Marcel Is Never Isolated From Historical Situation

By PATTY BOHN

Gabriel Marcel, noted French existentialist, concludes his speaking engagement at Rice this evening. Because of an early deadline, The Thresher was unable to carry a review of his lecture, but we do present below an analysis of a chapter from one of his books. The chapter, entitled "Sin and Technology," seems particularly pertinent to the problems confronting the world today.—Ed.

The existentialist Gabriel Marcel is thought confronted by a real situation, experience involved in an event, self present in reality. Neither component of his existentialism can be defined problematically because each is mysterious.

Self and situation constitute a unity that can't be described except as a combination. Marcel is never isolated from his communal, historical situation; if such an isolation is forced, Marcel becomes only a machine, his nature infinitely degraded.

SO WHEN THE situation October 29, 1961, confronts the self Marcel, the unity of both is an imminent, rational view or presence of the contemporary situation: the sin of Portuguese bombing of African villages (killing old people, women, children, all who didn't flee), the sin of East German deportation of East Berlin inhabitants and the destruction of their property, the sin of cumulating radioactive elements.

Existentially, the destruction of human life and dignity is sin. Existentially, those concrete relationships between technology and human beings which promote destruction of life and dignity are encouraging of sin. The flight test of a Saturn first-stage booster and the development of a more reliable inertial guidance system have that character for Marcel in the situation October 29, 1961.

TECHNOLOGY is problematic; consequently, Marcel denies its application to himself. He is not something that can be reduced to a common denominator; he is not un-mysterious; he is not defined for technology.

Yet his existentialism is contrasted with those who on October 29, 1961, discuss plans for the annual dance to benefit the South Shore Planned Parenthood Center and those in the California State Division of Labor

Statistics and Research who sample prices and apply them to "Minnie," a suppositious store or office worker.

The rational imminent view or presence of October 29, 1961, for Marcel is despair. What can technology do when a French Catholic school in Vientiane is accidentally bombed killing five to sixteen children?

TECHNOLOGY IS useless; the deaths of these children can only be condemned in terms of irreducible, inviolable mysterious existence which can't be con-

(Continued on Page 6)
MARCEL--

(Continued from Page 1)

prehended by technology.

The presence of October 29, 1961, can only be unity; its refuge, only in an ingatheredness, a conscious recalling of himself to himself, or prayer; never, never in the blind and blinding pride of the technician closed in by his techniques.