

Today (26Feb82) at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute Loree and I got to be with this 88-year-old scientist-saint. The candle of his body is guttering out, but the searchlight of his mind continues to shine into cancer cells, and his spirit is bright with humanistic (best sense) convictions. For discovering and analyzing the structure of vitamin C, he got a Nobel Prize (1937). He was the first synthesizer of muscle fiber, the discoverer of the thymus' relation to cancer, and the father of "bioenergetics." On \$75 + another poor man's faith in him, he founded the Cancer Research Foundation, which now has 33 labs scattered 'round the world.

When Loree asked him about nutrition and cancer, among his colorful responses were these: "At bottom, there is no difference between the grass and the man who is mowing the grass"; and "What we eat is us, eventually"; and "The jungle the monkey goes through goes through the jungle." He's radiant with *Lebensgefuehl*, a feeling for the whole of life and life in its wholeness. I called him "a warrior for life," and reminded him of God's saying to Joshua "Today I set before you life and death; therefore, choose LIFE!"

Because this latter half of his life has been devoted to cancer research, it's easy to understand that he's radiant with homeostatic conviction: death is life out of balance, and life is balance. "A cancer cell is a cell out of control, off balance in relation to the rest of the organism."

This homeostatic principle applies to the metaphysical as well as to the physical dimension: "Science is destructive when not in balance with religion." What he meant by "science" was clear, but--I wanted to know--what did he mean by "religion"? Surely not just any religion, for religion sometimes makes a devil's compact with science to destroy! But how draw out this shy, gracious, humble (as are all the great ones!) European gentleman? This is how I tried: "You say, 'Science is destructive when not in balance with religion': what is your religion with which your science is in balance?"

Somewhat taken aback, he said "That is a very personal question...very personal. I suppose we would all agree that a distinction must be made between religion and religious institutions, churches. I am religious, but not related to any church. But there are some things I believe, and try to live. First, Don't do to others what you wouldn't want done to you. Next, Be kind, kind in this world so full of ignorance and cruelty. And third, Fight for life--not just your life, but all life." He was deeply meditative as he said these things, and he seemed to struggle to get them out--as though it were ekdysiastic even to speak of one's deepest motivations and values. "And one more thing: To plan to murder is to commit murder. The neutron bomb, destroying only people, is a clear case--as are the 26,000 nuclear bombs already stockpiled in America." (Later, I said to him, "I think of you as much as an enemy of the cancer of war as I do of you as an enemy of cancer.")....A few NOTES:

1. He is a master of where cancer comes from: is he naive about where his convictions-motivations come from? As a patron saint of both "the counterculture" and the peace movement, he carries enormous influence: should he be helped to say more of the "religion" he sees as able to balance "science" so as to prevent destruction? All his quotes in religion are biblical: should he say so? (E.g., I reminded him that the thought=deed saying is from Jesus.)
2. Consistency? We must organize (says he) against cancer: not for religion? Again, his lab is in his head (which works best at 3am!), where also his temple (both sense) is: but his lab is also exterior, though his "church" is not.
3. His cancer labs have no government support. He has no faith in government, of which he said to me "Power corrupts into insensitivity to human values; power blinds even the good who come to power. We must find another way to peace." Well, he lives that; he is shalom, and so models peace for us all.