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"THE AUTHORITARIAN PERSONALITY," PECULIARLY SUSCEPTIBLE TO UNDEMOCRATIC IDEOLOGIES,
DESCRIBED BY SOCIAL SCIENTISTS FOR FIRST TIME IN VOLUME PUBLISHED TODAY, MARCH 15

Relationships Between Parents and Child Create Type of Human Being
Who Has Deep Inner Need to Submit to Power or Align Himself With It,
Reveals Final Volume of Studies in Prejudice Series Sponsored by the
American Jewish Committee

"The Authoritarian Personality," published today (March 15) by Harper & Brothers, completes the five-volume series of Studies in Prejudice sponsored by the American Jewish Committee in cooperation with leading universities and colleges throughout the United States.

The authors of "The Authoritarian Personality" are T. W. Adorno, senior member of the Institute of Social Research in Los Angeles; Else Frenkel-Brunswik, lecturer in psychology at the University of California; research associate at the Institute of Child Welfare, and research psychologist at Cowell Hospital, University of California; Daniel J. Levinson, assistant professor of psychology at Western Reserve University, and R. Nevitt Sanford, professor of psychology and associate director of the Institute of Personality Assessment and Research at the University of California.

Based on years of research by anthropologists, historians, sociologists, psychologists, psychiatrists and other social scientists, the series of Studies in Prejudice represent a pioneering attempt in this country to investigate scientifically the nature of racial, religious and ethnic intolerance, and to analyze the effect of these prejudices upon those who harbor them, as well as upon the life of the community as a whole.

In this final volume published today, the "authoritarian" personality, the type of human being who is peculiarly susceptible to undemocratic ideologies because he has a deep inner need to submit to power or to align himself with it, has been scientifically explored and described for the first time by social scientists. For years they have investigated the psychological characteristics of people who, in a democratic society like ours, still harbor undemocratic ideas, imbued with ill-will and even hatred for human beings who happen to differ from themselves in race, religion or national origin.

This predisposition in some men and women to surrender readily their social and political freedoms, the scientists found, stems from their experiences in early childhood, when they were deprived of that inner security which enables human beings to function as independent individuals.

"Authoritarian" personalities, in the composite picture drawn by the experts, are people who tend to fear and dislike persons outside their own groups; they accept without question the prevailing judgments of society; they put everything and everyone into hard-and-fast categories, and they cannot adapt themselves to new and changing conditions. This rigidity of outlook dominates their attitudes toward parents, wife, children, work, politics and sex. They see the world as a tug-of-war between the powerful and the weak, and they must align themselves either with the powerful, even if only in fantasy, or else with the camp-followers of a powerful leader.

In their investigations, which included questionnaires submitted to over 2,000 individuals, personal conversations with hundreds of them, as well as the application of highly specialized psychology tests, the authors and collaborators on "The Authoritarian Personality" found that where a youngster is subjected to harsh discipline and is deprived of deep affection and understanding, he grows up with a feeling of a world dominated by inexorable power -- as represented by his parents. In such an atmosphere, he becomes entirely dependent upon higher authorities for his judgments as well as his responses, and as he grows up he continues to seek symbols of authority in the society about him, as a substitute for the parent authority which was his mainstay in his formative years.

The data collected by the scientists demonstrate how, in this process, the youngster's capacity to experience real emotion is throttled, as is his ability to function as an independent human being. As he develops, he becomes an "authoritarian" personality -- a human being with little insight either into other persons or himself. Thus he tends to lump people into categories and to label them accordingly. Even where his own experience contradicts the label, he is unable to accept the experience, but must instead invent reasons for the other person's behavior to strengthen his own prejudices.

Should the United States experience a real crisis, the scientists point out, the threat to our democratic institutions would lie not so much in any un-American ideology, or in un-American forces, but rather in the degree to which individual Americans are likely to accept totalitarian ideas. Because "authoritarians" are people divorced from love, they tend to be cynical and mostly contemptuous of other people, and to such men and women the rule of violence can be made to look reasonable and just, precisely because they have an enduring need to rationalize their own hostilities.

A monumental work of almost 1,000 pages, "The Authoritarian Personality" rounds out the series of Studies in Prejudice which have been hailed by leading social scientists as the most important development in the field of human relations in the past twenty-five years.

"Prophets of Deceit," the first volume, is a study of the techniques of the American agitator as revealed in his spoken and printed word. "Rehearsal for Destruction," Volume II, traces the historical development of political anti-Semitism in Imperial Germany. The third volume, "Dynamics of Prejudice," reports the findings of a post-war research project conducted among Chicago veterans to investigate the incidence of prejudice among them against other groups in the American population. "Anti-Semitism and Emotional Disorder," publication No. IV, shows the connection between anti-Semitism and emotional disturbances in the prejudiced person.

The entire series of Studies in Prejudice is expected to constitute a reservoir of new knowledge, yielding better methods for the protection of democracy against the inroads of bigotry and the onslaughts of totalitarianisms. They were initiated in May of 1944, by Dr. John Slawson, executive vice-president of the American Jewish Committee, and represent the first fruits of a vast program undertaken by the Committee's Department of Scientific Research in cooperation with leading universities and colleges throughout the country. Dr. Max Horkheimer, director of the Department when the Studies in Prejudice were begun, is the director of the Institute of Social Research in New York and professor of philosophy at the University of Frankfurt in Germany. The studies were completed under Dr. Samuel H. Flowerman, his successor as director of the Committee's Department of Scientific Research, and both men are co-editors of the series.

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