the lessons to be learned from victory and defeat as experienced not only by ourselves, but also by the pioneers who blazed the trail for the work we are trying to do and to whom we should never fail to pay grateful tribute.

I regard the Duke of York's camp as the real forerunner of Outward Bound. He gathered boys from different classes, which were more bitterly divided by distrust and prejudice than they are in our time. He united them through fun and laughter and through exacting pursuits. He succeeded not only in planting memories that were unforgettable, but in many cases the seeds were sown of a life-long social service. When he started he encountered both from trade unions and from public school parents a wave of skepticism which needed all his royal courage to resist.

I welcome this occasion to register my indebtedness to Dr. Zimmermann, the beloved "Zim" of Aberdovey fame. To him I owe the watchword "Training through the body, not training of the body." He agreed with Plato. "Let us build up physical fitness for the sake of the soul." He himself a brilliant athlete in his youth, was interested in the boy of average physical ability and even more in the clumsy one, and far less in the star performer, whom he liked to call prim donna. It was his belief that in a short time he could bring every normal boy to athletic achievements enough to draw self-respect

therefrom. And he considered it less important to develop the innate strength in a boy than to make him overcome his innate weakness. “*Your disability is your opportunity,*” he used to say to a boy who thought that certain standards were out of his reach. Jumpers and runners are often reluctant to learn how to throw, natural throwers not infrequently take avoiding action when called upon to develop their resilience and powers of acceleration. He was radiant what he succeeded in defeating a boy's defeatism. But not more radiant than the patient himself who had learnt a great lesson, that the severe task is the real joy: “*res severe, verism gaudium.*”

Your disability is your opportunity.

We remember "Zim" as the fellow of infinite jest - and of most excellent fancy whose flashes of merriment made us roar. We call him unique and under the cloak of our admiration we are tempted to argue that it needs a genius like Zim to operate his methods of curing what Jacks calls “physical illiteracy.” If Zim were alive he would strongly protest in unprintable English, and maintain what is true, that his system of all-round Athletic training only needs an instructor who is competent and who has two human qualities: victorious patience and the devoted interest in the progress of the individual boy.

I will tell you of certain observations which I believe confirm Zimmermann's theory and practice. I once encountered a surgeon who gave me his left hand. I then heard his history. As a young rising surgeon in a London hospital, he had an infection, and the greater part of his right hand had to be amputated and he had to give up his beloved career. He became a physician and found himself baffled again and again by seemingly incurable conditions of the lung that did up until then not yield to the knife. So he became a surgeon again. And had since developed methods subtle and intricate which have saved thousands of lives. He had triumphed over great adversity.

I would like to illustrate this further. I tried to analyze the roots of victory in the lives of men who had had shown an unusual “power to overcome.” One of them was in a dark room for a year, another one had lost a leg when a brilliant young athlete, the third one helped his mother against a drunken father.

Now, I do not propose to introduce the drunken papa as a compulsory item of education. But I am certain that it is neglect not to give to the young the strength and the opportunity to overcome adversity. I'll tell you of two incidents from my Gordonstoun experiences, which I think are relevant. We had a boy who wanted to join our Fire Service but he couldn't stand heights, he was an asthmatic, nervous boy. When he was told he couldn't join because he was not to be trusted on a ladder, he was very sad and practiced on the sly until one day he was able to prove that he could stand heights. He subsequently gained at Oxford the best first of his year in Engineering. He told me years later that what had greatly helped him in severe intellectual tasks was his victorious struggle at school to overcome his weakness. He has also lost his asthma.

The other incident is even more instructive. We had a sergeant-major who was a terror to the big and burly boys, but he was like a tender grandmother to the weak and timid ones. There was one boy who stood in dread of the obstacle course, in particular of the rope across the lake. One day the boy himself wanted to try but his courage failed him after he had struggled along the rope for two yards. He sobbed, "I cannot do it. I cannot do it." I was all for calling him back but the sergeant-major climbed behind him and touched his heel and said in a broad Scots accent, "You are doing grand, man, *you* are doing grand." And the boy went on sobbing all the time, but yet pulling himself along whenever he felt that reassuring tap on his heel. This went on 'til he had sobbed himself across. And then a radiant look came over his face, he ran round the lake and once more crossed the lake by the rope.

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Experience has taught us that expeditions can greatly contribute towards building strength of character. Joseph Conrad in one of his most beautiful passages in *Lord Jim*, tells us that it is necessary for a youth to experience events which "*reveal the inner worth of the man: the edge of his temper; the fibre of his stuff; the quality of his resistance, the secret truth of his pretences, not only to himself but to others.*" Expeditions are by no means universally popular. While we believe that it is the sin of the soul to force any youngster into opinions, we consider it neglect not to impel everybody into health-giving experiences. I once asked a boy who, on a sailing expedition 'round the Orkneys had encountered three gale, "How did you enjoy yourself?" His answer was, "Magnificently, except at the time."

I now come to the most important element in the training in which we believe, and I will also tell you how we came to introduce it. I am referring to our rescue services. I had heard that in the eighth century there came across from Ireland a Saint Gernadius by name, who lived in a cave on our rocky coast, and on stormy nights he walked about throughout the dark hours waving a lantern. I thought I could enthuse the boys to do some coastwatching on their own and I summoned the whole school and told them the story of Gernadius and I thought I told it quite impressively. But suddenly I saw a light of distrust jumping from boy to boy as if they wanted to say, "The old man wants to improve our souls." And I suddenly realized that the modern young are allergic to the manifest improvers. I registered my defeat and dropped the subject. But the Board of Trade unexpectedly stepped in. Two ox-naval captains in charge of the Coast Guard Service of Britain visited me to inquire whether the rumor was true that we thought of introducing a voluntary Coast Guard Service and then told me why they came, "We tried to persuade the Treasury to build a Coastguard Station on your ground because neither Hurghead nor Lossemouth can observe what happens along this dangerous stretch of coast. The Treasury refused. Now we make you this offer. If you build us one we shall give you a rocket apparatus in trust, and enroll your boys as H.M. Coastguards, and

install a telephone at our expense.” I saw the possibility of redeeming myself and asked the two Captains - they were in uniform - to tell the boys the same story they had told me. I summoned the school. As soon as the boys heard that the Board of Trade was prepared to fork out cash they saw a reality. That is how Gordonstoun’s Watchers Corps originated, perhaps the school's most characteristic institution.

There are three ways of trying to win the young. There is persuasion, there is compulsion and there is attraction. You can preach at them, that is a hook without a worm; you can say “You must volunteer,” that is of the devil; and you can tell them, “You are needed.” That appeal hardly ever fails. I am quite certain that the young of today respond better to the service which is demanded from them in the interest of others than to the service which is offered them for their overt benefit and improvement.

There are all sorts of subsidiary motives which come into play and which at times seem to detract from the intrinsic worth of the service which is rendered: the love of adventure, the fascination of machinery, scientific curiosity. I do not believe they necessarily detract. The experience of helping a fellow man in danger, or even of training in a realistic manner to be ready to give this help, tends to change the balance of power in a youth's inner life, with the result that compassion can become the master motive. I remember a characteristic incident which took place in Salem. There was a wild and ruthless boy. I received daily deputations urging me that I should get rid of him. But I hesitated, wondering whether his undefeatable spirit could not be directed towards worthwhile aims. I persuaded him to join the agricultural guild. One day he came to me in great excitement and said, “Mr. Hahn, something terrible has happened. They want to kill our cow because she has swallowed a piece of wire. Now I know from my father, who is a doctor, that in such cases you can operate on humans, and a cow is a much tougher animal than a man or woman. May I find a vet who will operate?”

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In my stupidity, I said to him, “Well, if you find a Vet, who will operate on this cow, she shall live.” He disappeared for twenty-four hours, then came back with a Vet who lived 30 miles away. His coming cost more than the cow. I shall never forget what happened then. I was in bed at that time with a broken leg, and the stable was 200 yards away – suddenly I heard a cry. It was the cry of a savage, but it was not the cry of fear, it was the cry of jubilant mercy. What had happened? The boy had been allowed to assist at the operation; he had poured much iodine into the wound made by the surgeon's knife. The arm of the vet, buried in the recesses of the cow had extracted the piece of wire from near the heart. When he held it up the boy emitted that triumphant cry which I had heard. He has since become a distinguished surgeon.

Now I come to the fourth element, which also plays a part in the pattern of Outward Bound, that is the project. Examinations are one very effective method of training the willpower. I wouldn't miss them for anything. They ought to be invented if then didn't exist. But I am equally certain that the project chosen by the boy, carried through with purposeful tenacity to a well-defined goal, can tap the hidden reserves of the mind in a way that an examination can rarely do. I remember one boy who was the laziest one I had to deal with. He was so lazy that in free periods he used to set his alarm clock. But he had two passions in his life: one was to help other people – he always said he wanted to become a doctor – and the other was carpentry. The tables and bookshelves he made were masterpieces. I got him into an Oxford College – they were short of boys at the time – in 1941 he won the Medical Prize of Oxford University and in 1945 the Surgical Prize of Oxford University and just recently he won a prize for cancer research. He is now a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons. I spoke to him the other day. He attributed much of his success to the perseverance and accuracy he had to develop when carrying through his carpentry projects at school.

*Addressing the Five Declines in Modern Civilization:* These four elements – fitness training, expeditions, projects, rescue service are familiar to all who have experienced or witnessed Outward Bound in action. I should like to call them antidotes. When you speak of an antidote you imply that the human organism has to be protected against poison. There can be no doubt that the young of today have to be protected against certain poisonous effects inherent in present-day civilization. Five social diseases surround them, even in early childhood. There is the decline in fitness due to the modern methods of locomotion, the decline in initiative, due to the widespread disease of spectatoritis, the decline in care and skill, due to the weakened tradition of craftsmanship, the decline in self-discipline, due to the ever-present availability of tranquilizers and stimulants, the decline of compassion, which William Temple called “spiritual death.”

Now I will try to illustrate these declines. A surgeon friend of mine the other day had a patient from America, and he asked, “How did you first feel these pains in your knee – “when went for a walk?” . . . “I never go for a walk.” “When you went shopping – on the pavement?” . . . “I always take my car.” . . . . “When you walk upstairs?” . . . “Oh, I always take the lift.”

Spectatoritis is indeed a widespread disease. You can take part as a spectator in great feats of human effort; you can taste the tension of danger, you can experience the thrills of narrow escapes; you accompany these dramatic happenings with unconscious movements of your body as if you are part of the action you watch, the sensation is transitory and fraudulent yet ever again coveted with intensity. The decline in self-discipline I will illustrate by two ridiculous incidents. A mother of one of my boys sent him back to school with pills against homesickness. I was cross-examined by a very well-know progressive educator. He was very stern with me and asked, “Do your boys enjoy jumping, running and throwing?” And I put the counter question to him: “Do you enjoy brushing your teeth, Sir?” And he said, “I don't enjoy it and don't do it.”

*The Decline of Compassion:* Now I come to the worst decline. The decline in compassion due to the unseemly haste with which modern life is conducted. In 1945 I was the first private civilian from this country to go to Berlin. I was staying with an American friend – a Good Samaritan. He had done wonders in helping people in distress and danger who were living in the Russian Zone. He forced me to go and see the fugitives arriving at one of the big railway stations. I didn't want to go but he said you must, even though you are only a naturalized British subject. I want you to take back to Britain the memory of the great suffering you will see. I went with him in his car – there was a young American driving us, a friendly looking man. We passed through scenes of death and misery which will haunt me for the rest of my life. All the time this young driver was playing jazz on his wireless, 'til my host could stand it no longer and leant forward and said, "For God's sake stop!" This young man had a dispersed soul, which he could not even assemble before the majesty of death.

These incidents illustrate the social diseases to which the modern young are exposed. In November, 1936, I indicated the possible antidotes in an open letter to *The Times*. I received only one letter of encouragement, but I treasure it. It came from Lord Baden-Powell. And then these antidotes were embodied in a short course which owes its origin to the Chairman of the Northern Regional Committee of the National Fitness Council. I'm glad to say he's here today – Sir Harry Houldsworth. We had a remarkable Warden in Lord David Douglas-Hamilton, whose death in the war I regard as a tragedy for the young of this country. He was the most inspiring guide of the young I have ever encountered. He had the grace of leadership, his advice was stronger than other people's orders. The course lasted only a fortnight – too short, containing the danger of overstrain, but already you could see that much could be done in a short time. It is on this issue that we have to meet the criticism of many skeptics. Mrs. Leslie has helped me in my efforts to refute them. She wrote in the prospectus of the Moray Sea School, "*One has known of youngsters who were corrupted in a few minutes. It should be possible in a month for a boy to discover the strength which a good conscience can give him.*" Mrs. Leslie's argument encouraged me to prepare this answer for the skeptic: I know of a very fine General, an honourable and loyal gentleman, most faithful to his King; he had fought and won a great battle and he walked back through a wood, when he encountered three ugly women. He arrived home and talked to his ambitious wife. The loyal General and gentleman became the mass-murdered Macbeth, the whole transformation lasted 35 minutes.

*The Development of Outward Bound:* In 1941 Lawrence Holt committed his great act of faith. It was he who invented the term "Outward Bound." Against my strong protests, I am ashamed to say. And he said something, which I shall never forget and which I recall when courage fails me: "In a democracy you can only accelerate development by example." The pattern of Outward Bound remains the same in certain essentials. But there have been important developments and variations. We owe it to Tom Bedwell and Jim Hogan that early on there was introduced into the routine of the day a certain ceremoniousness which I hope will never be extinguished. It gives the boys a sense of security and order. It is good that the schools are not uniform. Each has fashioned a routine in accordance with regional opportunities and with the creative tastes of the



Wardens. The Moray Sea School has its three-master, the *Prince Louis*, and has invented the combined land and sea operations. Eskdale has developed into a reliable rescue centre whose services are relied upon in the district. The Warden has developed initiative tests which gives the individual release from the community life. Ullswater has built up a splendid tradition of canoeing and map-reading. Aberdovey is manning the beaches in the summer and helps in the beneficial work of afforestation under the guidance of the Forestry Commission. It is characteristic of our first Outward Bound School that it had admitted a deaf and dumb boy – he passed all the tests and was greatly helped by his neighbors at meals who, for his benefit, had learned the deaf and dumb language. It is also significant that Freddy Fuller asked me one day to give him many copies of a speech, which was made by a bereaved father at a memorial service at Gordonstoun. We had lost a splendid boy who died when a tunnel he had made collapsed over him. The father felt it was right for him to warn the school against foolhardiness. We shall always gratefully remember the words spoken on this occasion by this greathearted man:

“Anyone of us may at some time have sufficient reason to risk his life – even to go to certain death – but I do not believe it can be pleasing to God that we should throw away our lives to no purpose. Trying, for instance, to climb a rock face that is too hard for us, just to be able to boast that we have done it; therefore do not imagine that in order to be brave and enterprising it is necessary also to be reckless. The bravest man is the one who weighs all the risks and when they become greater than the object is worth, has the courage to turn back and face that other risk of being called a coward.”

I have singled out Aberdovey, and its Samaritan spirit. But it is only fair to say that not one of the five Outward Bound schools in this country has ever allowed toughness worshippers to distort the spiritual purpose of our enterprises.

The overseas developments are of particular interest. The Man O’ War Bay School has demonstrated how in one month boys can acquire certain techniques, which will help them to do useful work on their return to their home communities. The Loitokitok School in Kenya has done much towards mitigating racial discord. There are two schools on the Continent, one, the Sea School Weissenhaus in North Germany on the Baltic, the other at Baad, on the Austro-Bavarian border in the high hills. Rescue service has the place of honor in both schools, training is meticulous. The Baad boys have been active in over forty rescue operations. Weissenhaus employs a biologist who publishes an annual report on the wildlife of the district – each course helps him in this project by observing and collecting under his guidance. Weissenhaus and Baad have succeeded in establishing a precedent which may have far-reaching, even revolutionary consequences. Today, one-hundred secondary schools are sending whole forms in term-time to these two Outward Bound schools – they have found that the loss of over one hundred learning hours is far outweighed by the gain in vitality, even from a purely academic standpoint. In its initial stage the experiment was far from popular. The Headmaster of one famous grammar school only sent a form under protest by order from the Ministry and he chose the worst of two parallel Lower Sixth forms in accordance with the German proverb, “Vinegar

cannot turn sour.” In the final matriculation examination the “weak” form had no failures, which the “good” one had three.

The Outward Bound experience by itself does not go deep enough. It is the beginning of a great promise – but this promise will not be fulfilled unless the follow-up problem is solved.

*The Future of Outward Bound:* Experiments made abroad should be carefully studied in this country. The time has certainly come to look back, but I came here to look ahead. The late Master of Balliol once said, “Outward Bound has the duty of multiplication.” That is certainly true, but I am glad that the rate of multiplication is safe and slow. But even if we had twenty or thirty Outward Bound schools, we would not render the service for which the needs of youth cry out today. Outward Bound has no doubt developed certain remedial methods – but we can only release the cure, we cannot complete it. I am not under-rating the influence of soul-restoring experiences. Many a boy will return from an Outward Bound course or from a ceremony during which he received a well-earned reward with good resolutions, but these resolutions will in many cases evaporate, leaving no trace on future conduct, unless the Outward Bounder, after his return to his home surroundings is challenged by opportunities for a service which is regular, disciplined and needed. To put it bluntly: the Outward Bound experience by itself does not go deep enough. It is the beginning of a great promise – but this promise will not be fulfilled unless the follow-up problem is solved. It is not solved today.

I go further: our influence *is not wide enough*. Let me use an analogy - supposing we had developed a remedy of a particularly grave disease. We ought to feel uneasy in our conscience if we only administered it in our own institution; we ought to do all we can to make it available to the great mass of patients suffering from that particular disease. We should equip ourselves with facilities to transmit the know-how of the technique and practice, which we had developed to anyone who wants to profit from our experience. A hopeful start has been made through our cooperation with the Services; the Navy has coined a new word – to go “Outward Bounding.”

But as yet there is little penetration into the established system of education. I will tell you of a depressing experience, which is symptomatic. I once went to the Isle of Wight to visit the Sea Rover Coastguard Unit, which is famous for many rescues they brought off on a dangerous coast. I was hoping to see boys training for active service. My youngest boy was 26, my oldest, 63. I asked, “Why don’t you enlist boys?” The answer was, “The grammar school boys would not be able to volunteer on account of their homework.” There is no doubt, too many boys and girls climb the educational ladder, “purchasing knowledge at the price of power.” (editors note: this quote is attributed to William Wordsworth).

For the first time I feel hopeful that there is a real chance of Outward Bound doing its duty by the Nation, both by deepening and widening its influence. The day schools of the country no longer operate behind an Iron Curtain. Courageous reformers are at work and many of them look to Outward Bound for guidance and advice. I will put before you a characteristic example: the Headmaster of a big grammar school in the Midlands wants to

start an Outward Bound Centre of its own, to which he would send whole forms in term time for a month. He has a splendid site in view in challenging country. The boys and girls would be taught one subject but in addition experience the vitalizing activities in which we believe. I know of another famous day school in the South of England which wants to transform itself into a day-boarding school, that is to say, shoulder the responsibility for leisure activities – the boys would go home only after the evening meal, having done their homework at school. They would spend a good many weekends exploring the countryside under the guidance of their masters.

I could list many another sign proving that there is a hopeful reform movement stirring in the day schools of Britain – I feel in a strong position when I plead that Outward Bound should accept a missionary assignment.

As yet we are not ready for this task. I will only point to one gap, which should be filled. For nearly twenty years we have witnessed remarkable improvements in the physical well-being of the boys entrusted to our care. But this progress in vital health has never been registered and reported upon by competent medical observers. I tried to enlist the help of Sir John Ryle, late Professor of Social Medicine at Oxford, shortly before he died. He was greatly interested, admitting that there is between “Vital Health” and “Non-Illness” a no-man’s land, which is hardly explored. He even contemplated attaching one of his best young men to the Aberdovey Sea School to bring in the harvest of our own observations.

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*Deepening the Influence of Outward Bound:* Now I come to the task of deepening our influence. I am hopeful that before long a challenge will go out to the young of this country to render voluntary active service in peacetime. We owe much to the visit of Judge Curlewis. He is the President of the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia. He came to Europe with seven volunteers; they demonstrated the Australian techniques of lifesaving in Germany, France, and in Britain. In all these European countries he was profoundly shocked by the complacency, as he called it, in the face of unnecessary death. Dangerous bathing beaches were not manned at all, or sometimes manned by devoted beachguards who were inadequately equipped. He hated the term “the drowning season.” In this country 1,000 people drown a year. His organization has saved 104,000 lives since 1910. The training is severe. The Australians devote to the art of lifesaving a meticulous care such is generally only associated with the art of killing. When Judge Curlewis returned home he convened an International Convention on Life Saving Techniques under the guidance of the Medical Association of Australia. All possible statutory and voluntary bodies interested in lifesaving were represented, including the Police Department, The Royal Australian Navy and Air Force, Royal Life Saving Society, St. John Ambulance Brigade, etc.

It is too much to hope that a similar Convention will be organized in this country and that the safety conscience of the nation will be stirred, in particular that the call will go out to the youth of Britain, "Come and help in the fight against unnecessary death." I hope that the Rescue organizations from abroad would be represented. I am thinking in particular of the National Ski Patrol of America. Many years ago the founder of this organization, Minot Dole, lay with broke legs on a ledge in Vermont and he made a pledge that if he got out of this seemingly hopeless situation, he would start an organization so that others would not find themselves in the same predicament. He kept his promise. I asked him what was the purpose of his organization and he said, "The purpose of the Good Samaritan. I wish we could teach the Russians that. . . ."

Once this appeal to the young went forth from a high level I am confident there would be a great response among the adolescents of this country. But to influence the masses we need in addition a selected minority setting a fashion of conduct. We believe that such a minority can be built up in every free country through the foundation of the Atlantic Colleges, provided Britain will once again help other nations by her example.

Boys will come at the age of 16 or 17 for two or three years from all the Atlantic countries, from non-committed nations and we hope later on from the Satellites and from Russia. They will be prepared for a university entrance examination, which we hope will be recognized by the whole Free World. Russian will be one of the languages taught. We feel sure that Outward Bound can be relied upon to help in shaping the community life in which it is intended that rescue service will have the place of honor. The Atlantic College in Britain will be a fortress and a bridge – a fortress for the spiritual defense of freedom and a bridge to a better Russia, which is homesick for the Western family of nations.

To prepare the response to the minority returning home, we will try to create a Nansen Badge on the Continent modeled on the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. We hope to have the guidance of those who run this scheme in this country.

I come to the conclusion. The ills of Western youth are grave, but Outward Bound has proved they are curable. A great challenge has been thrown out to the young of the West which has stirred them deeply. I'm referring to the Hungarian Revolt – it has been drowned in blood, but it has been spiritual victorious. In October, 1956, one of the most wonderful sounds was heard – the sounds of fetters breaking. We shall hear it again. Our young have it in them to become the vanguard of a spiritual offensive. Since October, 1956, the masters of the enslaved world know that they are losing the fight for the soul of youth, but the West has not yet won it. There lurks in waiting a third force – a disintegrating force – cynicism, which since the outcome of the war has afflicted the young of the West. Russia fears the verdict of youth like judgement day and Christianity is the weed in the well-ordered garden of the devil. He tries in vain to exterminate it; will it spread irresistibly? That is the issue of destiny for the human race.

A cheated youth in the satellite countries and Russia looks toward the West full of hope and full of distrust and asks this question, which makes us blush, "Are you in earnest about the ideals you profess?" Who shall give an answer? Free young men and women

prepared to render hard and willing service ready to do as the good Samaritan has done. I believe that it is possible in a short time to inspire a small section of Atlantic youth to set an example which will carry conviction. We go further – we hope that, with your help, we will be able to introduce among the masses of young people throughout the Free World, activities which will give them new spirit and vigor and prepare them to follow the lead given by the minority.

I repeat: the ills of Western youth are grave, but curable. Under the veneer of skepticism and cynicism there is a longing the young of the West for a common cause to cry out. I cannot do better than to define this common cause by the words which George Trevelyan spoke at Aberdovey in 1943: “There are two passions not likely to die out of the world – the love of country and the love of freedom – they can be kept pure by the one thing which can tame yet not weaken them – tender humanity for all men.”

Issued by the Outward Bound Trust  
73 GREAT PETER STREET S. W. 1