

LETTERS TO SCHOOLS VOLUME ONE 15TH DECEMBER, 1978

In one of the past letters we said that total responsibility is love. This responsibility is not for a particular nation or a particular group, community, or for a particular deity, or some form of political programme or for your own guru, but for all mankind. This must be deeply understood and felt and this is the responsibility of the educator.

Almost all of us feel responsible for our family, children and so on, but do not have the feeling of being wholly concerned and committed to the environment around us, to nature, or totally responsible for our actions. This absolute care is love. Without this love there can be no change in society. The idealists, though they may love their ideal or their concept, have not brought about a radically different society. The revolutionaries, the terrorists, have in no way fundamentally changed the pattern of our societies. The physically violent revolutionaries have talked about freedom for all men, forming a new society, but all the jargons and slogans have further tortured the spirit and existence. They have twisted words to suit their own limited outlook. No form of violence has changed society in its most fundamental sense. Great rulers through the authority of a few have brought about some kind of order in society. Even the totalitarians have superficially established through violence and torture a semblance of order. We are not talking about such an order in society.

We are saying very definitely and most emphatically that it is only the total responsibility for all mankind - which is love - that can basically transform the present state of society. Whatever the existing system may be in various parts of the world it is corrupt, degenerate and wholly immoral. You have only to look around you to see this fact. Millions upon millions are spent on armaments throughout the world and all the politicians talk about peace while preparing for war. Religions have declared over and over again the sanctity of peace, but they have encouraged wars and subtle kinds of violence and torture. There are innumerable divisions and sects with their rituals and all the nonsense that goes on in the name of god and religion. Where there is division there must be disorder, struggle, conflict - whether religious, political, economic. Our modern society is based on greed, envy and power.

When you consider all this as it actually is - this overpowering commercialism- all this indicates degeneration and basic immorality. To radically change the pattern of our life, which is the basis of all society, is the educator's responsibility.

Education is not merely the teaching of various academic subjects, but the cultivation of total responsibility in the student. One does not realize as an educator that one is bringing into being a new generation. Most schools are only concerned with imparting knowledge. They are not at all concerned with the transformation of man and his daily life, and you - the educator in these schools - need to have this deep concern and the care of this total responsibility.

In what manner then can you help the student to feel this quality of love with all its excellence? If you do not feel this yourself profoundly, talking about responsibility is meaningless. Can you as an educator feel the truth of this? Seeing the truth of it will bring about naturally this love and total responsibility. You have to ponder it, observe it daily in your life, in your relations with your wife, your friends, your students. And in your relationship with the students you will talk about this from your heart, not pursue mere verbal clarity. The feeling for this reality is the greatest gift that man can have and once it is burning in you, you will find the right word, right action and correct behaviour. When you consider the student you will see that he comes to you totally unprepared for all this. He comes to you frightened, nervous, anxious to please or on the defensive, conditioned by his parents and the society in which he has lived his few years. You have to see his background, you have to be concerned with what he actually is and not impose on him your own opinions, conclusions and judgements. In considering what he is it will reveal what you are, and so you will

find the student is you.

And now can you in the teaching of mathematics, physics, and so on - which he must know for that is the way of earning a livelihood - convey to the student that he is responsible for the whole of mankind? Though he may be working for his own career, his own way of life, it will not make his mind narrow. He will see the danger of specialization with all its limitations and strange brutality. You have to help him to see all this. The flowering of goodness does not lie in knowing mathematics and biology or in passing examinations and having a successful career. It exists outside these and when there is this flowering, career and other necessary activities are touched by its beauty. Now we lay emphasis on one and disregard the flowering entirely.

In these schools we are trying to bring these two together, not artificially, not as a principle or pattern you are following, but because you see the absolute truth that these two must flow together for the regeneration of man. Can you do this? Not because you all agree to do it after discussing and coming to a conclusion, but rather see with an inward eye the extraordinary gravity of this: see for yourself. Then what you say will have significance. Then you become a centre of light not lit by another. As you are all of humanity - which is an actuality, not a verbal statement - you are utterly responsible for the future of man.

Please do not consider this as a burden. If you do, that burden is a bundle of words without any reality. It is an illusion. This responsibility has its own gaiety, its own humour, its own movement without the weight of thought.