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WHAT possible excuse can there be for another inquiry into this hoary problem? Surely, it has been discussed and solved beyond all further need of investigation. And even if it has not been finally settled, there have been so many expositions of it, that we are utterly bored with your problem. Better declare a moratorium on all talk concerning the individual and society, in the hope that when a sufficient time has elapsed and the question is raised anew in the far future, the inquiring mind will be less jaded and there will be a chance for a really fresh insight to emerge.

Thus the disgruntled reader. But the insistent writer, holding on to the reader's coat tails, will not let him run away, pleading that contemporary practical contingencies and contemporary theoretical expositions have brought about the need for a renewed assault on the venerable fortress. Today, we spurn and reject the Nazi doctrine that society is an organism and an end in itself apart from the individuals involved, and we affirm our belief that value resides in individuals alone, and that only individuals are real and endowed with initiative. In our justified rejection of the Nazi doctrine, however, we have, I think, been inclined to assert that society is nothing at all—at least if we have not taken that position, we have left things in that position. The denial of Nazism leaves us in a vacuum, for while the doctrine of organism is an extreme to be avoided, so is the doctrine of pluralism.

To deny that society is a substance and a value by itself is not necessarily to hold that the human group is a logical fiction or to imply that social harmony is not a good. Individualism is not pluralism, but if so, how is the difference to be formulated?