

SIGMUND FREUD'S MISSION: An Analysis of His Personality and Influence. By Erich Fromm. 120 pp. New York: Harper & Bros. \$3.

By JOOST A. M. MEERLOO

A BIOGRAPHY is always an intrusion into somebody's privacy. The biographer's inner motivations move somehow between loving admiration and hidden resentment. Most writers reveal in their biographies more about themselves than about the characters they set out to describe. In their rearrangement or omission of facts and anecdotes and in their manner of narration, they introduce their own sensitivities. Ernest Jones' recent three-volume official biography of Sigmund Freud, it seems to me, was not written as lovingly as its author intended it to be.

The important question in connection with Erich Fromm's brilliantly written book, "Sigmund Freud's Mission," is whether the author was able to take sufficient distance from his subject to compose a more objective report than Jones and other former biographers. I do not think so.

Fromm is a distinguished psychoanalytically trained social psychologist and therapist who became well known with his book, "Escape From Freedom," in which he so clearly described man's paradoxical attitude toward freedom and liberty. Since then he has written about religious and social themes, revealing a more philosophic existentialist attitude toward problems of psychoanalysis. He is the product of a later generation than Freud's and much more caught up by the social revolution in Europe.

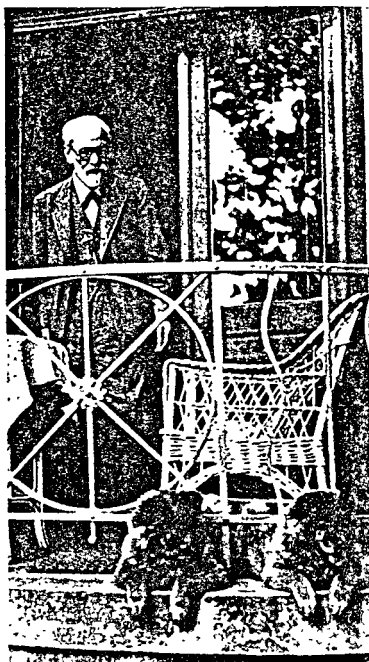
Fromm's book on Freud may be looked at as a reaction to Jones' dislike for all who dare criticize Freud or the Freudians. He is arguing against the international psychoanalytic hierarchy and the gospel it propounds as well as the canonization of its founder. But Fromm makes the mistake of identifying the science of psychoanalysis too closely with the organized psychoanalytic movement. At this very moment many creative psychoanalytic ideas are being formulated outside the original movement, while the great body of universities is gradually taking over the teaching.

Many of Fromm's astute observations and interpretations will clarify the reader's insight into the sociology of the psychoanalytic movement. He shows

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above all the battle of man's ambivalent attitudes toward life disguised behind the need for so-called biographical interpretations. Both the veneration of the hero and the rebellion against him can be the expression of the same fear of having a stronger and better rival, of being the lesser in comparison with the "beloved" authority.

Since Jones wrote his exhaustive biography, a volume of memoirs of Freud by his son has been published. In it is depicted, a gay and loving father, entirely different from the images given by the two worrying scientists, Jones and Fromm. A loving book about Freud, the friend, has been written by L. Binswanger, a non-orthodox existentialist analyst. The drama of Freud's discoveries lay in the great struggle that went on within him as



Sigmund Freud.

he clashed with the smug pattern of life he had inherited. He was repeatedly forced to change his presumptions by his own discoveries. And change he did. He is still ahead of his own movement. He left blueprints of the psychic structure of man that will keep us occupied for years to come.

FROMM describes as the quintessence of Freud's mission the conquest of passion by reason—"where Id shall be"—but he overlooks the fact that there is also an unconscious mission, usually not so well formulated. Freud was the first great explorer of the inner realm of man. Now, when the conquest of space excites man's imagination psychological scientists will have to show the world the importance of the inner realm if the world is to survive. To that end they must stop analyzing each other and forsake their theoretical quibbles.

Meerloo, J. A. M., 1959: Review Fromm, E.: Sigmund Freud's Mission. An Analysis of His Personality and Influence (1959a, English), In: New York Times Book Review, New York (1. 2. 1959), pp. 14.



HOW SHOULD WE RETOOL OUR SCHOOLS?

A Historian Agrees With Admiral Rickover's Proposals

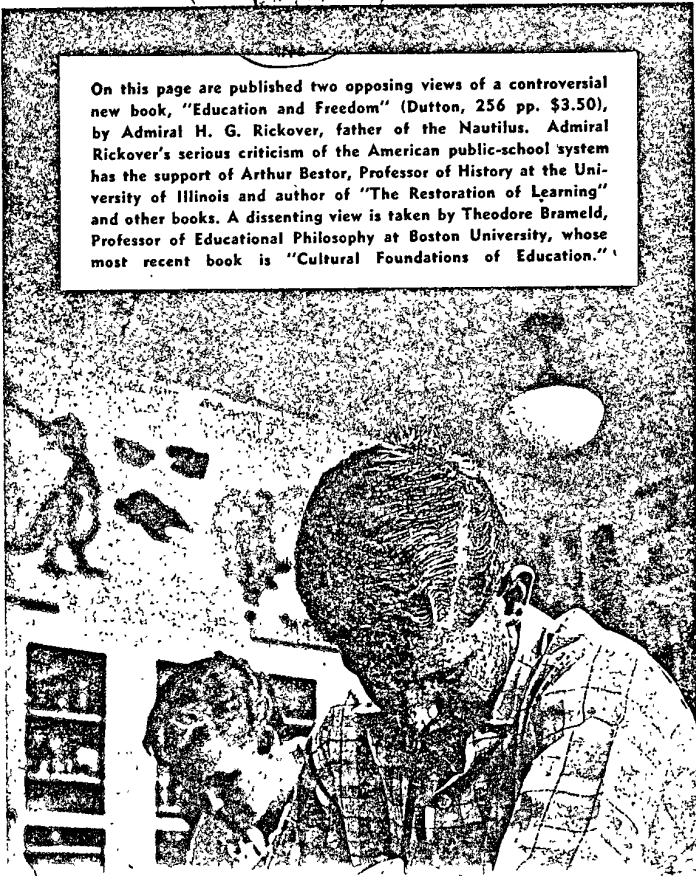
By ARTHUR BESTOR

THE problems of the world—today, our problems—will tomorrow be our children's problems. Are we equipping the younger generation to deal effectively with them? This is the central question in education—a perennial question, which every adult generation must, in a sense, answer anew, taking into account the changes that may have occurred in the nature of the world's problems.

In the great debate now going on over the adequacy of American education, both sides take off from this same starting point. Defenders and critics unite in believing that the public schools should prepare young men and women for the world in which they are going to live. The debate is over the kind of education that will do the job. Parents and citizens should keep the central issue in mind, for efforts are frequently made to obscure it.

Professional educationists in the United States often claim to be the only group interested in preparing young people for contemporary life, and they accuse their scientific and academic critics of wishing to turn back the clock. This completely misrepresents the position of those who are anxious to re-emphasize intellectual discipline in the public schools. One of the most distinguished spokesmen for the latter point of view, Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, states the matter with complete clarity in his latest book, "Education and Freedom"

On this page are published two opposing views of a controversial new book, "Education and Freedom" (Dutton, 256 pp. \$3.50), by Admiral H. G. Rickover, father of the Nautilus. Admiral Rickover's serious criticism of the American public-school system has the support of Arthur Bestor, Professor of History at the University of Illinois and author of "The Restoration of Learning" and other books. A dissenting view is taken by Theodore Brameld, Professor of Educational Philosophy at Boston University, whose most recent book is "Cultural Foundations of Education."



An Educationist Opposes The Stand of the Admiral

By THEODORE BRAMELD

BECAUSE everyone except the most myopic apologist agrees that American schools suffer from grave deficiencies, and because many earnest citizens are groping for solutions, uncritical readers of Admiral H. G. Rickover's book are likely to applaud both its objections to and corrections for public education.

Viewed critically, however, "Education and Freedom" rests upon an array of dubious, indeed ominous, assumptions. The many facts it presents, only some of which are contradictory and unsubstantiated, lend themselves to more than one kind of evaluation. To be sure, the contention that we need "a thoroughly reorganized educational system with totally different aims"—a contention that, in another context, some of us might applaud—appears on the surface little more than a hackneyed proposal to return to "the traditional task of formal education in Western civilization." This task is to transmit "the social heritage" and to provide "rigorous training of young minds."

But consider more carefully the meaning of "rigorous training." Admiral Rickover insists that "the school's concern is with the intellect alone." The primary process of learning is "storing the mind with knowledge." It never occurs to him to ask whether the psychological principles that he takes for granted are defensible in the light of modern theory and research.

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