stand (or cared to understand) his statement, "It is the non-Jews who create the disabilities and in so doing give definition to the term Jew? There is more than a hint in Brandeis' words that Jewish emancipation meant emancipation from Jewishness.

In his Zionism as in his other reforms, Brandeis displayed a detachment that should not have escaped himself as an American first who came to Zionism out of a realization that the Jewish people were by reason of their tradition and their character peculiarly fitted for the attainment of American ideals." There was no incompatibility between being a good American and a Zionist. Urofsky notes perceptively that his subject's conception of "Americanism" was an amalgam of Jeffersonian individualism and New England Puritanism. Yet the Puritans, as we know, were communitarians who would have little use for John Stuart Mill or Jefferson. In truth, Brandeis was closer to the eighteenth-century individualist than he was to the Old Testament Israelite or his Puritan admirers, and this fact alone may explain his inability to grasp the human condition in the twentieth century.

The Cruel Choice: A New Concept in the Theory of Development by Denis Goulet

Marc K. Landy

Development is viewed by most American academic and governmental experts as a series of processes whose object is the modernization of institutions and whose point of departure is an abstraction labelled "traditional society." This state of undifferentiated primitivism serves as the beaker into which measured amounts of capital, technical assistance and democratic procedures are poured and blended until a rich mixture of industrialism and constitutionalism bubbles to the surface.

Mr. Goulet is less of a chemist than a philosopher. He redirects our attention to the someone who must develop, and to the moral, social and psychological crises he is forced to undergo. The Cruel Choice correctly asserts that, in view of the hardship and indignity engendered by the transformation of values, habits and behavior, the primary question to be asked about development must be an ethical one: Who has the right to do what to whom, how, and under what conditions? He takes as his point of reference three needs that are basic to human life: sustenance, esteem and freedom. He evaluates plans, programs and institutions which lay claim to the label "development" in terms of their ability to satisfy these axiomatic human needs.

Many traditional societies have dealt successfully with these needs, but the imposition of a worldwide economy based upon industrial production has destroyed the ability of all but the most remote of these societies to maintain that capability. The move from countryside to city deprives the peasant of his economic self-sufficiency. The values of achievement and competition that are foisted upon him make a mockery of his claim to inherited status and group loyalty. Centralized political controls make him unable to control his own fate and, more importantly, that of his family. Underdevelopment is therefore not a primordial state; rather, it is the by-product of disruptive change. The cruel choice lies not between tradition and modernity, but between development and death.

The resistance of individuals or societies to development is not a result of a perverse desire to remain squalid and alienated; it is a response to a fear of losing what little control one has over circumstances. Increased vulnerability to processes outside one's control is too high a price to pay for the promise of need satisfaction, especially when policies designed to remedy a given need often involve deprivation with respect to others. The gift of food by the U.S. to India has doubtless raised nutritional levels but at great cost to the dignity of the Indian peasant who now sees what a poor job he was doing of providing for himself. The xenophobic nationalism fomented by certain African leaders has promoted a heightened sense of national pride and cultural esteem, but the consequent anti-subversion campaigns and commitment of resources to armor and "showplace" industrialism has deprived people of freedom and sustenance. Although the choice between developing or dying is a real one, it is not meaningful to the person or group being induced to modernize. In order to overcome his reluctance, a given development program must clearly serve to decrease his vulnerability to the mystifying external forces that seem to determine the course of his life.

When one employs this new yard-
stick of vulnerability to measure the contribution a policy or institution might make to real development, the utility of even such sacrosanct processes as education and the creation of national languages must be called into question. By creating skepticism with regard to previously held beliefs, and by provoking interest in foreign life styles without providing a basis upon which they can re-integrate their values, formal education has produced the horde of played-out would-be Westerners who inhabit bars and cafés from Lagos to Lima. Similarly, if one’s sense of personal mastery is bound up with cultural identifications evoked by a specific language (French in Quebec, or Calo, the gypsy language, in Spain), then being forced to adopt another tongue leads not to a greater sense of integration with the nation but merely to increased passivity.

To aid in overcoming the vulnerability problem, Goulet adds two other concepts to his schema: reciprocity and austerity. Sustenance but not luxury is compatible with the growth of esteem and freedom within a populace. The lack of indigenous capital, resources and technical skill means that high levels of consumption can be bought by most countries only at the cost of outside economic and political domination. Therefore, developing nations must practice austerity. They must devote available resources to the provision of food and shelter.

If a helping relationship is to be consistent with the need for esteem and freedom on the part of the helped, it must be reciprocal. Both parties must play a role in determining how the relationship is to function; both must feel they have contributed as well as benefited by it.

Since vulnerability exists on two levels, that of the individual in relation to his environment and that of the nation with respect to the developed world, reciprocity and austerity must operate both at the local and at the international level. It is necessary but not sufficient for national planners and field agents to encourage citizen participation, acknowledge the positive contributions of local cultures to the life of the nation, and set an example by means of voluntary low levels of consumption. Similar practices must exist within the international sphere. Underdeveloped nations must be free to set their own terms for the receipt of financial and technical aid and be assured that it will be available in the needed form and quantity. One cannot very well deprive a population of motor bikes when they can see Americans and Japanese roar by in Lear jets. For the “demonstration” effect to be controlled, the demonstration must be toned down through voluntary austerity on the part of the developed nations.

Goulet recognizes the utopian nature of these latter sets of proposals. Americans are hardly likely to hand over the key to the World Bank and trade in their color television sets for radios. Such proposals raise problems of theory as well as fact. Nations are not men: they are capable of showing neither love nor altruism toward each other. The qualities that permit reciprocity and voluntary austerity by individuals, groups and communities are not even in the vocabulary of international discourse. In fact, the increased recognition of the need for selflessness at home may diminish a nation’s willingness to extend itself abroad. In the mind of a government policymaker, the marginal utility of a dollar spent in Appalachia is much greater than the same dollar spent in Afghanistan, even if each yields the same amount of development. Respect for the United Nations is so low that defeat on a single vote is greeted by the U.S. public with demands for vengeance and budget cutting.

To use an ill-coined phrase, the most that we can reasonably expect the developed nations to contribute to the life of the Third World is benign neglect. A willingness not to interfere in the affairs of Tanzania and Chile might be sufficient to allow those countries to pursue the courageous and creative attempts at austerity and self-determination upon which they have embarked. A U.S. commitment not to grant aid to the sort of ostentation and sabre rattling that Goulet aptly terms anti-development might be an important step toward encouraging the underdeveloped countries to pursue more realistic development goals.

Because I consider The Cruel Choice to be mandatory reading for anyone seriously interested in development, whether it be in Bedford-Stuyvesant or Upper Volta, I have not attempted to delineate the full range of observations and analysis which it contains. For even if it lacked such richness of detail, its importance would be assured simply because it provides us with a theory of development replete with assumptions about the nature of man and a vision of the good society. One may agree or disagree with the specific constructs that compose it, but they are all explicit and coherently stated. In a field where relativism parades for ethics and mindless comparisons masquerade as analysis, this is no mean achievement.