

A Scene from the Movie CHARLY

Charly Gordon, played by Cliff Robertson in the movie CHARLY, is a mentally challenged individual, who barely is able to make enough income to feed and house himself. In the movie Charly undergoes an operation which, in not too long of time, provides him with a significant elevation in his intellect. There is a scene in the movie where Charly is the subject in an auditorium presentation and introduced to a group of leaders in the scientific community. The dialog of that scene is the focus of this writing. In this scene, the scientists are shown a film of Charly from the time he first entered the program and the film portrays a man, who if not truly retarded, is certainly very low on the intellectual and maturity scale. After the short movie showing Charly's development to the scientists, Charly is brought on stage for an exchange with the scientist's. I believe the dialog of this scene to contain significant insight. Charly is brought on stage through introduction and, of course, there is no applause, only silence. After a few moments of silence...

Charly: "Are their any... questions?"

More silence...

Charly: "Did you enjoy the film?"

More silence, then...

Scientist 1: "How do you feel at the present moment about your development?"

Charly: "Grateful sir."

Scientist 1: "You're happy about it?"

Charly: "Yes sir."

More silence, then...

Scientist 2: "Why?"

Charly: "Because it has allowed me to see."

Scientist 2: "To see what?"

Charly: "The world."

Scientist 2: "And what do you see in that world?"

Charly: "Well,... my eyes are new doctor... I..."

Scientist 2: "And what do they see Mr. Gordon?"

Charly: "Things... as they are."

Scientist 2: "And?"

Charly: "And what they are becoming."

Scientist 2: "Can you give me an example Mr. Gordon?"

Charly: "No sir, you give me one."

Scientist 2: "Very well."

Charly: "Very well."

Scientist 3: "Modern science."

Charly: "Rampant technology, conscience by computer."

Scientist 4: "Modern art."

Charly: "Dispassionate draftsmen."

Scientist 5: "Foreign policy."

Charly: "Brave new weapons."

Scientist 6: "Today's youth."

Charly: "Joyless, guideless."

Scientist 7: "Today's religion"

Charly: "Preachment by popularity polls."

Scientist 8: "Standard of living."

Charly: "A television in every room."

Scientist 9: "Education."

Charly: "A television in every room."

Scientist 10: "The worlds future Mr. Gordon."

Charly: "Brave new hates, brave new bombs, brave new wars."

Scientist 11: "The coming generation."

Charly: "Test tube conception, laboratory birth, T. V. education, brave new dreams, brave new hates, brave new wars, a beautifully purposeless process of society suicide."

Silence...

Charly: "Any more questions?"

Silence...

Charly: "In the back, any more questions about things as they are and what they are becoming?"

...

Well, there were no more questions from the doctors and scientists. Do we Americans have any questions? And are we willing to ask until we get answers?