

MISCELLANY

Cancer, Disease and Society

by Bernard Sanders

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And, related to the above and, most importantly, how will the future battle against disease be fought? Will drugs and surgery continue to be used against symptoms, or will society, and the way we live, undergo radical change so that the human organism can flourish on this planet. In short, will society be changed so as to fit the needs of the human organism, or will the human organism continue to be adapted, molded and crushed to fit into basically insane and disease provoking patterns.

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ually adjusted patients were 68, 67, 67, 59 and 41; whereas those of the partially adjusted group were 54, 55, 55, 57, and 61. This means that of the 14 patients 51 or more years old, 9 had some degree of orgasmic ability, whereas OF THE 26 PATIENTS BELOW 51, ONE WAS SEXUALLY ADJUSTED."

The authors concluded their study by citing 6 characteristics which they feel were shared by the patients:

- 1) A masochistic character structure. (The patients will to live appeared not very strong. Many of them delayed going for treatment despite the fact that they had noticed lumps on their breasts and were aware of what they could mean).
- 2) Inhibited sexuality—(as discussed above).
- 3) Inhibited motherhood.
- 4) The inability to discharge or deal appropriately with anger, aggression, or hostility, covered over by a facade of pleasantness.
- 5) The unresolved hostile conflict with the mother, handled through denial and unrealistic sacrifice.
- 6) Delay in securing treatment.

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—The hiatus in national student organization should permit young adults in the movement to reassess their role in it. The debacle of the past year was caused in part by the absence of an adult movement enjoying the confidence of the youth. The students have been burdened with too many responsibilities. For many years they have been forced to act as a general movement. But this posture is in perpetual conflict with their actual social base, which remains, after all, limited. The recognition by student revolutionaries that the campus "could not" lead the movement was both a maturing and a demoralizing experience, because there is no genuine working class radical movement.

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an editor's note

The Good Cops

"Now," someone may say, "this is all very interesting, but why isn't it put into some cancer research journal or something? What does it have to do with me?" The answer, my friend, is obvious. It has everything to do with you. The above references, in no uncertain terms, state that you might very well be the cause of cancer. "What!" says the upstanding citizen and head of the P.T.A., "absurd, preposterous. I don't know anything about cancer (except that aunt Millie died of it and that the Cancer Society will eventually prevent it). Ridiculous, me being the cause of cancer."

Not so fast, my friend. Read the above statements by the researchers again, this time more slowly, and bear in mind that the physicians who wrote the above (with the exception of Reich) are not social critics. They write gently and matter of factly.

What do you think it really means when 3 doctors, after intense study, write that "of the 26 patients (who developed breast cancer) below 51 (years of age), one was sexually adjusted." It means, very bluntly, that the manner in which you bring up your daughter with regard to sexual attitudes may very well determine whether or not she will develop breast cancer, among other things.

How much guilt, nervousness have you imbued in your daughter with regard to sex? If she is 16, 3 years beyond puberty and the time which nature set forth for child-bearing, and spent a night out with her boyfriend, what is your reaction? Do you take her to a psychiatrist because she is "maladjusted," or a "prostitute," or are you happy that she has found someone with whom she can share love? Are you concerned about HER happiness, or about your "reputation" in the community.

With regard to the schools that you send your children to, are you concerned that many of these institutions serve no other function than to squash the life, joy and curiosity out of kids. When a doctor write that the cancer personality "represses hate, anger, dissatisfaction and grudges, or on the other hand, is a 'good' person, who hnd, is a 'good' person, who is consumed with self pity, suffers in stoic silence", do you know what he is talking about, and what this has to do with children, parents and schools.

It means this quite simply. A child has an old bitch of a teacher (and there are many of them) or perhaps he simply is not interested in school and would rather be doing other thing. He complains and rebels against the situation, which is the healthy reaction. When a person is hurt, no matter what age, he SHOULD rebel.

And what happens when the child rebels against the adult world? Here he is, a little guy, complaining against a teacher who has been in

the school for 47 years, or maybe against the whole school system. Who listens to him, who takes him, and his feelings, seriously? Who demands that a teacher be fired "just because" she makes little kids miserable? Who demands that compulsory schooling be eliminated "just because" millions of kids don't want to go to school

The child rebels but, because he is a child, nothing happens. His rebellion is impotent because, being a child, people feel that he doesn't know what is right for him and that the major decisions in his life have to be made for him by adults. Some children, despite all the obstacles in their way, continue to rebel and assert their rights.

Others, in one form or another, give in and become resigned to the situation, and this is what the cancer personality as described above is all about. The child becomes resigned by repressing his natural anger and feelings about the situation he finds himself in. Outwardly, he becomes a "good boy", conforming to the rules and regulations of the system. Inwardly, his spirit is broken, and his soul seethes with hatred and anger which is unable to be expressed. He has learned to hold back his emotions and put on the phony facade of pleasantness. Thirty years later a doctor tells him that he has cancer.

What the above research into the psychosomatic aspects of cancer shows us is that, in psychological terms, resignation is the other side of the coin to the somatic breakdown called cancer. Simmons, among other, in his short work entitled "The Psychosomatic Aspects of Cancer" cites several instances when famous personalities developed cancer after suffering serious emotional traumas or disappointments and felt that their future was hopeless. When the human spirit is broken, when the life force is squashed, cancer becomes a possibility.

The cancer problem, like disease in general, poses an extra-ordinary dilemma for society. How painful it is to face up to the truth, and how easy it is to place a label on something, cancer, raise a hundred million dollars for research and give it to a handful of specialists to work on. "Go," we say, "solve the cancer problem. Prevent cancer. Tell me about the little virus that causes it, invent an injection to cure it, and everything will be just fine."

"While you're at it, tell your friends at the other laboratories to invent an injection to cure neurosis and psychosis, heart condition and ulcers, asthma and rheumatic fever, sexual impotence and frigidity alcoholism and drug addiction, obesity and insomnia, etc., etc., and etc."

Life is very simple. All we need is lots of money, well trained technicians, and a steady output of new drugs.

In the months past, I've had occasion at times to be quite critical of members of the State Police, including the top leadership. I've tried to qualify the criticism as applying to individual performance or non-performance, and not a blanket condemnation, but I'm sure this has been misunderstood.

The misunderstanding would be logical. The failure to correct police abuses and discipline violations of police ethics has left a cloud of doubt over all the members of the force, and unjustly.

Two incidents in recent months offer an opportunity to try to redress this injustice.

The first was in the course of our travels. We're on the road a lot among the Schoolhouse, Enosburg and Goddard bases. We log well over 2,500 miles a month. There are times when either haste or carelessness takes me over the speed limit.

Some miles south of St. Albans, a Trooper—I think his name was Williamson, stopped us on the Interstate. We'd been going too fast, and this time I didn't know it, because I was tired. The trooper had neither anger or sarcasm to offer; just some good advice. My recollection is that it was either foggy or slippery or both, so that even the 65 speed limit would have been hazardous, and I was over the limit. The trooper pointed out these things to me in a thoughtful warning that Linn and I both appreciated.

That's all. In 27 years of driving, I've been stopped

"Go ahead, take all the money you need, invent all the dugs you want BUT under no circumstances, DON'T TELL ME THAT THERE'S ANYTHING WRONG WITH THE WAY I LIVE. DON'T TELL ME THAT SOCIETY HAS GOT TO CHANGE"

"Don't tell me," we say, that the cancer problem might be related to people wasting away their lives before the television screen for 50 hours a week, to stupid jobs which people do with no desire or interest, to dead marriages, unhappy sexual lives to children falling asleep and telling dirty jokes afterwards, to people getting drunk and "stoned" in order to forget that they're alive, and to people just "killing time", i.e.—their lives. Please don't tell me these things, don't get me too worried I m'nt need another tranquilizer."

perhaps a dozen times and gotten three tickets. The other times I've been warned about excessive speed, or a burned-out taillight, or a soft tire, and once erratic driving because I was falling asleep. This was one of the other times. I'm glad he stopped me. He did his job intelligently.

The second incident was just last week. Driving home from an evening meeting we came on the scene of a rather nasty accident. A father and his five-year-old son had left the winding road that leads to Huntington. The car mashed into a tree just before it would have tipped into the Huntington River. When we got there a minute or two after the crash the father was standing clear, with a broken rib, gashed chin and tongue and a bunch of busted teeth. His son was still in the car, pinned under the front seat. We were later to learn that he had breaks in his right leg above and below the knee, as well as the very visible gash on his head.

When Trooper Edwards arrived he very calmly took charge. With quiet words and gentle hands he extricated the boy and had him up on the front seat when a nearby doctor arrived to assess the emergency. With the boy in the doctor's care, he turned to the father, did some first-aid bandaging, asked someone standing near to stay with the distraught man while he returned to the hurting, frightened son.

In a matter of minutes, the ambulance Trooper Edwards had called for on his way arrived. Father and son were on their way to the emergency room at the Fletcher unit of the Medical Center in Burlington. Then the trooper commissioned the doctor and two others to go to the family and let them know what had happened.

As I passed the scene perhaps 20 minutes later taking the little boy's mother to the hospital, Trooper Edwards was still there, supervising the removal of the wreck and the gathering up of the possessions that had been scattered around in the accident. Still later, he joined the family in the emergency room to finish noting the facts for his report and inquire about the condition of father and son.

As he left it was snowing. He was expecting more accidents before his hour of duty was over for the night. He was probably tired, but he didn't show it.

Trooper Edwards was efficient, but he was more than that. He was human and kind. Although he knew it

had been only a few minutes from the time he was called till he arrived at the accident scene, he knew it had seemed like a long wait to us, and he apologized for taking so long. He cared. He was, for us, giving more than just what doing a job requires.

Happily, these two are not isolated incidents. Much more, for me, they represent the typical experience. If they were the experience of the students in Berkeley, the Black Panthers in Chicago, the Negroes in the South, and poor people in many places, then "lawmorder" wouldn't be a national issue.

In fact, if the Rev. David L.H. Johnson in Irasburg had had this kind of experience with the Vermont State Police, then Vermont would not have been subjected to national notoriety, and its police to ugly suspicions.

In my opinion, Governor Davis and his top cop, Col. Erwin Alexander, did a most unfortunate service to capable men like Trooper Williamson and Trooper Edwards in not heeding the clear findings of police negligence and even harassment in the Irasburg business. They should have cleared the reputations and competent service of the many good men by taking disciplinary actions against the few who misbehaved, or were incompetent.

With such thoughts in mind, these paragraphs are a welcome chance to exercise the editor's prerogative, and write some well-earned praise for the able, thoughtful men who don't make headlines very often, and who do serve well with little thanks.

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