THE TIMELINESS OF ALFRED ADLER

EDITORIAL

On the occasion of the 100th birthday of Alfred Adler, February 7, 1970, as we take stock of his legacy, we are impressed by the timeliness of the issues to which he addressed himself, and the suitability of his general approach and particular methods to these problems. This would be the consensus of the tributes paid to him in general, including those presented below, the centennial lecture by Ashley Montagu, and the other centennial events.

The paper by Adler which follows is published here because it has not been translated previously, and touches especially on these "timely" issues, although it does not present Adler's final conception of human dynamics.

Adler takes man's connectedness with the earth and the cosmos, with human beings, and with the other sex, as preconditions. In Adler's time the mention of earth and cosmos may have sounded like pure rhetoric. But today, this connectedness has achieved focal interest through the threat arising from it from man's war-thrashing waste and pollution. Only from a completely holistic orientation was such broad comprehension possible. Maslow states particularly of this holistic emphasis that "the times have not yet caught up with Adler."

Again, Adler's breadth of view made him include all social factors as important, not only the influence of the mother, but also that of the school, and "of economic oppression of one class by another and one nation by another." Elsewhere he included race prejudice. Sykes points out the great relevance of Adlerian theory to these problems. Adler also anticipated the new feminist movement in speaking of the "devaluation of woman," which prevents her from fully developing herself "in the production process, in art, and in science," as well as in equal sexual partnerships.

At the basis of all these concerns was Adler's conviction that man was not essentially driven by energies unconscious to him, but was actively creating his own style of life in striving after goals, values and meanings, and that he was to be understood in his happiness as well as misery through these goals and the meanings he gives to life. The cognitive and value aspect of man removes him