

## I. THE CORPORATE STATE

THERE is a revolution under way. It is not like revolutions of the past. It has originated with the individual and with culture, and if it succeeds it will change the political structure only as its final act. It will not require violence to succeed, and it cannot be successfully resisted by violence. It is now spreading with amazing rapidity, and already our laws, institutions, and social structure are changing in consequence. Its ultimate creation could be a higher reason, a more human community, and a new and liberated individual.

This is the revolution of the new generation. It is a transformation that seems both necessary and inevitable, and in time it may turn out to include not only youth but the entire American people. The logic of the new generation's rebellion must be understood in light of the rise of the corporate state and the way in which the state dominates, exploits, and ultimately destroys both nature and man. Americans have lost control of the machinery of their society, and only new values and a new culture can restore control. At the heart of everything is what must be called a change of consciousness. This means a new way of living—almost a new man. This is what the new generation has been searching for, and what it has started to achieve. Industrialism produced a new man, too—one adapted to the demands of the machine. In contrast, today's emerging consciousness seeks a new knowledge of what it means to be human, in order that the machine, having been built, may now be turned to human ends.

Most of us see the nature of the present American crisis as a collection of problems, not necessarily related to each other, and, although profoundly troubling, nevertheless within the reach of reason and reform. Yet if we list these problems, not according to topic but as elements of larger issues concerning the structure of our society itself, we can see that the present crisis is an organic one, that it arises out of the basic premises by which we live, and that no mere reform can touch it in any way.

(1) *Disorder, corruption, hypocrisy, war.* The front pages of newspapers tell of the disintegration of the social fabric, and of the resulting atmosphere of anxi-

ety and terror in which we all live. Lawlessness is most often associated with crime and riots, but there is lawlessness and corruption in all the major institutions of our society—matched by an indifference to responsibility and consequences, and a pervasive hypocrisy that refuses to acknowledge the facts that are everywhere visible. Both lawlessness and evasion find their ultimate expression in the Vietnam war, with its unprincipled destruction of everything human, and its random, indifferent, technological cruelty.

(2) *Poverty, distorted priorities, and legislation by power.* America presents a picture of drastic poverty amid affluence. There is a superabundance of some goods and activities, such as defense manufacture, while other needs, such as education and medical care, are at a starvation level for many. These closely related kinds of inequality are not the accidents of a free economy; they are intentionally and rigidly built into the laws and institutions of our society. An example is the tax structure, which subsidizes private wealth and production of luxuries and weapons at the direct expense of impoverished people and impoverished services. The nation has a planned economy, but the planning is done by the exercise of sheer private power, without concern for the general good.

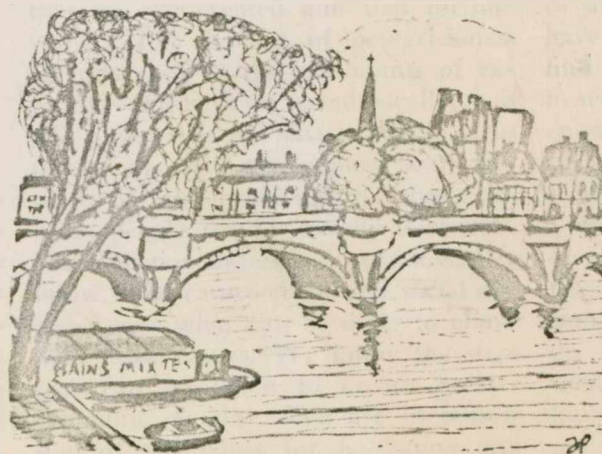
(3) *Uncontrolled technology and the destruction of environment.* Technology and production can be great benefactors of man, but they are mindless instruments, and if undirected they career along with a momentum of their own. In our country, they pulverize everything in their path—the landscape, the natural environment, history and tradition, the amenities and civilities, the privacy and spaciousness of life, much beauty, and the fragile, slow-growing social structures that bind us

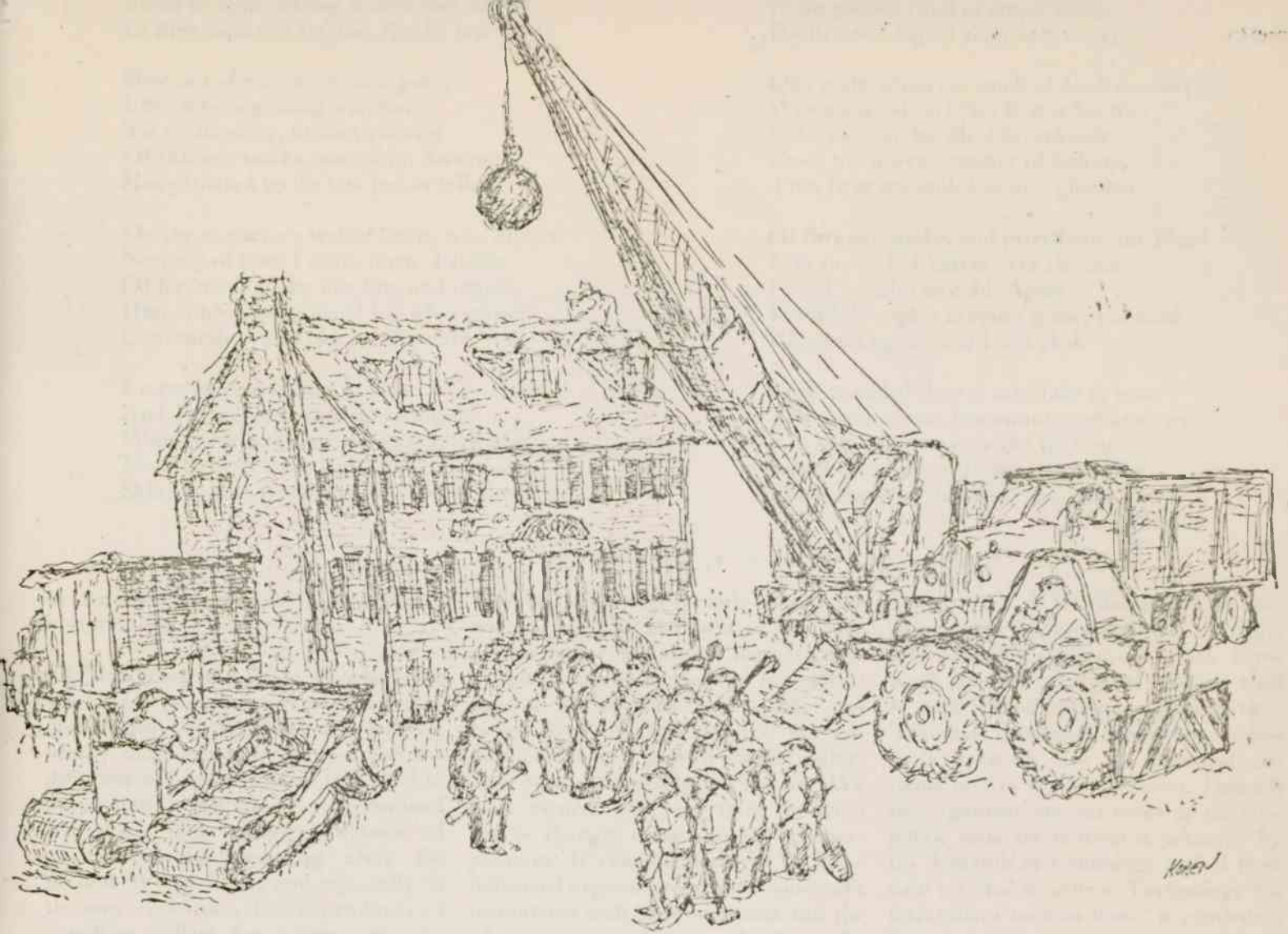
together. Organization and bureaucracy, which are an application of technology to social institutions, increasingly dictate how we shall live our lives, with the logic of organization taking precedence over any other values.

(4) *Decline of democracy and liberty, powerlessness.* The Constitution and Bill of Rights have steadily been weakened. The nation has gradually become a rigid managerial hierarchy, with a small élite and a great mass of disenfranchised. Democracy has rapidly lost ground as power has been increasingly captured by giant managerial institutions and industrial corporations, and decisions have come to be made by experts, specialists, and professionals, safely insulated from the feelings of the people. Most governmental power has shifted from Congress to administrative agencies, and corporate power is free to ignore both stockholders and consumers. As regulation and administration have grown, liberty has been eroded and bureaucratic discretion has taken the place of the rule of law. The pervasiveness of police, security men, the military, and compulsory military service show the changed character of American liberty.

(5) *The artificiality of work and culture.* Both work and living have become more and more pointless and empty. There is no lack of meaningful things that cry out to be done, but our working days are used up in what lacks meaning: making useless or harmful products, or servicing the bureaucratic structures. For most Americans, work is mindless, exhausting, boring, servile, and hateful—something to be endured—while "life" is confined to "time off." At the same time, our culture has been reduced to the grossly commercial; all cultural values are for sale, and those that fail to make a profit tend to be destroyed. Our life activities have become vicarious and false to our genuine needs—activities fabricated by others and forced upon us.

(6) *Absence of community.* America is one vast, terrifying anti-community. The great organizations to which most people give their working day and the apartments and suburbs to which they return at night are equally places of loneliness and alienation. Modern living has obliterated place, locality, and neighborhood, and given us an anonymous separateness of existence. The family, the most basic social system, has been





*"Be gentle with it, men. It's a historic landmark."*

stripped to its functional essentials. Friendship has been coated over with a layer of impenetrable artificiality as men strive to live roles designed for them. Protocol, competition, hostility, and fear have replaced the warmth of the circle of affection that might sustain man against a hostile universe.

(7) *Loss of self.* Of all the forms of impoverishment that can be seen or felt in America, loss of self—a sort of death-in-life—is surely the most devastating. It is, even more than the draft and the Vietnam war, the source of discontent and rage in the new generation. Beginning with school, if not before, an individual is systematically stripped of his imagination, his creativity, his heritage, his dreams, and his personal uniqueness, in order to fit him to be a productive unit in a mass technological society. Instinct, feeling, and spontaneity are suppressed by overwhelming forces. As the individual is drawn into the meritocracy, his working life is split from his home life, and both suffer from a lack of wholeness.

In the end, people virtually *become* their occupations and their other roles, and are strangers to themselves. Blacks long ago felt their deprivation of identity and potential for life. But white "soul" and blues are just emerging. A segment of our young people are articulately aware that they, too, suffer an enforced loss of self—that they, too, are losing the lives that could be theirs.

We seem to be living in a society that no one created and that no one wants. The feeling of powerlessness extends even to the inhabitants of executive offices. Yet, paradoxically, it is also a fact that we have available to us the means to begin coping with virtually all the problems that beset us. Most people would initially deny this, but reflection shows how true it is. We know what causes crime and social disorder and what can be done to eliminate those causes. We know the steps that can be taken to create greater economic equality. We are in possession of techniques for fashioning and

preserving more livable cities and environments. Our problems are vast, but so is our store of techniques. It is simply not being put to use.

The American crisis, then, seems clearly to be related to an inability to act. But what is the cause of this paralysis? Why, in the face of every warning, have we been unable to act? Why have we not used our resources more wisely and justly? We tell ourselves that social failure gets down to individual moral failure: we must have the will to act; we must first find concern and compassion in our hearts. But this diagnosis is not good enough. It is contradicted by the experience of powerlessness that is encountered by so many people. Today, a majority of the people, as moral individuals, certainly want peace, but they cannot turn their individual wills into action by society. It is not that we do not will action but that we are unable to act, unable to put existing knowledge to use. The machinery of our society apparently no longer works,

From its light, letting waxen bees drown  
In their liquor of fatigue. But by last

Shadows of another season gone,  
I live into beginning autumn  
To see its silver, broken column  
Of thready smoke ascending. Someone  
Has gathered up his few leaves fallen

On the morning's webby lawn, who knows  
Nothing of how I share them. I think  
Of his hands at the live fire, and thank  
Him in his private wood for what grows  
Commonly for us toward the stars

I recognize of winter to come.  
And I remember an August once,  
With armfuls of slushing leaves, left since  
Noon to dry by the hedge they fell from,  
Shiny as the shears. Could we burn them

In his garden rows of empty sticks,  
His fire shot higher than hollyhocks

One night when the smell of dead summer  
Was too much to bear. It was for me,  
Who had had hardly a breath easy  
From the heavy hammer of asthma,  
That frost assembled in that glimmer

Of thrown smoke, and prized into my blood  
Like the feel of knives over the skin.  
I lived on, into its cold. Again  
I tread through a crisping grass; the hard  
Air closes again, and I am glad.

Some troubled sleep it may take to bear  
The slump of one less summer—but clean  
The sun tomorrow, or the frail rain.  
I shall breathe in refreshed September.  
I have much to thank my autumns for.

—TED WALKER

or we no longer know how to make it work.

THE corporate state in which we live is an immensely powerful machine—ordered, legalistic, rational, yet utterly out of human control and indifferent to human values. It is hard to say exactly when our society assumed this shape. The major symptoms of change started appearing after the Second World War, and especially in the nineteen-fifties. The expenditure of a trillion dollars for defense, the destruction of the environment, the production of unneeded goods—these were not merely extensions of the familiar blunders and corruption of America's past; they were of a different order of magnitude. And although they were all an integral part of a legal and seemingly rational system, they were surrounded by a growing atmosphere of unreality. The stupidities and thefts of the Grant era were not insane; they were human departures from a reasonably human standard. In the nineteen-fifties, the norm itself—the system itself—became deranged.

Our present system has gone beyond anything that could properly be called the creation of capitalism or imperialism or a power élite. That would at least be a human shape. Of course, a power

élite does exist, and is made rich by the system, but the members of the élite are no longer in control; they are now merely taking advantage of forces that have a life of their own. Other societies have had bad systems, but endured because a part of human enterprise went on outside the system. We have turned over everything to what can be thought of as a single vast corporation. It consists primarily of large industrial organizations, plus non-profit institutions such as foundations and the educational system, all related to the whole as divisions to a business corporation. Government, providing coordination and a variety of needed services, is only a part of this corporate state, which represents a complete reversal of the original American ideal and plan. The corporate state, and not the market or the people or any abstract economic laws, determines what shall be produced, what shall be consumed, and



how it shall all be allocated. The corporate state determines, for example, that railroads shall decay while highways flourish, that coal miners shall be poor and advertising executives rich. The state is subject neither to democratic controls nor to Constitutional limits nor to legal regulation. Instead, the organizations that make up the corporate state are motivated primarily by the demands of technology and of their own internal structure. Technology has imperatives such as these: if computers have been developed, they must be put to use; if faster planes can be produced, they must be put into service; if there is a more efficient way of organizing an office staff, it must be adopted; if a psychological test provides added information for personnel directors, it must be used on prospective employees. The commanding officer of the California National Guard described the use of a helicopter at Berkeley for attacking students with chemicals as "logical." As for business organizations, their imperative is to grow. They need stability, freedom from outside interference, constantly increasing profits. Everyone in the organization wants more and better personnel, more functions, increased status and prestige—in a word, growth. The medium through which these imperatives operate is law. The

legal system acts as an instrument of corporate-state domination, and it acts to prevent the intervention of human values or individual choice. Although the forces driving the state are impersonal rather than evil, they are wholly indifferent to man's needs, and tend to have the same consequences as would a system expressly designed for the purpose of destroying human beings and their society.

The essence of the corporate state is that it is relentlessly single-minded; it has just one value, the value of technology as represented by organization, efficiency, growth, progress. No other value is allowed to interfere with this one—not amenity, not beauty, not community, not even the supreme value of life itself. Thus, the state is essentially mindless; it has only one idea, and it merely rolls along, never stopping to think, consider, balance, judge. Only such single-valued mindlessness would cut the last redwoods, pollute the most beautiful beaches, invent devices to injure and destroy plant and human life. To have just one value is to be a machine.

In the following attempt to outline the main features of the corporate state, the description is meant to be cumulative, for it is the interrelationship of the several elements that gives the state its extraordinary form. In the case of the corporate state, the whole is more than the sum of the parts, and the truth is in the whole, not the parts.

**A**MALGAMATION AND INTEGRATION. We normally consider the units of the corporate state—such as the federal government, an automobile company, a private foundation—as if they were separate from each other. This, however, is not the case. In the first place, there is a marked tendency for supposedly separate units to follow parallel policies, so that an entire industry makes identical decisions as to pricing, kind of product, method of distribution; the automobile and the air-travel industries show this. Second, very different companies are coming under combined management through the device of forming conglomerates, which place vast and diverse empires under unified control. But even more significant is the disappearance of the line between “public” and “private.” In the corporate state, most of the “public” functions of government are actually performed by the “private” sector of the economy. And most “government” functions are services performed for the “private” sector.

Let us consider first how government operations are “privately” per-

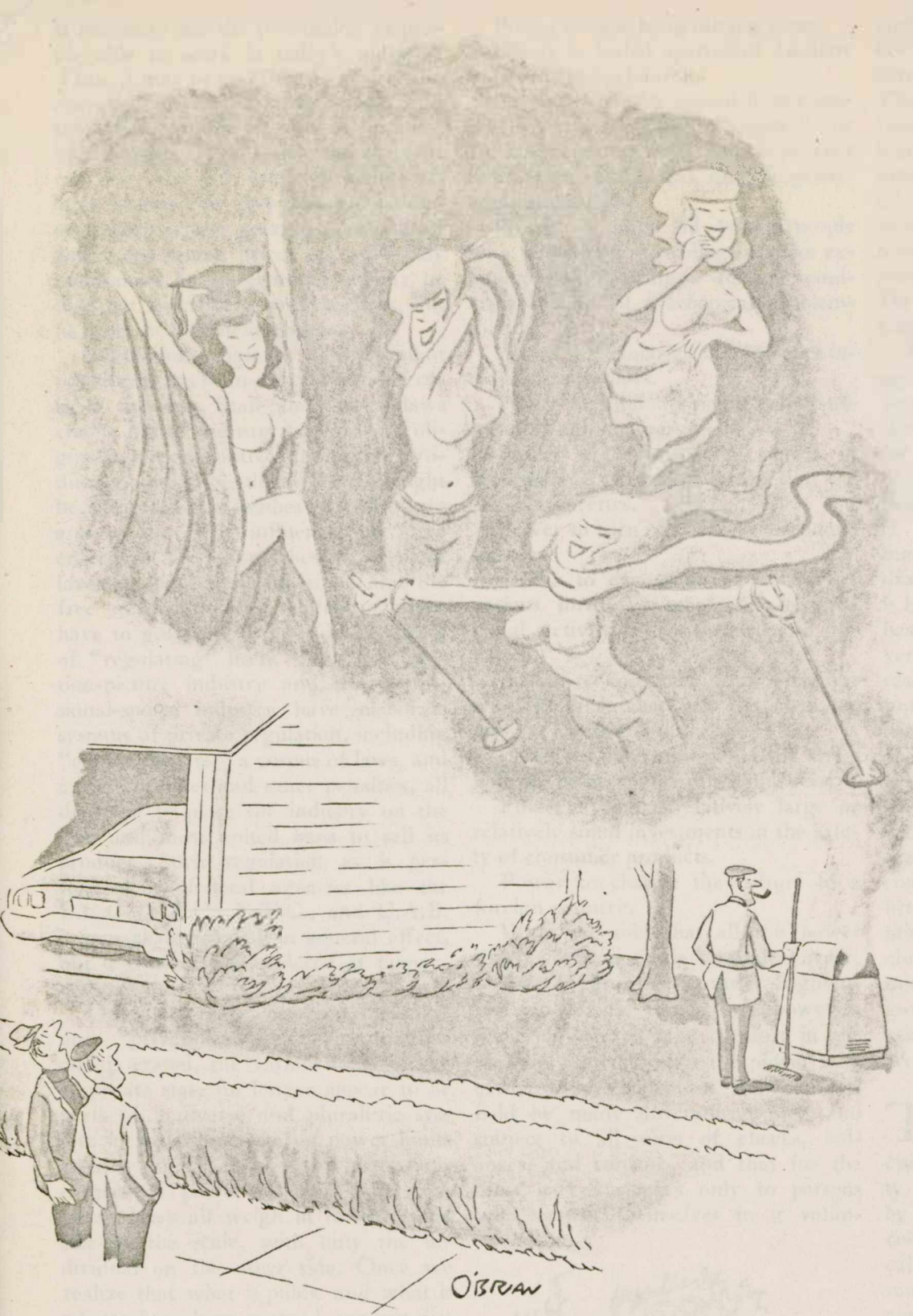


“Never a liquidity crisis around here, eh, Otto?”

formed. To a substantial degree, this relationship is formalized. The government hires private firms to build national-defense systems, to supply the space program, to construct the interstate highway system, and even to do its thinking for it. An enormous portion of the federal budget is spent in simply hiring out government functions. This much is obvious, although many people do not seem to be aware of it. What is less obvious is the “deputizing” system by which a far larger sector of the private economy is enlisted in government service. For example, a college teacher may receive a form from the Civil Service Commission asking him for certain information about an individual who is applying for a government job. When the teacher fills out the form, he is acting as if he had been “deputized” by the government; that is, he is performing a service for the government—one for which he might even feel himself entitled to compensation. Now consider a foundation that is granted special non-taxable status. The foundation is in this favored position because it is engaged in activities that are deemed to be of “public benefit.” That is, it is the judgment of the government that some types of ac-

tivity are public services although performed under private auspices. The government itself could do what private foundations now do—aid education, sponsor research, and carry out other projects that do not command a profit in the commercial sense—but the government has decided that these functions are better performed by foundations. This is the same judgment that the government makes when it hires Boeing to build bombers, or a private construction firm to build an interstate highway. Public utilities—airlines, railroads, truck carriers, taxicabs, oil pipelines, telephones—are all “deputized” in this fashion. They carry on *public* functions—functions that in other societies might be taken on by the government itself.

This summer, it was reported that the broadcasting industry was participating in a “crusade” against drug use. At the urging of President Nixon to “get the message across” to young people that drug use is “weakening the character” of the United States, television and radio responded in such diverse ways as adding a drug-addiction problem to the plot line of a daytime serial, delivering editorials against drugs, devoting news programs to the



*"Looks like Stevens is getting rid of his back issues of 'Playboy.'"*

drug "crisis," cancelling all programs for an entire day to present twenty-four hours devoted exclusively to the subject of drug abuse, and inserting subtle anti-drug messages amid programs of rock music. Since broadcasters get their licenses from the federal government, there may be some question whether this concerted campaign was the purely voluntary action of private businesses. And the fact that the cam-

paign was not limited to announcements but was also incorporated into supposedly neutral entertainment programs shows the extent to which the entire content of broadcasting can become political in nature, and serve to carry out policies of government. Even the most ordinary family or adventure program shows only an approved attitude toward government. If the "Mission Impossible" team under-

took an anti-Vietnam-war mission, or a comedian made some serious jokes about patriotism, the broadcasters involved would surely feel that they had reason to worry about the loss of their licenses.

Let us now look at the other side of the coin: government as the servant of the private sector. Once again, the relationship is sometimes formal and obvious. The government spends huge amounts for research and development, and private companies are often able to get the benefits of this. Airports are built at public expense for private airlines to use. Highways are built for private trucking firms to use. The government pays all sorts of subsidies, direct and indirect, to various industries. It supplies credit services and financial aid to homeowners. It grows trees on public forest lands and sells them at cut-rate prices to private lumber companies. It builds roads to aid ski developments.

It is true that government has always existed to serve the society—police and fire departments help business, too, and so do wars that open up new markets. This is what government is and always has been all about. But today governmental activity in aid of the private sector is enormously greater, more pervasive, more immediately felt than ever before. The difference between the local public services provided in 1776 and the expenditure of millions of dollars in subsidies to the shipping industry is not only one of degree. In the difference between a highly autonomous,

localized economy and a highly interdependent one, there is a difference of principle as well as one of degree. Government help today is an essential, not a luxury. The airlines could not operate without allocation of routes and regulation of landings and takeoffs, nor could the television industry without corresponding regulation. The educational system, elementary school through high school,



dition derived from classic liberalism, and, more proximately, from the New Deal and the welfare state. Liberalism adopted the basic principle that there is no need for management of society itself; the "unseen hand" is all that is needed. The New Deal modified this principle by requiring activities to be subject to "the public interest." Gradually, this came to mean ever-tightening regulation in directions fixed by the demands of a commercial, technological mass society. Gradually, it came to mean the replacement of a "political" state with an "administrative" state. (So pervasive, indeed, is the principle of administration that in many ways the corporate state is in its essence an administrative state.) A political state, in our present meaning, is one in which all sorts of differences in culture and opinion coexist, are represented in the political process, and contribute to the diversity and balance of the nation. This political model has also been called the "conflict" model. By either term, this resembles the original model on which our society was founded. Administration means a rejection of the idea of conflict as a desirable element in society. Administration wants extremes adjusted; it wants differences settled; it wants to find out which way is best and use that way exclusively. Whatever refuses to be adjusted is considered by administration to be "deviance," a departure from the norm that must be treated and cured. It is a therapeutic model of society, in which variety is compromised and smoothed over in an effort to make everything conform to "the public interest." Political radicals are expected to be "responsible;" blacks are expected to be "integrated." The state "knows what is best" for everyone; its massive energies, power, and apparatus are focussed on making sure that everyone accepts "what is best."

The structure of the administrative state is that of a hierarchy in which every person has a place in a table of organization, a vertical position in which he is subordinate to someone and superior to someone else. This is the structure of any bureaucracy; it represents a "rationalization" of organization ideals. When an entire society is subjected to this principle, it creates a small ruling elite and a large group of workers who play no significant part in the making of decisions. Though they continue to vote in political elections, they are offered little choice among the candidates; all the major decisions about what is produced, what

is consumed, how resources are allocated, the conditions of work, and so forth, are made administratively.

Hierarchy takes on particular importance in the organizations where most people work. It declares that, as workers, most men and women must accept the absolute authority and superiority of someone "above" them. For the boss to be empowered to tell a worker how to perform his work is one thing, but all too often the boss is treated as a higher form of human being. We have frequently heard criticism of the "childishness" of the average adult American; in many instances, hierarchy not only encourages but demands childishness—the wholesale turning over of responsibility and self-respect to someone in authority. One of the key points in the rebellion of the new generation is rejection of such authority and insistence upon personal responsibility and true personal equality.



Administration seeks to remove decision-making from the area of politics to the area of "science." Democratic or popular choice is rejected in favor of a "rational" weighing of all the factors by experts. Procedures are set up by which decision-making is channelled, and care is taken to define exactly which institution shall make which decisions. For each type of decision, there is someone "best" qualified to decide; administration avoids participation in decisions by the "less qualified." If followed, these procedures usually produce a decision that is a compromise or balance and that rejects any particular choice in its pure, uncompromised form. Choice takes place within narrow limits. A weighing of all the factors produces a decision somewhere in between, rather than at one or another "extreme."

Administration has no values of its own, except the institutional ones just described. Theoretically, it could accept any values. In practice, however, it is strongly conservative. Things go most smoothly when the status quo is maintained, when change is slow, cautious, and evolutionary. The more elaborate the machinery of administration is, the less ready it is for new, disquieting values. And "rationality" finds some values easier to understand, to justify, to put into verbal terms than other values. It can understand quantity better than quality. Administration is neutral in favor of present policy.

Public welfare offers an example of the administrative model of society. The theoretical object of public welfare is to protect people from the

hazards of forces in an industrial society that are beyond their control and from the other hazards of life against which neither family nor local community any longer offers help—to provide every person with a minimum standard of security, well-being, and dignity. With the introduction of administration as the means for carrying out public welfare, the emphasis shifts to regulation of exactly who is qualified for welfare, how much is allotted, how it is spent, whether rules are being followed. A large apparatus is developed for checking up, for keeping records, for making and enforcing rules, for punishing infractions. Some of this may save money, but the saving is minimized by the costs of administration. Some of this may also serve the purpose of punishing the poor for not working, even though many are unable to work. But the "accomplishments" of administration are almost secondary; after a while, what it does ceases to have an outside reference and it acquires a life of its own.

While the tendency of administration may appear to be benign and peaceful, as opposed to the turbulence of conflict, it is actually violent. For the very idea of imposed order is violent. It demands compliance; nothing less than compliance will do; and it must obtain compliance, by persuasion or management if possible, by repression if necessary. It is convinced that it has "the best way" and that all other ways are wrong; it cannot understand those who do not accept the rightness of its views. A growing tension and anger develop against those who would question what is so carefully designed to be "best"—for them as well as for everybody else. Thus, it is not uncommon for public-school administrators to engage in repression of independent thinking by students, although the ability to think independently is presumably an important objective of education. At the Del Valle High School in Walnut Creek, California, the students produced a "controversial" yearbook last spring. It included a poem by Robert Danielson, a seventeen-year-old star of the school baseball team, poking fun at school athletes who "don't reason" and "don't ask questions." Because of the poem, young Danielson was told by his coach that he would not receive a team letter and was not welcome at the presentation-awards dinner. The coach sought to mitigate this punishment by telling the faculty, "I like the kid. . . . I think he's pathetic, but I like him. If I hadn't, he wouldn't have played baseball for me for two years." Mean-

while, the principal threatened the faculty adviser of the yearbook, Mrs. Hildegarde Buckette, with dismissal; however, the principal and Mrs. Buckette reached an understanding whereby the yearbook would be subject in the future to "guidelines" established by a faculty committee. Administration wants the best for everybody, and all it asks is that individuals make their lives conform to the framework established by the state.

**THE AUTONOMY OF THE CORPORATE STATE.** We usually make at least three reassuring assumptions about the amalgamated power of the corporate state: (1) power is controlled by the people through the democratic process and pluralism in the case of government and through the market in the case of the "private" sector, (2) power is controlled by the persons who are placed in a position of authority to exercise power, (3) power is subject to the Constitution and the laws. These assumptions stand as a presumed barrier to the state power we have described. Let us deal here with the first two assumptions, leaving a discussion of law until later.

As machinery for translating popular will into political effect, the American system functions very badly. We can hardly say that our political process makes it possible for voters to enforce their will on such subjects as pollution, the supersonic plane, mass transportation, the arms race, and the Vietnam war. On the contrary, it is usually impossible for popularly held views to be expressed politically; this was demonstrated for all to see in the 1968 Presidential campaign, when both the Republican and the Democratic candidate supported the Vietnam war. And even if the political machinery allowed the electorate to express its views, it would be difficult for citizens to get the information necessary to form an opinion.

The failure of the political process is matched by that of the private economic process, which is supposedly governed by a market.

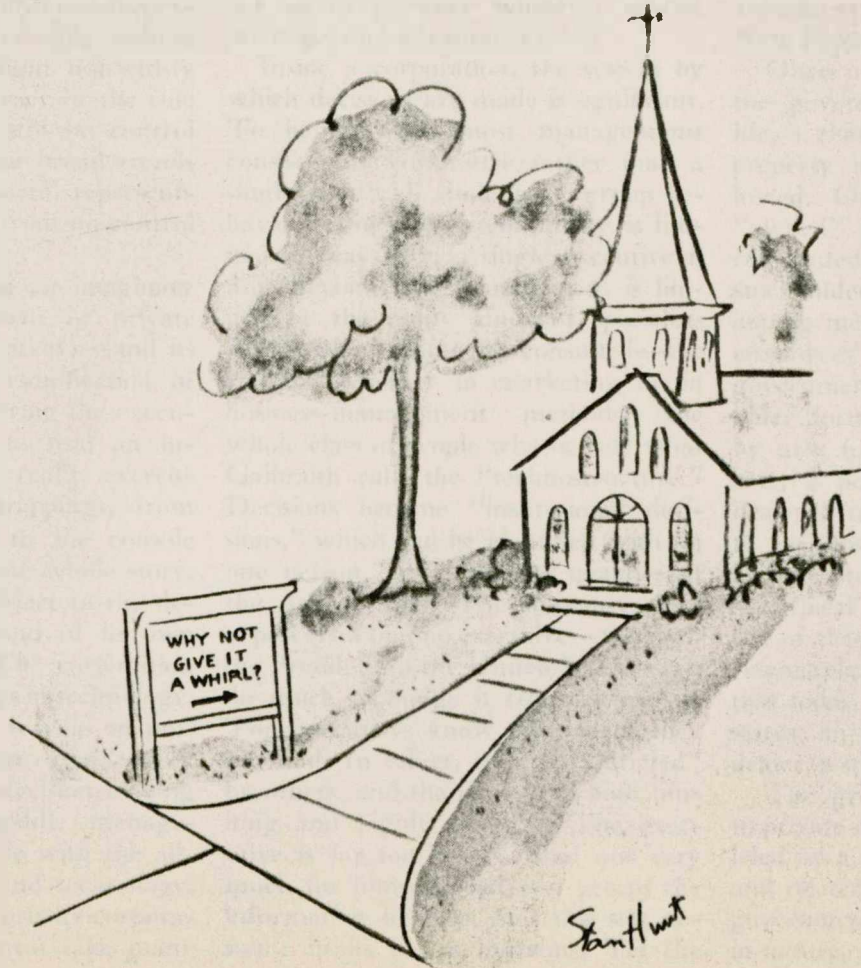
It has long been true that stockholders have no realistic power in the management of corporate affairs. But the more important fact is that producers largely create their own demand for products. This is a central thesis of Galbraith's "The New Industrial State," and it is hard to see how it can be disputed. Corporations decide what they want to produce, and then they convince the public that it wants these products, thus fashioning their own market. What we now produce and consume, the way we use our resources, the plans we make for future use of resources, are not directed by what the people want. No one asks them whether they would rather have snowmobiles than new hospital equipment, and they cannot make their voices heard.

If pure democratic theory fails us in both the public and the private sphere, we must nevertheless consider whether a modified version of democracy makes it possible for large competing interests to achieve a balance that represents a rough approximation of what people want; this is the theory of pluralism. Here again the theory simply does not work out. Robert Paul Wolff has effectively discussed this type of pluralism in his book "The Poverty of Liberalism." (The same essay also appears in a cooperative volume called "A Critique of Pure Tolerance.") The in-

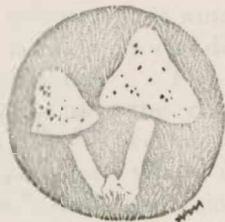
terests that make up the spectrum of political pluralism are highly select; many important interests are entirely omitted. Thus, as Wolff points out, we have recognized the three major religions but no agnostics; we have virtually no representation of the poor, the blacks, or other outsiders, no representation of youth, no radicals. And "pluralism" represents not interests but organized interests. Thus, "labor" means large labor organizations, though these do not necessarily represent the real interests of individual employees. "Labor" may support heavy defense expenditures, repressive police measures, and emphasis on economic growth, but this support may not express the true interests of the industrial worker at all. Likewise, the three major religions may fail to represent the spiritual strivings of individual persons, which might take some such form as resistance to the draft. Indeed, at the organizational level there is far more agreement than difference among the "competing interests," so they come to represent the same type of cooperation that conglomerate mergers produce among interests in the private sphere.

Even if the people had power to give orders, the orders might have little or no effect. Increasingly, the important part of government is found in the executive departments, which are staffed

by career men, experts, professionals, and civil servants who have specialized knowledge of technical fields. These persons are not elected, nor are they subject to removal on political grounds. They are thus immunized from direct democratic control. Congress and the state legislatures have neither the time nor the specialized knowledge to oversee all these governmental activities. Instead, the legislatures have increasingly resorted to broad delegations of authority. In effect, the legislature abandons any effort to set policy. It is true that Congress makes occasional investigatory forays into agency activities, but these are not in their nature policy-setting. Even if a statute tries to set definite standards—as the Federal Reserve Power



Act, say, lists some factors to be considered in building hydroelectric projects—the standards are simply left to be weighed at the agency's discretion. Thus, in the case of Consolidated Edison's proposal to develop a new power plant at Storm King Mountain, on the Hudson, the Federal Power Commission has continued to show a single-minded devotion to the interests of power development despite mounting public concern about its effect on the environment. What really happens is that government becomes institutionalized in the hands of professionals, experts, managers, whose decisions are governed by the laws of bureaucratic behavior and the laws of professional behavior. This means that decisions will be within narrow compass, tend to preserve the status quo, tend to continue any policy once set, tend to reflect the interests of the organization. These agencies, then, are unprepared to respond to any outside direction even if the people were in a position to give it. The same is true of the private corporate bureaucracies. And more and more often this immunity from human influences produces results that are truly monstrous, as the Army's recent dumping of nerve gas shows.



If the people do not control the corporate state, is it at least controlled by those who give the orders—the executives and the power élite behind them? Such control might not satisfy those who favor democracy or the rule of law, but it would still be control that had to consider the broad trends of public opinion—thus still representing a major difference from no control at all.

Let us focus first on an imaginary organization—government or private (an agency or a corporation)—and its executive head, the personification of the “power élite.” Entering the executive suite, we expect to find an individual or a “team” really exercising power. But the trappings, from the modern sculpture to the console telephone, do not tell the whole story. Any organization is subject to the demands of technology and of its own middle management. The corporation *must* respond to advances in technology. It *must* act in such a way as to preserve and foster its own organization. It is subject to the decision-making power of those in middle management, whose interests lie with the advance of organization and technology. If the organization is a private corporation, the power élite must take many

factors into consideration. There are financial interests, for example, represented by bondholders, stockholders, banks, institutional owners such as pension funds and mutual funds, potential raiders and conglomerates seeking financial control. This is not to suggest that stockholders or bondholders have any significant part in management. But the very existence of all these interests creates certain impersonal demands upon the corporation, including, for example, the demand for profit, a demand for growth, a demand for stability of income. The manager cannot act without an awareness of the constant demand for profit. Thus, a television executive's decision about whether to put on a special news broadcast and “sacrifice” a paying program is made in the oppressive

awareness of the demand for profit—a demand so institutional and impersonal that it literally “cares” about nothing but profit. The business executive is also required to be aware of many different state and federal laws, and the corporation is quite likely to be influenced by another set of relationships to government if it possesses valuable government contracts, subsidies, franchises, or licenses, any of which can be modified or revoked. A corporation that is the beneficiary of favored tax treatment must act in such a manner as to preserve whatever special privileges and advantages it has.

Inside a corporation, the system by which decisions are made is significant. To begin with, most managements consist of a committee rather than a single head; all students of group behavior know how a committee is limited in ways that a single executive is not. Beyond this, management is limited by the many kinds of specialists whose views must be consulted—the experts, whether in marketing or in business-management methods, the whole class of people who occupy what Galbraith calls the “technostructure.” Decisions become “institutional decisions,” which can be identified with no one person, and have the qualities of the group mind. The bureaucracy is so powerful that no executive—not even the President of the United States—can do much to budge it from its course. Top executives know only what they are told. In effect, they are “briefed” by others, and the briefing is both limiting and highly selective. The executive is far too busy to find out very much for himself; he *must* accept the information he gets, and this sets absolute limits to his horizons. Yet the

briefing may be three steps removed from the facts, and thus be interpretation built upon interpretation—nearer fiction than fact by the time it reaches the man at the top. The man at the top turns out to be a broker, a decider between limited alternatives, a mediator and arbitrator. And such a position tends to be utterly inconsistent with thought, reflection, or originality. Increasingly, it is also inconsistent with the realities of the outside world.

From all this, there emerges a great revelation about the executive suite. It is not the place from which power-hungry men rule our society. The truth is far worse. In the executive suite, there may be a Léger or Braque on the wall, and a vast glass-and-metal desk, but what looks like a man is only a representation of a man, doing what the organization requires. He does not run the machine; he tends it.

**THE NEW PROPERTY.** The effects of the corporate state's autonomy are in themselves profoundly harmful to human beings, but the state is worse than autonomous; the workings of its machinery are influenced by private manipulation for power and gain, yet those who use it in this way have no power to influence it in any more positive direction, and ultimately become captives as well as profiteers. These paradoxical results follow from the development of what we may call the New Property.

Once organization had come to be the governing principle of American life, a change in the nature of private property and wealth necessarily followed. Organizations are not really “owned” by anyone. What formerly constituted ownership was split up into stockholders' right to share in profits, management's right to announce policy, employees' right to status and security, government's right to regulate. Thus, older forms of wealth were replaced by new forms. A job, a stock certificate, a pension right, an automobile dealer's franchise, a doctor's privilege to use hospital facilities, the status of being a student in a university—these are typical of the new forms of wealth. All of these new forms of wealth represent relationships to organizations, so that today a person is identified by his status: an engineer at Boeing, a Ford dealer, a student at Yale.

The growth of status with respect to private organizations has been paralleled by a rise in statuses produced by, and related to, government. The more government has become “affirmative” in nature, engaging in regulation, allo-

cation of resources, distribution of benefits, and public ownership, the more it has become a status-dispensing organization—indeed, the largest of all such organizations. Characteristic forms of status wealth dispensed by government are occupational and professional licenses, taxicab and television franchises, airline routes, grazing rights on the public domain, subsidies to businesses and farmers, welfare payments to indigent families, tax benefits, Social Security benefits, jobs on the public payroll, and contracts for the construction of highways or defense hardware.

These statuses, public and private, achieve their great importance because they become for most individuals the chief goals of life. Taking a new job cannot be a mistake as long as it is “a step up.” An individual gets satisfaction from “having people under him.” And a title can compensate for the absence of many other things. The individual feels he must be happy because he has status; if he is an “executive director” or works for a top-level corporation, he glows with an artificial inward warmth. Statuses involve money, security, convenience, and also power, but they mean even more. They are a substitute self. The organizations of the corporate state are empowered to confer and take away selfhood, and this fact, perhaps more than any other, explains the state’s ability to dominate all the thinking and actions within it.

In theory, all benefits, whether originating in the government or in private organizations, are distributed according to “the public interest” or the interests of the organization concerned, and not simply to advance private interests. An airline route or a television channel is given to the applicant who will “best serve the public interest;” the windfall to the successful applicant is supposedly paid for by services to the public. Likewise, a government contract is awarded to the bidder who will best serve the government’s interest or to the one who submits the lowest bid. The theory is extended to taxicab medallions and turnpike concessions; these privileges are valuable because they are partial monopolies, and they are given to the “best” applicants, just as in a private organization the promotions supposedly go to those who most merit them and will do the company the most good. On a grander scale, Congress votes subsidies or tax concessions to large groups, such as farmers or the shipbuilding industry or the oil industry, on the theory that these groups serve the national interest.

But the whole concept of a society that assumes responsibility for allocating resources, benefits, and privileges is undercut if private interests are able to manipulate the system for their own advantage. If an airline can get a new route not because of merit but because of its political influence in Washington, the allocation system ceases to be an instrument of public policy and becomes a vast grab bag for the shrewd and the powerful. In turn, this maneuvering alters public policy. The machinery of the state begins to be influenced by private interests. It is still autonomous, but autonomous in an even more anti-social direction.

The marriage of the machinery of the corporate state to private profiteering can be illustrated by the television industry. Technology gives us television, and the imperative of technology, unguided by other values, insists that we produce it and use it without attempting to consider what it should and should not be used for, what harm it might do, what controls are essential to its use. When private manipulation is added to the equation, it produces programs expressly designed to win huge audiences so that mass-produced products can be sold, even if this means a degradation of popular taste and consciousness. It is the worst of all possible worlds: uncontrolled technology and uncontrolled profiteering combined into a force that is both immensely powerful and utterly irresponsible.

When status and relationships to organizations replace private property, the result is a change in the degree of independence enjoyed by the individual. Private property gave each person a domain in which he could be sovereign, and enabled him to tell the rest of the world to go fly a kite. But a person whose “property” consists of a position in an organization is tied to the fate of the organization; if the organization goes down, he goes with it. More important, he is subject to the power of the organization, for there are conditions to be met in acquiring

status, maintaining it, advancing it, and avoiding its loss, and these conditions significantly affect the individual’s independence. The conditions are set by the organization, not by the individual, and they may be unilaterally altered by the organization. And except as specifically enacted by law, there are no limits to the conditions that may be placed on status—they may be anything that serves the needs of the organization. In some places, a high-school boy must cut his hair or be suspended, a civil servant must refrain from political activity, a college teacher must publish in scholarly journals. In “The Adventure of the Copper Beeches,” Sherlock Holmes was consulted by a young lady who had been offered a position as governess provided that she agreed to cut her hair short, wear a designated dress at certain times, and sit in a certain chair when requested. These conditions puzzled her enough to make her seek Holmes’ advice, but nobody questioned that the prodigiously stout man with the smiling face who offered her the position at his country house had a perfect right to make these or any other requests of a would-be employee. Today, in the public-private state, where organizations are nationwide and are connected both with other organizations and with the government, the smiling request is no longer a private whim but a matter of public concern. If the telephone company or I.B.M., beaming with prodigious good nature, asks that its employees cut their hair or wear a certain dress or sit in a certain chair, the fact that such companies have almost monopoly control over various areas of the labor market makes them the possessors of a broad new legislative power never contemplated by the framers of the Constitution, who said that the United States would never be a country where a man could be told whether or not he must wear a hat.

This legislative power may cut deeply into the private life of the individual. Each step forward in job technology and organization means a further refining of job specifications, and today employers justify as fully relevant to the job an official inquiry into a prospective employee’s home life, psychological makeup, friends and associates, political and cultural activities, and past history. No part of an employee’s life is so private that it could not be deemed, by the accepted process of reasoning, a matter of legitimate concern to his employer. The investigations today by organizations such as the Peace Corps and VISTA ask former



teachers and employers to make evaluations of an applicant based on the most intimate of personal considerations.

Whether in the hands of private or public organizations, the new legislative power may in many circumstances be exercised without regard to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. A private employer may dismiss a man, or a private university may expel a student, for an act that, as a citizen, he has a Constitutional right to do; the rationale is that these private organizations are not limited by the Constitution. The government, which is limited by the Constitution, can evade those limits when in its capacity as a regulator of statuses. Would-be government employees, candidates for admission to the bar, applicants for radio or television channels have their opinions, speeches, friends, and associations subjected to scrutiny. Here the theory is that the particular status is "not a right but a privilege;" if the individual is denied the status, it is claimed, he can continue to exercise his Constitutional liberties and therefore the government has not taken away anything protected by the Constitution.

Power over the New Property leads to all sorts of procedural innovations unknown to the Constitution. Organizations set up investigatory procedures that take no account of the Fourth Amendment's protection against unreasonable searches and seizures, conduct trials in which the rules of evidence are not followed, and impose punishments that violate the principle of double jeopardy—all in the process of determining whether a student has broken university rules, or a federal employee is a security risk, or a welfare recipient is not qualified to receive a certain type of payment. It was the entertainment industry that instituted blacklists and loyalty oaths for those suspected of left-wing political views. Congressmen tack on a loyalty oath or a no-riot provision to old-age benefits or student aid; having the power, they cannot resist exercising it. Or private employers institute lie-detector tests and personality-evaluation forms. Moreover, a victory against the invasions of Constitutional liberties may be more illusory than real. Suppose an employee or a contractor wins his point. He may nevertheless be denied advancement or denied a new contract when the time comes. The organization may find other conditions that he cannot meet. There is nothing to stop a private employer, or even the United

States government, from establishing new conditions and applying them retroactively to past situations. There is always a large area of discretion if a specific exercise of power loses out in a legal battle.

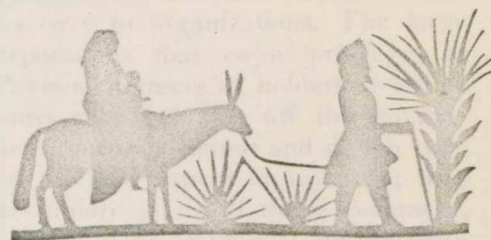
But will anyone even want to contest the conditioning power of organizations? The Bill of Rights assumes that the individual has interests that are separate from, and possibly contrary to, those of government. The Bill of Rights is not self-executing. One must *want* to make a speech that displeases the authorities before the right of free speech comes into play. But status works to undermine the separateness of that interest. It makes an individual decide that what is best for the organization is also best for him; he has the

same interest as the conditioning authority. He *wants* to be investigated, he *wants* to have his privacy invaded, he *wants* to fulfill special conditions because the organization's well-being is identical with his own, and he hopes to satisfy the conditions for moving up to the next rung on the ladder. Under the circumstances, rights are likely to go unused until they cease to be functional. Statuses erode the individual's basis of independence, his ability and desire to "go it alone." They offer him a reward for compliance; they purchase an abandonment of independence. From the welfare recipient to the licensed physician, from the student with a government scholarship to the man with an executive job, individuals have an *interest* in the compliance that the corporate state demands. Power is the stick, and status benefits are the carrot; together, they leave few people with the means or the will to resist what is, after all, designed expressly to be in their "best interests."

The deepest problem has to do with the kind of people that statuses create. Each person is increasingly tied to his status role. He is forced more and more to *become* that role, as less and less of his private life remains. His thoughts and feelings center on the role, and he becomes incapable of thinking about general values, or of assuming responsibility for society. He can do that only in the diminishing area outside his role. Consider an automobile-company executive. He can propose public housing as a solution to the urban crisis. But he cannot propose that fewer cars be produced, or that models be kept the same, to save money for public housing. His role prevents him from acting for the community in



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the one area where he has power to act, and it prevents him from even realizing that his cars are draining off money that might be used for cities. As long as he is in his role, he cannot act or think responsibly for the community. Outside his role, if there is any outside, he is virtually powerless, for all of his power lies in the role. Thus, a nation of people grows up who cannot fight back against the power that presses against them, for each, in his separate status cubicle, is utterly apart from his fellow-men.

What is true of individuals who are dependent upon the New Property carries over to organizations. The large corporations that enjoy privileges as television licensees or holders of airline routes may get rich off the government, but they cannot and do not contest the government in any area; they are timidly afraid of the government, or even of an individual congressman or commissioner, at the same time they are using the government for their own purposes. They have no interest or will to express independent values, and in this way they contribute to the autonomy and uncontrollability of the corporate state.

**LAW: THE INHUMAN MEDIUM.**  
Law is supposed to be a codification of those lasting human values that a people agree upon. "Thou shalt not kill" is such a law. The corporate state, a distinctively legalistic society, utilizes law for every facet of its activity—there has probably never been a society with so much law, or where law is so important. Thus, it might be expected that law would represent a significant control over the power of the corporate state, and a source of guidelines for it. But law in the corporate state is something very different from a codification of values. The state has transformed it.

During the New Deal period, the law was gradually changed from a medium that carried traditional values of its own into a value-free medium that could be adapted to serve "public policy," which became the "public interest" of the corporate state. This produced law that fell into line with the requirements of organization and technology, and supported the demands of administration instead of protecting the individual. Once law had assumed this role, there began a vast proliferation of laws, statutes, regulations, and decisions. For the law began to be employed to aid all of the work of the corporate state by compelling obedience to the state's constantly increasing demands.

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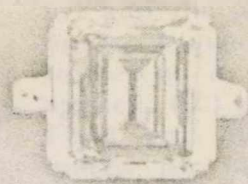
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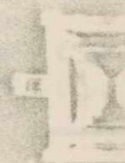
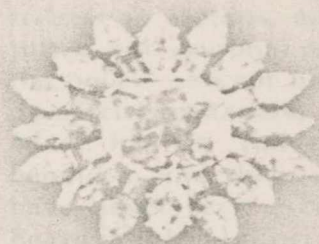
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One aspect of this development has been the steady erosion of Constitutional rights and the kind of laws that really do protect our basic values. Thus, despite the vast growth of corporate power, the courts, except in the area of racial discrimination, have failed to hold that corporations are subject to the restrictions of the Bill of Rights. Of course, the drafters of the Constitution did not imagine that corporations would exercise the governmental powers with which the Bill of Rights was concerned. But today private institutions do exercise governmental powers—more, indeed, than “government” itself does. They decide what will be produced and what will not be produced; they do our primary economic planning; they are the chief determinants of how resources are allocated. With respect to their own employees or members or students, they act in an unmistakably governmental fashion; they punish conduct, deprive people of their positions within the organization, and decide on advancement. In a sweeping way, they influence the opinions, expression, associations, and behavior of all of us. Hence the fact that the Bill of Rights is inapplicable is of paramount importance; it means that these Constitutional safeguards actually apply to only one part—and not the most significant part—of the power of the corporate state. We have two governments in America, then—one under the Constitution, and a much greater one not under the Constitution. Consider a right such as freedom of speech. “Government” is forbidden to interfere with free speech, but corporations can fire employees for free speech, universities can expel students for free speech, and newspapers, television, and magazines can refuse to carry “radical” opinion. In short, the inapplicability of our Bill of Rights is one of the crucial facts of American life today.

Does the Bill of Rights afford protection even where it is still held to apply? The Supreme Court decisions of the last few decades are not reassuring. In its adjudications, the Court gives heavy weight to “the interest of society.” The commands of the state are to be overturned only if there is no “rational” basis for them or if they contravene an express provision of the Constitution and that provision is not outweighed by “the interest of society.” The result over the years has been that virtually any policy in the field of economics—production, planning, or allocation—has been declared Constitutional; that all sorts of decisions classifying people in different and unequal statuses for tax or benefit pur-



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poses have gone unquestioned; that peacetime selective service has been upheld; that free speech has been severely limited.

A second aspect of the transformation of law is found in federal regulation of industrial activity. Here, if anywhere in the law, one might expect control to be exercised over corporate power. But consider the case of the regulated television industry. The television channels, in theory owned by the public, are licensed free of charge to various applicants (who can make a fortune out of them and then sell them for millions of dollars). The Federal Communications Commission could have distributed these channels to a wide spectrum of applicants; there could be stations controlled by blacks, by the poor, by students, by universities, by radicals, by groups with various cultural interests. The opportunity was there. What did the F.C.C. actually do? A large number of channels, the most desirable of all, were given to the three giant networks, and this proved a crucial aid to the networks in establishing domination over the entire industry, despite rules seemingly designed to limit chain ownership. Most of the remaining channels were given either to already established powers in the mass-communications field, such as newspapers (with the result that the sources of information were further concentrated rather than expanded), or to giant corporations. Moreover, the F.C.C. failed to make any adequate provision for truth, objectivity, or balance in the programs of those to whom it turned over the airwaves. Has anyone ever been able to see a program prepared by the Black Panthers, or migratory workers, or student draft resisters, or New Left economic critics, or women's liberation groups presented on a major network? Yet, at the same time, the law actually forbids any of these unrepresented groups to attempt to broadcast their views without a license. Regulation, proceeding strictly according to law, thus has the effect of giving a television monopoly to existing power groups in the corporate state and excluding all others.

The role of the law with respect to the corporate state, and particularly with respect to technology, can be further illustrated by the circumstances surrounding the introduction of chemical Mace as a police weapon. Developed by a private company, whose motivation was presumably to make a profit and expand its market and organization, Mace was purchased by many police departments and sprayed in people's faces, causing temporary or

possibly lasting injuries, plus a more profound injury to the nation as a whole that comes from the use of technology in a way that dehumanizes both policeman and victim. The law authorized the company to market this product and the police to start using it on human beings without (1) any tests or studies by a scientific or government agency, (2) the kind of review by the Food and Drug Administration required for other substances used on people, (3) approval by any legislative body, (4) any vote by the public, (5) any disclosure of information concerning the properties of Mace, (6) any information on long-term effects of Mace or its effects on people with special infirmities or allergies, (7) setting any general standards as to what weapons are appropriate for what circumstances, (8) requiring any special training for the use of Mace. At the same time, the law gave Mace protection and sanction. The law bars any redress to victims, any lawsuit for injuries, any criminal proceedings against the police—except under the most unusual circumstances. Thus, the use of Mace has the full power of the law behind it, and those who oppose its use have never been given a chance to be heard in a legal proceeding.

As the nation has become an increasingly legalistic society, law has become the medium in which private maneuver for power, status, and financial gain takes place. It has provided a huge game board, like Monopoly, on which expert players make intricate moves to positions of advantage. The game of law is played with all of the legal powers of government to provide benefits, subsidies, allocate resources and franchises, and grant special exceptions and favors to the winners. As for the losers, the legal game board embodies almost every iniquity, injustice, and irrationality that has become accepted in our society. The tax laws, for example, surely constitute one of the most intricate and remarkable structures of iniquity that the human mind has ever devised. There are well-known examples—capital-gains income and oil income taxed at lower rates than other income, deductions for businessmen not available to those in other occupations, distinctions between the person who owns his home and the person who rents one, distinctions between the single person and the married one. A great number of other inequalities and special favors are buried in its endless, complex pages. The draft law is even worse. For it sends some young men off to risk their lives and lose long years that might be spent in ways of their

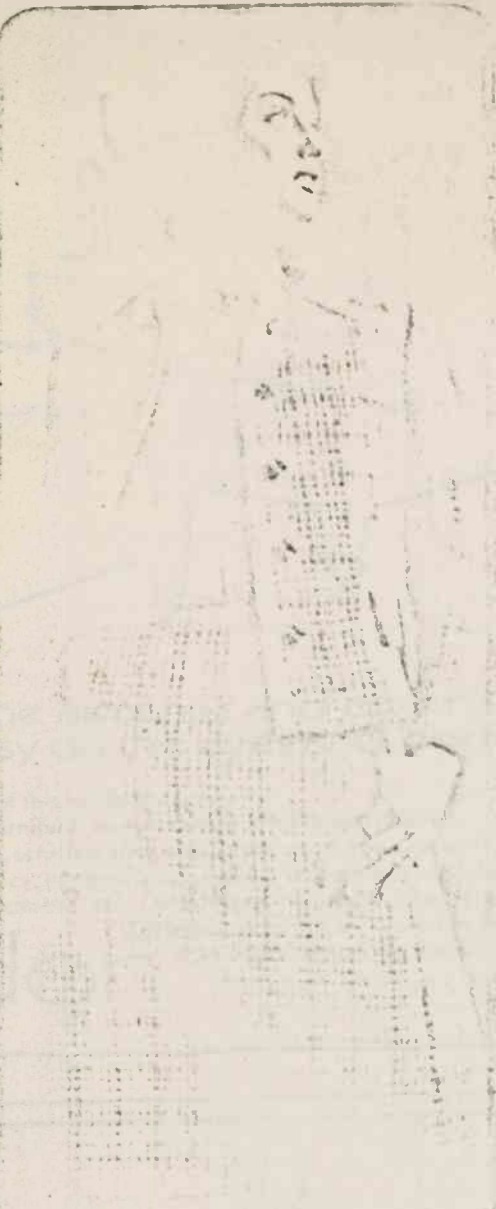
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own choosing, while others are privileged to escape any military service. The most recent regulations concerning conscientious objectors continue the inequitable pattern, since they clearly favor the well-to-do and the well-educated. We need not linger here on facts that are well known; the point is that the tax and draft statutes are not unusual examples of how the law works; they are entirely characteristic examples.

From a broader perspective, it can be seen that for each status, class, and position in society there is a different set of laws. There is one set of laws for the government employee, another for the congressman. There is one set of laws for the farmer, another for the writer. The Constitutional right of privacy is not the same for a welfare recipient as it is for a businessman. A person receiving Medicare was required by the original legislation to take a loyalty oath. If "law" means a general rule to govern a community of people, then there is no longer any such concept as "equal protection of the laws."

As administered, the law becomes lawless in an even deeper sense. When the heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali refused to submit to induction into the Army, the New York State Boxing Commission, a public body operating by authority of law, revoked his title. The Commission held no hearing at which Ali could present his case. It did not want to see whether the courts would convict him of a crime or accept his claim that by reason of his religious views he had a right to refuse induction. In Seattle, the legal authorities initiated action to revoke the license of a coffeeshop because the coffeeshop supposedly encouraged anti-war thinking among young G.I.s; the licensing official said that he did not want such activities around the Seattle area.

Through the law, his arbitrary personal view became a governmental act.

When governmental lawlessness is revealed, as in the "police riot" in Chicago or the killings at Kent State, everyone is shocked, as if this were an aberration in our society. But the police have always been brutal and lawless in their treatment of the powerless; we know this from the way blacks were and are treated by the police in the South, and from the way young people, the poor, blacks, and other outcasts are treated in the North. The cry of police lawlessness misses the point. In any large city, all the bureaucracies tend to be lawless—the

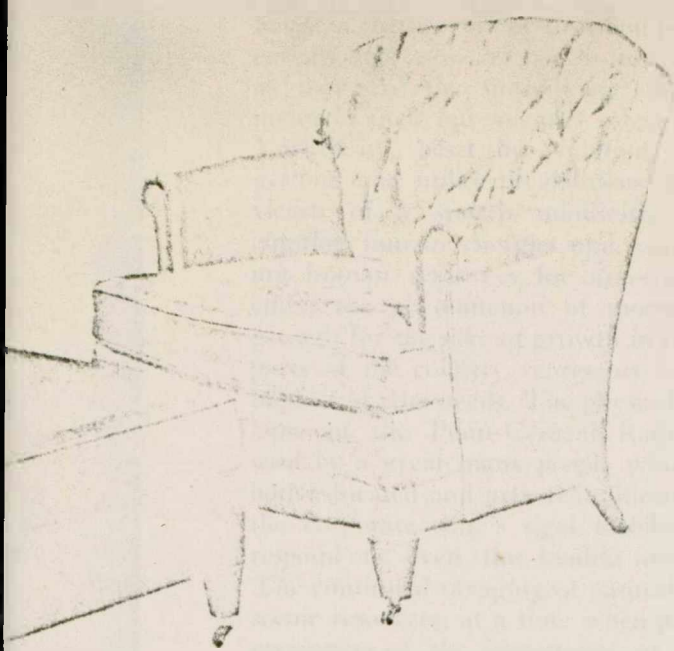
building inspectors make threats and collect bribes, the liquor-licensing authority is both arbitrary and corrupt, the zoning system is tyrannical but subject to influence.

Misuse of law is not an aberration in our society. It is the inevitable condition of any society that permits a concentration of enough power, of whatever sort, to exercise full control over those within the system. The ideal of the rule of law can be realized only in a political-conflict state that places limits upon official power and permits diversity to exist. Once everything is subject to regulation, the rule of law is inevitably lost, for the rule of law cannot stand as an independent principle of society; it is always tied to the question of power. Recent disclosures concerning the arbitrary arrest and jailing of migratory farm workers in New Jersey follow precisely in this pattern: the law is used by those in power as a weapon against those who are powerless. The bitter truth is that despite all our ideals of law and all the talk of law and order, we are today in the most literal sense a lawless society, for our "law" has ceased to be law and become instead its opposite—mere force at the disposal of whoever is at the controls.

With the advent of deep cultural conflict in the United States, the law has lost any pretense of neutrality and become a major element used by one side in the struggle. The way law is employed in the ghetto, in cases involving war protesters, and in drug-possession cases among the young has made almost the whole new culture "illegal." During the summer of 1970, nearly every attempt to hold an outdoor rock festival anywhere in the United States was subject to repression by legal means. An instructive example was the Powder Ridge Festival, supposed to



be held at a ski resort in Connecticut on the weekend of August 1st. A judge declared the whole festival to be a "nuisance" because of the traffic congestion it might create, and issued an "unappealable" injunction against it. Of course, the rock fans responded by coming anyway, perhaps in part to show their contempt for this species of law. Equally instructive was a recent action by the Board of Regents of the University of California. Ignoring the recommendations of faculties and administrators, the regents delayed promotions for two professors deemed to be left-wing and at the same time gave extraordinary and unrequested salary



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wing sensibilities. Both actions carried  
with them, of course, the full sanction  
of the regents' legal authority.

When law is employed to serve the  
corporate state, the people do not know  
what has been done to them, for law  
gets into the individual's mind and sub-  
stitutes its external standards, what-  
ever they may be, for the individual's  
own standards. We are taught that it  
is our moral and civic duty to substi-  
tute the law's standards for our own.  
It is a virtue to obey the law, a sin to  
ignore it in favor of personal desires.  
That doctrine serves a community well  
as long as law is formed in a human  
image. But what if the law becomes the  
betrayer of the people? The people's  
best instincts are then used to disable  
them from fighting an enemy, and  
they are told it is morally right to sur-  
render. Diabolically, law can teach  
that what is wrong is right, that what  
is false is true. It does this by supplying  
the sole normative standard in a society  
become so complex, so confused, so di-  
vided, where people know so little  
about each other, that there is no other  
standard.

Behind the law stands that even  
more basic element of the corporate  
state, "reason." Ours is a state built  
upon "reason." But just as what is de-  
nominated as "law" has been distorted  
to fit the ends of the state, so reason it-  
self has become merely an expression  
of the state's values. The "reason" of  
the corporate state leaves out so many  
values, ignores so many human needs,  
and pushes its own interests so single-  
mindedly that it is like the logic of an  
insane person—a monomania of tech-  
nology and organization. Ultimately,  
what the corporate state does is to sepa-  
rate man from his sources of meaning  
and truth. For human beings, the only  
truth must be found in their own hu-  
manity, in each other, in their relation  
to the living world. When the corpo-  
rate state forces its "public-interest"  
truth as a substitute for man's internal  
truth—the truth man creates—it cuts  
him off from the only reality he can  
live by. We say a man is mad when he  
believes he is Napoleon, or kills some-  
one because he heard a voice telling him  
to do so. A society is mad when its ac-  
tions are no longer guided by what  
will make men healthier and happier,  
when its power is no longer in the ser-  
vice of life.

ALL the features of the corporate  
state combine to cause the major  
symptoms of our country's sickness and  
decay. The complicity of American of-

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fields in the horrors of Con Son prison reveals men who are not so much evil as they are the unthinking embodiments of their bureaucratic roles. New York City, beset by pollution, congestion, and utility breakdowns, is the victim of a system mindlessly pre-empting human energies and exhausting human resources for non-human ends; the phenomenon of monstrous growth for the sake of growth in many parts of the country represents a vast neglect of true needs. The physical collapse of the Penn-Central Railroad, used by a great many people who are both educated and articulate, illustrates the corporate state's rigid inability to respond to even the loudest outcry. The continued ravaging of natural and scenic resources, at a time when public awareness of the importance of protecting wilderness is at a height, shows how difficult it is for the government to have a point of view separate from that of private industry. Individual privacy is being steadily eroded as an inevitable consequence of the merger of public and private centers of power and of the entire nation's single-valued emphasis on efficient technology. When neither the work people do nor the goods and services that are produced are judged by human needs, every turn of the machine makes both work and pleasure more artificial and less satisfying. The corporate state is at war with its human inhabitants. And it is no accident that it has manufactured an even more terrible war against the inhabitants of Southeast Asia.

The Vietnam war represents a form of madness in which logic is carried to fantastic extremes. Suppose a motorist is about to park in a convenient spot on the street when another car pulls into the place ahead of him. The first man might feel justified in yelling indignantly at the second man. But suppose the first man pushes the logic of justification to extremes. He plants a bomb in the second man's car, so that the victim will blow himself up when he switches on the ignition. The first man then goes to the second man's house and, using chemicals, sets fire to the house, burning to death the second man's wife and children. The first man then poisons the family dog, which escaped the holocaust. Thereafter, he acquires a huge supply of weapons for further attack or defense. When we encounter this kind of logic in real life, we quickly recognize it as one of the most frightening forms of insanity. Poe built his famous story "The Cask of Amontillado" on just this kind of madness—insults leading to a hideous revenge. There is a Laurel and Hardy

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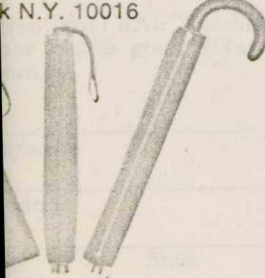
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film called "Big Business," in which, beginning with a trivial incident, the comedians systematically wreck a man's house while he wrecks their car; it is funny, but the laughter is uneasy. There are many examples in literature and in recent history, but none is so extreme, not even the example of the two motorists, as the Vietnam war.

Starting with an initial political-ideological concern, we have butchered and burned and mutilated men, women, and children, laid waste a country, and meanwhile built more and more weapons until we have impoverished our own people and communal life for this single purpose. This mad logic has been presented in a curiously detached manner; the war is merely one more artificial, manufactured product of the corporate state. The "need" for it has been created, like the "need" for that other characteristic product of the corporate state, a new, high-powered car. At the root of each creation is a fragment of truth: we do need a defense force, and we do need transportation. But the modern car, with its high power, its relationship to status, to sex, to aggression, its tremendous size, its extravagant consumption of fuel, its instant obsolescence, its fabulous expense, its indispensability to even the poorest family—all of that is the imaginary made real, just as the threat from a rural people ten thousand miles away is imaginary.

It is the misfortune of the corporate state that, unlike its other products, its venture into foreign policy has produced real blood, killed real babies, burned real homes. And it is doubly the state's misfortune that in order to market this product it requires the unwilling bodies of our own youth. The Vietnam war is the corporate state's one unsalable product. And so the great significance and irony of the Vietnam war is this. The corporate state could engage in almost any activity, no matter how impoverishing to life, as long as it did not pierce the consciousness that accepted the whole scheme of things. For some time, the war seemed just another such activity, and, indeed, it has not pierced the consciousness of many of the middle class, who have continued to accept it as "necessary," the same way they accept pollution, automobile deaths, or chopping down the redwoods. But the war should not have been offered to our young people. They were the wrong market. And when they began to be killed, their parents were the wrong market, too. The war did what almost nothing else could have: it forced a major breach in consciousness. And it made a gap in belief

so large that through it people could begin to question all the other myths of the corporate state.

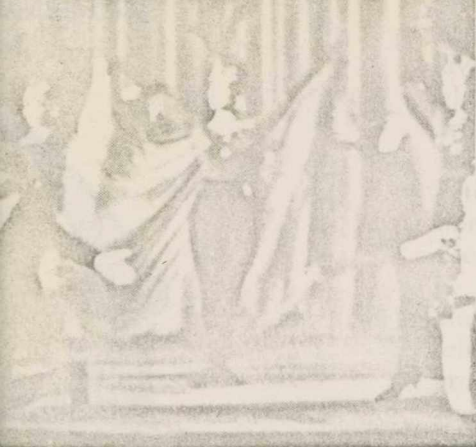
## II. THE NEW CONSCIOUSNESS

THE American corporate state is now accomplishing what no revolutionaries could accomplish by themselves. The machine has begun to destroy itself. The essence of the corporate state's power has been its ability to maintain a gap between the people's beliefs and the realities of society—for what the people do not understand they cannot control. The state could indulge in any irrationality so long as the discrepancy was preserved. What has happened now is that the state has begun to do things that reveal the falsity of existing illusions and myths. So far, the effect of the state's actions on the people's consciousness has been limited largely to producing bitterness, cynicism, despair, and fury at some unseen foe. But for many of a new generation, those endowed with the most hope and vitality, the revelations have led not to mere disaffection but to something that is even more dangerous for the state—a new kind of consciousness.

"Consciousness," as the term is used here, is not a set of opinions, values, and bits of information but a total configuration in any given individual, making up his whole perception of reality. It is a common observation that once you have ascertained a man's views on one subject you are likely to be able to predict a whole range of views and reactions. Ask a stranger on a bus or an airplane about psychiatry or redwoods or police or taxes or morals or war, and you can guess with fair accuracy his views on all the rest of these topics and many others besides, even though they are seemingly unrelated. The unity of consciousness in any individual is also revealed by the way in which it resists change. The violence with which some older people have reacted to long hair shows that they feel a threat to the whole reality that they have constructed and lived by. An argument between people who are on different levels of consciousness gets nowhere; they have no ground on which to meet.

When you hear a person's views, you can often tell something about his background, because, in general, consciousness is formed by underlying economic and social conditions. There was a consciousness that went with peasant life in the Middle Ages, and a consciousness that went with small-town pre-industrial life in America. But consciousness

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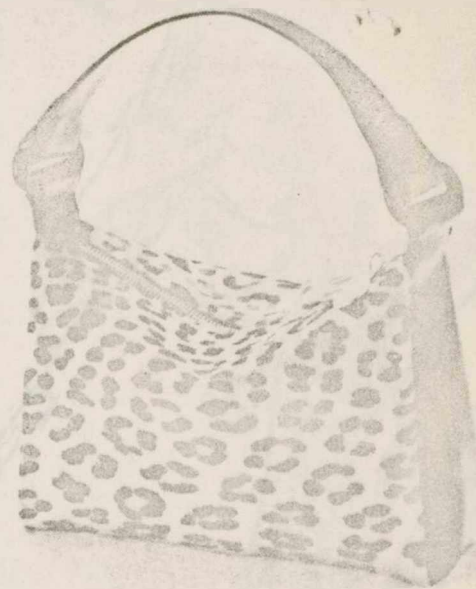


can lag behind a social system, and even be manipulated by that system. Lag and manipulation are the factors that produce a consciousness characterized by unreality. If we say we believe in free enterprise but the nation has become an interlocking corporate system, we are living in unreality and we will be powerless to cope with that corporate system.

To show how this has worked out in America, and to show the true significance of the new generation, let us attempt to classify three broad types of consciousness that predominate in America today. The three categories are, of course, highly impressionistic and arbitrary, and we must not expect any real individual to exhibit all the characteristics of one type of consciousness. But the terms can be useful in talking about changes in the American mind and way of life. The first of the three types of consciousness was formed in the nineteenth century, the second was formed in the first half of this century, and the third is just emerging. Today, a large segment of the American people still have a consciousness that was appropriate to the nineteenth-century society of small towns, face-to-face relationships, and individual economic enterprise. Consciousness I is the traditional outlook of the American farmer, small businessman, or worker trying to get ahead. Another large segment of the people have a consciousness that was formed by technological and corporate society, far removed from the realities of human needs. Consciousness II represents the values of an organizational society. In the second half of the twentieth century, this combination of an anachronistic consciousness characterized by myth and an inhuman consciousness dominated by the machine-like rationality of the corporate state has proved utterly unable to manage, guide, or control the immense apparatus of technology and organization that America has built. In consequence, this apparatus of power has become a mindless juggernaut, destroying the environment, obliterating human values, and assuming domination over the lives and minds of its subjects. Faced with this threat to their very existence, the inhabitants of America have begun, as a matter of urgent biological necessity, to develop a new consciousness, appropriate to today's realities and therefore capable of mastering the apparatus of power and bringing it under human control. Consciousness III, which is spreading rapidly among wider and wider segments of youth, and by degrees to older people, is in the

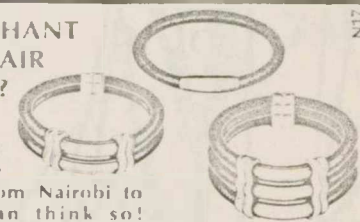
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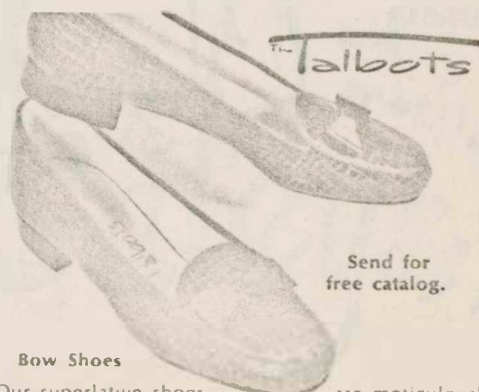
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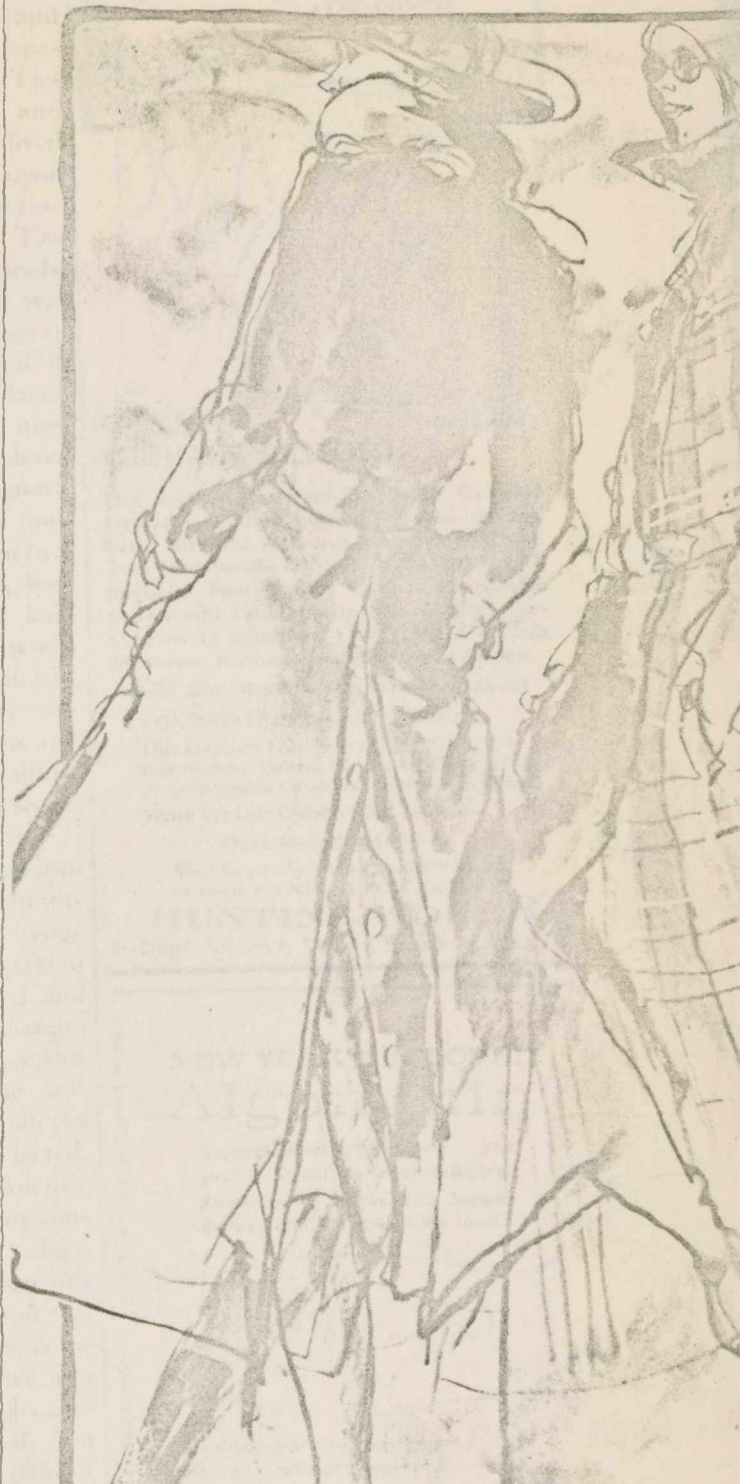
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**T**O the American people of 1789 their nation promised a new way of life: each individual a free man, each having the right to seek his own happiness; a republican form of government in which the people would be sovereign; and no arbitrary power over people's lives. Liberated from the constraints of class status and settled village life that still existed in the Old World, Consciousness I had its moment of exhilaration. Facing a vast land, great freedom, and seemingly limitless riches, each newly sovereign individual could be the source of his own achievement and fulfillment. One worked for oneself, not for society, but America would prosper if its people proved energetic and hardworking. Although Consciousness I focussed on self, it saw self in harsh and narrow terms, accepting much repression and hardship as a natural concomitant of effort. Yet the original American dream—the dream shared by the colonists and the immigrants, by Jefferson, Emerson, the Puritan preachers, and the Western cowboy—was premised not specifically on materialism but on a broad humanism, a sense of human dignity that made all men equal beings in a spiritual sense.

What sort of man was the hero of this new land? R. W. B. Lewis, in "The American Adam," emphasizes above all the admired quality of innocence. The hero was not worldly, cunning, overly learned, or intellectual. His triumph would be due to the ordinary virtues—plainness, character, honesty, hard work. The pioneer, the settler, the Westerner, the boy who made good was a moral being, and ultimately it would be his goodness, not his know- ingness, that would triumph. The belief that the character of the people is what ultimately matters retains its strength to the present day. Consciousness I still sees America as if it were a world of small towns and simple virtues. But innocence has great drawbacks, as America was to discover. When it encounters the worldly, it risks disaster. In American literature, from Melville's "Billy Budd" to James's "The Portrait of a Lady," the catastrophe of innocence is a major theme.

Soon after Americans began their experiment in a new community, the assumptions upon which the nation was based were threatened by the rise of two powerful forces that were world- wide in influence: the competitive-mar- ket economy and scientific technique. Before the coming of the modern in-



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Industrial world, most people were born, lived, worked, and died in the same place, among people they knew and saw every day. There was no separation between work and living. Ties to the community were strong and were seldom severed; each man lived within a circle that depended upon no action by him, that began before him, and that lasted beyond him. The scale of everything was small: tools, houses, land, villages. This world was destroyed in the making of our modern world, and the impact is reflected in our landscape, our culture, our faces. Perhaps the landscape shows it most vividly. When the forces engendered by the competitive-market economy and scientific technique seized the once beautiful Eastern states of America, they left forests denuded, rivers, harbors, and seacoasts polluted, the land ripped by highways, high-tension wires, and suburban swaths, the cities sterile. They left none of the country undisturbed — not even the miraculous and seemingly limitless beauty of California, where today the devastation seems most wanton and cruel of all.

Why did the forces of industrialism have such devastating, unforeseen effects? In pre-industrial societies, change took place very gradually, subject at all times to a humanistic cultural and social system. In contrast, when changes are made to accomplish specific scientific or rational objectives, the unconscious, invisible, and non-material human values are likely to be neglected. Industrialism was not only violently rapid but single-minded, with no concern for what happened to other values. In short, industrialism placed man under the rule of laws that were not human. Of course, no one was compelled to work in a factory or live in a city. But gradually, as the decades passed, the alternatives narrowed. Not everyone could any longer be a pioneer settler, farmer, or individual craftsman.

Growth of power over individuals was matched by the growth of power on a far vaster stage. After the Civil War, the country entered a period of business mergers, consolidations, and monopolies. This resulted in a gradual destruction of the free market and the development of a new corporate power to plan the economy — to allocate resources, to divide areas of business activity, to fix prices, to limit entry of new businesses, and, although this was still far off, to control the buyers themselves. A small group in steel and railroads, another group in oil, another in finance became rulers of nation-states, controlling economic forces, in some ways, as tightly as any Socialist country



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has attempted to do. The power that was now assumed, from regulation of the factory worker to regulation of the market, was power that had not previously existed in anyone's hands in America, if anywhere in the world. It was not a seizure from someone else but the subjugation of a previously free people and a previously free economy. It was, quite literally, a conquest of the American nation. The new lords arrayed themselves in the trappings of royalty. Monarchical homes were built, with furnishings suited for, and sometimes actually purchased from, the European aristocracy. The library offices of J. P. Morgan and Henry Clay Frick, both still preserved in New York, resemble nothing so much as imperial throne rooms. And the American language quickly recognized the realities of the loss of democracy; there were "copper kings" and "railroad barons" and an "American aristocracy." The American people, who fled the monarchies of Europe, had only a few decades of freedom before they were conquered by a set of autocrats wielding, if anything, greater power than the old.

But these were not merely the triumphs of certain successful individuals over their fellow-men. From a longer perspective we can see that the seizure was also a triumph of the impersonal forces of organization, efficiency, technology, planning—the forces of modern rationalism and scientific management. If Americans were to preserve their dream of a republican form of government and individual economic sovereignty, they would need to understand the forces that were threatening them, and to take action to insure that these forces worked for and not against the American dream. But Consciousness I was unwilling or unable to comprehend the transformation of America. Innocence, self-interest, and shallowness combined in Consciousness I to produce a widespread flight from responsibility and from awareness. There is a quality of willful ignorance in American life—ignorance of existing injustices, such as the treatment of the black minority, ignorance of the causes of social problems, ignorance of the world. If the American garden was being invaded by inhuman forces that were capable of destroying it, many Americans preferred denying the reality to fighting back—and still do. Consciousness I could not grasp, or would not accept, the reality that the individual was no longer competing against the success of other individuals but against a system. It could not understand that "private property" in

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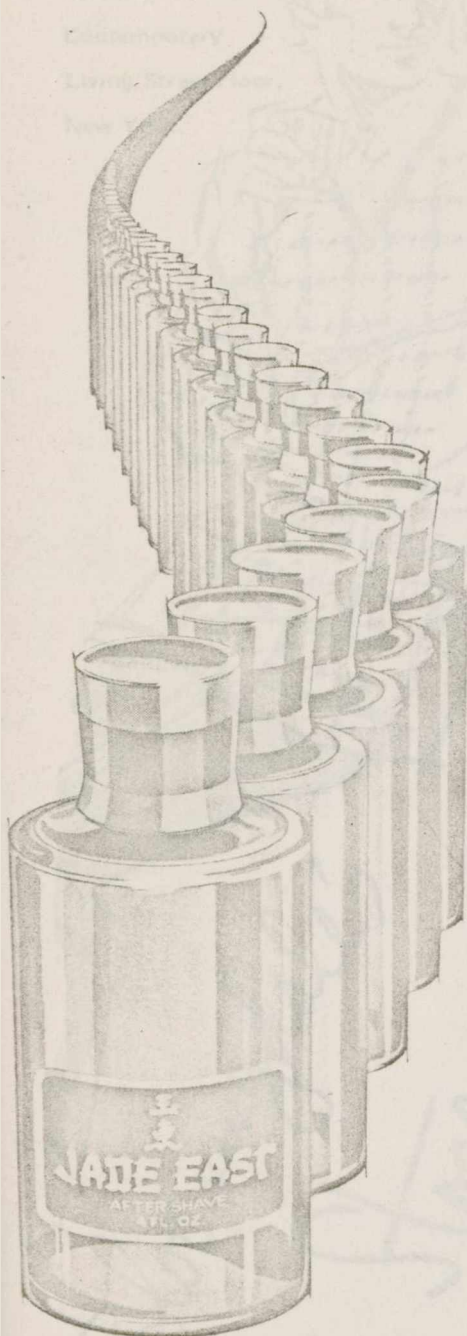
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hands of a corporation was a synonym for quasi-governmental power, far different from the property of an individual.

Consciousness I also failed to recognize that private production was not paying its costs. For example, a manufacturer would dump wastes into a stream but pay nothing to take care of the pollution, leaving the public to share in the costs but not in the profits. The manufacturer fought against having to pay for accidental injuries to workers, although these were statistically predictable, leaving the costs to be borne, sometimes for a whole lifetime, by the unfortunate individual and his family. Most characteristic of all, Consciousness I insisted on seeing the ills of industrialism not as what they were but as moral problems. If a given number of automobiles are crowded onto a highway, there will be a predictable number of accidents. The moral approach tries to deal with this as a question of individual driver responsibility. It stresses safe driving and criminal penalties. Yet reduction of the accident rate is almost entirely a problem in engineering. Similarly, urban crime is seen as a moral and law-enforcement problem, although most crime is a product of identifiable environmental factors. The moralistic approach to public welfare is similar. Over and over again, Consciousness I has sought scapegoats rather than face the forces of industrialism directly.

If the people would not dominate the forces that were changing their country, then those forces would dominate the people. Consciousness I, losing its own roots but holding tight to its myths, was ready for manipulation by the organized forces of society. These Americans could be sold a colonial war in the name of national honor. They could be sold hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of military technology in the name of American independence. They could be sold governmental irresponsibility in the name of the old American virtue of thrift. They could be sold ignorant and incapable leaders because they looked like the embodiment of American virtues. Worst of all, perhaps, they could be sold artificial pleasures and artificial dreams to replace the high human and spiritual adventure that had once been America.

AS the nineteenth century passed into the twentieth, there was much agitation for reform. But the most common reaction of the reformers to the chaos they saw growing about them

was that a few evil individuals were abusing a basically sound system. Reform began with highly specific efforts: laws regulating unhealthy practices in the meat industry, prohibition of monopolies and piratical methods of competition, laws against railroad favoritism, establishment of maximum hours for workers in certain employments, regulation of dishonest advertising. The basic theme was simple: economic power, where it has been too severely abused, must be subjected to "the public interest." This meant that government would keep an eye on the consequences of the economic system; when these got too bad, it would apply regulation (although self-regulation was always preferred). The system was a moralistic one, dealing with specific acts but not with their causes; in this sense it was typically American. Franklin D. Roosevelt stated this moralistic approach, and also the "public-interest" philosophy that was later to dominate, in his 1933 Inaugural Address. After describing the chaos of the Depression, he said:

Rulers of the exchange of mankind's goods have failed, through their own stubbornness and their own incompetence. . . . They know only the rules of a generation of self-seekers. . . . We now realize as we have never realized before our interdependence on each other; that we cannot merely take but must give as well; that if we are to go forward, we must move as a trained and loyal army willing to sacrifice to the good of a common discipline, because without such discipline no progress is made, no leadership becomes effective. We are, I know, ready and willing to submit our lives and property to such discipline because it makes possible a leadership which aims at a larger good.

What the New Deal did was to create, in furtherance of these objectives and to carry out its reforms, a new public state, matching in size and power the private corporate state. For each piece of regulatory legislation, a large, specialized government agency was established, and at the same time the regular executive departments of the government were greatly expanded. This physical growth was accompanied by a growth in power. Neither the New Deal reforms nor the earlier progressive reforms restored any power to individuals or limited the power that could be applied against individuals. Originally, individuals lost power to private organizations. What the reforms did, as far as individuals were concerned, was to take some of that lost power and turn it over to "public" organizations—government, labor un-



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ions, farmers' groups. Nothing came back to individuals. If anything, the public organizations gained greater power over individuals than the private organizations had held previously. And although the private power was regulated, it still was there. The New Deal furthered the creation of a hierarchical, elitist society whose principles contrasted sharply with those of democracy and equality. Both public and private centers of administration were seen as the province of the ablest, the most knowledgeable, and the best-educated "experts." In government and in business, the emphasis was on "planning" and "the rational allocation of resources." Legislative and judicial "interference" with administration was deplored, and the power of elected representatives and stockholders was further reduced.

Every step the New Deal took, of course, encountered the bitter opposition of Consciousness I people. They found their world changing beyond recognition, and instead of blaming the primary forces behind that change they blamed the efforts at solving the problems. In retrospect, the New Deal seems to have saved the capitalist system, but it intruded irrevocably upon the capitalists' make-believe problem-free world, in which the pursuit of business gain and self-interest was imagined to be automatically beneficial to all mankind, requiring of them no responsibility whatever.

What about the major supporters of the New Deal—most notably, organized labor, city dwellers, and parts of the South? The support of all these groups was gained through the catastrophe of the Great Depression. But how deeply committed were they to the New Deal program as a whole? Looking back, we can see that each was committed only to its own interests, for which it now needed the help of government. The workers needed the National Labor Relations Board; the cities needed relief, housing, Social Security; the South needed rural electrification and farm subsidies. But none of these groups had abandoned an older picture of America except in the one particular that concerned its own interests. Thus we have the spectacle, still to be seen today, of the Western rancher who accepts federal aid for his cattle operations and federal aid for his grazing requirements but bitterly opposes all social programs that do not concern him. The political allies of the New Deal—the blue-collar workers, the nationality groups, the urban poor—were all waiting in line for their chance at the American dream, with little

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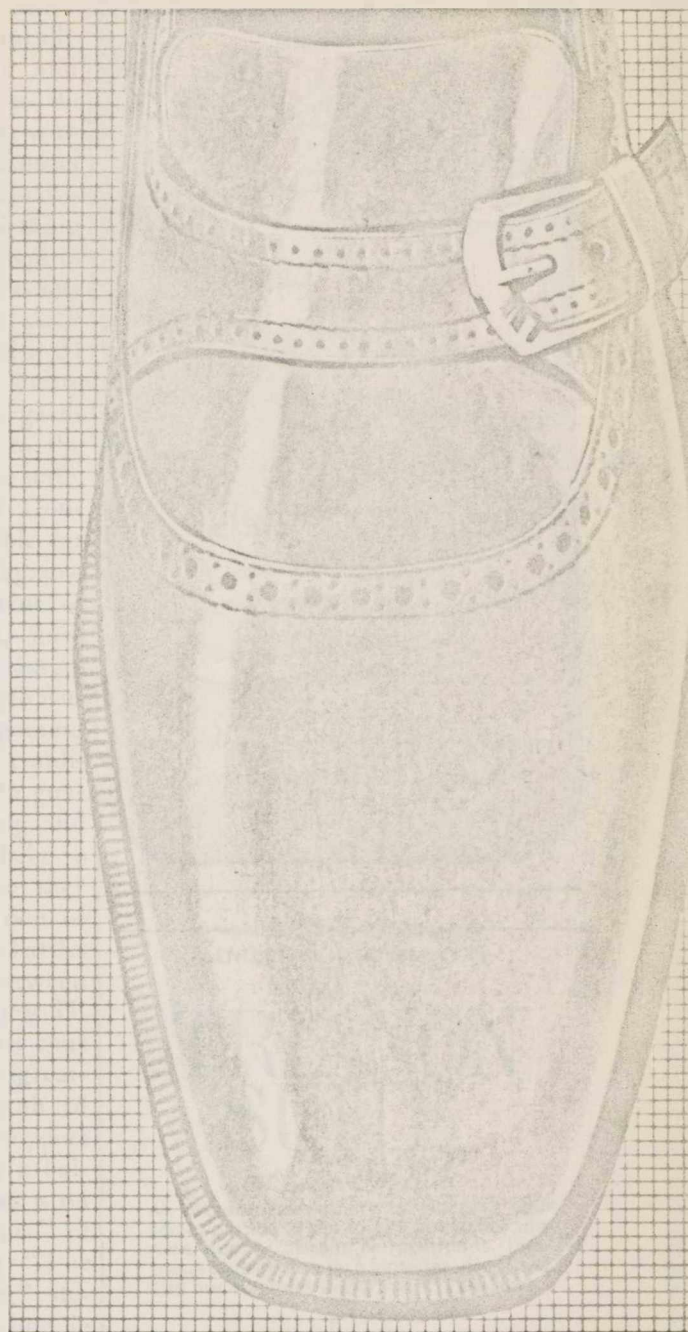
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thought of responsibility for the common good. When they got what they wanted, and the Depression was a thing of the past, their enthusiasm for reform waned.

The liberal reformers who devised the New Deal never imagined how great were the obstacles they faced—the incredibly stubborn opposition of those they were trying to regulate, the lack of true understanding and participation among the workers, the dangers and weaknesses of the reform structure itself. And the theme that lingered beyond the insecurity and idealism of the nineteen-thirties was the theme of domination; the New Deal had convinced much of America that its people must be placed under the control of something larger and more rational than individual self-restraint, that individual man must, for the good of all, become part of a system. The New Deal era created not only that amalgamation of public and private power we call the American corporate state but also a new consciousness, growing out of reform, which believed primarily in domination and the necessity for living under domination.

CONSCIOUSNESS II came into existence as a consequence of the disastrous failure of Consciousness I. In a mass industrial society ungoverned by any law except self-interest, the individual had become the plaything of circumstances and forces beyond his control. The Great Depression brought the whole nation to a critical point. In Germany and Italy, similar insecurity led to Fascism. In America, it led to a breach in the existing consciousness, a turn away from individualism. What the realities of the times seemed to demand was the organization and coordination of activity, the arrangement of things in a rational hierarchy of authority and responsibility, the dedication of each individual to training, work, and goals beyond himself. Consciousness I sacrificed for individual good; now it seemed necessary to sacrifice for a common good.

Consciousness II believes that the present American crisis can be solved by greater commitment of individuals to the public interest, by more social responsibility in private business, and above all by more affirmative government action and regulation, more planning, more of a welfare state, better and more rational administration and management. And yet, behind a façade of optimism, Consciousness II has a profoundly pessimistic view of man. It sees man in Hobbesian terms: human beings are by nature aggressive, com-



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petitive, power-seeking. Hence the vital need for law: without law we would all be at each other's throats. Deeply cynical about human motives and doubting whether man can be much improved, Consciousness II naturally places great emphasis on society and institutions; these are designed to do the best possible job of dealing with the doubtful and deficient raw material that is "human nature." The individual must tie his destiny to something larger, and must subordinate his will to it. "Ask what you can do for your country (or corporation)," says the voice of Consciousness II. Consciousness II does not accept any "absolute" liberty for the individual; rather, it regards all individual liberty as subject to the overriding "public interest" of the state.

The reformist tendencies of Consciousness II have been responsible for Social Security, the movement against racial discrimination, establishment of means for regulating business, government economic planning, changes in the criminal law, public projects like the T.V.A., collective bargaining and improvement of working conditions, a reduction of corruption in government, and so on down a long and admirable list. These reforms help to define Consciousness II because they may be seen as part of a rejection of the past. Indeed, most political battles in America are still fought between Consciousness I and Consciousness II. The reformers, of course, support conflict as a way of attaining the greatest possible rationality (the truth of the marketplace), and they support pluralism as a way of attaining a balance in society. But the emphasis is on the solving of problems, the "cure" of conflict. Johann Huizinga, in "The Waning of the Middle Ages," describes the medieval world as one in which extreme contrasts, inconsistencies, and violent conflicts were not "settled" but lived side by side, lending a color to life that order cannot provide. Consciousness II wants the resolution of conflict; its paradise would be one possessing an appropriate tribunal or authority whereby problems could always be "solved."

Consciousness II, although it is basically "liberal," has the potential of becoming repressive. It welcomes every point of view, but it wants everything expressed through proper channels and procedures, and the conflicts are to be dealt with by a meritocracy of ability and accomplishment. The meritocracy is to be structured so as to provide an equal opportunity for all at the starting point, but the idea of equality is rejected thereafter, for such

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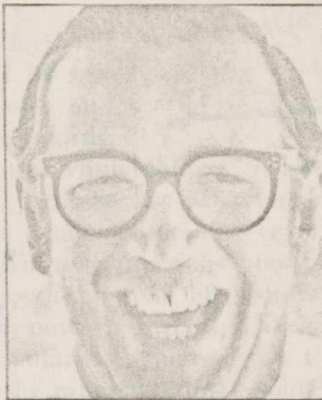
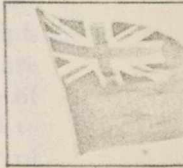
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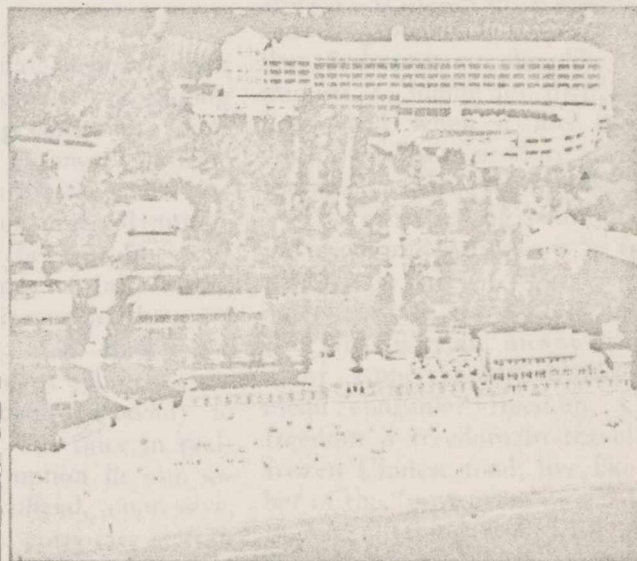
equality is at war with excellence. There is an abstract equality of opportunity but not an equality of individual human beings. Consciousness II is thus profoundly anti-populist and, in a large sense, anti-democratic. It is no accident that the most successful Consciousness II individuals surround themselves not with vulgar material display but with the signs of elegant style and taste; it is no accident that they often show an impatient, intolerant, and disdainful attitude toward individual members of the very groups they are "trying to help." For "reason" has led Consciousness II to believe in an elitist society, with never a doubt about the standard by which the elite is determined: utility to the technological society. The absolute worth of each individual is, to Consciousness II, a mere religious doctrine, having no application in reality.

Like Consciousness I, Consciousness II sees life in terms of a fiercely competitive struggle for success. The difference lies in the means of struggle and the character of success, for with Consciousness II these are defined by organizational or institutional values. This difference lends an air of gentility or public-spiritedness to the struggle carried on by Consciousness II. He can claim, and can convince himself, that his struggle is for something other than pure selfishness. Moreover, Consciousness II draws a strict line between the values of his working life and those of his home life. His home life may be characterized by many values that are contrary to those of his job, and he may deplore what the organized part of society is doing. But the struggle for success in the corporate meritocracy makes Consciousness II, despite all of his liberal-reformist convictions, deeply cautious about the positions he takes in public. He can fight for reform just so long as the fight is in the same direction that organized society is going. Beginning in the nineteen-fifties, he could fight racial discrimination; after 1967, he could oppose the Vietnam war; these days, he is for "revised priorities," but he is still following the direction of his organization and of society. And he makes sure that nothing he says or does will be perceived by his organization as a threat to its own power. Consciousness II is in favor of many reforms but he will not jeopardize his own status to fight for them; he will not put his own body on the line.

Thus, a crucial aspect of Consciousness II is a profound schizophrenia, a split between his working and his private self. It is this split that sometimes



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infuriates his children when they become of college age, for they see it as hypocrisy or selling out. But it is schizophrenia, not hypocrisy. The individual has two roles, two lives, two masks, two sets of values. It cannot be said, as is true of the hypocrite, that one self is real and the other false. These two values simply coexist; there is a "public" man and a "private" man. Neither the man at work nor the man at home is the whole man; it is impossible to know, talk to, or confront the whole man, for that wholeness is precisely what does not exist. The only thing that is real is two separate men.

Because of his lack of wholeness, because of his enforced playing of roles and subjection to outside standards, Consciousness II becomes vulnerable to outside manipulation. And he has become the victim of a cruel deception. He has been persuaded that the richness, the satisfactions, the joy of life are to be found in power, success, status, acceptance, popularity, achievements, rewards, and the rational, competent mind. He wants nothing to do with dread, awe, wonder, mystery, accidents, failure, helplessness, magic. He has been deprived of the search for self that only these experiences make possible. And he has produced a society that is the image of his own alienation and impoverishment.

**T**HE corporate state depends upon two human elements: a willing worker and a willing consumer. Consciousness II supplies the motive power: the individual works for the public interest and for status and advantage within the system; he consumes according to the dictates of false tastes, and then must work even harder, and so the wheel turns. This makes the system heavily dependent upon the continuance of a consciousness ready to work and consume. But since in reality work and consumption in our society tend to be artificial, oppressive, and unsatisfying, the corporate state is far more vulnerable than it seems. Consciousness II people remain generally unaware of the artificiality that rewards their efforts, but this unawareness cannot last forever.

The state tries hard to keep the worker-consumer contented. But this is the contradiction under which it operates: the overpersuaded consumer may no longer be a willing worker. To have consumers for its ever-increasing flow of products, the corporate state must have individuals who live for hedonistic pleasures, constant

change, and expanding freedom. To have workers for its system of production, the state must have individuals who are ever more self-denying, self-disciplined, and narrowly confined. In theory, they are supposed to accept the discipline of their work in order to enjoy the pleasures of consumption. But the theory is all wrong. For some people it is wrong in fact, because hard work does not leave time or energy for outside enjoyment. For some people it is wrong in principle, because if they are persuaded to believe in the principle of hedonism they find it hard to hold on to the principle of service. And for a very large group of people it is simply impossible on a personal level; they are psychologically unable to go back and forth



between self-denial and pleasure. The factory worker looks up from his conveyor belt, the lawyer looks up from his books, and both see crisp, sparkling snow or secluded beaches; they are likely to lose, not gain, enthusiasm for their work. Thus there is a great subversive, revolutionary force loose in America, manufactured with all the famous efficiency of the corporate state.

When the consumer-worker contradiction touches blacks, it produces the angry militancy of those who believe they have been left out of something. When it touches blue-collar workers, it makes them angry, too, but since they believe in the corporate state, they find someone else, like the Communists, to blame for their dissatisfaction. And when it hits middle-class youth, it helps to produce a rejection of the whole ethic of the middle class.

The great selling point of America is "freedom." America is "a free country;" it is part of "the free world," in contrast to the Communist world. But what is really meant by this freedom? Imperceptibly, it has come to mean consumer freedom. Consumer freedom is freedom to travel, ski, eat frozen Chinese food, live like a member of the "now generation"—freedom to buy anything and drive anywhere. For work, on the other hand, there is no longer any concept of freedom at all. Most of the repression of self—the meritocracy, loyalty oaths, character files, and employment regulations—occurs in connection with work; the worker does not live in "a free country." But can consumer freedom be turned off at the office door?

Advertising is only the visible portion of a much deeper consumer ethic, but its visibility allows us to study it. Most advertising attempts to sell a particular commodity by playing upon a supposed

underlying need, such as sex, status, or excitement. Buy our automobile and you'll get all three, the ads say. But in trying to sell more and more commodities by the use of these needs advertising cannot help but raise the intensity of the needs themselves. A man not only wants a car—quite independently, he also wants more sex, status, and excitement. Advertising is designed to create, and does create, dissatisfaction. But dissatisfaction is no mere toy. If one creates a desire for sex, status, and excitement and then sells a man an automobile, the desire is likely to remain unsatisfied. The wants created are real enough, but the satisfactions are unreal.

Increasingly, this shows in the kinds of strikes that occur and the kinds of demands that are made. Today many workers are demanding something, not fully articulated, that goes far beyond a mere economic ambition and encompasses the wish for greater status. Newspaper interviews with dissatisfied policemen and municipal workers have shown this clearly; New York City's troubles with its municipal employees quite evidently stem in part from a dissatisfaction with status. And nothing could be clearer than that the strength of George Wallace's appeal in 1968 was due to his support of the industrial worker's yearning for higher status. In an article in the *Times* on October 24, 1968, Sylvan Fox wrote that New York City policemen had rejected an excellent wage settlement because they wanted something more: recognition from the community. A police official was quoted as saying, "They are turning their backs on material things and going after other things—ego things."

When advertising paints a picture of consumer hedonism and freedom, and work is considered only a means to that end, the machinery of the corporate state begins to effect its own destruction. Consider the hereditary poor. Advertising intended for an audience that can afford what it offers also works (with perhaps even greater effectiveness) on those who cannot afford it; it inflames the desires of the poor without offering them any satisfaction at all. Perhaps the poor are "better off than they ever were before," as some say, but they can hardly be expected to be satisfied with this after watching television. A continual display of better living is paraded before them. Is there any wonder that we have riots? Television might justly be called a riot box; it raises a fury of dissatisfaction and mocks those who watch it. If television is a riot box for the poor, who can say what it is for the ordinary middle-class

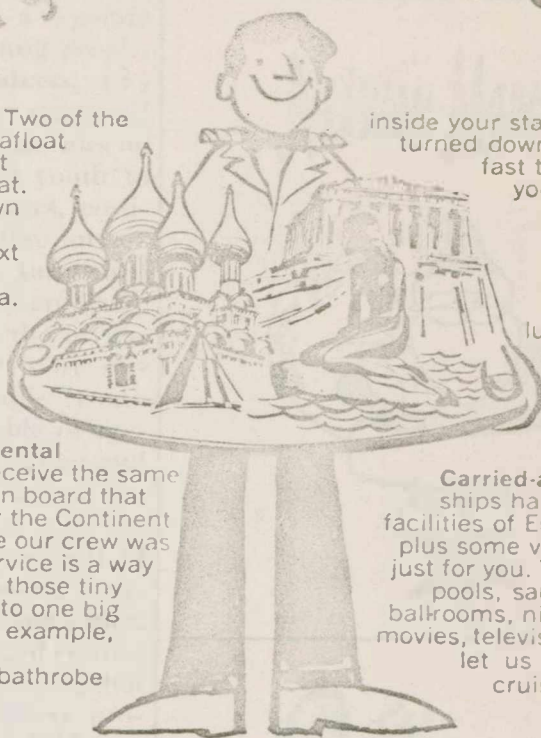
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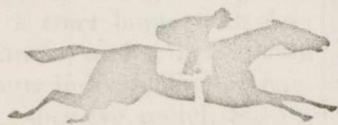
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worker, who has many of the advertised products but lacks the sensuality and freedom they are supposed to bring? The one thing that we can be sure of is that the aim of advertising is to create dissatisfaction.

The consumer ethic has a special message, and a special meaning, for young people. The American economy has done these four things: (1) greatly prolonged the period of youth, partly because of the need for more technical training, partly because of the absence of enough jobs, (2) made a separate consumer market out of young people, in order to sell more products, (3) made young people widely aware of each other in order to stimulate sales by example, and (4) subjected youth to the stimuli of constant changes, possibilities, and opportunities. Here advertising is dealing with an unformed group in the society, and they are likely to be far more sensitive to the invitation to live *now* than their more settled elders. Thus, in the volatile "youth market," advertising is capable of creating a maximum of dissatisfaction and a minimum willingness to accept the drudgery of life.

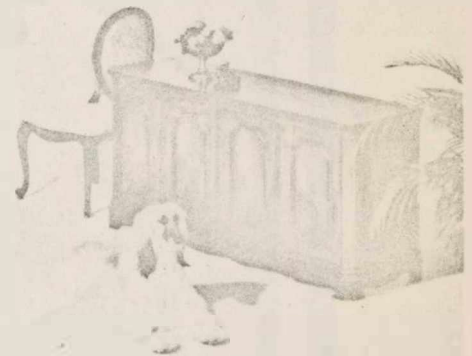
If the willing worker is one half of the motive force of the corporate state, the other half is the willing consumer. Consumer dissatisfaction lags, of course, far behind worker dissatisfaction, but the potential is vast. Our society produces products that are unreliable, or unsafe, or that break down and cannot be readily serviced, or are unusable without another product that is unavailable (an automobile without parking). Some products are showing a noticeable deterioration in quality; others can be frighteningly dangerous in the wrong hands (an oven cleaner that can damage the eyes). Technology of all sorts has proved surprisingly vulnerable to breakdown. At the same time, inflation has made buying anything more and more difficult, so families feel they are literally growing poorer year by year.

Consumer goods are produced, to a large extent, by draining resources away from vitally needed social services. This is beginning to undermine the value of the consumer satisfactions themselves. What good is a quarter-million-dollar cooperative apartment if, because of decay in schooling and job training, a robber waits in the hallway or elevator? What good is a luxurious suburban home if one is a prisoner in it, surrounded by locked gates, private watchmen, and "Beware of the Dog" signs to ward off the discontented populace? What good is shopping in the city if one is likely to get caught in a breakdown of the subway or com-

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muter rail services, or in a giant traffic jam?

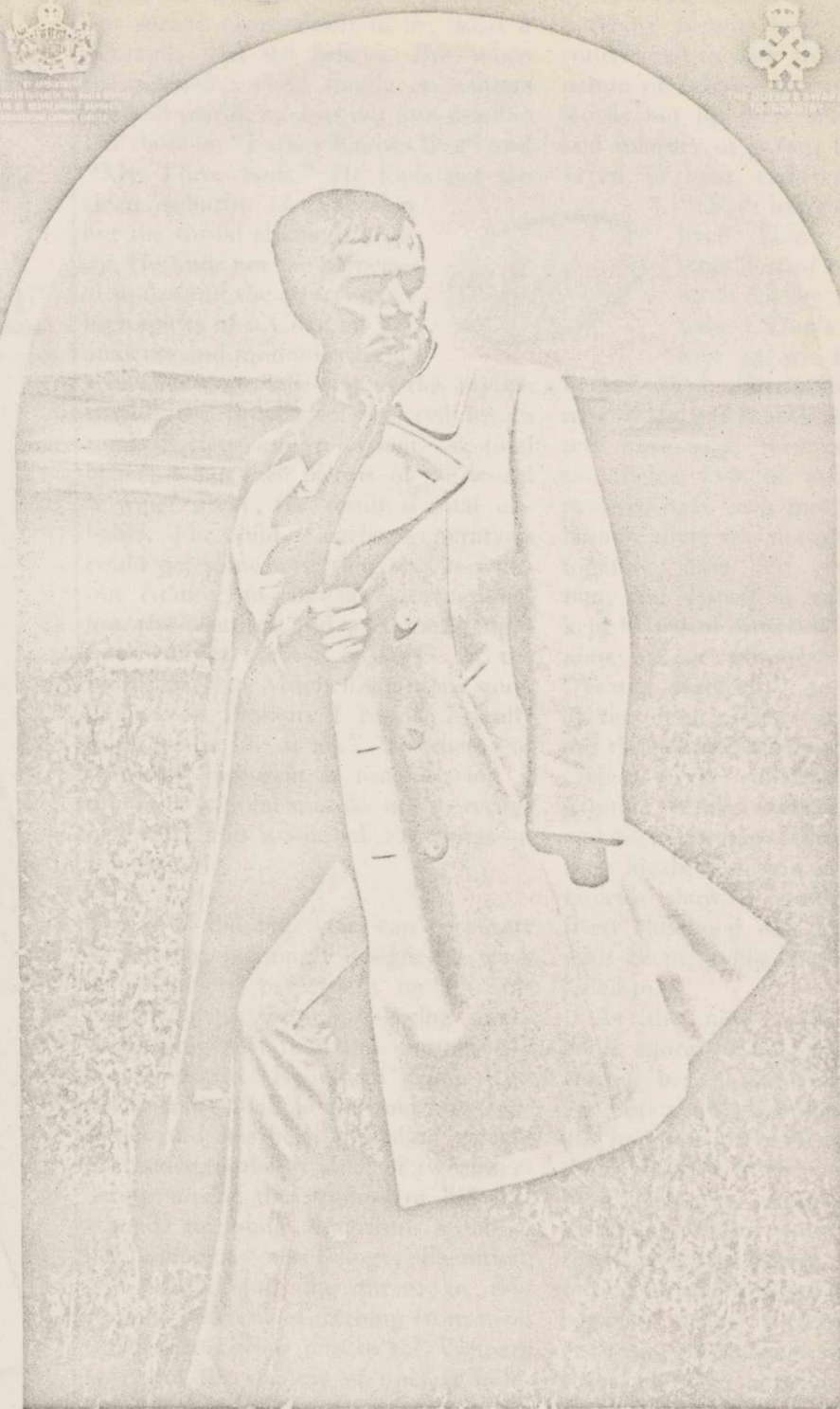
Many of the complaints we have mentioned would be comparatively trivial if consumers were hardy and self-reliant, and able to keep their needs under some sort of control. But, just as we are producing workers who are increasingly unwilling to work, so we are producing consumers who are increasingly dissatisfied, no matter what they get. What the manufacturing part of the economy wants is a consumer who is passive, has little ability to endure discomfort, and has constantly rising needs. Such a consumer has little ability to substitute one satisfaction for another if the necessity arises. Like a spoiled child, he is ever more difficult to please, ever more filled with complaints. If his gourmet meal aboard an airplane is delayed, he has no capacity to enjoy some diversion until things are put to rights. He is a potential rebel, because advertising has taught him to be one.

The end product of the over-pampered consumer society may well be a person who reacts against pampering, a rootless and truly liberated individual, one who ultimately threatens the corporate state. Suppose a boy or girl is brought up in a tract home with furnishings, appliances, and a front lawn that have no more individuality or character than an expensive motel. Such a child will have very little attachment to his surroundings. The child of a home with genuine character develops loyalties, but the child of a house that gives no sense of place is equally at home anywhere. He might as well be on the road, because he feels no special connection to any thing or any place. From a slavish and passive dependence on consumer goods, which his parents may never throw off, the child of the pre-packaged home may suddenly find he can ignore all consumer goods, and in that moment he is liberated.

The doubts of the worker and the consumer, basic as they are, are only specific examples of a breach in credulity and consciousness that is even deeper and more general. Perhaps this general doubt can be illustrated by the effect of television on the younger generation in terms of myth and reality. The youngster of earlier generations discovered reality by exploring outside his own front door; he encountered the world of the farm or the world of city streets, tested them, and found out about horses and cows and pumpkins and other youngsters and stores and traffic. The knowledge he gained did not play him false. Perhaps in old age, retelling his experiences, he turned them into myths, but they were myths

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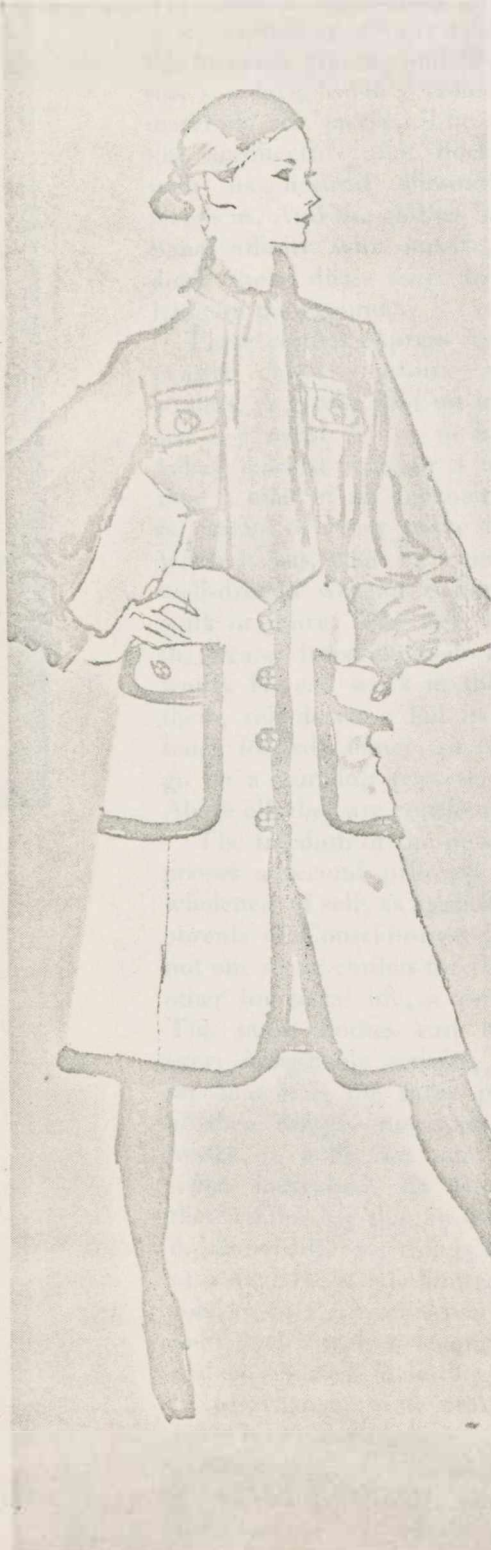
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that were fashioned out of his own reality. With the child of television, the process is reversed. Our society insists that children first be taught the prescribed mythology, in school, in films, and, earliest and most universally, on television. The television world is what our society claims itself to be, what it demands that we believe. But when the television child finally encounters the real world, he does not find families like those on "Father Knows Best" and "My Three Sons." He finds not the clean suburbs of television but the sordid slums of reality. He finds not the perpetual smiles and the effervescent high spirits of a Coke ad but anxieties and monotony. And when he stops believing in this mythic world, the breach in his credulity is total. Society and television ask total belief; when their picture of the world is wiped away, the result is total unbelief. The child of earlier generations could get some unsettling shocks without coming to disbelieve everything, but the postures and pretenses taught now cannot survive a shock. In the words of Joni Mitchell's famous song, "It's life's illusions I recall. I really don't know life at all." The theme of youthful disillusion is timeless, but it would be a great mistake not to recognize that this is one of the songs of revolution.

**H**OW did the American corporate state, seemingly designed to keep its inhabitants perpetually on a treadmill, suddenly begin producing something altogether new and unintended? Consciousness III, which began with a few individuals in the mid-nineteen-sixties and has been spreading rapidly ever since, is the product of two interacting forces: the promise of life that is made to young Americans by all of our affluence, technology, liberation, and ideals, and the threat to that promise posed by everything from neon ugliness to boring jobs to the Vietnam war and the shadow of nuclear holocaust. Neither the promise nor the threat is the cause by itself, but the two together have done it.

Older people are inclined to think of work, of injustice and war, and of the bitter frustrations of life as the human condition. Their capacity for outrage is consequently dulled. But for many of the young who have glimpsed the vision of something better, the prospect of a dreary job or a miserable death in war is utterly intolerable. Moreover, the human condition has been getting steadily worse in the corporate state—more and more life-

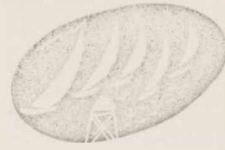
denying just as life should be opening up. And hovering over everything is the threat of annihilation. To the young, the discrepancy between what could be and what is becomes overwhelming. It is the greatest single fact of their existence.

Many parents have unintentionally contributed to their children's condemnation of existing society. Not by their words but by their actions, attitudes, and manner of living, they have conveyed to their children the message "Don't live the way we have lived. Don't settle for the emptiness of our lives. Don't be lured by the things we valued. Don't neglect life and love as we have neglected

them." With the unerring perceptiveness of the child, their sons and daughters have read these messages from the lifeless lives of their "successful" parents, have seen marriages break up because there was nothing to hold them together, have felt cynicism, alienation, and despair in some of the best-kept homes of America. And will have none of it. Kenneth Keniston, in "Young Radicals," declares that one of the most telling forces in producing the political ideals of the new generation is the contrast between their parents' ideals (which they accept) and their parents' failure to live up to these ideals. Keniston found that young radicals show a continuity of ideals from childhood on; they simply stay with them, while their parents have failed to.

As the new consciousness made youth more distinct, the younger generation began discovering itself as a generation. Always before, young people had felt themselves tied more to their families, to their schools, and to their immediate situations than to "a generation." But now an entire culture—including music, clothes, and a radical attitude toward certain drugs—began to spring up among the young. As it did, the message of the new consciousness went with it. And the more the older generation rejected the culture, the more a fraternity of the young grew up, so that they recognized each other as brothers and sisters from coast to coast.

**C**LOTHES are a significant symbol, and the dress of the new generation expresses a number of the major themes of Consciousness III in a very vivid and immediate way. The first impression given by the clothes many young people wear these days for any and all occasions is one of uniformity and conformity—as if every-

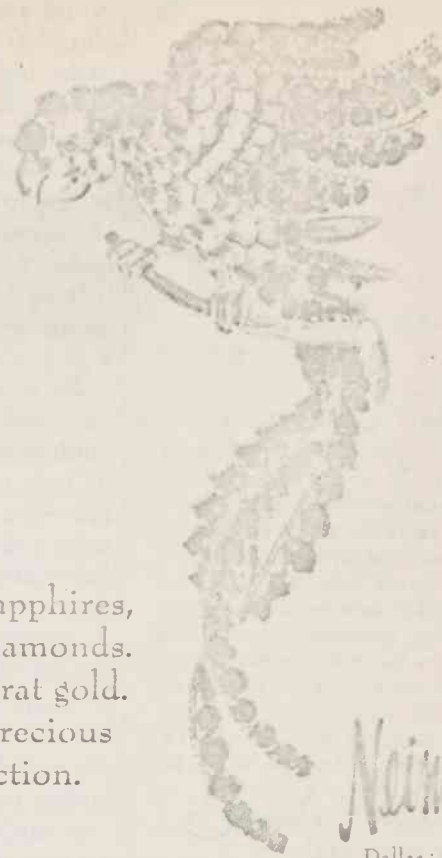


one felt obliged to adopt the same style. But although there is agreement on certain principles, there is great individuality within those principles. Another first impression given by wrinkled jeans and jackets made of coarse material in dark colors is that of drabness. This is an accurate observation, and for a reason. Such clothes are a deliberate rejection of the neon colors and artificial, plastic-coated look of the affluent society. They are inexpensive to buy, inexpensive to maintain. They suggest that neither individuality nor distinction can be bought in a clothing store; clothes are primarily functional; people are not objects to be decorated. The clothes are earthy and sensual. They express an affinity with nature—the browns, greens, and blues are nature's colors, earth's colors, and the materials are tactile. The clothes are like architecture that does not clash with its natural surroundings but blends in. And the clothes have a functional affinity with nature, too; they don't show dirt—they are good for lying on the ground.

These clothes express freedom. Expensive clothes enforce social constraints. A grease spot on an expensive suit is a social error; so is a rip in a ladies' tailored coat, or a missing button. A man in an expensive suit must be careful of every move he makes—where he sits, what he leans against. A well-dressed woman is hardly able to walk or move. The new clothes give the wearer freedom to do anything he wants. He can work in them, read in them, roll down a hill in them, play touch football, dance, sit on the floor, go on a camping trip, sleep in them. Above all, they are comfortable.

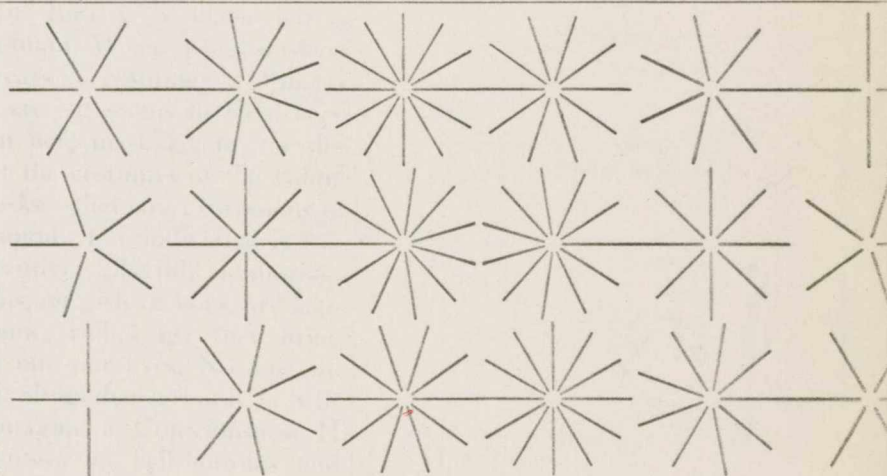
The freedom of the new clothes expresses a second principle as well: a wholeness of self, as against the schizophrenia of Consciousness II. There is not one set of clothes for the office, another for social life, a third for play. The same clothes can be used for every imaginable activity, and so they say that it is the same person doing all these things—not a set of different masks or dolls but one many-sided, whole individual. At the same time, these clothes say that an individual may do many different things in the course of a day. He is not limited to a single role, or to a role-plus-recreation; each individual is truly protean, with unlimited possibilities, including the possibility of whatever new and spontaneous thing may come along.

One reason the clothes are not "uniform," as many older people think, is that they are so fully expressive of the individual who wears them, and each



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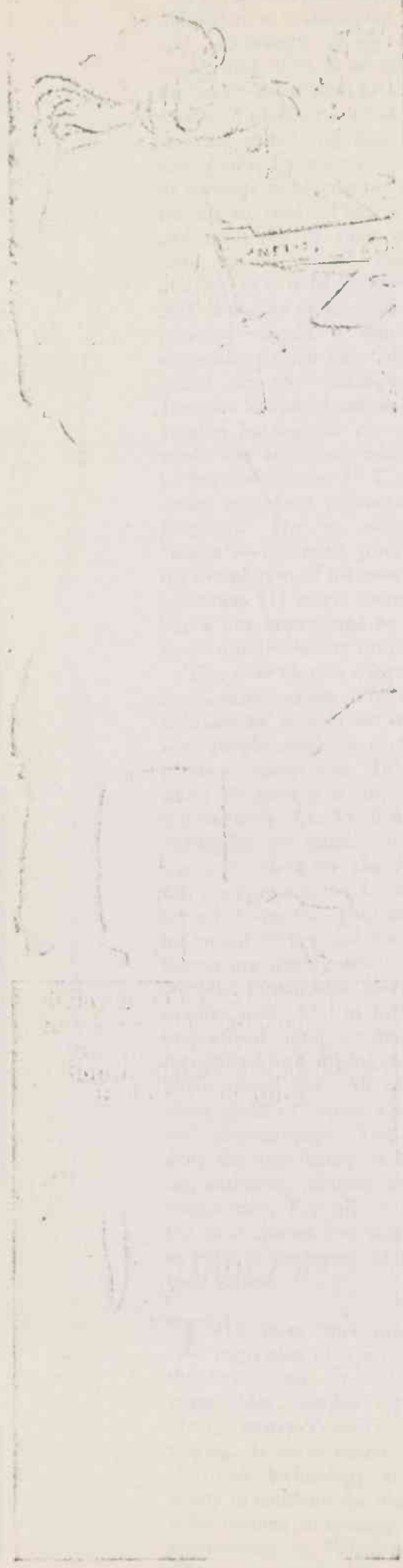
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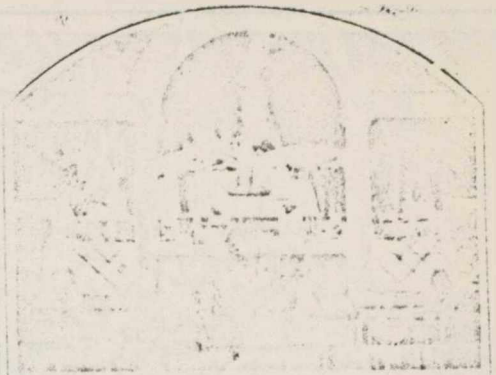
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body is different and unique. Men's business suits really *are* uniform. They look the same on a man as they do on the rack in the clothing store; the pants give no hint of a man's legs, and when they wrinkle to conform to the body's lines they are quickly taken to the dry cleaner's to be pressed back into straight lines. Jeans express the shape of legs—heavy or thin, straight or bowed. As jeans get more wrinkled, they adapt even more to the particular legs that are wearing them. To someone sitting across from a man in a business suit, it is as if he did not have a body at all—just a face and a voice. Jeans make one conscious of the body, not as something separate from the face but as part of the whole individual. Consciousness III believes that a person's body is a most essential part of his self, not something to be ignored while one carries on a conversation with his face and mind. Also, the new clothes make the wearer conscious of his own body, while a man's business suit is at odds with his body all day long. The new clothes are a declaration of sensuality—not sensuality-for-display, as in a fashion designer's style, but sensuality as part of the natural man.

If the individual wishes, he can add touches to his clothes that make them a costume, expressing whatever he feels at the moment. A headband can produce an Indian, a black hat a cowboy badman. When a high-fashion woman wears a costume—a "matador" suit, say—it seems to have been imposed on her, masklike, by the designer. But the costumes of the young are not masks—they are expressions of a state of mind. The individual is free to be inventive, playful, humorous. Bell-bottoms, on girls or boys, are happy and comic, rollicking; they bring dance back into our lives. No one can take himself altogether seriously in bell-bottoms. Imagine a Consciousness II college professor in bell-bottoms and all of his pretensions become funny; he has to laugh at himself. A boy can wear a military dress jacket, all buttons and brass, and at the same time mock the military establishment and express his small boy's love of parade-ground pomp. A Mexican peasant's blanket-sawl, a David Copperfield hat, boots of all descriptions, gangster suits, phantom-of-the-opera clothes—these costumes allow experimentation and changes of mood that are characteristic of and essential to youth and add to the gaiety and humor of the world. But they also nudge the wearer with deeper questions of identity that have rarely been posed in Consciousness I and II society, because their very freedom res-



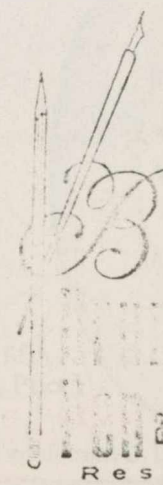
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The new clothes demonstrate a significant new relationship between man and technology. They are machine-made, and there is no attempt to hide the fact—no shame attached to mass-produced goods, no social points lost for wearing something that sells for four ninety-nine from coast to coast and has its measurements printed on the outside for all to read. That is the freedom and economy of mass production—a thing to be valued, not despised or evaded, as it is by seekers after “quality.” Touches of the handmade, of the personal—beads, a hand-tooled belt, decorations sewn onto jeans—are then added to the mass-produced base. Imagine a Consciousness II professional man buying the cheapest machine-made suit and then adding a tie that he has hand-painted! Consciousness II wants to have a tailor-made suit from England. He is ashamed of—or “above”—the mass production that is the foundation of his own society. Consciousness III starts from the machine but is not imprisoned by it; he wears his own individuality on top of it.

The new clothes express profoundly democratic values. There are no distinctions of wealth or status, no elitism; people confront each other shorn of these distinctions. In places where status or money is important, clothes tell the story. On Wall Street, one can distinguish the banker or lawyer from the mere clerk by the expensive suit. On the campus, the faculty member is set off from the graduate student by his tweed jacket and his tie; law professors are distinguished from the unworldly humanities teachers by businesslike suits. And in former times the prep-school undergraduate could be recognized and distinguished from the public-school boy. All of these differences spoke of competition, advantage, and disadvantage. The new clothes deny the importance of hierarchy, status, authority, position, and they reject competition. For all of these reasons, the new clothes are worn with pride, as befits a statement of principles and basic values.

THE most important medium of expression for Consciousness III is the new music. It had its origins in many older, familiar forms, including blues, country-Western, jazz, and folk singing. It owes much of its color to electronic technology and its protean ability to combine the older forms. But it has become an entirely new means of communication. When someone puts a dime in the jukebox of a restaurant frequented by young people, there is a



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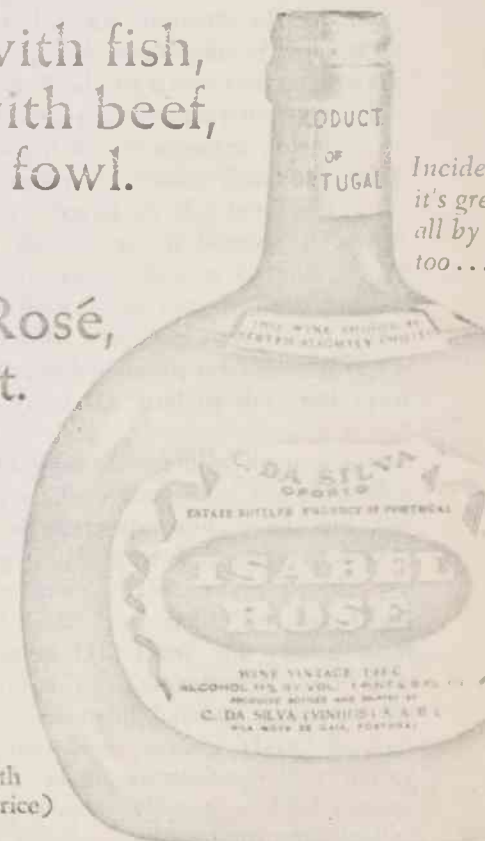
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moment of community. As the music starts, people in the restaurant begin to move: some nod heads, some drum fingers, others tap feet, others move their whole bodies. They glance with smiles of agreement toward the person who made the selection. If it is a song from the established canon, like Bob Dylan's "Mr. Tambourine Man," everyone knows the words, and many sing along.

The dominant means of communication in our society—words—has been so abused, distorted, and preempted that at present it does not seem adequate for people of the new consciousness. Music, on the other hand, seems to say all the things they want to say or feel. It tells of the discovery by whites of the quality known as soul—a depth of feeling long denied to most Americans. As an expression of sex, it is a repository of fantastic energy, as anyone who has watched a rock band knows. It can tell of a fresh and tranquil closeness to nature—sea, mountains, wind, and clouds. It can express the staccato pace of cities. For Consciousness III, no other music comes anywhere near being appropriate to the wonders and anxieties, the beauty and the tension and the excitement, of American life. It offers the young a poetic intensification of their condition ("I Am a Child," by Neil Young) and of love and heartbreak between generations ("Teach Your Children," by Graham Nash). It can express the feelings of young people toward the good things of an older America ("Rockin' Chair" and "King Harvest," by J. R. Robertson) or the violence, fervor, and fury of revolution in the streets ("We Can Be Together," by Paul Kantner). It can express the terrors and transiency of youth in an alien society ("Four Days Gone," by Stephen Stills), the strangeness and mystery in unpredictable new patterns of life ("St. Stephen," by the Grateful Dead), the happiness of discovering companions in the journey ("Stand," by Sylvester Stewart; "Get Together," by Chet Powers), and yearnings that are profoundly spiritual and religious ("I Shall Be Released," by Bob Dylan). It brings out a poetry in people who, if confined to words, would be awkward and prosaic. For the new consciousness, then, this music is not a pastime but a necessity, almost on a par with food and water. Indeed, the new music has achieved a degree of integration of art in everyday life that is probably unique in modern societies; to find anything comparable, one would have to look to

the Middle Ages or primitive man. Like a medieval cathedral or the carvings in a tribal village, the art of rock is constantly present as a part of everyday life, not something to be admired in a museum or listened to over coffee after dinner and the day's work are done. It is significant that nearly everyone who deeply feels the music also makes an attempt at playing an instrument and even at composing (and all of the best rock groups compose most of their own songs). For the lover of rock, as for men in earlier times, art is a daily companion to share, interpret, and transfigure every experience and emotion.



It is no accident that the "square" society has been unable to produce a single emotionally convincing song in support of the Vietnam war or any of the other patriotic projects of the corporate state. There is no genuine culture out of which such a song could be fashioned. And it would seem to be a measure of the strength of the new culture that in music it has created a language understood in nearly every country of the world.

**W**HEN a Consciousness II person meets a federal judge, or the head of a giant corporation, or the holder of a distinguished professorship, he takes notice. The position itself makes the man worth meeting and the occasion memorable. A member of the new generation, on the other hand, may be blankly unaware of the titles, positions, and reputations of persons he has met. Students a few years ago were keenly aware of whether they were being taught by an assistant professor or an associate professor. Students today have no idea at all of a teacher's rank. They do not see it because it is not there for them. It is a curious thing: the professor has put the best part of his life into acquiring a regalia of titles, degrees, publications, professional reputation, and the student does not even see it.

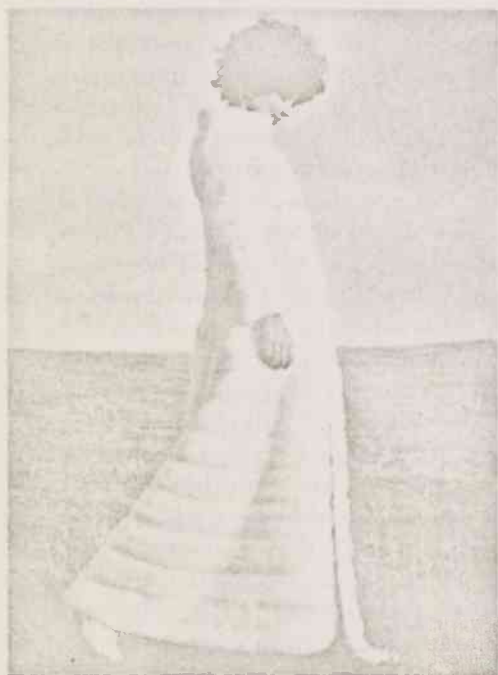
Older people begin by assuming that much of the structure of the corporate state is necessary and valid, but the young people start with entirely different premises. Many older people are puzzled by the radicalism of Consciousness III. Have the young been infiltrated by Communists? Are they influenced by left-wing agitators, or have they been reading Marx? It does indeed seem astonishing that naïve young people, without political experience, should come up with criticisms of society that seem to have escaped many of the most scholarly as well as many of

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the most astute and experienced of their elders. But there is no mystery, no conspiracy, and very little reading of Marx. What Consciousness III sees, with a clarity that no ideology could provide, is a society that is unjust to its poor and its minorities, is run for the benefit of a privileged few, lacks its proclaimed democracy and liberty, is ugly and artificial, destroys the environment and the self, and is, like the war it spawns, "unhealthy for children and other living things." The liberal measures the gains and failures of our society with a material rather than an emotional calculus; he takes such things as employment or medical care as the index of our well-being. Consciousness III understands conditions more the way a writer or painter would, and is thus sensitive not merely to a set of political and public issues but also to the deeper ills that Kafka or the German Expressionists or Dickens would have seen: old people shunted into institutional homes, streets made hideous with commercialism, the competitiveness and sterility of suburban living, the loneliness and anomie of cities, the ruin of nature by bulldozers and pollution, servile conformity, and the artificial quality of plastic lives in plastic homes.

All of Consciousness III's criticisms of society were brought to a head by the Vietnam war. For the war seemed to sum up the evils of our society: destruction of people, destruction of environment, depersonalized use of technology, war by the rich and powerful against the poor and helpless, justification based on abstract rationality, hypocrisy and lies, and a demand that the individual, regardless of his values, make himself into an impersonal part of a war machine bringing death to other people. Those who have refused to go to Vietnam have said, in effect, that compulsory service in a war they hate would be so nearly total a destruction of their personal values that even if they did return to the United States they could never return to the ranks of the genuinely living. A poster made by students at Berkeley says, "They also die who stand and watch."

The key to the Consciousness III commitment lies in the concept of full personal responsibility. In the case of Consciousness II, commitment to society means commitment to reform in the general direction already established by society (equality of opportunity, better education), the notion of "reform" implying no more than that the liberal is somewhat ahead of the rest of society. And the commitment has limits; the liberal enjoys his high status,

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his elegant house, his security and comfort, and fights his battle from that position. Consciousness III does not think much of fighting for change from the comfort of personal security and elegance. He feels that if he is to be true to himself he must respond *with* himself. If he is deeply committed, he may take a job teaching in a ghetto school, which offers neither prestige nor comfort but offers the satisfaction of personal contact with ghetto children. He does not assume that he can fight society while luxuriating in its benefits. He must take risks—the risk of economic loss, of discomfort, of physical injury, of a jail sentence. The liberal can be detached, cool, intellectual, cynical; he fights with his head. Consciousness III is more apt to feel visceral outrage at the ugliness of a freeway or the misery of a slum.

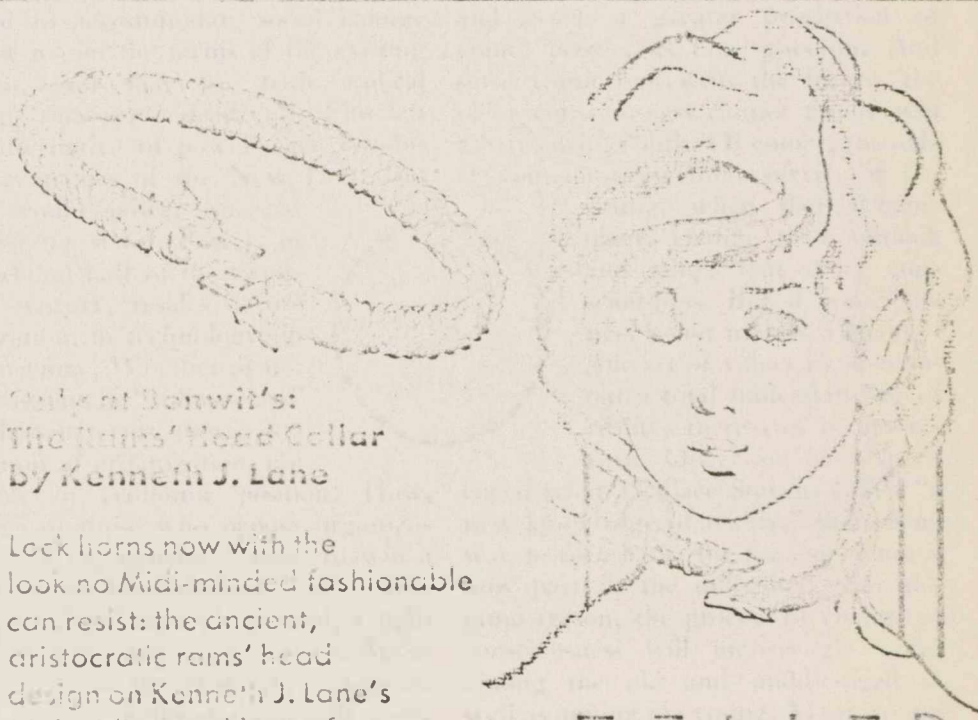
It is this notion of full personal responsibility that makes the new generation, when it finds itself excluded from the decision-making process, demand a part in that process. For the liberal, it is sufficient to say, "I oppose air pollution, but in my job I have nothing to do with it, no responsibility in that direction. All I can do is try to influence those who do." That, of Consciousness III, is not being responsible. It is this same personal responsibility that makes the young student feel himself to be an adult, not a person getting ready for life. At the Heptagonal Track Meet held at Yale in May of this year, the athletes of eight of the participating schools insisted that before the meet could begin a statement of their views on public issues be read over the loudspeakers by a spokesman who was a member of one of the teams. The statement, expressing profound concern over the invasion of Cambodia, the persecution of Black Panthers, and other issues, also took position, in explicit language, that athletics should not serve as an escape from public responsibility for the athletes themselves or for the fans; as an additional reminder, many of the athletes wore red or black ribbons on their sleeves or shorts during competition. No doubt many alumni and others in the stands were less than pleased with this intrusion of reality into Yale's playing fields. When members of the Annapolis and West Point teams expressed dissatisfaction with the statement, they were offered an opportunity to express their own views; instead, they left without commenting. But coaches, officials, and fans were forced to realize that the athletes who did compete were not the smooth-faced, even-juvenile jocks of American college sports. They were se-

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rious adults. They thought it essential, if they were to be whole and not fragmented selves, to make a personal response, and thereby, as Sartre's Orestes did in "The Flies," assume responsibility that was not theirs, and thus achieve a full existence.

ORTHODOX liberals and radicals conclude that there are two main approaches to bringing about social change or revolution. The first, favored by the liberal establishment, involves using the existing legal, administrative, and democratic procedures. These are the "lawful channels" through which students and radicals have been advised to work. The second approach is based upon power. At one end of the spectrum, it merges with politics, as in the McCarthy-for-President movement, whose aim was to elect people who would change the course of society. At the other end of the spectrum is the radical concept of revolution, street fighting, and the mobilization of the left. Through this approach, radicals seek to change the state by getting together more power—political or physical—than now is in the hands of the "Establishment" or the "ruling class."

The experience of Consciousness III people with the "lawful channels" has made clear what should have long been obvious: that these channels are not designed to accommodate social change except within the terms of the existing system, and that for truly radical change they are a dead end. This left the alternative of power—the revolutionary tactics of the New Left. But how could power succeed against the state? Power, in the second half of the twentieth century, resides in organization, in technology, in the machine. Whether or not we postulate a "ruling class" in Marxist terms, power is a function of organization, not merely of economic position. How, then, can those who oppose organization and the machine expect to win a fight on the battlefield of power? It is a fight on the enemy's ground, a fight in which the corporate state is sure to win. Street fights against the tank, the automatic rifle, and the helicopter can only come to disaster and defeat.

Neither "lawful channels" nor the politics-and-power approach can succeed against the corporate state. Neither can prevent the steady advance of authoritarian rule. The power of the new consciousness is not the power of manipulating procedures or the power of politics or street fighting but the

power of new values and a new way of life. Consciousness III is capable of changing and of destroying the corporate state, without violence, without seizure of political power, without overthrow of any existing group of people. The new generation has shown the way to the one method of change that will work in today's post-industrial society: revolution by consciousness. The crucial fact to realize about all the powerful machinery of the corporate state—its laws, structure, political systems—is that it possesses no mind. All that is needed to bring about change is to capture its controls—and they are held by nobody. It is not a case for revolution. It is a case for filling a void, for supplying a mind where none exists. No political revolution is possible in the United States right now, but no such revolution is needed.

Revolution by consciousness requires two basic conditions. First, a process of change of consciousness must be under way in the population—a process that promises to continue until it reaches a majority of the people. Second, the existing order must depend for its power on an earlier consciousness, and therefore be unable to survive a change of consciousness. Both of these conditions now exist in the United States.

The change of consciousness taking place among young people can be expected to grow even stronger, and reach a greater proportion of young people, as time goes on. And since youth represents the future, the older consciousness cannot finally win a battle with youth. Of course, the older consciousness could survive if the young, when they become older, change their outlook and adopt that older consciousness. But if consciousness is not merely a changeable set of values or opinions but a total understanding of reality, there can be no return. Once one has experi-

enced what Wallace Stevens called "a new knowledge of reality," there is no way to turn back, for the experience is now part of the individual. For this same reason, the process of change of consciousness will increasingly occur among the old and middle-aged as well as among the young. Many young people have already succeeded in converting one or both of their parents, or older brothers and sisters, and a growing number of older people have experienced a change of consciousness on their own. The same forces that operate on young people operate on them; as the madness of the corporate state becomes more obvious, the breakdowns



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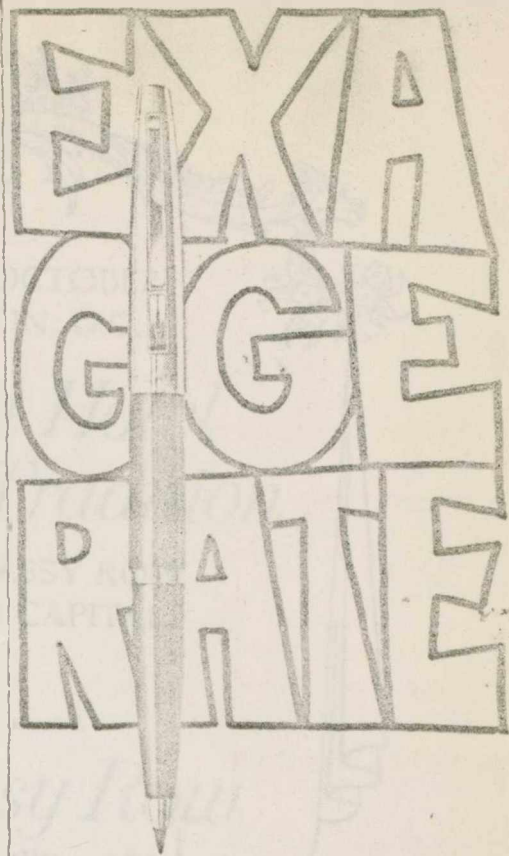
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of its machinery multiply, and its promise of happiness becomes more illusory. Women's liberation, black militancy, and discontent among young blue-collar workers are all signs of the new consciousness. The new consciousness is far more than a "youth revolution"—it is a discovery of human possibilities that is open to, and necessary for, all. More and more daily events conspire to breach the unreal consciousness upon which the corporate state depends. Subway collisions and fires, air inversions and power breakdowns, and the horrors of Vietnam all contribute. There is even the case of Miss Montana of 1970, a picture of all that is wholesomely American, who resigned her title because she was not allowed to speak her mind on political issues. And repression is only another means of changing consciousness. In a typical example, when indiscriminate police violence occurred this summer during a period of conflict at Isla Vista, the residential district adjoining the University of California at Santa Barbara, many formerly uninvolved faculty members were quoted as saying they had been "radicalized." But the greatest force for change of consciousness remains simply "the kids" themselves. After the "prohibited" rock festival at Powder Ridge, in Connecticut, many of the local people, who had been waiting for the festival "like a Roman village facing an onslaught from the Visigoths," as one reporter put it, found the invaders irresistible. The first selectman of Middlefield, Arthur Meckley, was reported to have said "The whole town has fallen in love with these kids."

The second condition necessary for revolution by consciousness is that the corporate state's power must depend on an earlier, outdated consciousness. The corporate state, which requires willing workers and willing consumers, is not like tyrannies of the past that ruled by force; its unique strength, and ultimately its unique weakness, is its dependence on possessing the minds of those within it. Because of this, the institutions of the corporate state, while heavily protected from outside efforts to attack or change them, are highly vulnerable to change from within. This is not what is meant by the people who speak hopefully of "seeking change within the established structure." Such efforts are no more than a peculiarly ineffectual form of trying to change an institution from outside, from a position without power. The only people who can successfully change an organization or institution are those who already pos-



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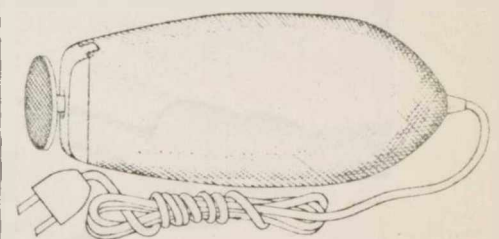
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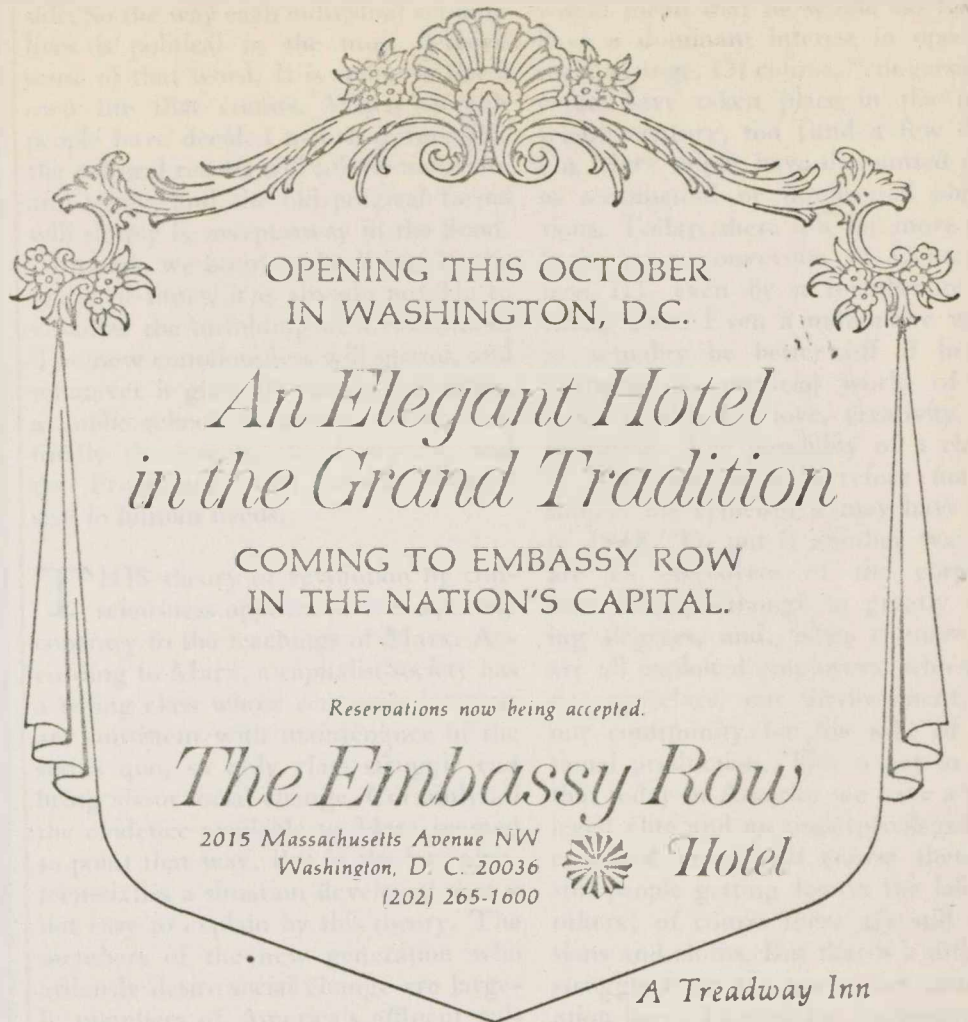
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sess power within it—people who are acting in their capacities as workers or consumers. A schoolteacher, no matter what he thinks or says, cannot change the public-school system while conforming to it by accepting its regulations. But if the teacher changes his behavior as a teacher, ignoring the threat to his personal ambitions that may be a consequence, then change must and will take place. A steadily increasing number of the nation's most idealistic and intelligent young college graduates are going into public-school teaching, and these young people will profoundly change the public-school system despite every effort of the established school bureaucracy to prevent change. They will overpower the school authorities from within, because, being a necessary part of the system, they cannot be prevented from doing so. If the young teachers are willing to accept the consequences of their resistance, they will not be merely voicing opinions—they will have put their opinions into their working lives.

There are many such "inside" transformations in progress today. The largest and most conservative law firms are being forced to devote a portion of their time to kinds of "public-interest" work they never before would have considered. The explanation is that young lawyers recruited out of law school do not merely ask for this change but actually refuse to work for firms that will not spend time on public-interest matters. The same thing has happened in some advertising agencies. University administrators are sharing power with students, because the students, as a necessary part of the institution, insist on it. Architecture and medicine have been hit by similar changes. Even the Army is reported to be changing, as dissent and challenges to authority are expressed with increasing frequency and force in the ranks. As a new group of younger workers enter industry, the same thing that has happened to universities will reach the production line, despite the combined efforts of management and union leadership; according to a recent article in *Fortune*, this is already happening.

A mere shift of public taste or public opinion changes little or nothing; it is too shallow. It does no good to "want safety" but go on buying unsafe cars, or to "oppose pollution" but continue pouring detergents into the water supply. But when opinion is translated into a change of one's own life, then things start to happen. People who refuse to buy can command the economy, just as people who refuse to work can command an organization from the in-




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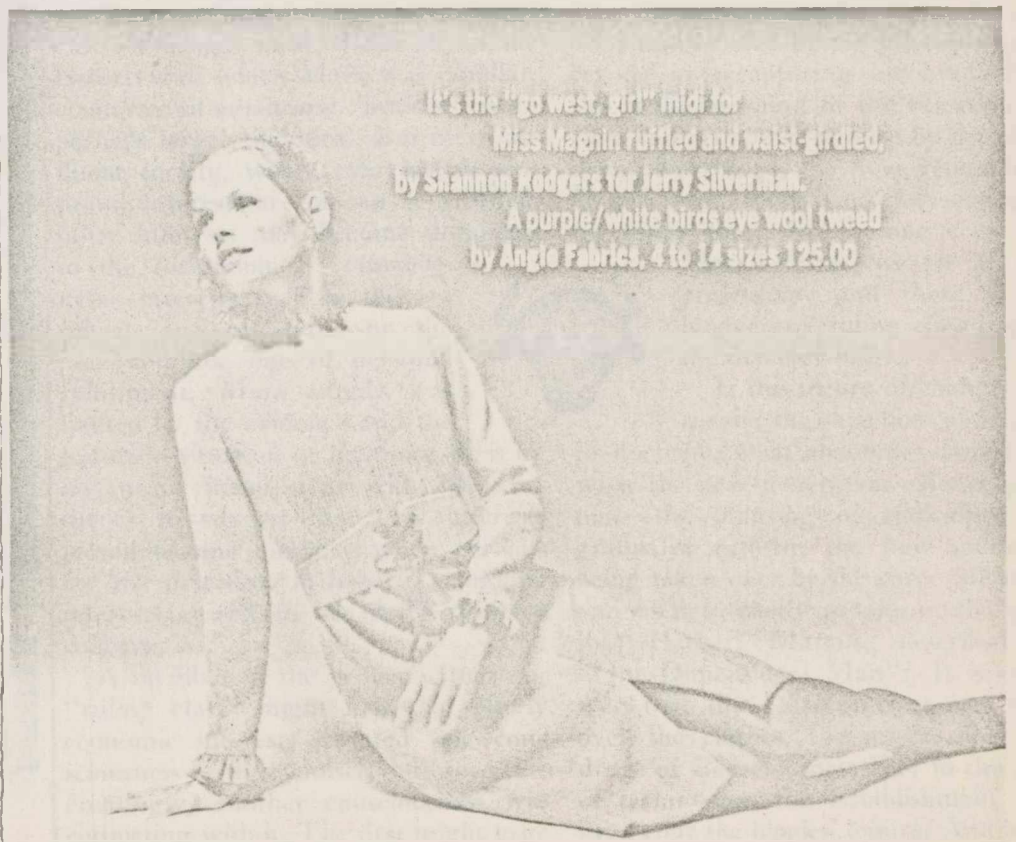
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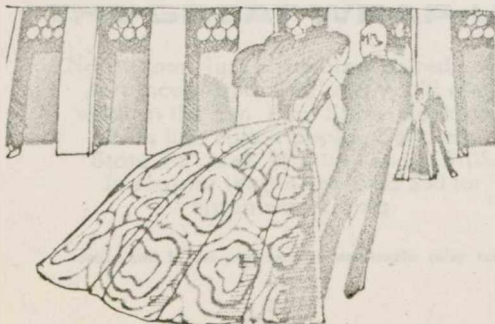
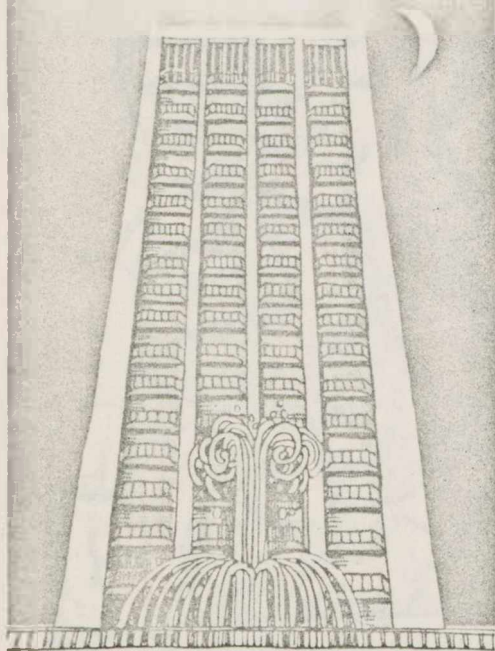
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side. So the way each individual actually lives is political in the most decisive sense of that word. It is action in one's own life that counts. When enough people have decided to live differently, the political results will follow naturally and easily, and the old political forms will simply be swept away in the flood. Although we seem to be living in the worst of times, it is already possible to visualize the unfolding of a revolution. The new consciousness will spread, and whatever it gives life to—a university, a public school, a factory, a city, and finally the courts, the Congress, and the Presidency—will become responsive to human needs.

**T**HIS theory of revolution by consciousness appears to run squarely contrary to the teachings of Marx. According to Marx, a capitalist society has a ruling class whose economic interests are consistent with maintenance of the status quo, so only class struggle can bring about social change. Certainly all the evidence available to Marx seemed to point that way. But in the late nineteenth-sixties a situation developed that is not easy to explain by this theory. The members of the new generation who ardently desire social change are largely members of America's affluent ruling class. And the greatest opponents of social change, the lower-middle-class workers, are members of the exploited class. Through most, if not all, of the history with which Marx was familiar, economic situation and "interest" were perhaps largely identical. But in an affluent society, where everybody's economic interests are or can be satisfied, other interests may become dominant in the formation of consciousness—interests such as the artificial one of status or the non-economic one of personal fulfillment. Marx simply was limited by the evidence and the historical situation of his times. It is by no means inconsistent with Marxian theory to suggest that new interests would become dominant when, perhaps for the first time in history, economic interests ceased to be man's primary concern.

A member of the present American "ruling class" might find that purely economic interests dictated one consciousness within himself but that, increasingly, another consciousness was competing with it. The first might urge monetary ambition, but the second might seek an experience of community, perhaps in a way of life that paid little but made possible warmer human relationships. If the new consciousness began to prevail in this individual, that

would mean that he would no longer have a dominant interest in opposing social change. Of course, "conversions" could have taken place in the nineteenth century, too (and a few did), but Marx might have discounted these as sentimental or intellectual aberrations. Today, there is a far more solid basis for a conversion to Consciousness III, even by a member of the ruling class. Even a millionaire would in actuality be better off if he exchanged the artificial world of material wealth for love, creativity, and liberation. The possibility of a change of consciousness is therefore not the subject for cynicism it may have been in 1848. To put it another way, we are all employees of the corporate state today, although in greatly varying degrees, and, what is more, we are all exploited employees, who sacrifice ourselves, our environment, and our community for the sake of irrational production. This is not to deny that today in America we have a privileged elite and an underprivileged and exploited many. Of course there are still people getting fat on the labor of others; of course there are still mansions and slums. But that is a different struggle from the one under consideration here. Though the continuing urgency of that older battle must be recognized, it must also be recognized that the economic class struggle has been transcended by the interest of everyone in recapturing his humanity; this is the meaning of the rejection of class and economic interest by the children of privilege, the new generation. In this sense, there is no class struggle, for today there is only one class. In



Marx's terms, we are all the proletariat, and there is no longer any ruling class except the machine itself.

If this theory of change can survive the objections of Marxist doctrine, what about the danger of what the new generation calls coöptation—the blunting of radicalism by gradualist reform, the new culture's being taken over by the corporate state and used to pacify people, in the way that Herbert Marcuse described in "One-Dimensional Man"? It is quite true that the Establishment can take over the clothes, the music, and the drugs of Consciousness III; in this age of technology, the Establishment can even copy the hippies' leisure. And bell-bottoms fashioned by New York designers would not seem to have much revolutionary potential. But the essence of Consciousness III is not in the shape of its pants; rather, it is in its liberation, its change of goals, its search for self,

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its doctrines of honesty and responsibility. The Establishment cannot safely swallow those. And as for coöptation, the new generation shows us the answer: If buying off were really the danger it is supposed to be, surely no one would have been as effectively bought off as the pampered young people of today; they have far more of everything than the middle-class worker. It is precisely those in our society who have everything it has to offer who appear most able to renounce our society. The new generation cannot be pacified or bought off, because it rejects false consciousness and false satisfactions, and the corporate state is incapable of producing anything that will satisfy real needs. When the society does begin to satisfy real needs, that will not be pacification—it will be revolution.

What of the possibility, feared by so many liberal members of the older generation, that the students' revolt will produce not the changes they want but an authoritarian swing to the right, accompanied by the repression of everyone's freedom? It would be foolish to deny the reality of this danger, for evidence of it can be found in every day's newspaper. The question is whether repression can stop the trend toward a new consciousness. Repression certainly does work—up to a point—against a revolt by the disadvantaged aimed at those holding power. But repression against the very different type of change now becoming visible in our society would have to be by one age group against another. Can parents be expected to turn against their own children? We are beginning to get quite contrary evidence—that children sometimes radicalize their parents, and that when parents, however conservative, find that their children are in trouble with school or public authorities, or have been beaten by the police, blood turns out to be thicker than ideology. Beyond this, it should not be forgotten that we are a country in which more than half the population is under twenty-five. Most power is in the hands of people over twenty-five, but how long can those who now hold it retain it?

Certainly Americans must expect ugly and violent times ahead, with more incidents like the killings at Kent State, with further repressive legislation, and with recurrent helicopter or shotgun attacks upon our own population. An increase in all these forms of conflict and violence seems only too likely, involving more and more of the population, causing increasing disruption of life, restriction of freedom, injuries, and deaths. However, since it is

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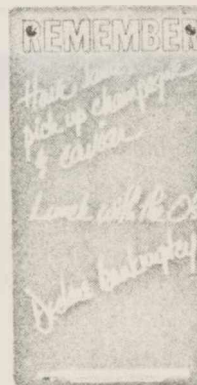
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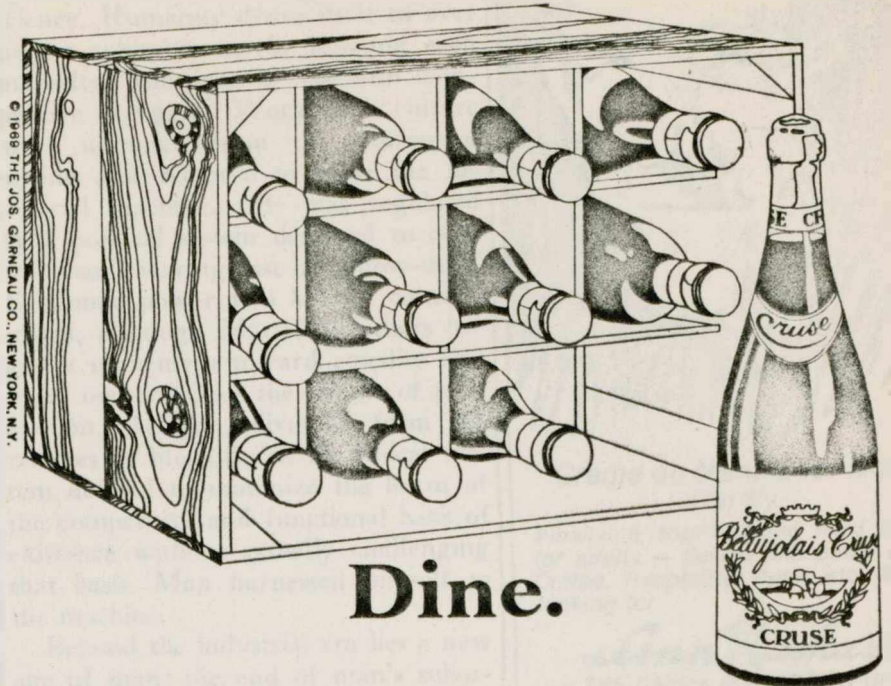
not public confrontations but more subtle changes in the attitudes of the people that constitute the most truly revolutionary force in our society, it is difficult to see how repression can succeed. The whole corporate state rests on the consciousness of its workers and consumers, and the corporate state, as we have seen, is working at maximum efficiency to produce the new, revolutionary consciousness that will destroy it.

The people of the revolutionary movement may grow tired, frightened, or discouraged, but time and the force of the machine are on their side. And for those who adopt the new values there is a great discovery waiting—the discovery that there really are no enemies. Nobody wants or needs poverty, inadequate housing and medical care, or war. There are no people who do not, in the depths of their being, want the same things that Consciousness III wants. There is no need, then, for any group of people in America to fight any other, for they are all fellow-sufferers—businessmen, policemen, construction workers. There is no need even to fight the machine, for technology can be made the servant of man when Consciousness III creates a new society.

**M**OST views of the contemporary revolution are inadequate. Liberals see it as another stage of reform, a rearranging of priorities, a restoration of law to areas where it has been lacking, a reestablishment of the Bill of Rights. For blacks and the poor, it is a revolution to establish a more egalitarian society, in which no one culture is allowed to dominate others. For the radicals of S.D.S., it is a revolt against capitalism, imperialism, and the ruling classes. But none of these views have grasped the incredible vastness of the revolution. Just thinking of all that is now challenged—the form of our institutions, the nature of education, the course of man's dealing with his environment, the nature of work, the relationship of self to society and to technology, the quality and content of life—makes it evident that the present revolution goes beyond anything in modern history. Beside it, the French Revolution and Russian Revolution were mere shifts in the base of power.

In pre-industrial times, man's life was integrated with his community and with nature. Communal life was governed by tribal authority and by tradition. Existence was harsh, dull, limited, and virtually static from generation to generation. Each man felt that God dwelt in him, in growing things, and

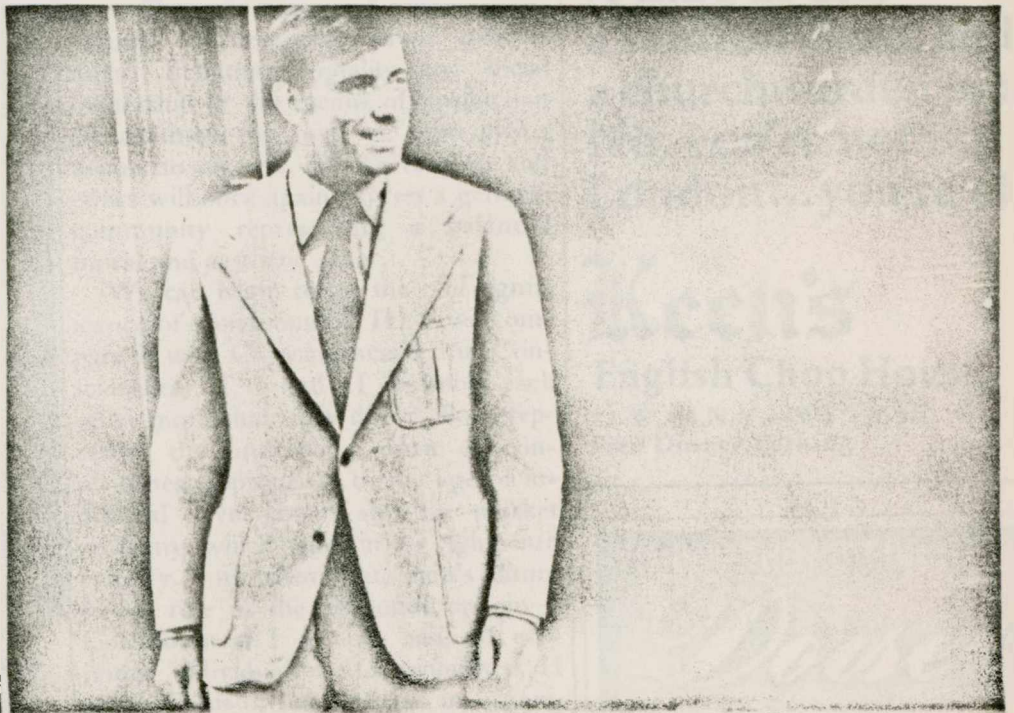
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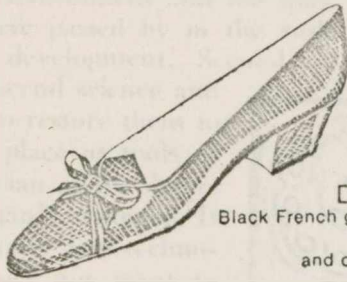
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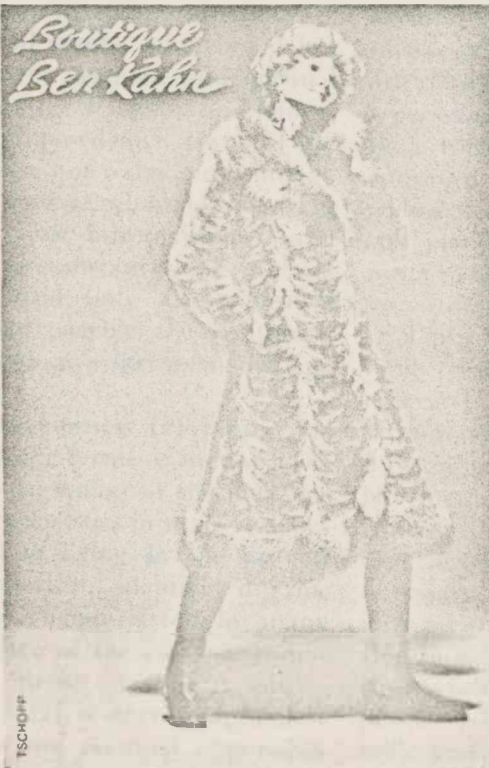


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in the sky. The religion and ethics of the times expressed the realities that man knew. The industrial age represented man's enormously successful attempt to raise the level of his existence by dominating life through reason and science. Humanity drove itself to ever higher achievements by isolating each individual and forcing him into competitive struggle. Work and culture were uprooted from the communal setting and required to serve the industrial machine. Life was regulated by a political system designed to control man's war against his fellow-man. Economic power was heavily concentrated, although Marx and others began a movement toward equality and social ownership of the means of production. Religion, divorced from the realities of life, offered an ethical system devised to minimize the harm of the competitive and functional basis of existence without actually challenging that basis. Man harnessed himself to the machine.

Beyond the industrial era lies a new age of man: the end of man's subordination to the machine and the beginning of the subjection of the machine to man—the use of technology to create a still higher level of life, based upon values that transcend the machine. The politics of controlling man become unimportant; the politics of controlling machines and organizations become the new concern of government. Economic equality and social ownership of the means of production are assumed, but they are now only a means to an end. Man's religion and ethics will once again express a genuine community representing a balanced moral and aesthetic order.

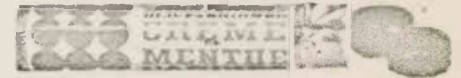
We can begin to see the real significance of Consciousness III if we compare it with Consciousness I and Consciousness II. I and II resemble each other more than they differ. Both represent the underlying form of consciousness appropriate to the age of industrial development and the market economy, which began in the eighteenth century. Both subordinate man's nature to his role in the economic system—Consciousness I on the basis of economic individualism, Consciousness II on the basis of participation in organization. Both approve the domination of environment by technology. Both subordinate man to the state. Both see man as basically antagonistic to his fellow-man, and neither has any theory of a human community except in terms of consent to law, government, and force. Both deny the individual's responsibility for the actions of society. Both define man's existence in material



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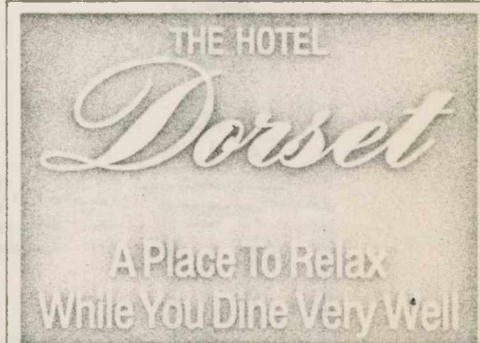


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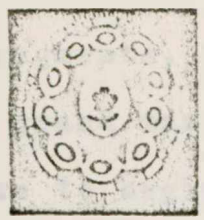
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terms, and define progress similarly. Both define thought in terms of the premises of science. II differs from I mainly in that II is adjusted to the realities of a larger scale of organization, including economic planning and a greater degree of political administration. Consciousness III is utterly different. In the first place, it seeks restoration of the non-material elements of man's existence, the elements like the natural environment and the spiritual that were passed by in the rush of material development. Second, it seeks to transcend science and technology, to restore them to their proper place as tools of man rather than as the determinants of man's existence. It is by no means anti-technological—it does not want to break machines. But it does not want machines to run men. It



akes the wholly rational assertion that machines should do the bidding of man—of man who knows and respects his own nature and the natural order of which he is a part. Third, the new consciousness seeks new ways to live, in the light of what technology has made both possible and desirable. Since machines can produce enough food and shelter for all, why should not man end the antagonism derived from scarcity and base his society on love for his fellow-man? Since machines can take care of our material wants, why should not man develop the aesthetic and spiritual sides of his nature? Prophets and philosophers have proposed such a way of life in earlier times, but today's technology has made it possible. Consciousness III could have come into existence only under the circumstances of today's technology. And only Consciousness III can make possible the continued survival of man as a species in this age of technology.

What Consciousness III represents, in the long-range terms of human evolution, is the beginning of the development of new capacities in man—capacities essential to living in the present age. The historical, adaptive, organic nature of the change is felt by many people. In place of the childish immaturity of so many American adults, Consciousness III is developing a new independence and personal responsibility. It is seeking to replace the infantile and destructive self-seeking that we had as "competition" by a new capacity for working and living together. It is creating a system of ethics—ecological and human—to control the amoral know-how of science. There have been many warnings that man must change himself or be annihilated by his own

technology, but most of these warnings conclude by calling for a return to the moral simplicities of an earlier day. Consciousness III says that man cannot turn back—he must grow. In Consciousness III we can see not a superficial moralistic improvement but a growth of understanding, sensibility, and the capacity for love that, for the first time, offers hope that man will be able to control and turn to good uses the machines he has built.

By the standards of history, the transformation of America has already been swift. And the change to Consciousness III is not, as far as anybody knows, reversible. Once a person reaches Consciousness III, there is no returning to an earlier consciousness. The change of generations is not reversible, either. Every evidence suggests that boys and girls in high school, in junior high, and even in grade school are potentially more radical, more deeply committed to a new way of life, than their elders in college. By the standards of history, change is coming with astonishing speed to the rest of the population as well. The newspapers are full of it. More and more people are dissatisfied, are actively protesting something, are drawn into controversies with the state over, say, freeways or urban renewal or transportation or missile systems. More and more groups are resorting to militancy, experiencing repression, and becoming radical in their turn. But the breakdown of the corporate state and the growth of radicalism would still lead nowhere, would still justify only despair, if there were not a new vision. It is the power of the vision that can turn hope into reality.

The extraordinary thing about this new consciousness is that it has emerged from the machine-made environment of the corporate state, like flowers pushing up through a concrete pavement. For those who were almost convinced that it was necessary to accept ugliness and evil, that it was necessary to be a miser of dreams, it is an invitation to cry or to laugh. For those who thought the world was irretrievably encased in metal and plastic and sterile stone, it seems a veritable greening of America.

—CHARLES A. REICH

The bride is the daughter of Mrs. Manley du Pont Breck, who raises Aberdeen Angus cattle in West Cornwall, Conn., and of John Gordon Ferrer Speiden, who raises Hereford cattle in Tucson, Ariz.—*The Times*.

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