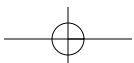
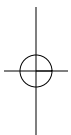
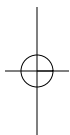


PART XI
Conclusion



CHAPTER 30

Making a Difference
in the Face of Temporal Inertia

One purpose of this memoir was to determine what did and did not work and why.

In the first place, almost everything herein achieved, except for some early work on the ABM, occurred only because of the base that FAS provided. Had I been at a university, with heavy teaching duties, or at one of the more prestigious, stodgy, think tanks, many of these adventures would have died aborning. Even some of the larger public interest groups would not have permitted or encouraged so much freewheeling activity. For entrepreneurial activists, making a difference requires one of the rarest qualities in modern life—autonomy.

But more is required. A vice president of the J. P. Morgan Bank in charge of venture capital once advised me, “People think that one can get rich with a good idea, but in fact, one needs financing and marketing.” The same is true, to a degree, with the merchandising of the kinds of ideas an activist generates. With regard to financing, although I kept my salary constant in inflation-adjusted dollars throughout my tenure, and started at \$20,000 per year in 1970, nevertheless, a summing of 33 percent for employee benefits and 50 percent (of salary plus benefits) for travel, telephone, computers, and so on, suggests that I cost the public interest funders and FAS members, over almost thirty years, about \$5 million in today’s dollars.

A great deal of my work, as with anyone’s, achieved nothing special. Over the course of nearly three decades, I wrote more than 150 monthly newsletters on a wide variety of issues, each devoting about eight thousand words, on average, to a specific issue. During

“EVERY MAN SHOULD TRY”

the first half of my three-decade FAS tenure, I functioned a bit like Robinson Crusoe, firing rifles from behind a stockade in such a way as to persuade the natives that there were more people inside than in fact there were.

Notwithstanding all the work that went into drafting the newsletters and circulating the editorials to the council and the experts, many of these newsletters had little or no discernible impact. Others were circulated by specially interested public interest groups happy to have a supportive discussion of their issue under the imprimatur of FAS. Most of these essays, like other forms of activism, contributed more to a general ferment than to a clearly definable result. Of course, from an organizational point of view, it was necessary to produce a product that could keep the federation members renewing their membership.

In reinventing FAS in 1970 and administering it since that time, I managed to provide a base that helped some others to carry out their own entrepreneurial activism. The staff expanded from one half-time person (me) with a half-time secretary to about a dozen full-time staff combined with a few senior activists working through us from their home institutions. Our key workers have included Steven Aftergood, David Albright, Deborah Blevis, Michael Casper, Frank von Hippel, Thomas Longstreth, Lora Lumpe, Michael Mann, Christopher Paine, John E. Pike, and Barbara Rosenberg. Most, if not all, of these people made a real difference in their fields—a number now run their own organizations. In 1986 *The Washington Post* called me a “Scientific Foreman in an ‘Idea’ Factory.”⁵¹⁷ I’d like to think that some of these people actually learned something from this foreman, directly or by example. So administration of these entrepreneurs is a way of making a difference, albeit at a remove. The dozen FAS chairmen or FAS Fund chairmen who helped supervise the operation were also helped to advance their works and their public personae through the letters and FAS proposals advanced over their signatures and with their help. The distinguished roster of chairmen includes, in order of ser-

Making a Difference in the Face of Temporal Inertia

vice, Herbert F. York, Marvin L. Goldberger, Philip Morrison, Martin Stone (no relation), Jerome Frank, George Rathjens, Matthew Meselson, John Holdren, Frank von Hippel, Richard Garwin, Andrew Sessler, Robert Solow, and Carl Kaysen.

But neither newsletter publishers nor administrators normally get the pleasure of making an overt difference. One influential newsletter author and publisher, when asked what tangible effect he could show for his efforts, mentioned only catching the Atomic Energy Commission when it reported that it could detect seismic events only if they were no more than a few hundred miles away when, in fact, it could do far better.⁵¹⁸ This seems not much for a long and celebrated career. Or to take a different example, when Senator Eugene McCarthy was running for president, he was asked by a thoughtful voter how many Senate bills had his name on them. He observed that most people were unaware how few such bills are named. Even distinguished senators could pass an entire career without having their names affixed to a bill.

In sum, many people make a difference, if they do, without making a perceptible or attributable difference. Success normally has too many fathers for that, and most successes require hiding one's role to permit others to secure sufficient credit to motivate their involvement. Oftentimes one's role, if known, would generate additional opposition. Attributable successes are thus a rarity in most lines of work, even in entrepreneurial activism, and much that occurs has hidden and complicated causes.

Nevertheless, in fulfilling the goal of this memoir, an attempt must be made to assess whether any of the work chronicled herein proved successful and, at least, whether it was a "good try." How should this be done? What is a "good try"?

An entrepreneurial activist starts with a conception of what might be achieved, moves on to activities designed to promote that conception, and hopes, in the end, for favorable consequences. The activist can, therefore, be judged according to three quite different standards.

"EVERY MAN SHOULD TRY"

Was the conception of how to deal with the seemingly intractable problem cleverly adapted to the circumstances at issue, so as to constitute a vision worthy of the dilemma?

With regard to activities, was the activist tenacious and determined; courageous morally, politically, or physically; and ingenious in tactics?

And finally, with regard to results, was the effort favored with good consequences, and how much might the activist's efforts have had to do with such success as may have occurred? It would be too much, of course, to demand of the activist that he or she be the sole or even the primary architect of success since, in today's world, many people working together openly, tacitly, or accidentally are required to achieve anything. But it is possible, in some cases, to be a possible or provable primary catalyst.

It is often difficult to apply these standards in real life with its chaos, compounded by the variety of methods being applied to get results. To illustrate, here are some instructive episodes in which I participated that are not recorded in the memoir.

The Vagaries of the Media and the Causal Opacity of Parliamentary Votes: Consider the case of the vote on the B-1 bomber on May 20, 1976, when, for the first time in the then thirty-year history of the Cold War, the U.S. Senate failed, in a floor vote, to approve a major weapon system that emerged from the Armed Services Committee. The month before, my assistant Michael Mann and I had conceived the idea of a really short petition—one sentence—that might capture the names of famous persons in a show of force against the bomber: "The tens of billions of dollars required to build and operate the B-1 bomber are not warranted by any contribution to our security which it might make." As an idea, this could be described, perhaps, as no more than "not bad."

Using a certain amount of enterprise, but not much, we managed to find seventeen famous persons, led by a former secretary of defense, Clark Clifford, to endorse this sentence. But to our dismay,

Making a Difference in the Face of Temporal Inertia

our press release was completely ignored. Fortune then turned completely around. An acquaintance, Marilyn Berger of NBC News, called up and was delighted to hear that it had not yet been referred to in the media because, she said, under her rules, she could then put it on NBC News. Marilyn put Clark Clifford and me on the air, and to our astonishment we heard her intone that this “prestigious opposition” (us!) seemed to be having an effect and there was a “big question” whether the B-1 will ever fly. Advised by us subsequently that no such Pentagon proposal had ever been defeated in the Senate, she said, “Well, you had better get moving, because I have had this job for only three weeks and do not want to lose it.” Compared with our modest enterprise, we were now doing better than we deserved in a town where media predictions of victory can be self-fulfilling.

Incredibly, the vote was successful. And the margin of success was narrow—only four votes (44-37). At the time, we credited the success to the special influence that Clark Clifford had with various senators, including his good friend Senator Stuart Symington. A journalistic review of the situation called our petition a “notable factor” in the vote, so this tactic doubtless “worked” in at least a limited sense.⁵¹⁹ But exactly what the vote lineup was before we released the petition—or, perhaps more importantly, when we were able to spread word that Clifford was with us—is not clear to us now. In sum, the consequences were entirely favorable, but we were lucky in how the media played our effort and have no firm reason to conclude—with so many other groups working on the issue—that this event played a last-straw role in creating the narrow margin.

Worst of all, several years later, the B-1 bomber was resurrected and built. So this affair could be audited, insofar as overall consequences were concerned, as somewhere between an unprecedented event in the Cold War (first floor defeat in the Senate) and, on the other hand, something that, at best, achieved nothing lasting. Perhaps, then, the entire B-1 campaign, including all participants, achieved little.

"EVERY MAN SHOULD TRY"

The Meandering of Enterprise: Or take the example of how an Eskimo woman's interest in a nuclear-free zone in the Arctic gave rise, through a chain of circumstance, to the creation of a new animal-welfare organization in the lower forty-eight states. I was invited to help an historic meeting of the world's Eskimos work out nuclear-related issues in the Arctic. But on traveling there, seeing how unrealistic the Eskimos' ideas were, and witnessing the problem of whales and caribou, I decided to write about animal problems instead.

Uncertain how to proceed, I accepted the suggestion of an animal-rights activist and foundation director, Scott McVay, that my newsletter ought to be about animal rights generally. Learning in my month-long investigation that Britain had a scientists' group working on such matters and that America did not, I emphasized the importance of creating a similar U.S. center. At this point another animal-welfare activist, Christine Stevens, mailed thirty thousand copies of my newsletter to biologists in a successful effort to create the Scientists' Center for Animal Welfare.

Clearly, this episode shows little conception—editorializing about the desirability of mimicking a British organization is not rocket science—and little enterprise, since so much was done by others—but the consequences were good (a new organization was created) and the editorial was provably the primary cause. This successful meandering of purpose suggests that there is always something useful for activists to do, just as columnists can always work up a column. And it shows the value of collaborative effort—in this case both in conception and in the final enterprise of mailing out the newsletter to so many scientists.

Part of a Ferment Through Random Events: And what are we to say about the happenstance of a journey to Libya in 1978 when, to my amazement, a high official freely admitted that Libya was seeking nuclear weapons even when I made clear, in advance, that our organization could only engage in scientific exchange with Libya if

Making a Difference in the Face of Temporal Inertia

they were not? Arriving home to discover that Libya had recently signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty—which is to say had proclaimed that they were *not* seeking nuclear weapons—in order to persuade the Russians to sell them a large nuclear reactor, I held a press conference denouncing the Libyans as false adherents to the treaty and wrote to the Russians and the State Department. The Russians reneged on the agreement to sell the reactor, but only eight years later—thus not exactly because of our intervention! (The only thing that did clearly result was a pointed allusion from a visiting Libyan embassy employee to our building blowing up—which led us to have an instructive meeting with the FBI bomb squad on issues of self-defense.)

Here I provided no conception and little sustained enterprise, and no clearly connected success resulted. But our press conference and letters to governments were part of a general agitation that made it harder for the Libyans to build a nuclear weapon. So perhaps it all counted for something. Here we were not making any particularly noteworthy or catalytic difference individually but were just joining in a collective effort.

Particular Issues Surface Generic Problems That Require Sustained Efforts: In August 1973 we noticed in the *Congressional Record* that a highly controversial bill on the law of the sea had been reported out of committee unanimously. It was hard for us and for a disturbed State Department to believe. The bill was brought to the floor of the Senate the day before adjournment. Since the bill had been described as having been approved unanimously by the committee, it could easily have breezed through the Senate. After a Democratic Policy Committee staffer, Charles Ferris (whom we had briefed earlier about the nefarious characteristics of the bill), spotted it, alerted the leadership, and had it stopped, we began to look into the general issue of how the Senate reports bills out of committee; at length we produced a November 1974 *PIR* entitled “Voting in Senate Committees: Unkept Records Reflect Violated Rules.”^[520]

“EVERY MAN SHOULD TRY”

The committees were required to have a nonproxy vote to report out a bill, but staff could organize a voice vote and fail to record who was present at the time—thus conjuring a quorum when none existed. Our efforts to force tighter rules foundered on an inability to find any senator who wanted to champion an issue so likely to alienate his colleagues. But a larger organization, such as Common Cause, would probably have had the time and energy to make a major issue out of this end run by the backers of the American Mining Congress Bill. During this period I could spend only one week between two monthly newsletters trying to merchandise my publication’s conclusion. So here we showed enterprise but not enough energy and had no tangible success.

Perverse Effects and Blackmail: In 1971, FAS played a major role in opposing an underground nuclear explosion so large that it could not be conducted in Nevada and so had to be tested in Amchitka, Alaska. With my well-covered testimony at the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) hearings in Anchorage, Alaska, and by using our senior scientists, many of whom had been advisers to the White House, we were able to draw attention to the bureaucratic momentum building toward the detonation of a nuclear warhead that the government had already decided it would never use. There was no great new conception to our efforts, some enterprise, but no success in preventing the test.

Worst of all, President Nixon became angry with the scientific community, based partly on its opposition on this issue and partly on its defection over the supersonic transport. He threw the scientists out of the White House by abolishing the President’s Science Advisory Committee. It took us two years of sustained lobbying, and the work of other scientific groups, to get them reinstated in a less prestigious way. So here we had no success and, indeed, a giant generic setback for a group that wants scientific advice to be presented to the government.

In some cases this kind of perverse effect can take the form of

Making a Difference in the Face of Temporal Inertia

blackmail. In 1998 the White House called to say that the Senate majority leader had threatened not to bring the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty to the floor of the Senate for a ratification vote if I and two others continued our work opposing the ratification of the NATO Treaty. But were we to act in accordance with such threats, our effectiveness as a small voice of conscience would immediately vanish. For better or for worse, FAS staffers are trained not to be easily diverted by tactical considerations.

These orienting examples of real-world applications of activism show that just about anything can happen. Let us turn now to attempts to assess, using the same kind of analysis, the major topics of this memoir.

Arms Control

The efforts recounted in chapters 1-3 on the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty seem to deserve high marks in all three categories: conception, enterprise, and results. Someone conceived, independently, a grand notion of two nations agreeing *not* to build anti-ballistic missiles either tacitly or overtly and wrote what may have been the first serious paper on this subject (notwithstanding the general view in his institution and elsewhere that technology cannot be stopped). He worked intently and enterprisingly for ten years to persuade both nations to help ensure the result: publishing many articles and two books, and making self-financed visits to lobby the Soviet Union for five years running. And the outcome was successful.

It was successful because the ABM was so expensive and so ineffective—had it been cheaper or more effective, it would not have been stopped. Luck was also involved as when the Army tried to build the ABM near cities, sparking off the Bombs in the Backyard debate and bringing Senator Kennedy into the fray with his unusual influence. Since the battle over the ABM treaty was very close and could have

"EVERY MAN SHOULD TRY"

gone either way, everyone who played a significant role in it—and, of course, there were many, many such people—deserves credit for its success. At least I was one of them and thus made a difference.

With regard to the initiation of real reductions of deployed strategic nuclear weapons between the United States and the USSR (getting the START talks started), there was again an original conception (the Bear-Hug Strategy). It was effectively lobbied in both the United States (where discussions were held with the State Department's Paul Nitze) and the USSR (where discussions with Evgeny Velikhov and a major filmed presentation in Moscow was achieved). And it shows, again, a successful conclusion: insofar as START talks did begin. In this arms control affair, I was, in fact, a more major player than on the ABM issue. And although Andrei Sakharov became the major Soviet activist in persuading Soviet society to accept his version of the bear hug—the Sakharov finesse—the original bear-hug approach won out. Here I feel I provided conception, enterprise, and a fairly tangible linkage to the eventual success.

The other work on arms control was less successful. In the case of "Shrink SALT II," on the positive side, a splendidly simple conception (i.e., percentage reduction) was adapted in original fashion to the limits and sublimits of SALT II. The method was deliberately designed to be simple enough to permit chief executives to agree on it without much ado, if they wished. And this simplicity did make it possible for President Carter to clear this approach with his chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the plane on the way to the Vienna summit and to offer it to Brezhnev on a legal pad in an elevator.

Also, the work shows enterprise in getting a president to adopt an idea and a Senate Foreign Relations Committee to approve it. But Brezhnev's health and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan combined to wipe out the SALT talks. So this effort is best characterized as a good try overwhelmed by events beyond the control of even presidents of the United States.

Making a Difference in the Face of Temporal Inertia

The efforts to create a legislative check on the first use of nuclear weapons failed. My ideas here were not as well conceived as I thought they were at the time. My conception of a crisis committee of Congress with veto over first use was quite original, but I misjudged the desire of Congress to be involved. I took too seriously the periodic hypocritical complaints of leading members of Congress that the executive branch refused to consult them in emergencies. In fact, members of Congress do not want to be consulted if it means they will have to take responsibility for the decision to bomb Libya or invade Grenada or Panama. My efforts to advance this approach—which succeeded fleetingly when a temporary committee was set up to implement the War Powers Act—might get good marks for resourcefulness and creativity, but they were doomed by the lack of constituencies with an urgent interest in pressing the issue. So the lesson is that when the conception is flawed, no amount of enterprise can save the effort from failure.

The second effort to prevent first use of nuclear weapons advanced a more plausible conception involving a dramatic declaratory proposition that would seem to say that the use of any weapons of mass destruction is prohibited. This still seems to me ideal for a World Court. I lobbied the court with quite unusual (procedural) success, but the overall approach failed because of internal court preferences for an entirely unexpected result based on an unpredictable coalition.

In fact, I was too optimistic in concluding that the court had only one place to go between business as usual and flat-out prohibitions on use. Activists need to talk themselves into believing that they have a chance—just as good salesmen talk themselves into believing in their product—but they should, in the back of their minds, retain a sense of the real unpredictability of life. Although my work failed, over many years, to make a dent in the no-first-use-of-nuclear-weapons problem, really no one else made any headway on this issue either—with the exception of President Carter's negative security assurance (which the current administration is trying to walk away from).

“EVERY MAN SHOULD TRY”

Good Government

My efforts to foster good government did not really require much work. Aside from writing a newsletter, no conception and enterprise were necessary in the successful campaign to stop illegal mail opening. But I am provably solely responsible for catalyzing this favorable result. Similarly, the “footnote in history” in Watergate simply arose out of other activities that happened to involve John Dean, but I was the sole catalyst.

I am proud to have come close to preventing the first federal preliminary injunction restricting the freedom of the press to publish, and I hope the method I invented will find future use if other such problems arise. In retrospect, I am glad that I did not show more enterprise in following up hints of the Reagans’ interest in astrology, since this interest, had it been fully exposed and repressed, might have prevented their astrologer, in a perverse effect, from selling the Reagans on Gorbachev’s virtues. But my work on the mysterious sonic booms shows enterprise, and even some vaguely scientific work, and shows the right result, for which I am solely responsible, in not alarming the East Coast unnecessarily.

Improving Relations Between the Superpowers

The establishment of scientific relations between the United States and China would doubtless have occurred eventually quite apart from my prodding. But it felt good helping, and the conception and enterprise seem worthy and the consequences perfect, except for the failure to get a medical delegation to China to help Zhou Enlai, for which I showed insufficient tenacity, which I thoroughly regret.

With regard to improving relations with the Soviet Union, I should have found Ann Hoopes and her troop of elite women, ear-

Making a Difference in the Face of Temporal Inertia

lier; this is one case where a larger FAS staff might have produced a more sustained effort—although I am sure that hired staff would not have had the panache and penetrating power of her team. Time was wasted while I floundered around for years, trying one thing or another to get members of Congress and senators to travel to the Soviet Union. The conception was good, but the enterprise was flawed. Still, in the end, there was good success. Here Ann made the difference.

Human Rights

The decision to shift FAS policy, in periods of détente, from a single-minded concentration on arms control into some emphasis on human rights for our Soviet colleagues was an important conception that paid off in the early institutionalization of human rights groups in American scientific societies and in our important defense of Andrei Sakharov. This defense shows independence of mind, and the value of autonomy, in pressuring NAS to do more and ingenuity in helping to resolve various hunger strikes.

I am not sure whether we were right, in 1980, to have downgraded our work on disarmament by boycotting the Soviet Union for three years to protest Sakharov's detention in Gorky. But our idea of having Sakharov freed as a present to Kennedy was a worthy one and might have worked. Here the hard work was done by Senator Kennedy. It came close to working and may have left behind momentum that did help in the eventual release of Sakharov.

Defeating Maoist Insurrections

The work on Cambodia shows an accurate conception—that Hun Sen was the best bulwark against a return of the Khmer Rouge—and it shows an enormous amount of work and enterprise.

“EVERY MAN SHOULD TRY”

In the end, our catalytic appeal to the energetic Senator Cranston to use his subcommittee to mobilize the Senate, against Congressman Solarz’s control of the House (combined with related follow-up work by myself and the coalition I had organized), was certainly a key part in keeping the country *overtly* out of a second Indochina war.

But I failed in efforts to divert the United States from its role in the *secret* war. The idea of buying the critical information from a journalist who could not or would not use it and getting it into *The New York Times* op-ed page shows conception and enterprise. But no one in Washington cared. The conception and enterprise in bringing Hun Sen to Washington to help fund the Cambodian peace plan was, certainly, a success in changing his image and helping get money for the peace plan. But change of this kind is not permanent (and, of course, ought not be), and Hun Sen’s reputation in Washington now has soured because of his preemptive strike against Prince Rannaridh’s forces and his violent suppression of political opponents before and after the last election, which he won.

The work on Peru shows, I think, a significant role in defeating a Maoist insurgency. The idea that the U.S. should be helping Peruvian intelligence, and the discovery that it was not, were both right and important. Chapter 26 shows enterprise in lobbying almost all the relevant bases in the intelligence community and some in the White House and State and Defense Departments who were initially reluctant to take action. And it shows a successful conclusion—which, necessarily, had other fathers inside the bureaucracy even if my lobbying on return from Peru was the catalytic event, which, of course, it might not have been since the State Department was, also, trying to get the United States government to move.

Terrorism, Proliferation, and Crime

How well it is going, no outsider can say, but the effort to forge a CIA-KGB connection cannot help but be important, over time, in

Making a Difference in the Face of Temporal Inertia

helping resolve common problems of the United States and Russia in today's global society. No doubt it would have occurred in time without my two major efforts—reaching Gorbachev on the issue of inviting Gates to Russia, which precipitated so much instant action, and threatening to organize my own intelligence exchange on North Korea if the CIA and the KGB did not. But successes are mostly a matter of hastening likely outcomes. And it has been well said that the inevitable often occurs only through the determined efforts of indefatigable men. So I feel good about this.

Resolving Territorial Disputes Within Countries

With regard to the territorial disputes in Serbia over Kosovo and in China over Taiwan, seemingly original conceptions have been marked by limited enterprise because the time has not seemed ripe enough to sustain more. And no success has resulted. At least Taiwan appears to have considered, albeit rejected for now, the North-east Strategy. And at least the strategy was briefed throughout the relevant Chinese institutions and received as “important and constructive” at quite a high level.

In Kosovo, the situation has, obviously, deteriorated, with no end in sight. But the “rent” approach of an agreement limited in time provides a framework for autonomy-plus that still might play some role. Still, in general, until the parties are ready to consider *any* reconciliation, there is little that even the U.S. Department of State can do, much less an individual based in an NGO. But where there is logic, there is always the possibility, at least, of future progress.

And so these disputes are unfinished business.

Whether, all things considered, this is deemed a lot or a little, for a third of a century of work, depends upon one's expectations. For butterflies, which is to say for outside agitators and entrepreneurial activists, it may seem considerable to some—certainly it covers a kalei-

“EVERY MAN SHOULD TRY”

doscopical number of issues and romantic adventures. For certain sufficiently high government officials, vested with the powers of their high office—at least for the limited terms that our democracy permits—it may seem less significant. But at least my fate was better than that of Ibn-Khaldun, who felt that *all* of his constructive efforts had failed. I feel particularly good about the work on arms control, on human rights, and on Maoist movements and the efforts to bring China and Russia into better relations with America.

Human society has become, of course, enormously better organized than it was when Ibn-Khaldun was born, 603 years before me, and it provides more individual scope to many more people. Certainly it would have been much harder, six centuries ago, for a John F. Kennedy to assert, “One man can make a difference, and every man should try.”

The Inner Life and Qualities of Entrepreneurial Activists

Whatever has been effectively attempted, what does it require to undertake the effort? An entrepreneurial activist is often fueled by pride of authorship. My feeling that, in 1963, I had independently conjectured, if not indeed invented, the theory behind the ABM Treaty, and my sense that this might turn out to be *the* most important treaty of the Cold War, motivated me for more than a decade! By the end, many others were involved; but to me, it always seemed *my* campaign, and this was the only reason I could persist for so long. Having a sense of ownership of an idea or issue is a powerful motivator. (As a corollary, it can be, for quite a few reasons, quite disruptive to managing one’s campaign to have someone else advance your idea publicly without suitable attribution.)

A certain passion, and perhaps even a touch of mania, is essential because so much work is inevitably involved in the face of low prospects of success. This hypomania, found in many of the world’s

Making a Difference in the Face of Temporal Inertia

great artists, inventors, and activists, can give the entrepreneurial activist the (normally false) conviction that he or she might actually create something unique and wonderful despite all odds and despite the full knowledge that others have tried and failed. In particular, the amount of enterprise required to play an outsider's role in Cambodia for three years, or to support Andrei Sakharov, on and off, for fourteen years, requires an intensity of effort that cannot be purchased and is based on this mania.

To be successful, passionate idealism and ego involvement must be combined with a certain pragmatism and moderated by the businesslike approach of a capitalist entrepreneur selling an invention. In particular, one cannot achieve change by oneself, by throwing lightning bolts from one's brow. One has to deal with, and through, others. They will not cooperate unless treated with civility. Without such an approach, I could not have pleaded with the intelligence community for its help in arresting Peru's Guzman—and I would not have known enough people in the administration to get my foot in the door.

Thus, it is much better to be well-liked than disliked. On the other hand, too much good-fellowship, and too much emphasis on maintaining civil relations with all and sundry, can interfere with one's effectiveness; one can become captured by too many people or institutions relevant to the goal. Andrei Sakharov benefitted from the fact that I was not a member of the National Academy of Sciences and, accordingly, was willing to joust with its leadership and chide its members in a fashion that could not be denied. And my freedom of action was backed by an organization sufficiently autonomous that its board could not be suborned by the academy's president.

In my experience, the degree of combativeness of entrepreneurial activists varies greatly in normal ordinary life. But when aroused and armored in the right, they are the difficult people without whom the world cannot be saved. Most seem to be—as I see myself—people who are not eager for combat. But their sense of

"EVERY MAN SHOULD TRY"

self is such that, once involved, they would rather run personal moral, political, or physical risks than suffer the consequent harm to their integrity of witnessing their own inaction. At the outset of any adventures that involved a degree of moral, political, or physical hazard, an internal dialogue between my backbone and a tightened part of my stomach informed my brain that the undertaking could not be avoided. At these moments, I well knew how many acquaintances, all eminently moral men, would, instead, just have taken a cold shower. Effective entrepreneurial activists are created and maintained, perhaps, by intense visceral reactions that hold them prisoner.

Entrepreneurial activists must combine, in a single persona, both creativity (a key part of the entrepreneurship) and motivation (a key part of the activism). These must be present simultaneously because great idea-men without the motivation to carry out their ideas have difficulty in finding someone to implement "somebody else's idea." And, on the other hand, motivated persons without ideas, even if they are given an idea to work on, often lack the deep conviction and the understanding necessary to keep the idea going when mid-course corrections are necessary, as they always are.

On the other hand, even when motivation and pride of authorship are linked, even when activists are energetic and well connected and well funded, and follow their best instincts, even when a notion is skillfully advanced, even when worldwide coalitions are built, even when many conditions are right, all too often, nothing lasting happens—and for many reasons. The totality of reasons why lasting change does not occur can perhaps best be summarized as temporal inertia.

Not every rifle shot in snowy mountains brings down an avalanche. Similarly, not every activist foray in public life hits a fracture line that produces important, lasting change. Indeed, if life were this easy to manipulate, change would come too fast for all of us to survive. In its broader dimensions, on the whole, human life seems, in any case, affected more by *trends* (i.e., by combinations of

Making a Difference in the Face of Temporal Inertia

many small similar events) rather than by (single newsworthy) *events*. An exception consists of those scientific discoveries or inventions that have changed the life of Mankind, usually for good but, sometimes, as with Edward Teller's insistence on pursuing the hydrogen bomb during World War II, for perilous bad. (His willful behavior may well have put Mankind into more avoidable jeopardy than that of any other man ever born.)

Certainly the more far-reaching the change, the less probable that it will be achieved by a single act of well-motivated will or, put another way, the less likely it is that a single individual will find himself or herself at a point in space-time of such profound significance that his or her act of will could have such results. And, regrettably, it seems much easier for individuals to precipitate *destructive* change—by misconceived acts of some kind of disruption—than it is for individuals to catalyze *constructive* change.

On the other hand, entrepreneurial activity for good, engaged in by many individuals and groups at the same time, can undoubtedly be a powerful force. Happily we see today the continued institutionalization of altruism in the proliferation of nongovernmental organizations devoted to good purposes and staffed by ever more professional activists. This rising tide of potential for good is offsetting the decreasing capacity of governments to control their own affairs in a world that is coming together. Nothing is more important than to find ways of strengthening this trend by stabilizing the nongovernmental public interest sector on a worldwide basis.

Because so much altruistic human activity cannot be firmly linked to good results, the notion that "one man can make a difference" is best understood, I think, as an article of faith. And its corollary, that "every man should try," should be seen as a companion inspirational injunction. *In sum, seeking to make a difference could be at the core of a new secular religion.* If orchestrated properly, such a quasi-religious movement could enormously increase the number of entrepreneurial activists, could further bring the altruistic instincts of Mankind to the fore, and could reshape the future. Activism could

"EVERY MAN SHOULD TRY"

become less a series of isolated events and more of a genuine trend—strengthening its impact.

How to do this remains to be worked out. But if science fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard could deliberately set out to create an alleged religion, the Scientologists, it ought not be beyond the wit of some entrepreneurial activist somewhere to create an intense movement championing John F. Kennedy's assertion and bringing together its adherents.

Obviously, there are limits to the enduring change that even the most inspired, and hardworking, public interest activist can reasonably hope to accomplish by himself or herself or even with others. But happily no one can know what, in particular cases, it is. Social science will never be able to determine, in our chaos-driven world, with what probability any particular activist, or group of activists, might be able to achieve any specific goal. And this weakness of social science should not be deplored because it has a positive side for those who dream implausible dreams. If you ask entrepreneurial activists how much temporal inertia there is in modern life, they may tell you:

God Only Knows,
And for this,
We are grateful.