Winter 1983

A JOURNAL OF POLITICAL RENEWAL AND RADICAL CHANGE

Editorial / 2
Theme Note / 6

URBAN PROSPECTS
Thomas Bender/The End of the City?/ 8
Andrew J. Polsky/Welfare Policy: Why the Past has No Future/ 21
Duane Lockard/Stranded Cities/34
Glenn Yago/Urban Transportation in the Eighties/43

EXPLORATIONS
John Shattuck/National Security a Decade After Watergate/56
Eldon Kenworthy/Dilemmas of Participation in Latin America/72
David Abalos/Going Home/84

CONTESTED TERRAIN
Joyce Appleby/Industrial Effetes/96
Jackson Lears/Ghetto of Illusion/104
John R. Wallach/Fearful Establishment/117

CLASSICS OF DEMOCRACY
Linda A. Rabben/Street without Horizons: Main Street Revisited/129

READERS WRITE
On “The Family Crisis”/137

Contributors/140
The Future of democracy/144
EDITORIAL

This issue marks the beginning of democracy's third year of publication. It is a proper occasion for thanking our readers for their many letters of encouragement, suggestion, and criticism, and for their loyal support. A special thanks to the large numbers of subscribers who completed the questionnaire accompanying the previous issue.

The first issue of democracy coincided with the inauguration of Ronald Reagan. He came to office in January 1981 promising a "new beginning." Unlike most campaign promises this one is being delivered, and so it is important to look back on two years of Reaganism and to ask, "What are its meaning and implications, especially for the cause of democracy?"

Reagan's policies can be summarized as an American translation of the advice that a French king gave to his bourgeois supporters, "Enrich yourselves!": tax cuts, depreciation allowances of almost embarrassing generosity, relaxation of environmental safeguards, giveaways of public lands and resources, job training programs in which businessmen write the specifications and the public underwrites the costs, and defense spending that is keyed to ever more expensive, complicated, and quickly obsolescent technology. If for nothing else, the first two years of Reaganism should be remembered as the golden moment when the political utopia of corporate America became reality, when the brows of those who governed America were never darkened, not even for an instant, by the thought that what was good for the Fortune 500 might not be equally good for the American 200 million.

This is, of course, not a new chapter in the history of the republic. Bankers, industrialists, and arms manufacturers have been swilling at the public trough ever since Hamilton succeeded in establishing the principle that the fate of the American political system would depend ultimately on their support and confidence.

What is new is that the policies of the Reagan administration, both by what it has provoked as well as by what it has promoted, has quickened certain deep-running and opposing tendencies in the life of the nation and caused them to
group into polarized forces. The sharp cuts in social programs and the vast increase in defense expenditures have not only provoked an either/or choice in public policies, they have also struck at the power of society while increasing the power of the state. By eliminating or severely reducing family services, health care, aid to the elderly, dependent, and handicapped, nutritional programs, education, worker safety rules, environmental standards, and much more, the Reaganites have all but declared war on society in the name of economy and on behalf of the tightlipped virtue portrayed in Grant Wood's "American Gothic." ("It's about time that the people who blow so much smoke about compassion started showing some real compassion for the people who pay this country's bills."). Concurrently, the military power of the state grows by leaps and bounds, as do the other instruments of control. Surveillance is increasing, while public access to information is decreasing. "National security" is being restored to its Nixonian grandeur as a justification for governmental arbitrariness. The independence of the judiciary is under attack in the name of halting "judicial activism," and measures are readied to change the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court so as to put certain subjects beyond its reach.

Society has not, however, passively submitted to the legal authoritarianism of the administration. For almost two decades there has been a tremendous upsurge of political activity that has been ignored by the official indices of polls, elections, and news media. Grassroots politics in rural areas, cities, and towns is the most important political story of the past two decades, and it is happening almost entirely outside and in spite of the established political structure. With the emergence of the women's movement, the antinuclear and disarmament movements, new and broader dimensions have appeared. All of these movements are testimony that what is politically authentic—the spontaneous cooperation of citizens acting together out of a sense of common concerns and a commitment to their common well-being—has virtually nothing to do with the state, with the official processes and institutions that are supposed to embody the nation's political life. The great polarity is between a managerial, antipolitical state and a participatory, political society.

This polarity will survive the results of the recent midterm elections, because the Democratic party does not represent an alternative to state-dominated politics. It has not functioned as an opposition party because the terms on which politics is now defined do not make it politically feasible. A political economy dominated by huge corporations, governed by the federal bureaucracy, and struggling to adapt to the changing dynamics of an international economic system, is too massive and too much in need of political stability to allow for anything more than party competition whose permissible gamut will extend no further than from A to B. The Democratic party has become the medium for registering the narrow limits within which the political system can allow democratic reforms.
How far this process has gone, of sacrificing democracy to the needs of a corporate economy, was clearly indicated recently when a committee representing House Democrats issued a policy paper on the economy. The report carefully avoided any reference to "full employment" as a goal. Instead, as a spokesman helpfully explained, the document was meant to signal a "move from the politics of redistribution to the politics of investment and growth." To translate this description one should realize that in the language of political economy "employment" is the equivalent of "the people" and "redistribution" is the code word for a politics that favors them, just as "investment" and "growth" are variations on the theme of trickle-down politics. The document also produced a vision of politics that is profoundly antidemocratic. It urges the government to establish "a partnership among labor, small business, big corporations, universities, and government." According to the report, this partnership will uncork prodigies of production and marvels of efficiency that will enable the United States to compete against Japan.

Although the report starts out with five partners, it somehow ends with three: government, business, and labor. This matters less than the assumption that the Big Three would be representative of anything other than their respective hierarchies. Does anyone seriously think that the AFL-CIO represents the rank-and-file? or that "big corporations" and "small business" would forward the views of small farmers and white-collar employees? or that universities would represent more than a concern with protecting patents on the latest scientific discovery by a combined team of university and corporate scientists? The scheme is merely one of several fashionable proposals for introducing under the guise of corporatism a huge enterprise zone carefully sealed off from citizen participation. As a vision of politics it is simply a rehash of Saint-Simon, an early nineteenth-century eccentric who proposed to solve all political and economic disorders and unleash an orgy of productivity by handing over complete authority to a body composed of industrialists, bankers, and scientists. He was more imaginative than the Democrats, however, for he saw that to make the authoritarian system work there was need for a new religion to restrain the greed of the few and provide solace for the many, as well as for enlisting the intellectuals to write inspirational messages on behalf of productivity.

The document illustrates an important reversal in the role of the Democrats in forging a national consensus. Beginning with the New Deal, the historical pattern was for the Democrats to pass innovative and progressive legislation; when the Republicans gained the presidency in 1952 and 1968, there was little effort made to roll back previous gains, even when they were anathema to Republican orthodoxy. As a result, a consensus was formed around liberal social policies. Under the Reagan administration this pattern has been reversed as the Democrats joined the counterrevolutionary consensus. Only on rare occasions and in
small numbers did Democrats take principled positions against the effects of Reaganomics on the poor, the unemployed, the environment, and the cities. At the party's miniconvention last June a Democratic congressman spoke for many when he applauded the party's "tone of moderation" and suggested the proper electoral strategy should be based on the fact that "there are not enough poor people in America today to win a national election with their votes."

Democrats, then, are not more democratic, only somewhat less antidemocratic than Republicans. They exist not as an alternative but as a reminder of the necessary limits to change—not to all types, only to change that challenges the presuppositions of the bureaucratic and corporate system. One of the main lessons of Reaganism is that that system can be made to respond dramatically and with strong measures when it involves corporate interests. Another is that only an administration so wholly at one with corporate power could undertake to dismantle systematically and quickly programs, institutions, and vested rights and expectations of relatively long standing, and not provoke a fierce opposition and clamor. It is not at all paranoid to speculate that if a merely liberal—let alone radical—program commensurate with Reagan's were to be introduced by a president who had received as vague a mandate as Reagan did, and who had not been elected in the midst of an obvious national emergency, the result would be a political crisis of chilling if not Chilean proportions.

The biggest lesson of all is that the revitalization of democracy must be undertaken primarily in society rather than through state-oriented institutions, and its model of action is not the administrator who "creates" an organization, but the craftsman who respects what he or she is working with—persons, relations, places, and needs—and knows the story of where they have come from. A basis has already been laid, thanks to the devoted efforts of countless community organizers and ordinary citizens, and a rich and varied fund of political experience is now accessible. The next step is to begin the slow task of developing political economies so that political life, the life of citizens, can become whole.

—Sheldon S. Wolin
October 29, 1982
The city is the birthplace and home of politics in the western world. It has symbolized democracy in Athens, equality in Sparta, republicanism and empire in Rome. The city has symbolized faith, too, from Jerusalem to Rome, Mecca to Constantinople (called simply “the City” in Byzantium). John Winthrop's vision of the “city upon a hill,” a vision of a place of love and charity to be established in America, captured both the political and spiritual heritages: his city would, through the example of its virtue, reform the corrupt England he left behind.

In accepting the Republican nomination as presidential candidate, Ronald Reagan invoked Winthrop's image of the city upon a hill. It is fitting that he should have descended from his mountain ranch in California to do so. Not long after the nation's founding the myth of the frontier rose to challenge the premises of Winthrop's city. Winthrop would have assumed that while cities impose spatial and physical limits, they also provide the spaces for spiritual and cultural growth. Many early American preachers feared that the apparent abundance of the North American continent and the westward expansion would undermine those limits and result in profligacy and corruption. Reagan, whose very manner of occupation of the White House is representative of that profligacy, marks the point at which the rhetoric of Winthrop's city—the language of public virtue and charity—is used to bury it.

In the United States, the city as the ideal of political association never fully took hold. "The citizen" was more likely to be envisioned as a yeoman farmer than as a city dweller. Here the city, elsewhere the symbol of permanence, became the symbol of rootlessness, while the rural landscape, though trampled by westward-moving feet, acquired the image of settled, traditional life.

Only our oldest cities give the appearance of having been intended for long-term occupancy. For the most part, our urban centers bear the imprint of the peculiarly American notion that cities, like almost everything else, can be used up and discarded. Only the rubble remains, as the original inhabitants move on to the next temporary stop, either to the suburbs or to another more prosperous city while the rubble is turned over to the jobless, the poor, the outcast. This predilection has become national policy. The Reagan administration came to power armed with a report, commissioned by the Carter administration, that advocated the abandonment of the older cities of the East and Midwest in favor of the new metropolises of the South and Southwest.

There is more underlying this kind of policy than the assumption that city people have no real roots, of course. The original westward movement was part of an expansion of the American economy in the same direction. Today's admo-
nition to move to the sunbelt comes at the same time that one of the largest-selling newspapers in unemployment-ridden southeast Michigan is a Houston daily—the movement of capital dictates the movement of people. Cities vie with each other in offering tax breaks and other free benefits either to keep or lure free-moving corporations. Detroit beat out its sunbelt rivals for a new Cadillac plant by agreeing to level part of Poletown, one of the city's oldest and most self-conscious neighborhoods. The city council claimed it had no choice.

Whether in the ancient polis or the medieval commune, the city has historically been associated with democracy through the practice of self-governance. But in America, the dictates of the market find a hospitable ideology of movement that has undermined self-governance. To truly restore our cities will require their democratization, and the first step must be to loose the economy's grip on them. Federal programs, when available, can help take the sting out of corporate decisions, and a national economic policy to curtail capital movement may be necessary; but the real thrust must be from below. What is at stake is more than buildings: it is citizens, and the virtues of citizenship can only be learned through participation in and responsibility for governing. Gentrification and the restoration of tourist attractions can never compensate for what has been lost in Winthrop's vision. Walt Whitman got the stakes right when he wrote:

A great city is that which has the greatest men and women.
If it be a few ragged huts it is still the greatest city in the whole world.

The Presidential Commission for a National Agenda for the Eighties suggested that cities have a life span, and that many American cities may have reached the end of theirs—after only 200 years. Thomas Bender takes up the disembodied logic behind this observation and others that frame discussions of the city today. Andrew J. Polsky looks to the urban theories of an earlier epoch—the period of Progressive reform in the late nineteenth century—to uncover the urban origins of the welfare state, and argues that a successful welfare policy must begin and end in the neighborhood. The flawed welfare policies of the past contributed to Ronald Reagan's election and his plan for a "New Federalism."

Duane Lockard shows that proposals for decentralization that ignore the national dimension of many problems and the extent of corporate power are doomed to failure. And Glenn Yago looks closely at one particular area of urban concern, public transit, to show how concentrated corporate power can thwart local planning.

—N.X.
So many of the issues confronting the city have been rehearsed so often in the popular press that any reasonably alert citizen can recite them: disinvestment in older cities and the export of capital and jobs to the sunbelt and overseas; suburbanization and the consequent fragmentation of political and fiscal jurisdictions; rising welfare costs and declining tax bases; racial division and gentrification; the reduction of federal social programs at a time when cities have become increasingly dependent upon them; the decline of the manufacturing sector and the rise of the service sector that brings us fast food and fast knowledge. Yet much of the discussion of these issues lacks a full enough historical framework to explain the apparent futility of our efforts at urban improvement. It is the historical and political context of city problems, rather than attempts at technical innovation, that we must concern ourselves with and understand. One approach to such understanding, it seems to me, is to explore the origins of the modern city in America and the pattern of urban politics that grew up with it.

Between the American Revolution and the Civil War, New York City became a metropolis and took its place beside the great cities of Europe. During this brief period the social and physical patterns inherited from the eighteenth century gave way to new ones that established novel forms of social and physical differentiation, transforming the political context of urban life.

The logic of these transformations, though much obscured in the past century, threatens many ideals historically associated with the city. In recent public discussions, however, the dangers have become manifest. A rather grim logic is now displayed, one that denies political and moral meaning to the city. This culmination of American urban thought marks the end of an era of the city that began with the Greek polis and found its most important definition in Aristotle's Politics. In current political discourse the city has no legitimate existence prior to or superior to the claims of the market. There is no political justification of the city.

The current thinking is bipartisan. It is apparent in the urban report of the
Presidential Commission for a National Agenda for the Eighties, a group appointed by Jimmy Carter. And it is even more sharply defined in the recent urban policy report released by the Department of Housing and Urban Development with Ronald Reagan's approval. Both reports are identified with New Yorkers. The former is known as the McGill Commission Report, after William McGill, former president of Columbia University and chairman of the commission, and the latter report was drafted by former Columbia University professor E.S. Savas. It is symbolic of a momentous loss of urban self-confidence that the strongest articulations of this new antiurbanism come from New York City itself. Witness the recent report by the commission of prominent New Yorkers funded and published by the Twentieth Century Fund, *The Future of New York City*, or read the commentary on New York and cities in general that Roger Starr regularly writes on the editorial page of the *New York Times*, or read the interviews of Felix Rohatyn or his regular articles published in the *New York Review of Books*.

Two themes with a long history seem to culminate in these recent urban prescriptions. The first is the recurring cluster of worry, revulsion, and occasional sympathetic concern for the condition of life among the poorest of the city's residents, for what were once called the "lower orders" and then the "dangerous classes." The phrase "urban crisis" is intended in our time to capture these concerns. But we are, in fact, talking about a political crisis. Ever since the American moral imagination first confronted the problem, even the prospective problem, of the urban masses, a politics of justice and participation has rarely been embraced, or even tolerated by Americans. Nearly two hundred years ago, Thomas Jefferson, in his *Notes on the State of Virginia*, provided Americans with a language for denying the "mobs of great cities" political standing, reserving that for the independent yeoman. Jefferson sought to protect republicanism through the establishment, particularly with the purchase of Louisiana, of an extensive agrarian republic. He was, moreover, generally hostile to intensive, urban-oriented, hierarchical capitalist development, writing in one of his last letters against the advent of "moneyed incorporations . . . riding and ruling over the plundered ploughman."1 Today, however, political commentators who have uncritically embraced corporate capitalism rejoice in Jefferson's contempt for the urban lower classes without respecting the context for that contempt. Surely it was this traditional urban worry, for example, that was at work when Irving Kristol, in his inaugural lecture as Luce Professor of Urban Values at New York University, referred to urban populations not as citizens but as mobs. And, as we shall see, this tradition of commentary profoundly shapes the political contours

Urban Prospects

of much liberal—or perhaps I should say neoliberal—as well as neconservative urban thought.

Secondly, the modern American city grew up and took form—physically and politically—during a century in which there was a momentous move to immunize economic decisions in the marketplace from the political realm. As William Pfaff recently observed, Americans in contrast to Europeans are inclined to submit themselves “to the proposition that the market must arbitrate, and that it is scientifically impartial, choosing necessity.”² The market in this remarkable example of reification becomes a public philosophy and a natural law of society all at once. Under such assumptions politics is rendered marginal if not precisely null.

In contemporary discussion of urban economies, of urban growth and decline, we are repeatedly counseled to accept passively the decision of the market, however tragic its local consequences. Choices concerning the use of property, no matter how broad their ramifications for our common life, are assumed to be properly removed from the arena of political discussion and conflict and from moral judgment.

Nowhere is this obfuscation of the notion of a public philosophy and urban political conflict more evident than in the Reagan administration's National Urban Policy Report of 1982. The first chapter of this report begins with a brief paean to the benefits to be derived by cities from the economic growth to be stimulated by the administration's "Economic Recovery" program. Then it moves to a section titled "The Evolution of Urban America." Here the report instructs the reader on the way that cities grow independent of any politics in the public realm. The first sentence sets the philosophical tone for the report: "Urban growth in a free society," we learn, "is the result of decisions by many individuals, households, and firms, acting independently, to cluster together in particular places."³ This extraordinary sentence not only equates my individual power with that of General Motors, but it also stresses that in a free society, we must each act independently, without any perceived collective purpose or interest. While thus denying any political expression of a public interest (and the conflict implied by such expression), the report assumes that a consensual public exists, somehow beyond these self-interested actors who allegedly include us all, a public that will be satisfied with both its powerlessness and with the substantive policies of an autarchic private sector.

The modern city is distinguished in part by its spatial form. Social historians have for some time now insisted upon the significance of the separation of work and residence, while urban historians have recognized that the spatial separation of the two has given modern form to the city. It is only recently, however, with the publication of City Trenches by Ira Katznelson, that the importance of this social and physical transformation for the shaping of political discourse in American cities has been recognized. 4

Katznelson interprets the separation of work and residence in antebellum American cities as the decisive event in the formation of urban political culture in the United States. He claims that this separation, in conjunction with the comparative acceptance of labor unions by the American state and its willingness to open participation through the vote, accounts for the absence of class language in American politics. While American workers had no difficulty grasping and using the language of class at work and in their unions, they did not carry this language into the life of their residential communities. The political participation of urban workers in the United States was defined in territorial rather than in class terms. The urban political machine rooted itself in the neighborhood, and the stuff of urban politics became ethnic competition over the territorial supply of municipal services. With the advent of the liberal state these services became more consequential, but they remained reactive to the market, and the boundaries of political discourse were reached before one entered the factory and before one discussed patterns of capital investment and income distribution. The legacy of this historical formation severely limits the democratic promise of local politics and community activism in our cities.

Just when these changes in the geography of urban life were emerging and bifurcating the political consciousness of the urban working classes, broader changes in the culture were working toward the limitation of municipal politics and authority. First let me discuss, however briefly, the way in which the urban economy escaped from the realm of politics, and then I will consider the legacy of worry about democracy and the moral order of cities.

Between the mid-eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries, the last vestiges of mercantilism, which had regulated the urban economy of the eighteenth century, were abandoned in favor of a Lockean understanding of the relation of politics to economics. In the eighteenth century, the connection between politics and economics was openly acknowledged in the city. Indeed, the greatest amount of government activity recorded in the minutes of eighteenth-century munici-

palities concerned the regulation of the local economy. The general welfare or, more precisely, economic security was legally and morally favored over private market opportunities. Mid-eighteenth-century New Yorkers had little faith in the self-regulating market—or, I might add, in democracy. My point, therefore, is not that affairs were more democratic or communal; they were not. But economic activity was considered to be a legitimate object of political negotiation, whatever the relations of power. In such an essentially mercantilist environment, the right of the city's population to economic security was more important than the protection of the economic ventures of individuals.

Though the ideological roots of change were present a century earlier in the political thought of John Locke and other even earlier English thinkers and its social basis was apparent in the latter half of the eighteenth century, it was not until the nineteenth century that Americans experienced what Karl Polanyi called the "great transformation" in a classic work of that title. There had long been trade and hard bargaining, but the innovation that characterizes modern capitalist economies is the transformation of the market into an autonomous and self-justifying force in society. In the eighteenth century social priorities, expressed through the political structure and moral suasion, shaped the character of economic activity in the city. But in the nineteenth century, economic activity became an autonomous system of market relationships freed of all constraint, practical and moral, beyond itself, save for obvious police powers residual in the state. 5

The problem, of course, then as now, is that private decision makers in the market when freed of civic values might not act in the best interests of the collectivity. Today we react with great surprise at the casualness with which corporations move plants, depriving one city of many livelihoods, while extracting new and often expensive concessions from another city. But this is precisely what the great transformation was all about. Adam Smith early recognized that the new urban capitalist would be an untrustworthy sort, with little civic commitment. "A very trifling disgust," Smith observed in *The Wealth of Nations*, "will make him remove his capital." 6

While Smith clearly recognized such actions as acts of volition, the current sense of the market as something above personal or political choice suggests that a law of nature akin to the law of gravity is at work. This mentality underlies the attitude of resignation that usually surrounds discussion of the flight of capital and jobs from older cities.

It supplies, for example, the motif of the urban report of the Presidential


Commission for a National Agenda, the so-called McGill Commission. 7 This report seeks to prepare us for the end of the city—two centuries is apparently the life span of the American city. The authors do not explain how Rome has managed to keep on for more than twenty centuries or Paris more than ten. Perhaps those critical eighteenth-century commentators on America, Robertson and Buffon, were correct after all about the enervating effects of the New World environment.

More directly to the point, the burden of the report is to counsel those of us in older cities that the end of the city is a necessary and just decision of the market. Again and again we are told to recognize forces that are "potent and enduring," trends that are "persistent and immutable," and the "long-term inevitability and desirability of this transformation." Once one enters into the mentality of this report, one comes into contact with a world in which there are actions without responsible actors. Everything is reduced to the crudest form of economic determinism. Such language, of course, is intended to depoliticize fundamental social acts. It is a prescription for political passivity.

Decisions producing structural changes in American society, changes that the authors of the report portray as equal in consequence to the industrial revolution or even the invention of cities, are to be kept beyond the realm of political discussion and remedy. While government intervention in support of such trends is acceptable, a countervailing policy is not. We must not interfere with these decisions ascribed to the market, though we are urged as ethical beings to be prepared to deal humanely with the tragic consequences of these unavoidable decisions. Such thinking is usually called realistic. But it is in fact what C. Wright Mills once called "crackpot realism." It obscures all the relevant questions. Who is making the choices? How and on what grounds can they be encouraged, even required, to choose differently? And, of course, we must ask whether the pattern of decisions produces systematic injustices. The failure to ask these questions is an indication of the degree to which the market is accepted as a science of society, and, indeed, as a legitimating public philosophy. The consequences may be discussed as moral and political problems, but not the acts themselves.

The depoliticization of economic life leaves us with a rather remarkable image of history and society, one characterized by actions without actors. Of course, such a view is not an accurate reading of American economic history. As historians as different as David Noble and Alfred Chandler have shown, the economic structure of the United States is the product of conscious strategy and aggrandizing decisions. It is what Chandler calls the visible hand of corporate management, often assisted by the state, and not the mythical invisible hand of

market theorists, that has shaped our economic history.\(^8\)

By making the market the standard of value, without recognizing countervailing democratic political expression of social values, the McGill Commission report reduces and impoverishes urban culture. And it diminishes to the vanishing point the central fact of city life: place. While place does not in itself make social bonds, certainly it is a fundamental dimension of human experience. It often constitutes and prompts the collective memories that make cohesion and culture possible. Seeking to dissociate place and culture, the report urges that the power of government be used to loose the ties that hold individuals together in particular places. The commission responsible for the report clearly fails to grasp that association of place and culture is what cities are all about—symbolically, economically, politically.

The new thinking reflected in the report seeks to deny place as a category of experience or analysis. The social structures, symbolic meanings, and physical forms associated with place have no value. The report urges us to be tough, to throw away “outdated urban structures and functions.” While explaining that cities have been transformed from centers of production to centers of consumption, they turn the city itself into a consumable, something to be discarded casually when it gets old. There is nothing to value in the old. “Public policy,” according to the report, “should seek to loosen the tie between distressed people and distressed places just as a variety of technological developments have loosened the ties between industry and its traditional and urban location.”\(^9\) People, it seems, are being asked to be as mobile as capital. Marx’s description of the flow of commodities, one of his most passionate and chilling metaphors of capitalist society, is here casually prescribed as the good life. With such perfect mobility space ceases to be a factor in history, and places lose their significance in the organization of individual and group lives. All of this is encapsulated in a slogan about aiding people rather than places, by encouraging residents of old eastern cities to migrate to the new cities of the sunbelt. No doubt the rhetorical intention is to convey human concern, to respect the individual. In fact, of course, the slogan masks the intention to reduce people to the role of movable commodities in a national capital and labor market. And, as in the case of any consumer product, older models of urban life are to be simply thrown away. All must respond to the discipline of the market.

Now I wish to turn to my second theme, the uncomfortable relation between democracy and the city in America. And our discussion returns, as any discussion of cities and democracy in America must, to Thomas Jefferson.


9 *Urban America in the Eighties*, pp. 36, 62.
If Jefferson was, as Alexis de Tocqueville put it, "the most powerful advocate democracy has ever had," he was also the American city's most hostile critic. It is common to remark upon the agrarian bias of the founding fathers and of Jefferson in particular. But this does not get us as close to the issue of democracy and the city as we need to be. What we call a bias of Jefferson's generation is in fact a political philosophy and a social ideal. At the core of Jeffersonian political thought was the notion that good citizens live and work in the country rather than in the city. For Jefferson this belief was based upon a political sociology that recognized a fundamental difference between urban and rural economies.

Recall the famous passage in Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia*: "Those who labor the earth are the chosen people of God, if ever He had a chosen people, whose breasts He has made His peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine value." This passage is environmentalist and for precisely that reason it places moral virtue at the center of American discourse about economic and political life in a form threatening to cities. Jefferson makes his political point clear at the end of the passage: "The mobs of great cities add just so much to the support of pure government, as sores do to the strength of the human body." Several things here deserve comment. Jefferson's concern is with the nourishment of free and virtuous citizens. He finds them in the countryside, largely because for Jefferson the yeoman farmer symbolized both a general equality of material condition and independence from superior authority. Cities were characterized in Jefferson's mind with gross inequalities of wealth and hierarchies of power. Workers dependent on others for employment could not, Jefferson worried, be free and virtuous citizens. It is important to understand, then, the precise foundation of Jefferson's antiurbanism. It was not the hostility of a provincial. Jefferson, who was an enormously cultivated man and who thrived in Paris, fully appreciated the economic and cultural possibilities of city life, but, to be baldly anachronistic, Lincoln and Citicorp Centers were simply insufficient to redeem a pattern of social organization founded upon hierarchical power and gross inequality in the social condition of citizens.

The well known controversy between Hamilton and Jefferson hinged on such issues, phrased at the time in terms of intensive and extensive development. Hamilton sought to solidify a financial elite in the cities that would be the bulwark of the new government, and his program implied a concentration of wealth and power. Such a policy seemed to Jefferson a prescription for corruption. He praised western expansion precisely because it tended to prevent the concentration of wealth and capital in the eastern cities and served to distribute political power into the hands of the independent yeomanry. In purchasing Louisiana,

Thomas Jefferson was convinced that he had preserved essential equality in America—and thus political virtue—to the thousandth generation. Jefferson was not responding directly to American cities. Remember, more than 90 percent of the population were farmers when Jefferson became president in 1800. He had in mind European cities, and he wanted to avoid their experience. After Jefferson’s death, American cities burgeoned, New York City most of all. Cities not only became a central fact of American life, but the simultaneous and integral development of industrial capitalism created an extensive and new pattern of dependent social relations within them. Jefferson’s prospective worry seemed to have become a frightening reality.

By 1831, when New York City received a young French aristocrat named Alexis de Tocqueville, the first indications of a modern urban social order were becoming apparent. In *Democracy in America*, Tocqueville directly discussed the relation of cities to democratic prospects in the United States. Cities clearly frightened him. His generally optimistic interpretation of specifically American democracy faltered when he reflected on the problem of large cities in America. In a chapter titled “Principal Causes Which Tend to Maintain the Democratic Republic in the United States,” he added a long footnote:

The United States has no metropolis, but it already contains several very large cities. Philadelphia reckoned 161,000 inhabitants and New York 202,000 in the year 1830. The lower ranks which inhabit these cities constitute a rabble even more formidable than the populace of European towns. They consist of freed blacks, in the first place, who are condemned by the laws and public opinion to a hereditary state of misery and degradation. They also contain a multitude of Europeans who have been driven to the shores of the New World by their misfortunes or their misconduct. . . . As inhabitants of a country where they have no civil rights, they are ready to turn all the passions which agitate the community to their own advantage; thus, within the last few months, serious riots have broken out in Philadelphia and New York. . . . I look upon the size of certain American cities, especially on the nature of their population, as a real danger which threatens the future security of the democratic republics of the New World; and I venture to predict that they will perish from this circumstance, unless the government succeeds in creating an armed force which, while it remains under the control of the majority of the nation, will be independent of the town population and able to repress its excesses.12

Surely, here is an expression of the politics of control. The quotation is important in another way as well. It is an index of the fear that the city engendered in

Tocqueville (and the Whig elite with whom he associated during his visit to America) that in this passage he abandoned one of the central tenets of his explanation of the sustaining virtues of the American democracy. Again and again he remarks that the surest value of democratic institutions, governmental and voluntary, is their role in educating the population in the responsibilities of civic life. Men, he writes, cannot belong to political associations for any length of time without finding out how order is maintained among a large number of men and by what contrivance they are made to advance, harmoniously and methodically, to the same object. Thus they learn to surrender their own will to that of all the rest and to make their own exertions subordinate to the common impulse, things which it is not less necessary to know in civil than in political associations. Political associations may therefore be considered as large free schools, where all the members of the community go to learn the general theory of associations. Like Jefferson, he did not trust the city as a political environment. The social and political atmosphere of urban life formed mobs, not citizens. Confronted by the city Jefferson feared, a city in which the conditions of rough equality necessary for democratic government were absent, Tocqueville easily abandoned democratic visions and resorted to ones of force, no doubt out of an awareness that violence was increasingly the only resort of the underclass being formed in the city.

Doubts about urban democracy abounded among New York’s elite in the nineteenth century. Former Mayor Philip Hone, for example, recorded in his diary in 1840 his conclusion that “scenes of violence, disorder, and riot have taught us in this city that universal suffrage will not do for large communities.” Though it “works better” in the country, he thought democracy hopeless with the city’s “heterogeneous mass of vile humanity.” Recall, also, that control of the metropolitan police force created in the middle of the century was taken from municipal authorities and placed in state hands precisely to make it less responsive to the democratic ward politics of the largely immigrant city. And throughout its history, New York’s municipal charter has required state approval of a variety of municipal actions. At the base of these policies is the assumption by those in power and seeking to retain power that urban democracy is inherently irresponsible and cannot be trusted.

Of course, our urban history has had as well proponents of hope. The answer to Jefferson is intellectually simple, if politically difficult. The inequality that makes urban democracy problematic can be attacked as preparation for economic and political democracy. One of the earliest and most important statements of this hope came from Frederick Law Olmsted, appreciated by New York-

13 Ibid., 2:124–125.
Urban Prospects

ers as the designer of Central Park, and nineteenth-century America’s most impressive urban theorist. “Our country,” he wrote in 1877, “has entered upon a stage of progress in which its welfare is to depend on the convenience, safety, order and economy of life in its great cities. It cannot prosper independently of them; cannot gain in virtue, wisdom, comfort, except as they also advance.” Some years earlier, in a private letter encouraging a friend to undertake a career of urban reform in New York City, he had observed: “Government should have in view the encouragement of a democratic condition of society as well as of government.”

A generation later, Frederick C. Howe, one of the most important of the Progressive urban advocates stated his revision of Jefferson in the title of a book: *The City: The Hope of Democracy.* “To the City,” he wrote, “we are to look for a rebirth of democracy.” He brought Tocqueville’s faith in political experience into the city. He was convinced that expanded political activity in cities would produce an “enlarged public spirit.” “The humanizing forces of today,” he insisted, “are almost all proceeding from the city. They are creating a new moral sense, a new conception of the obligations of political life.”

Such advocates of the city were not without effect. They helped lay the foundations of the welfare state. Yet it is fair, I think, to describe the resulting welfare state as the mildest of all forms of the politics of control rather than an example of the politics of justice. The welfare state is compensatory: rather than seriously challenging the sources of inequality, it seeks to ameliorate its worst consequences. It is clear that reservations about urban democracy have never been fully overcome.

The era of big cities coincides with and is, I believe, implicated in a fundamental revision of democratic theory. Modern democratic theory began, as far back as Hobbes in Europe and Jefferson and Adams in the United States, as an attack on certain types of elite power and privilege, seeing elites as the main danger to the well-governed polity. But the age of urban, industrial, and organizational society—and what we must fearfully confess looks like the acceptance of a permanent underclass—there has been a contrary tendency. Democratic theorists, liberals not excepted, have come to believe, in the words of Sheldon Wolin, “that the perpetuation of democracy depends on the ability of the elite to protect the system against the masses.” The culmination of this tendency, so far as cit-


ies are concerned, is not in the future. It arrived in 1975, with the creation of the Big MAC (the Municipal Acceptance Corporation) and the Emergency Financial Control Board, which have as their missions the discipline of the citizenry of New York.

Whether interest-group pluralism qualifies as genuinely democratic practice is debatable. But even this notion of organized elites competing for influence has been transformed by the developments represented by the Financial Control Board. The task of political or interest-group leadership since its advent has become the imposition of the demands of nonelected public authority on its constituency rather than bringing that constituency's desires into the political process. While pluralism has been viewed as a way of distributing the goodies bestowed by public authority, it today threatens to become an instrument of paternalistic denial for most of us, with the goodies reserved to the narrow elite represented on the boards, as the plans for Westway and the building boom below 96th Street so eloquently testify.

Now one might draw some rather appalling lessons from this development, but Felix Rohatyn, a central figure and the most articulate of the new "reformers" of the city, in fact drew a quite different lesson from the experience. He elevated this disciplining function to a fundamental principle of government. His much discussed plan for a new Reconstruction Finance Corporation to revitalize northeastern cities depends upon the creation of an agency of great power and resources that is, in words Rohatyn published in the presumably liberal New York Review of Books, "publicly accountable but is run outside of politics." This board of philosopher-kings, representing banking, business, and labor, would "negotiate . . . stringent concessions" as conditions for providing funds, as MAC did in New York City. The most important result of the fiscal crisis, if the widespread and favorable commentary on Rohatyn's ideas mean anything, is apparently the depoliticization, at least in any recognizably democratic sense, of our city life.

My reading of these two historical legacies suggests that antecedent to and the essential context for the fiscal crisis is a political crisis. This political crisis, which has been endemic and enduring, today takes the form of a fiscal crisis because of a new and undeniable perception of scarcity. Our fundamental civic task under such circumstances is to deal equitably with a situation in which expressed wants exceed available resources. Politics, economics, and moral imperatives are inextricably linked. If the resulting distribution of resources is to have legitimacy, those links must successfully bear public scrutiny. The economist Lester Thurow recently made this point while discussing the national econ-

omy: “Our society,” he writes, “has reached a point where it must start to make explicit equity decisions if it is to advance. . . . If we cannot learn to make, impose, and defend equity decisions, we are not going to solve any of our economic problems.” 19 The same is true of our urban problems.

How—in the late twentieth century—can such decisions be morally justified or legitimated but through democracy? Open and responsible democratic politics cannot produce more, but it can, especially in a heterogeneous society, come closest to a sense of the public interest. Although it will not lead to universal satisfaction, it will result in a more equitable, representative, and legitimate public policy.

From the very era of our national embrace of democratic ideology 150 years ago, our democratic practice has fallen short in fundamental, not trivial ways. The physical form of the modern American city has sustained a limitation of the bounds of political discourse that has been motivated by our fear of the masses and by our public denial of classes. We have excluded the means of life from the realm of political discourse. As a result, the political activism we see in our cities is too often merely defensive and negative, obstructing the antisocial acts of the government or business, but not significantly shaping the pattern of capital investment in our cities. Local activism too often produces instead divisive conflict over municipal services rather than larger movements to recapture political control of the urban economy under conditions of democratic participation. My point, then, has been that contemporary activism confronts a historically embedded structure of urban politics that is not easily transcended.

Lest my intentions be misunderstood, I emphasize in conclusion that I have not tried to portray in a nostalgic way a fall from democracy. The eighteenth-century city was not democratic; it was hierarchical and elite dominated. The relevant contrast between it and our own city concerns the comprehensiveness of its nondemocratic politics. Its moral, political, and economic universes of discourse were continuous. This unified discourse, called by historians the “moral economy,” was dissolved with the rise of democratic ideologies and procedures in America. As a result, justice, which Aristotle called the “bond of men” in political society, was left as an abstraction, as an independent discourse.

Making justice part of urban political discourse returns us to Jefferson’s challenge to the city and its citizen-making capacity. Unless we can sustain a vision and a movement in cities that is sufficiently egalitarian to make democracy possible, we cannot answer Jefferson. And until we do that, we cannot defend the city on democratic grounds. If, as Jefferson, Tocqueville, Olmsted, and others have insisted, urban inequality threatens democracy, we must make that central fact of city life itself a part of our political discourse.

Welfare Policy: Why the Past Has No Future
ANDREW J. POLSKY

With its successful offensive against social programs and human services, the Reagan administration seeks now to revise the basic assumptions that guide welfare services. Yet even before the 1980 election, welfare policy had collapsed, the victim of its supporters' vast expectations. For the liberal intelligentsia and those who administer welfare programs, welfare policy always meant something more than minimum material support for the poor. Public assistance was linked to other services that had a broadly therapeutic intent; together these programs did not merely maintain clients but sought to restructure their lives in the hope that they might better cope with the challenges of modern society. Through the intervention of human service specialists, welfare policy aimed to supply the preconditions for full participation in middle-class culture, thus narrowing the divisions between social classes. The programs included juvenile courts, community mental health clinics, halfway houses for drug addicts, and community action programs. But the events of the past two decades—abrupt expansion of welfare services followed by civil disorders, clients' rights movements, and disaffection among welfare functionaries—ultimately exhausted the therapeutic strategy and left its advocates befuddled. In the aftermath the Reagan administration has been free to gnaw at the carcass of the welfare behemoth.

Why did the therapeutic agenda fail? The answer lies in the origins of welfare policy. We can trace the notion that public social agencies should integrate marginal groups into the mainstream of American life back to the urban reformers of the Progressive era. Earlier urban observers had worried that social order in the city was threatened by the collapse of traditional social institutions. The Progressives reasoned that a new instrument, the human service agency, could be inserted into urban neighborhoods to heal the damage done to the poor, the immigrants, the factory workers, and the young. The reformers also looked to the state to sponsor these human services, thus harnessing the therapeutic impulse to public authority. In creating modern welfare policy, however, the Progressives permitted a state apparatus with sweeping powers and left clients with no voice and few rights. Reform ideology invited the welfare agency to insinuate itself into the most private affairs of its clients—a recipe for disaster only recently realized.
In light of this dismal record, therapeutic welfare policy has nothing to offer as an alternative to the bleak conservative vision now ascendant. But the past can also help us recover ways of thinking about the welfare problem that lie outside the present debate. In particular, the Progressives who took up residence in the slums learned that even badly deprived neighborhoods contained the seed of their own regeneration. This perception was stifled by the rapid triumph of statism, but by examining the road not taken we may discover possibilities for liberating our own future.

Several factors, separated chronologically by more than fifty years, defined how Progressive social reformers would view the city and its problems. First, during the antebellum period genteel professionals identified the erosion of traditional institutions in the city as a threat to social peace, and invested reform with the reactionary task of restoring preurban values among the urban masses. Second, by the 1870s some reformers realized that to preserve order and aid the vulnerable, formal organizations might have to intrude upon family relationships commonly regarded as privileged. But under the influence of traditionalist ideas, those who operated the new social agencies tended to minimize and distort their clients' needs. Hence the significance of a third factor, the growing influence during the 1880s and 1890s of modern social science. By emphasizing that irresistible social forces denied individuals control over their own destiny, social science undermined the preurban faith in personal responsibility that had led charity organizations to dispense advice rather than aid.

In the opening decades of the nineteenth century, the rise of new forms of capitalist enterprise set in motion parallel changes in work patterns, social norms, family structure, and public affairs. For example, the shift of labor from the home to the shop or factory accelerated the trend toward the redefinition of family relationships. With fathers no longer a steady influence in the home, the strict patriarchal code of the colonial family gave way to an enhanced role for mothers in childrearing, and to a developmental view of childhood. Another example: reorganized production allowed a physical separation between social classes, with workers soon concentrated in identifiable city quarters. As early as the 1820s this differentiation by class manifested itself in the form of "mass politics"; the first political bosses gained power in cities such as Philadelphia.

An older middle class, composed of ministers, lawyers, and doctors was threatened by these developments. What is most interesting about the response of the genteel professionals is its distinctly antimodernist expression. Many members of the gentry had been raised in the very different world of the small New England village. When a minister or doctor moved to the city, his sphere of reference was a society populated by farmers, craftsmen, and professionals. Further, he had been taught a different set of values—patriarchal authority in families,
The reciprocal obligation between social classes, and respect for nonpecuniary accomplishment—than those prevailing in the city. The professional man remembered, too, that the village contained a status hierarchy in which persons of his rank exercised social and political stewardship. With the gentry dominating the city's early literary life, this collective memory became the basis for urban discourse and provided the standards for criticizing the city. New family mores, unchecked poverty, the political assertiveness of the urban masses—all signified to the middle class the absence of traditional sources of communal order and the breakdown of reciprocity between social classes.

The genteel professionals, determined to resist the encroaching forces of capitalism and modernity, moved swiftly to reassert social preeminence in the city. To preserve order and avert class conflict, some analogue to the social arrangements of the rural community would have to be invented for the metropolis. The middle class first hoped to reclaim its moral leadership directly, by distributing bibles and religious tracts to the working class and poor and by organizing Sunday schools. Later reformers leaned toward the asylum as a substitute for the patriarchal household. Neither technique succeeded as hoped: mere rhetoric could not close the class divisions that capitalism had generated in the city; nor could an institution replicate the sensitive discipline of a family. Nevertheless, failure did not deter reformers from new efforts designed to recapture a lost moral order. The assumption that urban society was gravely jeopardized by the weakening of preurban authority-structures continued to underly reform projects down to the Progressive era.

In other ways, however, the traditionalist sensibility was transformed after the Civil War. Certain reformers, notably Charles Loring Brace, objected to the romantic view of rural values and institutions shared by most urban moralists. For example, preurban rhetoric celebrated the family and paternal authority at a time when urban lower-class parents often neglected or exploited their children. Brace began to speak instead of function: families ought to be regarded as socializing instruments, and evaluated for how well or poorly they prepared their members for life in the community. By demythologizing the family, Brace created a space in which social agencies (like his own Children's Aid Society) might act with some latitude to separate children from unacceptable homes. In the process he helped establish the belief that social order among the urban masses would be maintained, not through rhetoric or by isolating the deviant in institutions, but by organizations operating as vehicles of moral education beside or even in place of families. And we can take this logic one step further: the social agency that assists or displaces a family might share its moral authority—and use it to neutralize the hostility that the working class and the poor commonly ex-

pressed toward reformers.

The typical postwar social agency did not capitalize on this possibility. People who sought aid from the local charity organization society often received a patronizing lecture on the virtues of thrift, self-sufficiency, and sobriety. In the slum itself the same message was circulated by the so-called friendly visitor, usually a woman drawn from the upper middle class who believed the poor needed nothing so much as sympathy and guidance. Such practices reflected the conviction that an individual exercised control over his immediate circumstances—still another residue of the preurban mentality. But the faith in individual potency diverged sharply from the reality of urban and industrial life. By the late nineteenth century one could no longer affix responsibility for poverty or joblessness on the victim. Here we must turn to the university, where new social science disciplines emphasized a different view of social causality. To the political economist or sociologist, an individual might fall prey to forces beyond his control, perhaps even beyond his awareness. It made no sense to counsel self-sufficiency to the man who lost his job when a business panic forced his factory to close. This message served as the immediate catalyst for Progressive reform.

Social science met the slum through the creation of the settlement house. Patterned after East London's Toynbee Hall, the first American settlements appeared in New York and Chicago in the late 1880s and spread rapidly until, by one loose count, they numbered four hundred at the turn of the century. A desire to apply scientific methods to concrete problems inspired young university graduates to take up residence in the poorest urban quarters. Settlement founders also believed that the educated middle class, having lost touch with the struggles of common life, needed to revive a sense of mutual duty between social classes. At the risk of oversimplifying a diverse movement, I will focus on the ideas of its most famous leaders, Jane Addams and Robert A. Woods. Their writings, however impressionistic and untheoretical, constituted a first attempt to define the scope and function of therapeutic welfare policy.

Both Addams and Woods described the settlement house as a "social laboratory." Following the method of contemporary social science, the settlements aimed to amass a body of facts about local conditions and problems. The settle-

ment house resident, by living as a neighbor alongside the working class and the poor, could be at once unobtrusive and systematic in gathering accurate information. Experience, however, quickly taught the social settlements that access to the intimate facts of neighborhood life could not be gained overnight. Only after constant social intercourse—initiated first with the local children and teenagers, then their mothers, and lastly with the men of the district—did the newcomers earn a measure of acceptance.

In settlement house reports on the slums, long-standing fears about family collapse, delinquency, and the immigrants' antidemocratic proclivities surfaced once again. But there was a marked difference in tone. When Addams described the plight of the immigrant in Chicago, torn from Old World customs and demoralized because he could not practice his family trade, she voiced sympathy and respect for her subject. Similarly, she balanced her account of threats to the family—frequent joblessness, overcrowding, unstable households, and no recreation for children—with a testimonial to the steadfastness of family affections among the working class. Woods, too, paid homage to the durability of the families he observed in the neighborhood around his Boston South End House. Settlement residents most clearly demonstrated the new attitude when they discussed unemployment. Having witnessed firsthand the 1893 depression, they insisted on an environmental interpretation of joblessness rather than genetic or moral explanations.

Life in a working-class district also yielded the startling observation that each neighborhood, despite centrifugal forces, contained hidden resources for its own regeneration. Successive waves of immigration had turned neighbors into strangers; more, the district as a whole was isolated by language and custom from the mainstreams of city life and American culture. Yet working people went overboard to extend aid and kindness to those in the greatest distress. Woods noted also that, on a more advanced level, the benevolent efforts made by voluntary associations formed within the district—clubs and lodges, trade unions, street gangs—eclipsed the activities of outside philanthropists.

To Woods this impressive record suggested a simple but quite radical possibility for social reform. With few financial resources, the working class had called forth its own eclectic organizations and forged a system of mutual aid. Imagine what might be done if the district were given formal administrative responsibilities coupled with greater political autonomy. He urged measures that would restore to the neighborhood its old village powers, with local representatives controlling public welfare and education. The experience of self-government would nurture among residents an identification with the district and a commitment to its future; the neighborhood would again become the center of interest, activity, and enterprise. In short, Woods recognized that social integration was fundamentally a political process: when people shape their destiny through collective
action, they take pride in the results and feel a personal stake in the social order they have helped to create.

But what role did Woods's call for neighborhood self-determination leave for the settlement house itself? After all, the settlement did not exist merely to accumulate facts; as Addams liked to say, fact-gathering for its own sake was the business of universities. Settlements intended to apply their knowledge to the rational reconstruction of urban society. If careful observation was linked to controlled practical experiment—a laboratory in the fullest sense—the settlement workers could eliminate the social pathologies of the neighborhood and produce a better life for all inhabitants.

By this broad rationale there was no limit to the range of tasks settlement houses might undertake. Settlement residents saw themselves mediating between the neighborhood and the existing system of benevolent agencies; this served to humanize the charitable relationship while focusing aid toward the working poor who would benefit most. Addams extended the mediation concept to the city as a whole. To adjust the neighborhood population to life in an industrial city, the settlement would sponsor a host of social and educational programs. Soon the schedule at Addams's Hull House included social and political clubs, recreational activities, classes in "domestic science" for working mothers, child care and kindergarten, manual training for young people about to enter the factories, and even a labor museum in which traditional crafts might be preserved.

Woods thought experimental scientific methods suitable for improving the neighborhood's capacity for self-organization. Like the naturalist in search of a rare specimen, the settlement worker sifted through his district for "every germ" of spontaneous association. He then investigated how such collective action might be stimulated from without and directed toward "some better and worthier end." By this technique Woods expected the settlement to make the neighborhood's own efforts more efficient. At all times the settlement worker aimed to enlist community cooperation in new ventures, for he neither possessed nor desired formal authority over his constituency. The settlement house did not dictate to its neighbors.

In Addams's and Woods's statements of the settlement function, we can discern important elements of therapeutic welfare policy. Consider first the implications of settlement strategy for the practice of social agencies. The settlements represented a permanent, constantly expanding presence in the slum—the realization of Charles Loring Brace's vision of organization. This kind of social agency could observe details of local behavior invisible to the occasional interloper such as the charity visitor. In addition, the settlement movement, while seeking community rebirth, reaffirmed the principle that an outsider should penetrate a neighborhood through its individuals and families. These smaller units were the designated vehicles for social reconstruction.
Woods and Addams also contributed to justifying outside intervention in the ordinary affairs of the urban masses. First, both argued that such intervention was indispensable: in the face of threats from all sides, the worker and the immigrant needed outside support to restore a meaningful community life. We have encountered before the reform assumption that cities destroyed traditional institutions and created instead a dangerous moral vacuum. The settlement movement thus continued an old theme in urban discourse. The new environmental perspective, however, meant that urban victims would no longer be chastised for their plight—and therefore should not resent the social agency acting on their behalf. Second, Woods and Addams shared a confidence that modern social science would make intervention more effective. Social agencies now possessed thorough knowledge of social conditions, and, as every Progressive knew, better facts yielded better solutions. Lastly, the two movement leaders raised the glittering prospect that if a social agency employed certain methods it would not only be tolerated but embraced by its clients: intervention was legitimate. Settlements, too, had first met with the suspicion usually directed at reformers. But by combining neighborliness with expertise, the settlement house had been accepted as a partner in the daily struggles of working-class families, an organic member of the neighborhood.

Jane Addams believed that ultimate success for her movement depended upon enlisting the state in projects initiated by the settlements. After the settlement house demonstrated the utility of a program, she expected the government to assume operating responsibility and provide the financial support. Only in this way could an experimental service be made available to the entire public. She also called for the government to initiate programs for which it alone disposed of the requisite legal or fiscal wherewithal. Thus Addams envisioned for the state a far-reaching role in the reconstitution of urban community. The significance of this scheme for welfare policy can be illustrated by noting what happened when settlement and state met in two specific programs, the juvenile court and the so-called widow’s pension plan.

First established in Illinois in 1899, the juvenile court was based on the conviction, popular among settlement workers and other reformers, that the criminal justice system injured young offenders to no sound public purpose. For Progressives, children were a most precious resource—one not to be dissipated through factory labor, poor education, or institutionalization. Adult courts, on the other hand, either incarcerated juveniles for serious offenses or, just as bad, simply released those accused of minor violations to return to city streets that promoted delinquency. Reformers endorsed the juvenile court as a device that might address gaps in the regular judicial apparatus.
The new creation occupied a shadowy area between legal tribunal and social agency. Juvenile court judges did not welcome defense lawyers; hearsay testimony was admissible evidence; and many proceedings were conducted entirely off record. All this made sense if, as reformers believed, the juvenile court’s purpose was less to punish specific misdeeds than to understand completely how a young person’s circumstances had precipitated the offense. From this nonpunitive ideal it followed that the court would seek other case dispositions besides incarceration. Another Progressive innovation, the probation system, became the preferred option because it gave judges some alternative to dismissal for juveniles charged with minor offenses. In theory the probation officer, who was trained in the latest social work techniques, monitored a youngster’s environment and behavior until he had shed all traces of deviancy. The court tried to reestablish through probation a delinquent child’s ties to the community. The juvenile court did not so much adjudicate as provide a surrogate for family and communal discipline thought to be lacking in working-class neighborhoods.

But if we look more closely at the juvenile court, a different reality emerges: whatever its therapeutic aspirations, it is still an instrument of the state, backed by a system of legal coercion. When reformers linked social integration to a judicial apparatus, welfare policy ceased to be a genteel avocation and became instead a form of power. Unlike the settlement house, the juvenile court could compel adherence to its recommendations and take harsh measures if necessary. Let us bear in mind, too, that Woods and Addams had justified intimate involvement by social agencies in their clients’ lives. Because the juvenile court doubled as a social agency and used settlement techniques—indeed, a Hull House resident served as the first Chicago juvenile probation officer—the exercise of power could be pervasive, even unrestrained. Yet reformers, by extending the settlement analogy, had good reason to expect that the court’s practices would be accepted as legitimate by juveniles and their families. Here was a model for state-sponsored human services.

In practice juvenile courts proved much more adept at expanding the state’s police power than at social rehabilitation. A new population of youngsters guilty of minor offenses or loosely defined improper conduct came under the jurisdiction of the legal system. But the juvenile court demonstrated little ability to modify behavior. One could blame the lack of resources that reduced probation to a meaningless ritual, yet even where a court expanded probation efforts and worked closely with child guidance specialists, the results were poor. Judges often ignored professional advice, which may have been just as well given the crude state of scientific knowledge. More fundamentally, juveniles brought before the court never lost sight of the fact that they were engaged in an encounter with power; the threat of punishment remained. Thus, despite the court’s desire to win acceptance, its clients never embraced the state in a joint effort to adjust to
middle-class values. Where there was power, no therapeutic partnership could form.

Settlement workers also played a prominent role in the campaign for widow's pension legislation. We have seen that an environmental view of poverty set apart the settlement movement from most charity activity. To the charity establishment, public relief appeared inefficient and turned recipients into dependent paupers, and therefore ought to be used only as a last resort. Well into the 1890s this perspective still dominated relief work. But charity methods proved inadequate during the economic crisis of that decade, and came under heavy attack from the settlement movement. Gradually charity officials paid less attention to the “moral” causes of poverty and recognized the influence of larger economic forces. Settlement workers and other reformers began to agitate for public insurance programs for the innocent victims of economic catastrophe, particularly the elderly poor and families without fathers. In the settlement view, it made more sense to keep a family together through public support, so that a widowed mother could raise her children in a true home, rather than force her to work and surrender the children to an institution. By 1920 the movement for old-age insurance had stalled, but a number of states had authorized “pensions” for widows with young children.

Here, too, settlement house doctrine suggested a therapeutic dimension to a simple maintenance program. Settlements had offered working-class mothers counseling in child care, hygiene, and home economics; surely impoverished widows could benefit from the same kind of expertise. The relief system would be asked to encourage modern household habits rather than just to provide a minimum standard of living. Of course, domestic tutelage required that the client reveal every facet of her life to the relief worker. This had been common in the settlement, where confidences could be shared with those of long acquaintance and neighborly association.

Once again, however, we must note that the juxtaposition of state power and therapeutic purpose can have pernicious consequences. When a welfare worker gave advice or requested information, legal sanctions loomed in the background. Because state legislatures refused to appropriate funds for all eligible families, it became necessary to devise elaborate criteria to select clients. Relief agencies tried to determine whether an applicant might work, had other sources of support, or had hidden resources; her psychological profile might single her out as an unfit mother. The client faced the threat that noncooperation would lead to a termination of benefits. Under these conditions the quest for intimate knowledge became humiliating for many women. No great distance separated the settlement ideal from the welfare caseworker’s interrogation about a client’s sex life, or the notorious midnight raids. Reformers only needed to add the state. Progressivism’s contribution to welfare policy thus includes the record of abuse

later compiled by public assistance bureaucracies.

Even as the new public welfare agencies began to undermine therapeutic ideals, the settlement movement found itself bypassed in the tide of reform. The academic social sciences increasingly exercised intellectual hegemony over the definition of welfare policy. At the same time, social workers and city administrators stressed the need for professionalism and efficiency in welfare service delivery, repudiating the amateur style represented by the settlements. Settlement leaders acquiesced in the rise of competing models of social practice. As a consequence, no one remained to speak for the working-class neighborhood—to interpret it to society, as Jane Addams once said—or to identify what the neighborhood needed for self-renewal.

Among the social science disciplines, sociology assumed early leadership in the quest for a formal theory to guide reformers in the rational reconstruction of society. Sociologists sought particularly to improve "social control" by strengthening the artificial mechanisms that function to preserve order in modern societies. Edward A. Ross, perhaps the foremost Progressive sociologist, argued that social control would have to be directed consciously by an expanded administrative state. This state, drawing upon sociologists' expertise, would reeducate its citizens to respond first to the corporate needs of an interdependent society. On occasion, Ross admitted, the state would have to use control techniques to break up obdurate family units. That such intervention might require coercion was frankly admitted by Luther Lee Bernard, a fellow social control theorist. He proclaimed that the state should insist on conformity to the rules that science found to be in the interest of society. "Where a social fact is established it should become as obligatory as the laws of astronomy or physics." Bernard expected that, given the plasticity of individual minds, the targets of state intervention would eventually acknowledge and accept its therapeutic purpose. By implication social control theory completely depoliticized the social integration of the urban masses. Scientific control left no room for a community to define itself, as Woods had envisioned, through self-governance and administrative autonomy. Such practices left too much to chance.

As the neighborhood role diminished, that of the expert increased. Other social sciences—social psychology, psychology, and psychiatry—spoke more precisely than sociology about the techniques a trained specialist should use to assist


each client in coping with the demands of modern life. While the settlements had tried to reach the community through its individual members, this emphasis on counseling as the goal of therapeutic practice signified a basic shift in orientation. Advocates of the new approach began to distinguish themselves as professionals. By the 1920s they had delineated a field of social work with its own individual-casework methodology that required advanced study in professional schools. Further distancing themselves from the settlement movement, social workers tried to sanitize therapeutic practice of any reform content.

The consolidation of statist welfare policy was completed in the arena of urban politics. Elected officials, under pressure to improve public services for all social classes, turned to privately sponsored municipal research bureaus to reorganize city departments and rationalize administrative procedures. These management specialists—some of whom, like Henry Bruère, had been settlement house residents—often shared the settlement conviction that government ought to extend welfare services to the working class and the poor. City governments thus began to operate a variety of social programs, including public health stations, tenement code enforcement, recreational facilities and public baths, visiting nurses, and milk quality inspections. These measures contributed to the well-being of the entire city population. But there was a cost, too: reformers became convinced that administrative efficiency required centralization and sophisticated knowledge. No place remained for local autonomy through which working-class citizens might learn to manage services for themselves. To the professional administrator, of course, such involvement meant nothing because public agencies, properly organized, satisfied the most pressing needs of the urban masses.

Settlement workers greeted the professionalization and bureaucratization of social agencies with deep ambivalence. On the one hand, Woods and a colleague asserted that administrative solutions to neighborhood decay threatened to undermine the foundations of democratic government. Indeed, the very rationalizing processes so beloved by middle-class reformers made the public domain more baffling to common people and increased their sense of isolation and futility. But the same two writers also complained that indigenous working-class organizations were often manipulated by outsiders—presumably bosses—in ways that stifled initiative. When offered the opportunity to support reform causes, the settlement's neighbors proved unready to assume responsibility. Amidst such confusions it is not surprising that Woods finally threw up his hands in frustration. "I may be allowed here to express a wish that there might be a long 'off-season,' during which nobody might use the word 'democracy' and we might have

the opportunity of developing a fresh psychological approach to its meaning."

Neighborhood autonomy as a means of collective definition had lost a leading advocate.

As we consider the future of welfare policy, we must confront the meaning of the past. Therapeutic welfare policy proved to be a resounding failure. The working class and the poor never accepted the state apparatus as a well-meaning partner; on the contrary, clients regarded welfare functionaries with sullen resentment. This disdain—an inchoate resistance to power—reflected people's unwillingness to view themselves as defective personalities, to be rehabilitated much as an automobile is fixed by a mechanic. Welfare agencies learned to use their power with striking capriciousness against individuals who lacked the resources to protect themselves. Eventually the policy ideologues and professionals, disenchanted with the obvious gap between theory and reality, decided to reform the bureaucracy by institutionalizing client "input." This approach—taken to greatest extreme by the community action program but tried in some form almost everywhere—sought to make clients more effective by allowing them to demand better services. For the policy planners, however, clients never lost their principal identification as service recipients who needed benefits and counseling. Participation became the latest therapeutic technique.

Against the therapeutic model, we would do well to reiterate Robert Woods's early insight that social integration is best strengthened by the experience of political action. He observed the inner resiliency of urban communities and concluded that this capacity had to be given political expression. If people were to see themselves as members of the larger community (the city or the nation), they needed the forums in which to develop leaders, argue and express conflict, and ultimately create their own self-governing institutions. Although Woods himself thought outside expertise could enhance local resources, the therapeutic approach was in fact incompatible with the political one. Social agencies treated people as passive objects whose refusal to welcome intervention was taken as a sign of pathology. No room remained for autonomous action. But while therapeutic welfare agencies helped to maintain social order—the enduring preoccupation of urban reformers—that order could not be made legitimate. For people will acknowledge as just or fair only a social order that they themselves help to define.

This political understanding suggests that we ask neighborhoods to create a shared identity among those effectively disenfranchised by the concentration of

---

power in distant bureaucracies, corporate and state alike. It is not clear, however, that the neighborhood unit can sustain this burden. During most of this century, private investment patterns and public programs encouraged people to flee urban communities until these maintained only a marginal existence. For example, to city planners with elaborate dreams, neighborhood texture counted for nothing next to the monuments that emerged from urban renewal and the highway trust fund. Nevertheless, while many districts succumbed, others rallied themselves, mustered their limited resources, and held their ground. That we have recently witnessed a visible surge in local organization gives cause for modest optimism.

But to become the vehicle for social identification, local initiative must be given a substantial political content. This remains the blind spot of conservatives who celebrate the vitality of churches, kinship networks, and voluntary associations. The capacity of such groups to resist encroaching power on the modern scale is severely limited; they can flourish only under a benign sovereign. And that in turn means that authority now vested in public bureaucracies and private corporations will have to be devolved to ward-based, participatory governing councils. To these political bodies will go responsibility for planning and development, administration of public services and social programs, and local investment. In effect, this welfare policy reasserts the importance of place, the notion that people rise with their communities and not in spite of them.

If the recesses of the past can help us formulate an alternative to therapeutic or conservative welfare policy, historical inquiry also teaches the need for great caution. Exaggerated hopes and unexamined assumptions led us once to construct a massive edifice of power that enjoyed wide latitude and inflicted much pain on its subjects. A political approach to the problem of membership in the collectivity still entails the exercise of formidable power, even if by citizens themselves. People can be harmed by their neighbors, perhaps as badly as by the state, especially when localities suffer the same class divisions as society as a whole. Against this grim possibility we can only hope that power will be concealed behind fewer mystifications and will therefore enjoy no moment of peace.
Either you believe in democracy or you don't. Like you, I believe."
This declaration of faith by President Reagan was made to a gathering of local officials in the hope of persuading them to approve transfer of responsibility for a wide range of governmental activity from the federal to state and local government. Only through extensive decentralization of authority, the President maintained, could local democracy be restored. By this formula he reduced the complexities of decentralization and democracy to a simple either/or proposition. Neither decentralization nor democracy is that simple. If, for example, the national government were no longer to provide financial resources to local governments to enable them to deal with problems that are essentially national in character, the effect would be to prevent the cities and states from responding to what their citizens may want and need, blocking the expression of local democracy. It is difficult to see how local democracy could have much meaning if its capacity to act were denied by a policy of fiscal starvation. There are also profound problems of equity involved because of the vast disparities in wealth among the states and localities. If federal financing were curtailed, many vital programs on which people depend would be terminated.

Yet federal financing of state and local governmental functions is not without its problems. Some champions of strong local government (and they come from both left and right) fear that any system of federal grants necessarily involves central control. Such outside control, in their view, undercuts local democracy. The paradox is that local governments cannot act in a number of areas without federal funds, and yet the existence of federal funds brings with it outside control and the inevitable reduction of local governments to dependency.
Reagan's "New Federalism" would eliminate 24 billion dollars annually granted to the states and localities by the federal government. The proposed reduction or elimination of grant programs covers four areas: education, social welfare, health care, and community development. In return the federal government would assume sole responsibility for financing Medicaid and continue to provide 4.6 billion dollars a year in Revenue Sharing payments.

The net result of the proposed cuts and the takeover of Medicaid would mean either the elimination of genuinely needed programs or the fiscal collapse of many state and local governments. One mayor called the President's plan an "antiurban policy statement," and many governors claimed their states were already near fiscal disaster without the extra burden the new plan would entail. At the time of the President's speech (in July of 1982) sixteen states were seeking loans from the federal government to save their unemployment compensation systems from going broke. Despite these pleas from local officials, the President insisted that something had to be done to reverse the steady decline of state and local independence and initiative that was caused by the "swollen government in Washington." He argued for a return to the "balance" between the levels of government, claiming that this was a constitutional requirement. He even went so far as to warn that he would invoke the Tenth Amendment as a barrier to federal action, a position abandoned forty years ago by the United States Supreme Court. "The more government we can keep at the local levels in local hands," he asserted, "the better off we are and the more freedom we will have."

The President did not say who would be better off and who would have more freedom under his plan, but by examining the programs he wants to kill, it is fairly clear who stands to gain—and it will not be the urban poor. Of the twenty programs slated for transfer that involved education, energy, social, health, and nutrition services, every one of them is predominantly concerned with aiding the poor. The list includes Aid to Families with Dependent Children, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, child nutrition, maternal and child health care, and health care centers. Many central city people literally owe their lives to these programs, and to others they provided an avenue of escape from poverty. Although the President assured local leaders that they will be guaranteed 100 percent of the "funds historically passed to them from the federal government," local officials remain skeptical. The political will is lacking to levy heavy new taxes and probably will remain so for the foreseeable future. Although some states can afford to raise more revenue, many are too poor to do it. Many cities are barely managing to stave off bankruptcy. Their resources are severely depleted as a result of mounting levels of unemployment and the firing, permanent

as well as temporary, of thousands of city employees. Meanwhile the demands on cities mount as each new wave of workers joins the ranks of the unemployed. Detroit's unemployment rates are the highest since the Great Depression, and its resources are strained to the utmost to keep the city afloat. It borders on the bizarre to suggest that a city in that condition could raise hundreds of millions of dollars in new revenue. The case of Newark is a revealing example of the plight of cities. An increase in the local property tax rate resulted in actual decline in total revenue because many property owners chose to abandon their buildings rather than pay the tax. Accordingly, Newark sought and got permission to use its Revenue Sharing funds to lower the tax rate.

Some might claim that cities such as Detroit and Newark are not facing actual crises and would point to the current building boom in those cities, where billions are being invested in luxury apartments, convention centers, and commercial space. To some observers, this indicates a basic strength in local economies and holds out the potential of increased tax revenues. However, the promise of the building boom is misleading. First, in order to get corporations to build the new structures, cities have to offer tax write-offs as an incentive, thus reducing the revenue to be collected by the city. Cities compete to attract corporations, but the competition raises the municipal ante for builders, thus reducing revenues for years in advance. And while it is no doubt true that the new construction will provide some local employment, it is very difficult for local governments to make minority hiring a condition. The number of highly skilled construction workers among minority groups is too few to alter appreciably the chronic unemployment that afflicts such groups. Moreover, the new buildings often house establishments that will not hire many central city workers because the skills and education needed in most automated and computerized operations are more likely to be found among suburbanites rather than central city residents.

Even if it were true that resources could be found at the subnational level to keep the programs in operation, it does not follow that the whole burden of services and programs such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) should be borne by local government with state aid. For the problem is not local but national in scope. Localities are places where the consequences of a national economy are registered. Often these consequences are the result not of a wasteful program adopted by a city or state, but of a national policy. For example, the federal government, by the use of tax incentives, encourages industry to install labor-saving devices that will boost productivity. One result has been technological unemployment and a drastic change in the urban work force. Workers whose physical power was their chief resource as workers are needed less and less, and white collar or technical workers have displaced muscle workers by the millions. It is
now possible for four coal miners working with modern machinery to accomplish in three minutes what it took two coal loaders a full day to do. For the first time there are now more white collar than blue collar workers.

Of course, enhanced productivity has some positive results. For example, many dirty and dangerous jobs are being eliminated. But the displacement of physical workers is having a disastrous effect inside our major cities. The costs of displacing workers has fallen mainly on the workers themselves, and very little thought has been devoted to the plight of superfluous workers. As a consequence a kind of lumpenproletariat has been created, especially in the largest cities—a group of people for whom there is nothing to do that is economically rewarding. (At least nothing to do legally—a point attested to by the soaring prison population.) To the burdens of local government created by technological change there is the further unemployment produced by a national policy aimed at curbing inflation while “accepting” a rising level of joblessness.

The human suffering and social consequences of national economic policies are staggering. The new generation faces the prospect of being permanently barred from the work force. Often in central city areas more than half of all young potential workers have no jobs and in many instances never have had one. Women get pregnant and do not expect to get married; the fathers of these children are commonly the long-term unemployed who could not support a family by any legitimate means. The number of families headed by unmarried mothers grows steadily. In a fundamental way the state is left to pick up the bill for the “advances” that corporations make in “rationalizing” their workforce.

Whatever the problems with many existing social programs, they should not be allowed to obscure the simple fact that many of them do work and do help to ease misery and often to save human lives. Newark provides a striking example of this. During the 1970s, when most of the city’s services hardly merited the name, the quality of health care was the only service that improved. The educational system was floundering, the police were more of a threat than a source of protection, and housing was being abandoned when it was not being burned. Nonetheless, the incidence of many serious diseases during the ten year period in which a black had become mayor was sharply reduced. The reasons for this were simple and material. The state, with federal assistance, built a new teaching hospital in the center of Newark, and it was soon providing better care than had previously been available. In addition, a campaign by some public-spirited doctors succeeded in raising money for neighborhood health clinics. The net result was a sharp decline in the incidence of and mortality due to diseases the rest of the country no longer suffers from. Clearly there are circumstances in which “throwing money” at a problem may in fact ameliorate it.
Though the Reagan administration's profession of faith in local democracy is suspect, it does have the virtue of raising the question of whether any of the recent attempts at revitalizing local democracy have been any more successful. Over the past two decades there have been several different efforts to increase the power of ordinary people. A brief discussion of some of them may help us to understand the difficulties.

One of the most highly publicized was the black power movement. It began in the 1960s when it was becoming clear that federal legislation against discrimination and the desegregation of much of the Southern political system constituted a beginning in the struggle for racial equality but that there was still a long way to go. The idea of black power was simple: to elect as many blacks to public office as possible and where there was a majority or large minority of blacks to attempt to take over local and county government and make it an instrument for improving the social and economic condition of blacks. In the intervening years, the number of cities, towns, and counties with blacks in leadership has grown steadily. In 1981 the Joint Center for Political Studies reported that over 5,000 black persons were holding elective office at all levels of government. Although this was a significant gain over the figures for 1970, when the Center first began to make its reports, the sad fact is that 5,000 blacks in elective positions constituted only 1.03 percent of all elected officials. Nonetheless, blacks did gain access to the governing bodies of many counties, cities, and towns and in some instances there were even black majorities. In 204 cities, blacks were mayors, and 1,267 blacks were elected to state and local education boards.

From a democratic perspective these gains have demonstrated that it is better for blacks to have power than not. Being in office it is at least possible for them to overcome the systematic neglect that had historically characterized the treatment of all black concerns. At the very least, black power has enabled blacks to use the resources of the cities in much the same ways as earlier ethnic groups used municipal governments as a source of patronage for their members. Doubtless this system of patronage did little to improve the life or general conditions of ethnic groups but, again, better to have had these opportunities than to have been denied them altogether—which was certainly true of most blacks until very recently. Having said all this, one should not exaggerate the benefits derived from patronage. Typically, it does not affect a very large number of people, and its implications for increasing black power are very modest. Above all, like other forms of social service, patronage becomes a victim of the fiscal crisis of cities. Black mayors have had to fire black employees. Indeed, when the black mayor of Newark, Kenneth Gibson, ran for reelection in 1982 he boasted that he had trimmed the city's work force by eliminating 1900 jobs.

In short, the limitations of the black power movement are becoming apparent. A black mayor, a black majority on the city council, and blacks in key ad-
ministrative positions do not necessarily have the power to alter the living condition of the population living in older cities. The plain fact is that the powers of local government are insufficient to create decent jobs and housing, or to protect the population from thieves, arsonists, drug addicts, and even the police. If the black leaders were able to exercise control over the police force, for example, even then it would be difficult to provide protection because the magnitude of crime far exceeds the capacity of the forces at the disposal of city governments. Even if a black administration were to come to power and be seriously committed to altering the conditions of urban life, it is not likely that they would have either the finances or the formal authority to achieve much. This is due to the historical situation of the city itself. Cities are at the bottom of the hierarchy of governmental organization, and they are compelled to operate, to an unusual degree, through intergovernmental politics. The result is a series of constraints that hobble initiative and make it impossible for cities to afford to take on the problems that are besieging them. The oldest municipal joke is that winning the mayor's office in Newark—or in any one of a hundred other comparable cities—is the equivalent of taking command of a sinking Titanic.

Another highly publicized approach to local democracy was decentralization. It is almost impossible to recall the enthusiasm with which that idea was raised not long ago as the way by which black people could gain control over government and much needed services. Education was thought to be one of the most crucial areas for enabling blacks to improve their own condition. The idea was to localize educational policymaking and thereby give local enclaves some chance to influence the way their schools operated. It was obvious that in a city as large as New York, with such extensive housing segregation, there was no effective way to integrate schools. Accordingly, the school system was divided into many relatively small districts with a modicum of power allocated to locally selected school district school boards.

The decentralized area school boards, especially in their early years, did allow some local influence on school policies, personnel, and curriculum. However, much controversy centered in these area boards, especially in budget and personnel matters. Participation, never very extensive in many areas of the city, declined before long. Moreover the well-organized teachers moved in and dominated elections to district boards, overcoming the poorly organized parents. In other cities experiments with decentralization did not have much effect; either decentralizing moves were hesitant and short-lived, or they faded from the scene because tight city finances made the decentralization efforts a prime target for cutbacks in expenditures.

Still another brave effort at community participation came with Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty. The proponents of the antipoverty program believed that the active involvement of the poor in the program was imperative. This was
not just because they thought the poor themselves, knowing firsthand what poverty was, would be able to contribute ideas that professionals and bureaucrats might not see. They also believed that the self-confidence and self-respect of the poor might be aided by actively involving them in solving their own problems. The latter idea had derived from efforts in New York City to provide a sense of high self-esteem for young people whose empty lives had led them into gangs, violence, prison, or death from an overdose of drugs. The emphasis was on providing, in special schools, an education that was relevant to their street lifestyle, and providing a sense of participation in something useful and constructive. These ideas, largely the work of Richard Cloward, came to Washington with the Kennedys and in due course were explicitly expressed in the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) legislation, calling for "maximum feasible participation" for the poor in local operations of the program. There was much skepticism and opposition to the idea. None of the attacks was as strident as Daniel Patrick Moynihan's book, *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding*. Moynihan ridiculed the whole idea of involving the poor in an effort to solve the problem of poverty; how could one expect them to resolve a complicated situation that had baffled the best efforts of professionals for generations? The purpose of the Act, he said, should be to aid people, not to help them engage in politics.

Predictably the maximum participation rule was a point of conflict in the OEO operation; some communities developed systems for participation and they worked with mixed results. Often the professionals and the local poor fought battles over control of the operation of the local project. In still other places the local political leaders were apprehensive about giving any significant power to the poor. In the eyes of politicians, any organization with a political potential should either be dominated by city hall or rendered impotent. Eventually Congress modified the law to give local politicians ultimate control over local OEO operations.

Although the history of the War on Poverty has yet to be written, the scattered returns indicate that the attempt to mandate participation by legislation did not prove successful. Whether longer use of the antipoverty program might have led to more effective participation by the poor we shall never know, for the program fell victim to the Vietnam War, which absorbed the money that might have gone to continuing the OEO operation.

Finally, there was during the 1960s and 1970s a variant on the ideas of decentralization and maximum participation. This was the rediscovery of the idea of neighborhood political organization. With this scheme, power would be located at the neighborhood level because, so it was argued, only there could local concerns be decided in a genuinely democratic way. The value of local determination was in part that it avoided the problem of representation—or of misrepresentation—of local needs. An elected representative may decide matters for con-
stituents in light of his or her own choices and in response to pressures brought to bear from forces that are remote and certainly not responsive to local people. In an effort to find a midpoint between direct democracy and representation, the scheme was floated to establish numerous neighborhood councils and "little city halls" in cities around the nation. These local councils were largely concerned with planning and development decisions—that is, they won the opportunity to review projects before things had gone so far toward acceptance that no local force was likely to be able to turn them back however destructive they might seem to local residents. They also served as complaint centers regarding public services.

These ideas received powerful support from Jane Jacobs. In 1961 she argued in her book on the American city that it was imperative to have neighborhood councils to allow local people some say about what was to be done to their neighborhoods—particularly concerning planning and physical development. Although critics warned that neighborhood government would proliferate the number of local bodies and make coordination extremely difficult, the defenders of the idea responded that the risk was a necessary one if there was to be real democracy. Progress toward developing such neighborhood-level government has, however, been very slow in coming. In New York, for example, a progressive mayor, John Lindsay, made a stab at local democratization but abandoned it in the end for more "elitist" approach—doing what was "right" for the city in a "rationalist" manner, but abandoning the beginnings of local democratization.

Discussion of the difficulties in achieving significant democracy at the community level seems inevitably to lead to the paradox mentioned at the outset of this essay. On the one hand, if power is to be exercised directly by the people, it will have to be at the local level, for the complexities of the nation state are not manageable through direct democracy. But if power is devolved to the lowest levels, the financial resources necessary to govern are often lacking. In the absence of resources local authority can do little, but if power is centralized the will of the community cannot be expressed clearly or consistently. If the central government finances local operations, strings will inevitably be attached. To expect a representative system to allow people to rule themselves is to overlook a crucial consideration: the economic and political power of wealth.

That, it seems to me, is the real issue of centralization and decentralization. To argue the question as if it were primarily a matter of government structural

arrangements and the location of jurisdictional boundaries among governments is to fail to perceive the complexity of the paradox of local democracy and central authority and resources. What transcends the structurally focused discussion is the power of corporations that override governmental concerns. If we sought to give power to the people in central cities and devised governmental structures to enhance their role and influence, the probable consequences would be minimal so long as corporate power over the economic and social conditions of people continued unabated. That is to say, although politicians go on about how they understand how to reduce unemployment, and how their experience in business has equipped them to do something about bringing new jobs to a constituency, the truth is that elected officials in cities and states have little opportunity to change the forces that determine the well-being of their districts. For those who make and eliminate jobs are not for the most part in government but often command government from the outside. Note the steps that were taken when cities got into fiscal trouble in the 1970s; bankers, corporation heads, and lawyers were authorized to put the city's finances back in order, usually making the poor pay for the restoration of solvency.

If one wants to enhance the power of the people in all seriousness, a way will have to be found to overcome the force of corporate power that determines the opportunities of the city's poor population. As we have said, one of the first discoveries that black politicians made when they took over local governments was how limited were their opportunities to do anything significant about the most crushing disadvantage of their black constituency: enduring poverty. This is no resolution of the paradox of local versus central powers, but it does suggest that discussing the problem as if it were strictly a political or governmental-structural one is not going to get us anywhere.
Urban Transportation in the Eighties

GLENN YAGO

In the twentieth century a crisis developed in transportation that coincided with and contributed to the crisis of the city. "We shall solve the problems of the city by leaving the city," promised Henry Ford, and current federal policies threaten to make the abandonment of cities into an object of public policy. Scorned as they may be, cities are inhabited places, and their social and physical decay has consequences that extend well beyond the city limits. Rather than serving existing urban populations, highway transportation redistributed population creating new settlement patterns and new limits to urban mobility.

Today we confront the phenomenal costs of our urban transportation system—oil shortages, rising auto prices, highway repair costs, transit budget crisis, mass unemployment in the auto industry, and rising environmental and highway safety problems. Less tangible, but no less real, are the effects upon community life. The division of urban space spurred by motorization has resulted in the isolation of the workplace from community life, the invisibility of the elderly and the young, and the erosion of social cohesion that preserved socially mixed and stable neighborhoods. Patterns of residential segregation by economic class, ethnic, racial, or age group have drained community life of political vitality. Community interests are now perceived as separate from workplace concerns; the primacy of private over public life weakens political participation; and the

1 Census figures indicate that transportation costs as a portion of total personal consumption expenditures have more than tripled since World War I; state and local highway debt are over $30 billion; and, government estimates of repairing the national highway system by 1990 are as much as it cost to build it (over $250 billion). On cost changes see J.W. Fuller, "Inflationary Effects of Transportation," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 456 (July):112–22.
socialization of children isolated from diverse income, age, and social groups re­inforces the privacy of consciousness. The decline of mass transit narrows the diversity of urban experience, isolating communities and workplaces and insulating urban travelers from the world in between. These costs are indicative of the impact of transportation on ordinary lives.²

At the turn of the century, the most popular stocks on the New York Stock Exchange were urban electrical railways; from 1890–1918, urban transit grew faster than urban population and investment in transit more than quintupled. Electrification's rapid pace was less a function of population growth than the growth of land speculators (or "groundhogs," as they were less affectionately called) who viewed transit as a social overhead investment to encourage regional development by private enterprise. As Delos Wilcox, the premier transit engineer of the period, noted, "public service was largely incidental to the operation of the street railways," physical mobility in cities was subordinated to speculative profits in land, transit, and utility stock manipulations. Economic concentration proceeded through the conglomeration of landowning, public utility, and financial interests that controlled the "transit trusts." The lack of extensive service and rising fares politicized transit and led to calls for public control. Before World War I, virtually every U.S. city was the scene of legal battles, referenda over fare hikes, public ownership campaigns, and investigations of transit corruption.

Overcapitalization, corrupt accounting practices, and overextended transit lines were unprofitable—except in the short run, of course—for land speculators and investors, and led to a financial collapse by the end of World War I when over a third of the operating firms went bankrupt. As one insider told the Feder-

² These impacts occur differently for various groups. The deficiencies in mass transit have created distance barriers for the working poor who live far from job opportunities (see C.S. Davies and M. Albaum, "The Mobility Problems of the Poor in Indianapolis," *Antipode* 1 (1972):67–87). Low levels of transit service and auto ownership also function to prevent women's labor force participation and occupational mobility (H.Z. Lopata, "The Chicago Woman: A Study of Patterns of Mobility and Transportation," *Signs* 5, no. 3 (Spring 1980):161–69. For those with access to urban transportation, inequities appear in the compulsory time spent in work-related travel. Although transportation shifts towards private modes promised decreased travel time, it created instead land use patterns that impose new spatial limits on mobility. In most urban centers the average time it takes to get to work has increased and will continue to do so by 10–15 percent by the end of the century according to the Office of Technical Assessment Study on the Future of the Automobile. Moreover, minority and blue-collar work trips average longer and are more time-consuming than all work trips regardless of residential location (David Greystak, *Residential Segregation, Metropolitan Decentralization, and the Journey to Work* [Springfield, Virginia: National Technical Information Center, 1972]).
al Electrical Railway Commission in 1919, "we insiders are selling out just as fast as we can."

Disinvestment and calls for public control led corporate figures such as August Belmont, owner of the New York Subway, and Samuel Insull, an electrical utility magnate and Chicago elevated-line owner, to call for public regulation instead. The resulting regulatory commissions were the first of many measures that removed fights over urban transportation from the public sphere of city politics to the forums of appointed, business-oriented public utility and public service commissions at the state level. This was the first step in insulating transportation decisions from public pressures by the de facto disenfranchisement of the urban population. Political centralization in transportation planning thus began, draining democratic participation from transportation policy. Transit issues were depoliticized.

The resulting shift from public to private in urban transportation meant that the public sector would pick up transportation expenses and thus free investment capital from infrastructural costs. But disinvestment and corporate-directed public regulation did not assure transit's demise. After the credit collapse of World War I, receiverships began to fall and major urban centers actually experienced growth in their ridership. For that brief period, increasing auto ownership and transit ridership coexisted in U.S. cities. In spite of financial disasters and rising fares, rail transit survived and was cheaper than bus operations. In fact transit trips increased at a higher rate than auto-generated urban trips until the Depression (25 percent compared to 17 percent).

The resiliency of mass transit, along with market saturation in the auto and oil industry, created problems for monopoly corporations. Although innovations were introduced to further motorization—the introduction of the assembly line, changes in style, financing, and new marketing techniques—the popularity of transit remained a problem for auto, oil, rubber, and construction companies. The reorganization and economic concentration of the auto industry alone was insufficient to motorize America. When competition from public transit carriers would not disappear, it was eliminated—urban rail transit was replaced by motor buses that were replaced by cars. This was accomplished by paving over rails, replacing streetcars with buses, and simultaneously displacing thousands of passengers into automobiles.

---


5 See Bradford C. Snell, American Ground Transport, Hearing before the Subcommittee of Antitrust and Monopoly (United States Senate, Washington, D.C., 1974).
The coalition of large auto, rubber, and oil firms used various methods to promote conversion from electrical transit to buses—direct acquisition of electrical transit operating companies, the establishment of noncompetitive supply contracts, investments by corporate officers or managers in other transit lines, financial pressure through banks, direct and indirect loans, and manipulation of trade association activities. All of these strategies violated antitrust laws, fair trade practices, and a host of civil and criminal laws. When prosecution occurred, as in the famous National City Lines and General Motors-Bus antitrust cases, the judgments were trivial or impossible to enforce. In some cases, indictments were prepared by the Justice Department but mysteriously never filed in court. Monopoly behavior continued and the corporate structure that produced it remained untouched. Smaller producers of alternative transportation technologies, either automotive or electrical transit, disappeared.

The consequences of forced conversion to buses were disastrous for the transit operating industry as well. In order to finance bus modernization, route abandonment became common as a cost-cutting measure, leaving many urban dwellers with no alternative to the automobile. This hastened declining ridership by shrinking the area served by mass transit.

By the 1950s, over 90 percent of the surviving transit operating firms were bankrupt and had to be taken over by local government. The authority to tax, along with control over urban transportation, had been centralized at the state and federal level, leaving few resources for local investment into transit. Financial inanition in public transit produced a vicious circle of rising fares, declining service, and declining ridership that eventually resulted in the fiscal collapse of private transit.

The establishment of receiverships and the subsequent dissolution through deficit-financed municipal takeovers had left transit operations with a burden of past debts. This allowed lending institutions to exercise financial control by vetoes and to impose restrictive loan covenants that constrained transportation planning. Everything was done by government policy to promote the automobile, nothing to limit it. What developed was a largely unsystematic, almost accidental relationship between cities and transportation systems. Instead of comprehensive, long-range, publicly determined goals for city development, cities grew haphazardly, and transportation facilities provided largely inadequate service that created transportation barriers between jobs and residences.

---

6 Cases of these practices are all documented in FBI investigations on the Motor Bus Industry and Department of Justice Anti-trust Investigations of General Motors released to me under the Freedom of Information Act. See Glenn Yago, *The Decline of Transit* (New York: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming 1983).
Government surrender to the automobile was achieved by the same large corporate coalition that gave birth to bus conversions and created the highway lobby that informally developed national transportation policy. The highway lobby was created in 1932 by General Motors' President Alfred Sloan, Jr. It linked government agencies and bureaucrats with oil, auto, and transportation firms, and trade associations. Through lobbying, campaign contributions, and the influence of corporate representatives in government, highway building was insulated fiscally and politically from opposition.

But it also spawned a political organizing effort on an extraordinary scale. Local, state, and federal highway officials, private construction firms, truckers, construction material suppliers, gas station owners, car insurance salesmen, and auto users created a political coalition that grew with each new highway appropriation. Auto-related employment, in accordance with Sloan's design, became distributed evenly across the country.

Although the changing economic realities of the past decade make the highway-dominated transportation system, and the absence of balanced transportation, irrational—economically, environmentally, and socially—the highway lobby still dominates transportation by political means.

Every federal administration since the sixties pledged a rebirth of mass transit that never occurred. The Reagan administration's wholesale abandonment of mass transit simply ends the political charade. Political rhetoric praising transit began only in response to neighborhoods and transit consumers who mobilized against the highway bulldozing and protested the budgetary neglect of mass transportation. Federal transportation policies, from Nixon to Carter, pursued the promise of urban mobility without competing with automobiles—a contradictory and impossible task. People movers and electrical sidewalks were supported instead of subways, buses, and van pools as alternatives to streetcars and railroads.

In 1973, Congress approved limited diversions of the highway trust fund to mass-transit uses. The victory for environmentalists, transit consumers, big-city mayors, and Nixon's urban policy was shortlived. The following year the highway lobby succeeded in adding legislative provisions permitting states to spend trust fund monies for road repair instead of mass transit. Later congressional decisions allowed money eliminated from one interstate segment to be substituted for another highway segment elsewhere. At the state level, 28 states approved $8.2 billion of state highway trust fund diversions, but only $ .08 billion went to nonhighway transportation uses. The lion's share of those transfers went to everything from welfare payments to mosquito control.

Little of the money potentially available for urban mass transit projects was used. Of the $1.5 billion made available during the 1974-75 fiscal years, only $140 million was transferred to mass transit. In Minneapolis, for example, only
13 percent of the mass transit funds available were used for that purpose; the rest went for highways and parking lots. In cities considering mass-transit alternatives, the Carter administration pressured for remaining interstate links to be completed, threatening cancellation of federal support unless monies were spent. In 1977, the Comptroller General's office blamed the lack of transit expenditures on "institutional biases" of the state and local governments and the highway lobby's successful efforts to leave intact Federal funding formulas that increased the percentage of federal assistance for highways over that of mass transit. 7

The combination of vested bureaucratic interests and the power of the highway lobby combined to undercut democratic efforts at modifying transportation policy. A 1976 Department of Transportation study indicated that regional, state, and federal highwaymen overrode local initiatives to diversify transportation spending. 8 Established bureaucratic procedures in the Federal Highway Administration insured that planning would be concentrated in federal and state highway offices. The language of participatory planning in federal legislation was reinterpreted to emphasize technical factors rather than the social effects of highway construction. Public hearings were organized not as "popular referenda" on highway plans, but as trial balloons for testing local opposition, developing highway support, and constructing a political strategy for a proposed route. Planning control slipped further from municipal hands, and from the influence of the mass-transit public.

Since 1970, subsidies for mass transit have more than tripled, yet ridership continues to decline. Today as many people walk to work as use public transit. Transit subsidies now face wholesale abandonment, largely because they never worked.

Why, in spite of the experience of the energy crisis, decades of transportation policy and planning, and an upsurge in public support for mass transit (indicated in both public-opinion surveys and referenda results), is the U.S. the only advanced industrial nation that has failed to reverse ridership decline? In asking who defined the range of transportation policy options, we might answer why it failed.

The decline of mass transit is not primarily due to the limitations of its service. Rather, it is a consequence of corporate strategy. The only policy measures that receive any public airing are those that do not directly threaten the interests

of the highway transportation industry, even though that industry can fairly be said to have indirectly damaged the productive structure of the entire national economy.

The extent to which alternatives are suppressed can be graphically illustrated. In 1979, the Office of Technology Assessment's $1.4 million report on the future of the automobile studiously avoided consideration of rail alternatives. Advisory panel members included Dr. William G. Agnew, GM Research Labs; Leo Blatz, Exxon; John J. Burne, GEICO (auto insurance); Dr. Lamont Eltinge, Eaton Corporation Research Center (auto parts supplier); Ken Joselyn, Highway Safety Research Institute; and Archie Richardson, Auto Owners Action Council. As one panel member noted, "it was the auto industry that narrowed the focus of the study to their product."

The National Transportation Policy Study Commission, another congressional multimillion-dollar research effort, concluded that highway expansion and maintenance were preferable to rail development. The Commission's advisory panel included highway lobbyist Gilbert E. Carmichael, National Highway Safety Advisory Committee; William F. Cellini, Illinois Asphalt Pavement Association; Richard L. Herman, Herman Brothers Trucking Company; and James D. Pitcock, William Brothers Construction Company (a highway construction firm). The Commission was headed by Representative Bud Shuster (R-Penn), well-known for his long opposition to auto safety and pollution control measures, and less well-known (as Common Cause has shown) as a major recipient of auto and oil company campaign contributions. Shuster also wrote the section of the Republican party 1980 platform calling for the abandonment of mass transit that has been the keystone of Reagan transportation policy, presided over by Transportation Secretary and former trucking-industry leader Drew Lewis.

For a brief period at the beginning of the seventies, it appeared that rail and mixed-modal systems (rail and bus), might make a comeback. Aerospace firms facing declining military contracts after the Vietnam War looked covetously upon the transit market, but Boeing and Rohr Industries were no match for GM and Exxon in lobbying. In a few cities, locally based businesses that were dependent upon economic growth and were desperate to reverse the falling value of central-city property joined with locally headquartered corporate capital to push for commuter rail systems to revitalize urban centers and stimulate urban growth. However, there was no necessary coincidence between public support for mass transit and corporate needs for coordinated land use and transit corridor development. Rail systems often failed to achieve the promised reduction in auto traffic. They provided an alternative only to a limited portion of the population—upper-income commuters who were likely to use their automobiles anyway. Confronted by continued federal motorization policies, local deficit spending exploded.
Until 1976, subsidies were limited to capital expenditures. Lacking support for operating costs meant that older higher-ridership systems received relatively fewer subsidies. In 1977, the Carter administration rechanneled federal investments almost exclusively toward bus systems, calling rail systems “overdesigned.” This coincided with a general antirail initiative that saw proposals for a 43 percent cut in Amtrak and a partial dismantling of the original Conrail system. Rail systems and vehicle research development decreased to a quarter of the Department of Transportation budget. It was replaced by increased funds for bus purchases.

As bus modernization proceeded in the seventies and GM monopolized bus production, bus fleet fuel efficiencies declined and operating costs increased. A variety of government and corporate studies concluded that bus systems and “people movers” (which compete with pedestrians instead of cars) were the only reasonable investment opportunities for public transportation. Both Carter administration officials and Reagan Budget Director David Stockman cited the same cost-benefit studies to argue for rail transit budget cuts.9 These research efforts were fatally flawed because of the limited and selective data upon which they were based. Projecting from data concerning ridership that had been compiled before the energy crisis, a General Motors-National League of Cities (as well as a Congressional Budget Office) report claimed that mass transit would inevitably account for only a small proportion of total urban trips (between 5 and 7.5 percent) and that rail lines were less energy-efficient than buses. Anticipating low levels of government spending, buses were projected as the means to

---

9 The hypothetical cost models upon which all of the pro-bus studies are based are fundamentally flawed and require a methodological criticism that can only be briefly suggested. The basic problems with these studies are that they: 1) assume fixed population densities as the basis or projected ridership, thereby ignoring studies showing the impact of transportation development upon land use; 2) they extrapolate current ridership loads into the future to show the expense of rail while ignoring studies that show rail investment would attract greater ridership; 3) construction costs for rail rights of ways are included, while those for buses are not making the construction cost comparisons unequivocal and invalid; 4) the studies ignore benefits of safety, travel time, environmental, and energy savings; 5) they use profit maximization rather than productivity criteria. McShane, Bloch, and Ihlo have examined specific operating systems to examine different efficiency rates between electricity and liquid fuel sources and show rail efficiencies considerably higher than buses in previous governmental and corporate studies (The Energy Advantages of Public Transportation [Washington, D.C.: Urban Mass Transit Authority, 1981]). Boris Pushkarev of the Regional Plan Association has utilized input-output data to show that indirect consumption in maintenance, wayside, and construction adds about 40 percent to gross fuel used in vehicle operation for buses.
increase transit use and energy savings. The assumption of these studies was also that transit was limited to nonauto-owning populations—poor, elderly, and handicapped. The lack of competition between public and private modes was, therefore, the result of demand by very different markets; government expenditure on rail transit would interfere with market forces. Utilizing questionable methods of cost estimation, higher operating and energy costs for bus systems were projected, belying actual operating data.

Faulty ridership extrapolations and cost estimations conveniently mask the concrete experience of other countries and cities that encouraged balanced transportation. Since the first energy crisis, Swedish, French, Canadian, and German cities inaugurated new suburban and regional rail systems, integrating them with expanded bus service along appropriate routes. Though these systems required massive investment, they yielded increased gains in transportation system productivity and a reduction of oil-generated balance of payment deficits. Other benefits included increased ridership, substantial reduction in city travel times, traffic safety increases, rising land valuations, employment increases, and environmental improvements. Ridership in Germany, for example, increased up to 60 percent in major cities since 1973. The argument that a separate, noncompetitive transportation market exists is hardly supported by such evidence; instead, the argument perpetuates a system of separate and unequal transportation access.

At this writing, Reagan administration proposals are to phase out all operating subsidies (now about 15.7 percent of transit budgets) by 1984, totally eliminate new rail construction, and reduce all capital expenditures between 15 and 30 percent. This is a watershed in abandoning mass transit, but it grows out of the mistakes of past policies. With reduced federal subsidies, fares have risen on the average of 19 percent in the past year alone, and maintenance and capital expenditures have been cut. Ridership continues to fall. The same conditions that precipitated the collapse of privately owned transit companies before 1950—lack of capital, reduced maintenance and modernization, rising fares, and declining ridership—now threatens surviving transit systems.

Corporate-directed transportation policy has not only destroyed transportation possibilities in the past, but has narrowed future ones as well. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the revolution of public transportation technology. As in other areas of the economy, patterns of capital investment in transportation left the U.S. with the most technologically backward and least efficient transportation system in the industrialized world, characterized by declining investment, employment, cost efficiency, and productivity. The absence of research, development, and technological innovation in rail car, roadbed, and tunnel construction raises total costs.
The decline of public transportation technology has resulted from a combination of factors: corporate failure in product development; governmental neglect of technological innovation; and government investment policies that preserved existing transportation technologies.

Bus technology has been controlled almost exclusively by the monopoly power of General Motors Corporation (which holds over 80 percent of the U.S. bus market). Consequently, U.S. bus technology has fallen considerably behind its European counterparts. As a result of greater competition, Europeans have introduced better fuel efficiencies, articulated buses, and newer suspension systems more than a decade before General Motors' advanced design bus was put into operation.

But if GM's bus innovation efforts are questionable, rail innovations were a disaster. With concrete highways covering many of the old rail right of ways, the cost of constructing new rail corridors is astronomic. Outside those few areas where old corridors have been preserved (San Diego, San Francisco, and Connecticut), the expense of purchasing the right of way is also high. With roadbed construction and maintenance a declining occupation in the United States, labor training and management costs of roadbed construction are higher in the U.S. than elsewhere.

To further complicate matters, the electrical generation systems necessary for rail transit are generally in disrepair. When San Francisco recently assessed its electrical generating capacity for its streetcar system, city consultants found that most of the generators, consisting of rotating machinery and mercury rectifiers, were obsolete before the Depression. Technology has not simply stagnated but disappeared. For example, most signal and car-carried control systems for the new San Francisco system had to be imported from Sweden and West Germany.

Similar problems exist for heavy-rail commuter and subway construction. Because of the lack of underground construction technology, tunneling costs in the United States are between $140 and $160 million a mile as opposed to $6 million a mile in England. The lack of technological innovation and efficient management practices have been cited by the U.S. Department of Transportation for these immense gaps in construction costs.

Government procurement policies further equipment problems. Each local governmental unit (usually a regional planning body) was able to specify options for rail supplies. This resulted in a complete lack of standardization. With each rail car and control system custom made, cost savings necessary for rail industry development in the seventies was absent. The costs of new rail systems were exorbitant for all but the wealthiest cities (Washington, Atlanta, San Francisco). The lack of standardization also prohibited the future integration of rail systems.

Public investment policies had the effect of freezing transportation tech-
nology at the status quo. Transportation Department investments in technologi-cal innovations have been antirail. While $173 million was spent in research and development on buses and new automated pedestrian travel modes that do not compete with highway traffic (for example, accelerated walkways and people movers), about $40 million was spent on rail development. Multimillion dollar research and development was squandered on such esoterica as the 300-mile-per-hour Tracked Air Cushion Vehicle and Gravity Vacuum Tube train, while subways and commuter rail vehicles could not maintain an average of 30 mph. More importantly, the combined Urban Mass Transportation Association research budget for all public modes was a fraction of the billions spent on automotive and highway development.

The technological devolution of public transportation is representative of a pattern increasingly common in U.S. industry—the decline of productive technology. Manufacturing not directly linked to the growth of the auto-oil-rubber coalition experienced disinvestment over the past decade. Without capital, technical capabilities faded that might otherwise have enhanced the viability of mass transit.

What has declined is not simply technical expertise, but the industrial capacity to respond to changing structural conditions in politics, the economy, and the environment. With manufacturing capacity overdeveloped in the pursuit of annual automobile style changes, the ability to facilitate more substantial improvements in transportation has withered. Public transportation remains an underdeveloped island in an overspecialized transportation industry dominated by monopoly firms controlling all forms of ground transportation. Moreover, the lead time necessary for developing a public transportation industry and constructing a balanced, efficient, and environmentally sound transportation system is rapidly running out. The long-term debts of a transportation system that promoted short-run corporate profits are now coming due.

Political centralization and economic concentration are the core processes of twentieth-century social organization; they are also its undoing. Centralized planning policies, drained of democratic participation, have promoted monopoly economic power. Both political and economic bureaucracies separately and through their fusion have lost the flexibility necessary to cope with drastically changed urban economic conditions. The largest planning bureaucracy of the modern state was a consequence of federal, state, and local highway building. After the defeat of urban populism, transportation came to be defined as a purely technical problem that only experts could solve; public participation was accordingly excluded. The technical definition of urban transportation also dominated the appointed corporate-directed regional planning authorities and
resulted in large, costly, and ambitious transportation proposals.

A way out of the pitfalls of centralized bureaucratic planning is to decentralize. Currently, localities mostly enforce national transportation policies. Instead, they should be empowered to plan their own systems, integrated at a regional level. Rather than shadowing suburban sprawl, local planning could stabilize and link urban, suburban, and polycentric travel. National transportation agencies should serve as a technical and information resource for elected neighborhood and metropolitan planning boards, rather than providing preordained plans. Experiments in some U.S. cities (San Diego, Madison, and Portland), as well as Italy and France, indicate that increased ridership, auto travel speeds, cost effectiveness, and environmental benefits have resulted. The democratic decentralization of transportation planning could allow consumers to become the planners, rather than the planned. This is quite different from current “New Federalism” proposals that are masking massive public disinvestment and abandonment of transit.

A way out of monopolistic control of the ground transportation industry and its resulting imbalance is to introduce competition between travel modes and their supplier industries. Both the supply and operating transit industries require effective governmental intervention and coordination. The aim of public policies and investment should be to revive transportation markets. While it is easy to see how public monies might be used to subsidize research that would result in greater productivity and employment, and might well be part of a general reindustrialization effort to utilize abandoned plants and equipment, it is essential, from a democratic point of view, not to repeat past policies governing the financing of transportation.

Up until now, transportation has been financed through regressive sales and property taxes, deficit spending, and highway trust funds. These fiscal instruments are as highly regressive as they are overused, resulting in negative income distribution and insulated from public control and market forces. Financing highways through designated rather than general revenues prevented flexible planning, protected highway planners from fiscal pressures, and satisfied large corporate interests in preventing transit viability.

Public transit can be financed through a widely accepted principle of public finance that treats public infrastructural investment in the urban transportation industry as a social expenditure from which many private benefits accrue. Accordingly, an increment of those benefits can justifiably be taxed. There is ample evidence of benefits—value captured by real estate close to transit corridors; publicly subsidized markets and overhead for auto, oil, and rubber products; increased savings in travel time and cost by auto drivers or commercial goods transport through congestion relief; wage subsidies to private employers through low transit fares. The regressive edge of current deficit financing can be removed.
San Francisco is experimenting with special assessment methods rather than property taxes to finance transit improvements. New York and Connecticut have tried, albeit unsuccessfully, due to the lack of federal legislation, to tax gross oil company receipts. France and Italy both tax large employers for the benefits of low fare transit. Such taxes are neither expropriatory nor unjustified, but reflect the need to realistically assess beneficiaries of their fare share of the burden of public costs. The current focus on user taxes ignores the free ride nonusers get from infrastructural investment.

Indirect public savings are also worth considering. There is reliable evidence to indicate that transit's decline posed not only a physical, but also a social barrier to income and employment mobility. Decent transit is an incentive for social participation rather than isolation, enabling workers, unemployed, women, and youth entering the labor force to access employment opportunities.

But innovative public financing or decentralized planning will not alone address the fundamental problem of urban transportation—the political and economic power of large corporations. Vigorous antitrust enforcement is a thing of the past, yet it should be restored to challenge the industrial network of automobile and oil firms in ground transportation.

The motorization of urban transportation led to one of the twentieth century's dead ends. Anyone who has lived through urban congestion, gas station lines, crumbling bridges, street-corner neighborhoods, or the social life of "bedroom" communities longs a bit for what is sometimes considered a romantic past of cars and trains, buses and streetcars. The issue of transportation is how to bridge the gap between city and town, suburb and countryside, not to see which wins on a demographic scorecard. In continuing to isolate our "living" from our "work," the spatial gaps in our social life will diminish our cities and our lives within them.
Not so very long ago the decline and fall of Richard Nixon brought the problems of civil liberties and presidential politics into the living rooms of millions of Americans on an almost daily basis. White House enemies lists, political misuse of the IRS, CIA domestic spying, FBI burglaries, corruption of the judicial process, the waging of secret wars—month after month these and other disclosures poured forth from newspapers, television sets, and congressional hearing rooms until they forced a president out of office, sent some of his subordinates to jail, and confronted the country with a crisis of confidence in its national government.

But it was never entirely clear what the problem was. Was it Richard Nixon? That was how a majority of the House Judiciary Committee saw it, and they were speaking, no doubt, for a majority of the Congress. Was it a problem of the “imperial presidency” taking over powers of the other branches of government until its overreaching finally shook them out of their slumber? That is certainly the way a large body of scholarly opinion has looked at the crisis of the Nixon White House, and no doubt there is much truth to be found here.

But there was another lesson to be learned from the decline and fall of Richard Nixon, and it was all but forgotten as soon as the crisis of August 1974 was over and a new president was installed in the White House. Nixon himself hinted at one of the most difficult problems he had confronted as president when he described his concept of “national security” in a court deposition in Morton Halperin’s wiretap lawsuit in 1976. Halperin had been the victim of a twenty-one-month warrantless wiretap installed on his home telephone when he was a deputy to Henry Kissinger on the National Security Council staff in 1969. The Halperin wiretap—along with taps on sixteen other government officials and journalists—was part of a Nixon White House investigation of supposed leaks of
sensitive information. When Nixon was questioned about the wiretap program, he justified it as follows:

In America, we have the blessing of both security and freedom. What we were trying to do with this [wiretap] program was to maintain security with the least possible infringement upon freedom. It is not always possible to do so... The use of electronic surveillance to enable the United States to conduct a responsible foreign policy, to get all the options and to get the best possible advice and to get the communication with people abroad that we need to have—I believe that for those fundamental reasons this kind of activity was not only right, but from the standpoint of the security of this country I think it was legally right.

Nixon's view of national security had a profound impact on the inhabitants of the White House. In June 1974, for example, one of the minor dramas of Watergate was played out in a Los Angeles courtroom, when Egil Krogh, chief of the White House plumbers, was sentenced for perjuring himself in connection with the burglary of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist. Before imposing sentence, the judge asked Mr. Krogh whether he wished to make any final statement for the record. He said:

I see now... the effect that the term “national security” had on my judgment. The very words served to block critical analysis. It seemed at least presumptuous if not unpatriotic to inquire into just what the significance of national security was.... The discrediting of Dr. Ellsberg, which today strikes me as repulsive and an inconceivable national security goal, at the time would have appeared a means to diminish any influence he might have had in mobilizing opposition to the course of ending the Vietnam War that had been set by the President. Freedom of the President to pursue his planned course was the ultimate national security objective.

In the eight years since Egil Krogh was sentenced as a White House plumber, the concept of “national security” has undergone considerable growth. After an initial period of post-Watergate reform, national security policies in recent years have generated steadily increasing pressures on traditional civil liberties. A current example is the Intelligence Identities Protection Act, which was signed into law by President Reagan on June 29, 1982. The Act makes it a crime to publish “any information that identifies an individual as a covert agent” of the CIA or FBI—even if the information is unclassified, is a matter of public record, or is derived entirely from public sources. The impetus for the legislation is the understandable desire to protect the lives of intelligence agents overseas, but as
drafted it almost certainly violates the First Amendment's guarantee of freedom of the press.

It is hoped that no president will use the Intelligence Identities Protection Act to try to curb freedom of the press, but the definitions of national security embodied in the Act are so broad that the First Amendment will be under constant pressure. Sponsors say that the statute is aimed at Covert Action Information Bulletin, a journal that has used public record information from newspapers and State Department publications to identify CIA agents. The new law could also silence a New York Times reporter who writes an article about agents who participate in the CIA's secret destabilization of Chile, or any other journalist or editor who makes a difficult decision to publish lawfully obtained information about intelligence agencies. Although the legislative history of the Act states that it is not intended to apply to investigative reporting, the express language is very broad. The statute does not require a prosecutor to show that a reporter intended to impair foreign intelligence activities by publishing an expose, but only that he had "reason to believe" that identifying an agent would do so. A warning by the CIA—or even general knowledge of the CIA's sensitivity about the subject of an article—may be enough to constitute the required "reason to believe."

In the face of these broad provisions, it is not surprising that many First Amendment scholars have concluded that the Intelligence Identities Protection Act is unconstitutional. For the first time in American history it would penalize the publication of information that is already public, and it would open the way for a new category of censorship. The authors of the new legislation have candidly stated that civil liberties must yield to superior claims of national security. Senator Richard Lugar, Republican of Indiana, put it very bluntly when he said in an interview with the New York Times, "I am willing to take risks with regard to all of the [constitutional] protections we have set up. . . . I don't think on a continuum we are going to be able to have both an ongoing intelligence capability and a totality of civil rights protection." Apparently, Senator Lugar was not just speaking for himself, because on March 18, 1982, the Intelligence Identities bill passed the Senate by an overwhelming vote of 90–6. The Senate vote was only slightly more lopsided than the margin in the House of Representatives, which had passed the bill six months earlier, 354–56.

The Intelligence Identities Protection Act is symptomatic of a growing crisis for civil liberties in the area of national security.

The origins of this crisis are both obvious and obscure. They are obvious because it is a clear lesson of our history that international tension often creates a hostile environment for civil liberties. They are obscure because the causes of
tension in the world today can in some measure be found in our own national security policies. The notorious Palmer Raids on tens of thousands of aliens living in the United States after World War I, the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II, political blacklisting and McCarthyism in the 1950s—these are some of the ugly legacies of earlier periods when the security of the nation was widely perceived to be threatened. Today we live under conditions of international tension and instability unmatched by any other period in our recent history. A relentless series of foreign military and political crises, coupled with the rapidly increasing threat of nuclear war, have combined to create a substantial impetus in the Reagan administration and parts of the Congress in favor of writing a blank check for national security. The result may be the most serious political crisis for civil liberties since the early 1950s.

As we survey the landscape of national security in the Reagan era, the Intelligence Identities bill is only one of the many recent threats to fundamental rights:

- In December 1980 a Washington research institute, the Heritage Foundation, issued a report on U.S. intelligence agencies prepared by several staff members who later became members of the Reagan transition team. The report calls for stepped-up surveillance of dissidents and a revival of federal internal security machinery. The justification: “terrorist cadres” that grow out of “the splinters of dissident or extremist movements” must be tracked “through the cumulative compilation of comprehensive files.” A central point of the report is that “clergymen, students, businessmen, entertainers, labor officials, journalists, and government workers all may engage in subversive activities without being fully aware of the extent, purpose, or control of their activities.”

- In January 1981, Strom Thurmond, the incoming head of the Senate Judiciary Committee, created a new Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism, to be chaired by Jeremiah Denton, a freshman Alabama Republican, eight-year prisoner of war in North Vietnam and one-time proponent of capital punishment for adultery. In a private comment, a liberal senator paraphrased Roosevelt in 1933, saying, “we have nothing to hope for but fear itself.”

- In April 1981, President Reagan conferred pardons on two former FBI officials convicted of planning and supervising warrantless FBI break-ins of private homes during the search for members of the Weather Underground in the 1970s. The president saluted the two convicted FBI burglary supervisors as “men who acted on high principle to bring an end to the terrorism that was threatening our nation. . . . Their actions were necessary to preserve the security interests of our country.” In response to criticism, the White House issued a statement saying that the President believes “warrantless searches in the intelligence field should be permitted when interests of national security so require.”

- In December 1981, Reagan signed a new executive order on intelligence agencies. It includes new authority for the CIA to mount “covert operations” in-
Explorations

side the United States so long as they are “not intended” to influence “U.S. political processes,” new authority for the CIA to spy on Americans at home and abroad in order to collect “significant foreign intelligence,” and new authority for the Attorney General to open mail without a judicial warrant if the targets are suspected of being “foreign agents,” a term which is nowhere defined in the order. This new executive order strips away basic civil liberties protections without any public debate.

- Three months later a massive expansion of the security classification system was put in place by the Reagan administration that enshrouds the uses of these new intelligence powers in permanent secrecy. The new classification order tells bureaucrats in essence: “When in doubt, keep it secret.” Gone is the requirement in the Carter administration’s earlier executive order that some “identifiable damage” must be likely to occur if information is not kept secret, as well as the requirement to balance the public’s right to know against the need for secrecy.

- At the same time the Reagan administration began pressing Congress to obliterate key sections of the Freedom of Information Act and CIA officials began urging private scientists to submit sensitive research plans to the government for “preclearance” so that the fruits of their research could be classified and kept secret from foreign governments.

These maneuvers by the Reagan administration have helped foster a climate in Congress where the very words “national security” serve to “block critical analysis.” The effect on civil liberties can be seen by the fact that there are now 158 members of the House of Representatives cosponsoring a resolution to resurrect the notorious House Un-American Activities Committee. It can also be seen by the fact that an obscure right-wing Virginia congressman, Dan Daniel, was able, in late 1981, to tack a rider on a 1982 appropriations bill that harks back to the McCarthy era by barring “communists, terrorists, and subversives” from participating in Labor Department employment programs. The measure was later struck down as unconstitutional by a federal court.

How did we come to this turn of events? The underlying crisis in the presidency of Richard Nixon was the clash between claims of national security—often cynically invoked by the White House—and traditional values of American liberty. But in the presidency of Ronald Reagan, there is little resistance to claims of national security, despite the fact that similar assertions were routinely questioned and sometimes condemned a decade earlier. What happened? The story begins long before Watergate.

At the end of World War II the United States was jolted out of its traditional isolation from world politics and became an active participant and frequent intervener in international affairs. The Cold War that prompted this fundamen-
tal policy-shift appeared to require a permanent place for many of the temporary institutions and powers of wartime mobilization. Just as the executive powers and agencies that had grown up in response to the Depression became a permanent feature in the political landscape during the New Deal, the security policies and intelligence community that grew out of World War II became a permanent feature of the Cold War. Five years after the end of World War II, President Harry S. Truman, with varying degrees of congressional concurrence, had already issued a series of executive orders creating a secrecy classification system, imposing loyalty and security investigations on government employees, and requiring members of the Communist party and other "subversive organizations" in the United States to register with the government. The cumulative impact of these developments on civil liberties reaffirmed James Madison's comment to Thomas Jefferson in 1798 that "perhaps it is a universal truth that the loss of liberty at home is to be charged to provisions against danger, real or pretended, from abroad."

Deep involvement in foreign political and military affairs became the principal feature of postwar American foreign policy. The consequences for the structure of government in the United States were far reaching. For one thing, an interventionist foreign policy served to diminish the power of Congress and to increase that of the executive branch. During this period, Secretary of State Dean Acheson was fond of quoting Tocqueville's warning that "foreign politics demand scarcely any of those qualities which are peculiar to a democracy. . . . [A democracy] cannot combine its measures with secrecy or await their consequences with patience. These are qualities which more especially belong to an individual or an aristocracy." In the United States this precept translated into a strong executive bureaucracy.

The postwar growth of the executive branch had an increasingly distorting effect on the Constitution. The premise of the founders that Congress makes the laws and the executive branch carries them out was a major obstacle to presidents seeking to shape world events to conform to their view of American security interests. Under the Constitution, of course, it is the Congress, not the president, that has the power to declare war, raise armies, and has the final say in the making of treaties. But these arrangements were increasingly seen as a hindrance to quick presidential responses to the long series of foreign crises over the last four decades—Greece, Iran, Lebanon, Guatemala, the Congo, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Chile, Angola, El Salvador, Nicaragua—a list that extends to every corner of the world. Hanging over each of these crises like the sword of Damocles has been the confrontation between the U.S. and the Soviet Union and the nuclear balance of terror that has dominated American defense and foreign policies since 1945.

This, then, is the national security framework within which postwar pres-
dents have sought "the freedom to pursue [their] planned course of action." To make up for their lack of constitutional authority to act so freely, every president since Truman has relied on two doctrines to justify executive initiatives to protect national security: inherent presidential power and post-hoc congressional ratification. Taken together, they provide a new legal system within which presidents have felt justified in acting outside the confines of the Constitution.

In the case of inherent power, repeated presidential acts of warrantless wiretapping or covert manipulation of foreign governments are said to validate claims of presidential authority to perform these acts. The Supreme Court rejected the theory of inherent presidential power in its 1952 decision in the Steel Seizure Case, when President Truman sought to nationalize the steel industry. But Justice Jackson's frequently cited concurring opinion in that case left the door open to future presidents by recognizing a grey area where the president may act in the absence of express constitutional authority, unless and until the Congress tells him to stop.

In the case of post-hoc ratification, military or intelligence initiatives by the executive branch, even if secret, are said to be tacitly ratified by Congress when it votes general appropriations, as in the case of the secret bombing of Cambodia in 1969 or clandestine efforts to overthrow the government of Chile in 1973. Broad language in congressional statutes, such as the provision in the National Security Act of 1947 giving the CIA director power to "protect intelligence sources and methods," is also said to ratify programs of doubtful constitutionality, such as the CIA's requirement that former employees submit manuscripts for pre-publication censorship.

These doctrines of expanded presidential authority have become the major building blocks of national security policy. They are also major roadblocks for the Bill of Rights.

The national security powers of the president are powers to act in peacetime as if the country were at war. But since at least 1945 we have lived in a twilight zone in which the distinctions between war and peace are so blurred, and the instability of the world so constant that presidents have lacked any objective guideposts for the exercise of their national security powers. "War is peace," wrote Orwell. This maxim has guided presidents for more than thirty years, all of whom have claimed that in order to keep the peace abroad it has been necessary for them to do things at home that, it was once believed, could be done only in a state of declared war.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the areas of government secrecy and political surveillance. Here, the Nixon administration stands out from other recent presidencies only because of the fate of its principal, not because its policies
presented a unique threat to civil liberties. In fact, the development of a law of secrecy and surveillance, and its steady erosion of the First and Fourth Amendments, has accelerated in the post-Nixon, post-Watergate era.

Until 1971 the national security secrecy system had been created and maintained by the executive branch alone. The only law establishing the system was a series of executive orders issued by Presidents Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Nixon. There were security clearances and investigations in many government agencies, and millions of pages of classified documents. But there was no systematic enforcement of secrecy and no stamp of approval by the courts or the Congress. All that began to change when the Nixon administration went to court in May 1971 to try to block the *New York Times* from publishing the Pentagon Papers. Although the case is widely regarded as a victory for freedom of the press, the Pentagon Papers litigation actually set in motion the development of a formal law of national security secrecy. The case marked the first time the courts had become involved in defining and enforcing the secrecy system; the first time a president had sought the help of the courts in obtaining a prior restraint of publication of the press; and the first time the Supreme Court had said that both the president and the Congress may have authority to restrain the press in this area, although not in that case.

The Supreme Court’s 6-3 decision in the Pentagon Papers case was remarkable for the opportunity it gave the president to curtail First Amendment rights at the very moment that it authorized the *New York Times* to roll its presses. Forty years earlier, in *Near v. Minnesota*, another celebrated prior restraint case to come before the Supreme Court, the Court had made it clear that, at least in peacetime, the First Amendment rule against prior restraints is absolute. In times of war, it said, publishing a narrow category of military information might conceivably be restrained if it concerned such details as “the sailing dates of transports or the number and location of troops.”

In the Pentagon Papers decision, the Supreme Court abandoned the wartime limitation articulated in *Near*. The pivotal concurring opinions of Justices Stewart and White for the first time generalized the category of information subject to prior restraint and recognized the authority of Congress to legislate in this sensitive constitutional territory. After the dust had settled, the Nixon administration and its successors began to claim that the Pentagon Papers decision had actually established two key principles in a new law of secrecy: first, that the government can block publication of information if its disclosure will “surely result in direct, immediate, and irreparable damage to the nation,” as Justice Stewart put it; and second, that if Congress passes a statute authorizing prior restraint, the standard for obtaining an injunction to stop publication can be even lower.

The cat was out of the bag. A succession of post-Watergate cases transformed it into a tiger with a ravenous appetite for the First Amendment. The most spec-
tacular prior restraints to be imposed in the decade since the Pentagon Papers
decision involved former employees of the CIA whose writings the government
claimed the right to censor. Because former employees are insiders who once
had authorized access to classified information, the government argued success­
fully in these cases that it did not have to satisfy the Pentagon Papers standard in
order to obtain a prior restraint. The Victor Marchetti and Frank Snepp deci­sions established the legal principle that the CIA and presumably other govern­
ment agencies as well can bar a current or former employee from publishing “any
information or material relating to the agency, its activities or intelligence activi­
ties generally, either during or after the term of [his or her] employment . . . with­
out specific prior approval of the agency.” This new principle is based on the law
of contract—if you work for an agency that operates within the national security
secrecy system, your employment contract obliges you to waive permanently
your First Amendment rights to speak and publish without prior restraint.

In Frank Snepp’s case this principle was taken to its most Draconian extreme
by the Justice Department in the Carter administration. Unlike Marchetti, Snepp
was not alleged to have disclosed any classified information in his book, Decent
Interval, a critical review of the CIA’s conduct during the U.S. withdrawal from
Vietnam. But the Carter Justice Department sued Snepp to recover the profits
he had earned from his book for violating what it called a “fiduciary obligation”
to submit the manuscript for CIA clearance, even though Snepp’s contract barred
him only from disclosing classified information. When the case reached the Su­
preme Court in February 1980, the Court upheld this new prior restraint theory,
6–3, without even hearing argument, and relegated its discussion of Snepp’s First
Amendment defense to a footnote of the opinion.

The Snepp litigation was just part of the Carter administration’s curtailment
of freedom of the press on the grounds of national security. In 1979 the Justice
Department moved against a left-wing magazine in an effort to block it from
publishing information that was already in the public domain. The Progressive
case involved an article written about the hydrogen bomb based on information
obtained by its author, Howard Morland, from studying government publica­
tions. In its effort to obtain an injunction, the government argued that informa­
tion about atomic weapons is “born classified” and can be restricted under the
Atomic Energy Act whether or not its disclosure would meet the Pentagon Pa­
pers standard. Although the government eventually abandoned the Progressive
case when it became increasingly clear that the H-bomb information was not se­
cret, the theory put forward by the Justice Department was that there are whole
categories of “dangerous information” that are beyond the reach of the First
Amendment.

Three years later, in 1982, the Reagan administration is using this same the­
ory in its well publicized effort to persuade academic scientists to submit their
research plans to the government for clearance. On March 30 the New York Times reported that Lawrence J. Brady, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Trade Administration, condemned what he called “a strong belief in the academic community that they have an inherent right to...conduct research free of government review or oversight.” So much for the First Amendment.

National security secrecy presents its gravest threat to the First Amendment when it is armed with the criminal law. For this reason it has never been a crime simply to publish information relating to the national defense. Until the enactment of the Intelligence Identities Protection Act in 1982, the espionage laws of the United States applied only to situations in which information was secretly passed to a foreign government for the specific purpose of injuring the United States. Even at the height of the Cold War, Congress declined to make it a crime to publish national defense information when it enacted the Internal Security Act of 1950, which expressly provides that “nothing in this Act shall be construed to authorize, require, or establish military or civilian censorship.”

In 1971 this consensus began to break down when the Nixon administration, on the eve of oral argument in the Pentagon Papers case, indicted Daniel Ellsberg for releasing the papers to the press. In pursuing the Ellsberg prosecution before it was dismissed because of government misconduct, the Nixon Justice Department argued that there was no need for it to show that Ellsberg intended to damage the United States, and that it did not matter that he had passed the papers to the New York Times, rather than to a foreign government. All that mattered, the Justice Department said, was that the papers were the property of the government and that Ellsberg knew they were classified.

Seven years later, in 1978, this same theory was successfully used by the Carter administration when it obtained convictions of Ronald Humphrey and David Truong in a celebrated espionage prosecution. Humphrey and Truong had been charged under the espionage statute with passing national defense information to persons not entitled to receive it, without any allegation that they had done so with an intent to injure the United States or even that they had passed the information to agents of a foreign government. Soon after the Truong and Humphrey convictions, the Carter administration sent to Congress the first version of the Intelligence Identities Protection Act, reflecting all the elements of the new crime of disclosing official secrets. Although it took the Reagan administration to secure the bill's enactment, the new crime had been planted and carefully nurtured by three presidents.

Like the law of secrecy, the law of national security surveillance has evolved from bold presidential assertions of power to an extensive authority ratified by judicial decisions and congressional enactment. Every president since
Franklin Roosevelt has claimed the power to conduct warrantless wiretapping of foreign governments. But once again, it was Richard Nixon who put forward the most sweeping claims in this area, and sought to have them approved by the courts.

In a series of cases beginning in 1969, the Nixon administration argued that it had an inherent power to disregard the Fourth Amendment warrant requirement whenever it conducted wiretaps or physical searches of persons or groups believed to be a threat to the national security. In the first such case to reach the appellate level, this argument was rejected by the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, which wrote a scathing opinion in 1971 comparing the Nixon claims to the royal prerogatives of King George III to search the houses of colonists—prerogatives whose exercise triggered the American Revolution and were foremost in the minds of the Founding Fathers when they wrote the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution prohibiting unreasonable searches and seizures. The Sixth Circuit decision was affirmed by a unanimous Supreme Court in 1972. Like the Pentagon Papers decision, however, the Court's ruling in the national security wiretap case was most significant for what it did not decide. Since the wiretap at issue had been installed on a domestic organization with no connections to any foreign power, the Court left open the possibility that warrantless surveillance of a person or group with "foreign ties" would be legal. For the next few years, however, the erosion of the Fourth Amendment appeared to have been contained.

By the end of the Nixon administration, the courts and the Congress were viewing presidential claims of national security with skepticism. In a 1973 Freedom of Information Act case, for example, when a group of congressmen sued the Environmental Protection Agency to obtain information about the environmental impact of underground nuclear testing in Alaska, several Supreme Court Justices observed in a concurring opinion that blanket national security claims can be "cynical, myopic, or even corrupt." A year later, the Watergate tapes case provided a dramatic example of such a claim.

But the political corruption of the Nixon White House obscured the steady development of a new law of national security surveillance. Taking its cue from the Supreme Court's 1972 wiretap decision, the law began to focus on the elusive concept of "foreign agency." Since the Court had held that the Fourth Amendment only barred warrantless national security surveillance of domestic targets, suspected agents of a foreign power were presumed to be beyond its reach. Ironically, this distinction established a legal rational for much of the surveillance that had been condemned in the Nixon era. One example was the CIA's program of spying on the anti-Vietnam War movement, jauntily dubbed "Operation CHAOS." This was a surveillance effort to ferret out links between the leaders of the peace movement and foreign governments. Although no such links were ever established, the program resulted in the creation of CIA files on more than
300,000 domestic activists participating in activities that had been under suspicion for having a foreign stimulus.

The Ford, Carter, and Reagan administrations have all claimed, in a series of executive orders, that undefined foreign agent surveillance is beyond the reach of the Fourth Amendment. The confusing world of these executive decrees is best captured by a section of the Carter order entitled “Restrictions on Certain Collection Techniques.” It reads as follows:

Activities . . . for which a warrant would be required if undertaken for law enforcement rather than intelligence purposes, shall not be undertaken without a judicial warrant, unless the president has authorized the type of activity involved and the Attorney General has both approved the particular activity and determined that there is probable cause to believe that the United States person is the agent of a foreign power.

What does this mean? It means that whenever the government has “probable cause to believe” that a person in the United States is an “agent of a foreign power” (a term not defined in the executive order), that person can be targeted for unlimited, warrantless wiretapping, television monitoring, physical searches, and mail opening. A White House document further explaining and implementing this claim of presidential power is classified “because of the sensitivity of the information and its relation to national security.”

The Ford, Carter, and Reagan executive orders on intelligence agencies have been issued with much public fanfare proclaiming the “rule of law” over the “intelligence abuses” of the Watergate era. At the same time, however, the orders have been broadly drafted to fit the needs of the national security apparatus, regardless of their impact on civil liberties. The Reagan order represents the culmination of this process. It goes beyond the “foreign agent” approach of the Carter administration and authorizes the CIA to conduct general surveillance of anyone inside the United States who may be in possession of “significant foreign intelligence,” such as journalists or academics or businessmen returning from trips overseas. It also authorizes the CIA to conduct undefined covert operations inside the United States so long as they are not “intended” to influence “the political process, public opinion, policies or the media.” No secret abuses can occur now. Everything is out in the open. All in black and white. All within the claim of a general foreign security loophole to the Constitution.

During the last decade there has been only one successful effort in the Congress to narrow this presidential claim, and that success has been mixed. In 1978 Congress enacted the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, requiring judicial warrants based on evidence of criminal conduct for most national security wiretapping in the United States. On paper, this statute is a significant improvement
over the chaotic state of the law before its enactment. It puts Congress on record against presidential claims of inherent power to conduct unrestricted surveillance, and it all but closes the "foreign security" loophole to the warrant requirement left open by the Supreme Court in its 1972 decision. On the other hand, the statute authorizes the executive branch to keep all its foreign security wiretaps permanently secret, and it lowers the standard for the issuance of warrants so that full-fledged probable cause of a crime does not have to be shown.

The real significance of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, however, will ultimately depend how it is applied. The early signs are not encouraging. The statute sets up a special "Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court" to receive applications for wiretap orders. The court operates under extraordinary security procedures for the handling of materials submitted to it—procedures that inevitably compromise its independence from the executive branch. So compelling is the lure of legitimacy surrounding this special court that the Carter administration could not resist turning to it on at least three occasions in 1979 and 1980 for approval of physical searches as well as wiretaps, paving the way for routine cooperation between the executive branch, the courts, and the Congress in pruning back the Constitution in the name of national security. In essence, the Carter Justice Department was saying that since Congress has created a special national security court, that court should be used as an all-purpose source of authority for particular executive actions curtailing constitutional rights. If the court can authorize wiretaps, why not physical searches, mail opening, covert action, prior restraint, and censorship?

Apparently the Reagan administration prefers to leave these delicate matters to executive discretion, so the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court is once again limited to performing its statutory function of serving up wiretap warrants that their targets will never see. But the new court is a permanent feature of our legal system and it stands for the stark proposition that the conflict between constitutional rights and national security must be adjudicated under different procedures than those which apply to other areas of constitutional law.

The development of a formal law expanding the concept of national security is a largely unnoticed legacy of the Watergate era. Out of the national trauma that accompanied the impeachment proceedings against Richard Nixon there emerged a consensus that abuses of presidential power must be contained by the rule of law. This consensus was best articulated by Chief Justice Warren Burger, speaking for a unanimous Supreme Court in the White House tapes decision, which served as Nixon's writ of execution in July 1974:

The President ... reads the Constitution as providing an absolute privilege of confidentiality for all presidential communications. Many de-
cisions of this Court, however, have unequivocally reaffirmed ... that it is the province and duty of the judicial branch to say what the law is. ... We conclude that ... the [President's] generalized assertion of privilege must yield to the demonstrated, specific need for evidence in a pending criminal trial.

But the rule of law has little force if the law can always be bent by claims of necessity. Another passage from Burger's opinion in the tapes case is a reminder that the consensus about Nixon's abuses of power never touched his claims about the necessities of national security. How much deference should be accorded to presidential definitions of national security? The view of the Court is that few questions should be asked of a president when he claims to be acting in this area.

The President does not place his claim of privilege on the ground that [the tapes] are military or diplomatic secrets. As to these areas ... the courts have traditionally shown the utmost deference to presidential responsibilities.

National security is a ubiquitous concept that presidents have frequently invoked over the last three decades to insulate their actions from review. The law has not only been inadequate as a safeguard against overreaching claims of national security; it has become, especially since the Nixon presidency, a source of legitimacy for the view that definitions of national security should be left to the discretion of the executive branch. Over the last eight years the courts and the Congress have increasingly been drawn into the conflict between security and liberty, but instead of defining and narrowing security claims by the executive branch, they have often ratified executive practices and insured them against legal challenge.

The ultimate effect of much law in this area has been to authorize discretion and flexibility in the management of security practices. The result is that today we have greater secrecy, more censorship, a CIA with more domestic authority, an FBI with fewer restraints, and a National Security Agency with broader power than we have ever had in our history. And all of these developments have taken place under a new system of law that has grown up in the shadow of the Nixon presidency, after we thought we had struck down the abuses that produced Watergate. Ten years later, most Americans are not aware of this continued erosion of their individual liberties in the name of a dangerously expanding concept of national security.

What is most remarkable about all this is that we have drifted into a state of permanent emergency that has no immediate contest. We do not know what the emergency is or how long it will last. We do not even have a clear understanding of its impact on our system of liberty, since we have been conditioned to accept
the view that the rule of law often requires individual liberty to yield to claims of security under certain limited circumstances. In fact, we do not even think of ourselves as living in a state of emergency. On the contrary, we believe that a general suspension of liberty happens only in other countries and could never happen here.

Take a typical example close to home. On October 16, 1970, Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau went on Canadian national television and declared a “state of insurrection” throughout Canada, based on the kidnapping of a Canadian minister and a British consul by Quebec separatists. Trudeau invoked the Canadian War Measures Act and authorized the national police to conduct predawn roundups of French Canadians suspected of associating with the separatists. Trudeau’s emergency decree had the effect of temporarily suspending the Canadian Bill of Rights.

Could it happen here? Probably not the way it happened in Canada. We are not likely to experience such a dramatic announcement and clear suspension of the Constitution in a time of similar crisis. Why not? Because our law of national security is flexible enough to accommodate almost any necessity. A decade ago, the Nixon administration was already able to devise methods of coping with similar emergencies without formally suspending the Constitution. In 1971 Nixon’s second attorney general, Richard Kleindienst, commented on Trudeau’s declaration of emergency by stating:

It could not happen here under any circumstances. We wouldn't suspend the Bill of Rights even if the whole Cabinet, the Chief Justice and the Speaker of the House were kidnapped. . . . We wouldn't have to because our existing laws—together with our surveillance and intelligence apparatus, which is the best in the world—are sufficient to cope with any situation. . . . There is enough play at the joints of our . . . law, enough flexibility, so that if we really felt that we had to pick up leaders of a violent uprising, we could. We would find something to charge them with and we would hold them that way for a while.

That, of course, is exactly what the Nixon Justice Department did when it unceremoniously rounded up 12,000 people in the streets of Washington, D.C., during the May Day antiwar demonstrations in 1971. Although these mass arrests were later condemned by federal courts as unconstitutional, they were an awesome display of informal executive power to define and declare emergencies and suspend the Constitution. Comparing the Canadian and American approaches to national security, the Canadian Attorney General, John Turner, made a wry comment after Trudeau lifted his emergency decree:

In a certain sense, it is a credit to the civil liberties of a country that it has to invoke extraordinary powers to cope with a real emergency. Some
countries have these powers at their disposal all the time.

Is the United States becoming such a country? Without clearly defining what we mean by national security, we have turned it into a talisman to ward off any evil that might befall us as a nation. It is disturbing, but not surprising, therefore, that the current administration has turned the CIA loose to spy on Americans and conduct “covert actions” inside the U.S.; created a presumption that all government information about foreign or military affairs can be withheld from the public; pardoned FBI officials who supervised criminal burglaries as heroes in a war against terrorism; mounted a campaign for official censorship of scientific research; and accused the critics of its foreign policy of promoting Soviet propaganda.

There is a simple question that we must ask ourselves as we look at these recent developments and the long history of national security maneuvers that preceded them: where does the Constitution fit in? National security is what protects us from our adversaries, but the Constitution and the Bill of Rights are what distinguish us from them. The question, of course, is not just one of law. We must decide what we mean by national security and whether its protection should be allowed to blur our principal distinguishing features as a nation. “Liberty lies in the hearts of men,” Judge Learned Hand said in a famous speech delivered during a time of grave national danger, in 1943. “When it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can save it.” Judge Hand’s speech echoed the warnings of the drafters of the Bill of Rights that, in the words of Thomas Paine, “those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom must always undergo the fatigue of supporting it.”
Dilemmas of Participation in Latin America

ELDON KENWORTHY

Socialist revolutions appear in Latin American countries that lack, among other things, effective channels of mass participation in national politics. Where such revolutions triumph, an opportunity arises to empower those in whose name the revolution was made. What form shall this empowerment take? The answer has been satisfactorily given neither by Marxist theory nor by the practice of the established socialist states. It is an area in which the few socialist governments of Latin America proceed hesitantly by trial-and-error.

This article first describes the problems accompanying political participation in such postrevolutionary situations and then examines one indigenous solution: the "Organs of Popular Power" eventually created in Cuba. The Cuban experiment will be compared not to abstract criteria for democracy. Rather the question will be framed this way: to what extent is the Cuban system a satisfactory, if incomplete, resolution of both the leaders' and their followers' expectations regarding political participation?
Marxism, according to Harry Boyte, "assumes that a sundering of people from their historical and organic connections—from their 'roots'—is the indispensable preliminary to freedom."¹ Through its multiple forms of alienation, capitalism liberates workers from past identities. Stripped of these divisive identities, it is argued, workers recognize the proletarian in each other and begin both the liberation of their class and the creation of a more rational social order. "The left does more than name and describe modern suffering," comments Boyte. "It also proposes a theory for ending it that assumes people are and must be that to which capitalism tends to reduce them."² It is clear that Boyte does not believe that political courage and creativity flow from alienation.

Latin American revolutions support Boyte's views. Perhaps because Latin American capitalism is dependent and incomplete, revolutionary protest has been fueled by strong ties to land and neighborhood (barrio), by nationalism, and by a critique of capitalism rooted in Catholicism, which antedates capitalism. Revolutionary behavior flows at least as much from values and memories embedded in popular tradition as from alienation experienced in the modern workplace. The 1979 revolution in Nicaragua is a case in point.

Made in the name of Sandino, this revolution invoked a history of popular resistance dating back to the 1850s, when the United States first impinged on Nicaraguan sovereignty. Popular support for many of the revolutionaries arose from their being seen as los muchachos: youths performing the heroic role accorded them by a culture that links each new generation to societal regeneration. Loyalties to neighborhood were evident in the widespread resistance to Somoza. In Monimbó, a barrio of Masaya that exemplified this neighborhood solidarity, artisans used traditional skills to manufacture weapons. Today the revolution is remembered in terms of local citizens who died to make it happen. One sees not massive monuments to all the war dead of Nicaragua, but individual streets named after individual local martyrs.

Particular attention should be paid "liberation theology," which to Marx would have been a contradiction in terms. In both Nicaragua and El Salvador, Christian comunidades de base (grassroots congregations often led by laity) have served functions comparable to those provided in the U.S. civil rights movement by the black church: legitimating "illegal" challenges to the dominant order while offering sanctuary to those who make this challenge their praxis. Some of the combative popular organizations united in the Democratic Revolutionary Front in El Salvador grew out of comunidades de base and the cooperatives they spawned. According to one estimate, by 1979 there were over a hundred thou-

² Ibid.
sand of these grassroots congregations in Latin America.  
Among the revolutionary leadership of both Nicaragua and El Salvador are lay preachers and ordained clergy, mostly Catholic but some Protestant. Dietrich Bonhoeffer and John XXIII are quoted alongside Sandino, Martí, and Marx. Among the rank and file the fusion between Christianity and revolution takes forms ranging from the Pietá-like photograph of the dead Ché Guevara to the inscription scrawled on a Nicaraguan wall: “Fortunate is the womb that bore a Sandinista fighter.” The link is not lost on U.S. policymakers. From the Rockefeller Report commissioned by Richard Nixon to the Committee of Santa Fe influential with Reaganites, advisers of U.S. presidents have warned against the Church’s contribution to revolution in Latin America.

If since 1968 a significant faction of the Latin American Church has openly endorsed popular protest and empowerment, over the preceding centuries the authority-supporting Church harbored, in the recesses of its doctrine, Aquinas’s legitimation of disobedience. (Civil authority that violates natural law—God’s law—should not be obeyed. Open rebellion may be justified only in extreme cases, but extreme cases exist.) Of course the finer points of theology never permeated the masses, and it may be argued that the anarchism that Richard Morse and other students of the region view as a persistent tradition owes more to geography than to theology—to the distance separating king from colonial, tax collector from rancher. Whatever the reason, in most Latin American cultures the sense of justice seems rooted more in intuition and historical precedent than in positive law. Civil obedience is not a given; rebellion has credentials.

Names such as Zapata, Martí, Evita, Sandino, Gaitán, and Ché resonate in specific national contexts as embodiments of the revolutionary option. When political openings appear, as a split within the military will sometimes create, ordinary citizens remember this tradition and try to translate inheritance into action. The 1965 uprising in Santo Domingo is a case in point. A book describing it

---

3 Penny Lernoux, _Cry of the People_ (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1980), p. 448. In the 1970s in El Salvador alone, some 15,000 lay leaders of the Christian base communities were trained. A Maryknoll nun described the impact this movement had in the countryside in these words: “When I first arrived in Tamanique, every time a child died the family would say, ‘It’s the will of God.’ But after the people became involved in the Christian communities, that attitude began to change . . . After a while they began to say, ‘The system caused this.’” Tommie Sue Montgomery, _Revolution in El Salvador_ (Boulder: Westview Press, 1982), pp. 103-4.

is entitled *Barrios in Arms*; those *barrios* were for the most part neighborhoods of the poor.\(^5\)

No matter how rooted revolutionary behavior is in traditional values, post-revolutionary leadership usually exhibits a strong national, modern, and Marxist concept of the task at hand. Leaders view the arduous work of socialist transformation of their maldeveloped, dependent countries as if the masses only act *en masse* out of a dedication born of a modern understanding of the nation's plight. Ché Guevara sometimes revealed this abstract, homogenized, Marxist conception of political motivation. Five years after the revolution triumphed in Cuba, he announced that cutting sugarcane was done "with love and grace" since "what enslaves man is not work but rather his failure to possess the means of production."\(^6\) A few years before, Fidel Castro proclaimed, "here there is just one class, the humble; that class is in power," and later: "today, when there is total identification of the people with their resources; today when there is complete identification of the laborer with the fruits of his labor, . . . it would not occur to anyone to consider a machine his enemy."\(^7\)

In their first years of rule, the Sandinistas avoided this abstract idealism that ironically springs from materialist Marxism. Owing to the multiclass nature of the opposition to Somoza and to the new regime's dependence on the private sector to reconstruct the economy, "diálogo"—dialogue—and "pluralismo político" became key phrases in the leaders' vocabulary. In its concrete dealings with peasants, however, and with Atlantic fishermen, Miskito Indians, market vendors, coffee growers, and some clergy, the ruling *comandantes* betray the same impatience, the same flight into rhetoric, the same reluctance to comprehend the real choices their policies force on the powerless, as their Cuban counterparts did at a comparable moment.

True, the external pressure on the Sandinistas is intense. Given stagnation in the world economy and reaction in the White House, Nicaragua's was the right revolution at the wrong time. Acknowledging these pressures, however, does not diminish the tragedy of another revolution, pledged to honor the diversity of its supporters and to empower them, slipping into a dialogue of the deaf. By the

---


time the new law of political parties was proclaimed, it was moot, much of the opposition hounded into silence. At the grassroots one now hears either ritual incantations or the cynicism for which peasants are famous: “It’s the same monkey with a different tail.”

How are we to understand this process?

First, it is apparent that revolutionary leaders share with many of their followers a disdain for previous forms of routinized political participation. Some students of Latin America argue that liberal democratic forms never suited the subjective understanding of politics, others that these forms were discredited by decades of fraud and corruption. Among those identified with revolution one senses an initial preference for continuing the task-oriented, minimally structured, frequently consensual politics of the military struggle. But two problems soon arise.

Revolutionary consensus, fed by hatred of the old regime and by unrealistic dreams of what will replace it, erodes under the pressures of postrevolutionary reality. Secondly, during the fighting so much popular participation occurred in face-to-face interactions within neighborhoods or within guerrilla units that it is hard to find a model of national political organization while clinging to the simpler, more direct forms of the previous phase. When the Sandinistas triumphed, for instance, there were only two governing structures operative throughout the country: the national directorate of the Frente (essentially nine guerrilla commanders joined by “the Twelve” prestigious civilians) and the barrio based Civilian Defense Committees. Three years later, it is still not clear how national leadership connects to local organizations.

The two problems intertwine. In the postrevolutionary period leaders are reluctant to pin down the mix of command and representation until they see how amenable the led are to the vanguard’s prescription of what needs to be done. In both Cuba and Nicaragua leaders have given higher priority to defending the revolution from external enemies and to attacking the legacy of social and economic underdevelopment than they have to institutionalizing popular participation. At best leaders are ambivalent about yielding the near monopoly of decision making that characterized the fighting phase. Prematurely representative politics, in their eyes, would leave the new order vulnerable to internal divisions and outside penetration. They have little trust in those who did not put their lives on the line and a strong sense of obligation to those who did and paid the price.

While socialist in spirit, these new governments are saddled with tasks of re-

8 For information on attitudes inside Nicaragua, I am indebted to Dennis Gilbert and Forrest Colburn, whose observations should find their way into print soon. I visited Nicaragua in January 1982 and remain responsible for the interpretation given here, although benefiting from Colburn’s and Gilbert’s separate interviews in Nicaragua before and after mine.
construction and accumulation that require denial and discipline from the populace. Revolutionary leaders must complete the work of capitalism while confronted with the hostility of capitalist powers. In the euphoria following the military triumph, it is not clear that the masses will accept their historic duty as a sacrificial generation. It is best, some leaders argue, to maintain the disarticulated politics of the military phase: mobilization below with decision making confined to the top.

Whatever the reason, and there are many, both Cuban and Nicaraguan leaders have delayed institutionalizing leader-led relations. In Nicaragua the Sandinistas postponed until 1985 the national elections they had promised during the fighting. Framing electoral and party legislation has proceeded slowly in the Council of State, and has been eclipsed by the emergency decrees. While mass organizations have methods of selecting national representatives from regional and municipal units, these procedures have not been formalized. In Cuba a project to draft a new constitution was begun six years after the triumph; two years later a scheme for "local power" was broached. These attempts at institutionalizing political participation were aborted, however, and the project not seriously advanced until the mid-seventies.

The older revolution in Cuba provides clues both to this delay and to the eventual resumption of the leadership's interest in institutionalized participation. Throughout the first decade of the Castro regime, the vanguard mobilized the masses in support of its attempt to overcome underdevelopment while trying to escape dependency on a single world power. The spirit of equality born of the guerrilla war and reinforced by external attacks gave leader-led relations considerable directness. There were few explicit means, however, by which rank and file supporters could either control local institutions or send a clear message to the national leadership.

The effort to achieve a ten-million ton sugar harvest in 1970 has come to symbolize the gradual transition from this mobilization phase to a more representative system. When the desired "great leap forward" of the late sixties produced stumbles that increased reliance on the army could not avert, the Cuban vanguard modified its strategy, adopting a slower, more coordinated assault on underdevelopment, with less emphasis on autonomy from the Soviet Union and more emphasis on two-way communication between leaders, cadres, and the citizenry at large.

Structured participation by the rank and file was seen in a new light: less as a constraint upon national leadership and more as an ally in the vanguard's struggle against low productivity. In an effort to elicit high quality work from workers unaccustomed to it, to minimize the demoralization that favoritism brings, and to prevent middle-level bureaucrats from strangling society in red tape, the Cuban
leadership turned to a formal system of popular participation combined with administrative decentralization and economic reforms. This occurred fifteen years after the revolutionaries came to power.

If we ask what political inventions are acceptable to revolutionary leaders once they recognize that the honeymoon of uncritical support is over, two answers arise from the Cuban experience. Local participation is more attractive to elites than national participation, inasmuch as citizen involvement at the local level may help implement national plans in the face of understaffing or sabotage by the bureaucracy. Leaders also welcome forms of participation that, while placing the broad strategy of the revolution beyond debate, spread understanding and acceptance of the sacrifices necessary to make that strategy work.

Turning to the rank and file, we are on shakier ground. It seems likely that most supporters of a Latin American revolution are similarly ambivalent about a well-articulated political structure. Their participation in the fighting is localized, action oriented, and accompanied by high risks. John Booth's summary of the literature on political behavior in Latin America suggests that this focus on the local arena could be sustained as normalcy returns.8 Writings on "political culture" point to a probable dropoff in activity, however, as the stakes diminish and political action appears less consequential. More politically involved than many peoples in times of crisis, Latin Americans seem to participate less than others under normal conditions. While some postrevolutionary tasks lend themselves to campaigns modeled on the guerrilla effort (e.g., literacy "brigades"), most are less dramatic. Under conditions of austerity and denial, followers may have no more enthusiasm than leaders for being enmeshed in political structures that take time and involve a lot of ritual talk. While leaders want to get on with the tasks at hand, as they define them, followers want to look after their own interests—and have some time to enjoy life.

Studies of grassroots attitudes in Latin America suggest that successful postrevolutionary politics would need to be securely rooted in the barrios or in equivalent arenas of face-to-face interaction. In a culture where the powerful are legitimate only when they respect the personhood of ordinary citizens, a structure that permits authorities to hide behind the trappings of office, to obfuscate common understandings of what is going on, or to distance themselves through claims of privilege will not attract mass loyalties. Rhetoric will play a role in a culture that values oratory, but to be successful the symbols used must be rooted in popular history and religion, not in arcane ideology. Both structurally and

symbolically, accessibility is key: the opportunity to know and be known by leaders and thus to be confirmed as an individual.\(^\text{10}\)

Thus far I have outlined a political opportunity: the creation of new forms of popular participation in postrevolutionary settings. Limits on this process also have been anticipated. Too representative a structure too soon is obviously unacceptable to the vanguard. Too abstract a process—too distant, impersonal, and routinized—will not attract the energies of rank and file citizens who otherwise identify with the revolutionary project.

What makes Cuba’s current experiment with Popular Power interesting is the degree to which it fits these assumptions. It emphasizes neighborhoods, face-to-face communication, and each citizen’s right to explanation and access. Thus Popular Power seems a promising adaptation of cultural patterns and, as such, an alternative to Boyte’s reading of Marxism as a force that tries to wipe the slate clean of such inheritances.

Essentially the Organs of Popular Power (OPP), launched nationally in 1976, vest popularly elected citizens with responsibility for overseeing government activities appropriate to their level and locale. Municipal OPP is responsible for local transportation, retail commerce, housing, local health and communications, hotels and restaurants, schools, and some agricultural and industrial enterprises. At the provincial level, OPP oversees regional equivalents of these activities (for example, intercity transportation). At the national level OPP deputies discuss and ratify policies that, for the most part, originate in the ministries and among the Cuban Communist Party leadership. The following description concentrates on the municipal level, where participation is more extensive.

Municipal delegates are nominated at open meetings held in the barrios, typically under the auspices of local Committees for the Defense of the Revolution. At such meetings anyone can nominate or be nominated. After the merits of potential candidates have been discussed, one or more votes are taken to produce a majority. Candidates chosen at these meetings compete in secret elections to choose from each ward (circumscripción) one delegate to Municipal Popular Power. There are variations on the procedure described here, as population density and special circumstances require.

\(^{10}\) Few subsequent attempts to characterize political culture in Latin America have altered the picture presented by John Gillin in “Ethos Components in Modern Latin American Culture,” *American Anthropologist* 57 (1955). One recent work is Julius Rivera, *Latin America: A Sociocultural Interpretation* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1978).
Explorations

One need not be a member of the Communist Party to be elected, although the campaign is conducted through standardized posters containing biographies compiled by the mass organizations. Over half those nominated have been Party members, a concentration that increases among those elected and especially among those subsequently chosen to serve at provincial and national levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Popular Power Delegates With Party Ties</th>
<th>(1) COMMUNIST PARTY MEMBERS</th>
<th>(2) COMMUNIST YOUTH MEMBERS</th>
<th>(1) + (2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Municipal OPP Candidates</td>
<td>53.4%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>70.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal OPP Delegates</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>75.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National OPP Deputies</td>
<td>91.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>96.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Data in this table are for 1976. Subsequent elections have not significantly altered the pattern.


Providing continuity and direction at the municipal level is an executive committee of five to twenty-one members, many of whom become salaried employees of the OPP system, particularly in the larger cities. Each committee member typically oversees a facet of local administration, aided by task forces which include other, nonpaid delegates, state employees, and citizens with relevant backgrounds.

The elected delegates also perform what United States politicians call constituency services. They hold office hours once a week. Through his or her delegate, for example, a constituent might obtain materials for fixing a house, obviating the long wait for public crews to attend the problem. Another mandated interaction is the thrice-yearly “rendering of accounts” (*rendición de cuentas*), which typically occurs in a roped-off street during the evening. Here the delegate must explain how he or she processed issues raised at the previous *rendición* before opening the meeting to new queries and complaints. What emerges at these meetings affects the entire barrio, ranging from complaints about garbage collection and unsafe housing to suggestions for improving service in the shops or learning in the schools.

One *rendición* I observed could have been a New England town meeting were it not for the street commotion, the milling about of children. The delegate and his constituents addressed one another as equals and discussed community issues in an open, critical way largely devoid of ideological abstraction. True, the topics discussed were closer to what C. Wright Mills called “personal troubles of
milieu” than to “public issues of social structure.” But here was a local authority taking citizen questions seriously and citizens apparently receiving straight answers in return.

As one moves up the OPP ladder, elections become more indirect and the screening of candidates by Party officials more decisive. Nearly half of the national delegates (called deputies) are not elected at the ward level, and participation in the twice-yearly, three-day National Assembly meetings often seems perfunctory, except in a few key committees. The overlap between the executive committee of the National Assembly (the Council of State) and the Communist Party’s Central Committee is almost total. As one approaches the vanguard’s domain, then, popular representation thins out. Preliminary analysis of one objective study of the National Assembly, however, reveals a trend toward greater participation by deputies who are not members of the Council of State, more spontaneous comments from the floor, and greater attention to the substance rather than the form of legislation.

At the local level, Popular Power appears to institutionalize participatory norms that as yet are more preached than practiced at the national level. Municipal OPP provides a forum for discussion of those issues that local initiative can help resolve. It subjects administrators to scrutiny and provides channels for cutting through bureaucratic logjams. The system is structured in such a way that the delegate represents the people to the administrators and the administrator to the people. Delegates, who serve two and a half years and are subject to recall, can collectively fire the administrators.

One would have to live in the system to determine how representative it is. The experiment in poder popular does not alter the fact that the media are controlled and political prisoners exist. The most visible change brought by the new system is accountability: an emphasis on ordinary citizens receiving public explanations for why things are the way they are. In a December 1980 speech Fidel

12 Delegates to the provincial and national assemblies of the Organs of Popular Power are chosen by the municipal assemblies from slates proposed by nominating commissions headed by a Party representative and including local leaders of the mass organizations. Outside candidates may be incorporated at this point, on the theory that neighborhood constituencies are unaware of citizens who excel at their workplace. The electoral law provides that at least half the candidates for the higher assemblies come from “the base” (i.e., initially elected in the wards). Where a municipality is entitled to more than one delegate, its nominating committee usually proposes separate slates to achieve this balance of inside and outside representatives.
Castro reiterated the public's right to "satisfactory explanations when immediate solutions are not possible." One need only reflect on the trauma experienced by homeowners at Love Canal or by servicemen exposed to A-bomb tests to realize how devastating lack of accountability can be.

That accountability should be emphasized is not surprising, for it is the one norm that serves both democracy and economic development. At least in its local manifestation, OPP brings to the surface the politics inherent in policy implementation, making it more difficult for bureaucrats and cronies (socios) to subvert policy and feed public cynicism. The decentralization of decision making, which accompanied OPP and appears in recent economic reforms, seeks to wed participation with efficiency. According to state planning director Humberto Pérez, these moves were "designed to increase participation by the masses and lower levels of administration in the solution of problems."

How well the new system meets most Cubans' expectations of political participation is almost impossible for an outsider to assess. Participation in the OPP remains high after three elections. The percentage of those eligible to vote who actually do so remains in the nineties. Between October 1976 and March 1979, ninety-nine delegates were recalled, suggesting active involvement by at least some of the citizenry. While uncritical in their assessment of OPP, Marta Harnecker and her Chilean associates published interviews that suggest the system is used by rank and file Cubans, for some of whom it appears to be a real political opening. "When the people are given a chance to define and resolve their problems as they see fit," one informant told Harnecker, "when they see themselves as directly in charge, as the real doers, all this engenders a new climate, a different atmosphere."

Clearly all the evidence is not in. All we can say at this point is that Cuba may have found a structure that satisfies elite requirements while being congruent with popular attitudes. On the long road to fully democratic socialism, Or-

---

14 Speech to the Second Congress of the Cuban Communist Party, delivered December 17, 1980.
15 Interview in Bohemia, February 16, 1979.
16 Latin American Political Report, March 20, 1979. Others resigned for a host of reasons, which included fear of recall. As reported by Granma, the Party newspaper, participation in the last election (1981) was high both in the meetings to nominate candidates (86 percent of those eligible) and in the election itself (97 percent). There is a concerted effort by the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, however, to get out the vote, and because the Popular Power system has an impact upon daily life, many Cubans may participate simply to stay in the good graces of local authorities. We simply do not know.
gans of Popular Power represents the first steps. Given the propensities of Latin culture and the dilemmas of underdevelopment, it is a beginning worth taking seriously.

In all political systems mass participation serves different, usually contradictory, needs of leaders and led. Those with power use participation to increase the identification the ruled feel with the rulers. Those without power tend to see participation as a way of limiting the powerful, or at least making them accountable. The scarcities and pressures of the postrevolutionary situation in Latin America—to which Washington contributes—tempt revolutionary regimes to perpetuate the concentrated decision making of the fighting phase. Marxist-Leninism's concept of the vanguard provides ample justification for this. Sans Lenin, Marxism contains a participatory, democratic thrust as well—one that resonates with anarchistic and religious values embedded in Latin American popular culture. It is this latter thrust that one hopes will emerge as the dominant concern of leaders and followers alike in Nicaragua, in Cuba, and in those parts of Latin American fortunate enough to have this problem on their agenda.
Going Home

DAVID ABALOS

To keep people out of trouble, keep them out of themselves.
—J. J. Rousseau

One of my earliest reminders of being a Mexican, a Chicano, a Latino, a Hispanic is a profoundly sad and terrifying experience. Across the street and down the block a fight between a Mexican man and a white patron in a bar had spilled out into the street. The Mexican was bleeding; he staggered to the front of the tavern and began to shout “¡Viva Mexico, Viva Mexico!” The only thread of hope that he could grasp was his native home, his fatherland and motherland, the focal point of his identity at the moment his personhood was being assaulted. Equally impressive was the fear that it created in me. I could not have been more than five years old, and yet I distinctly remember the paranoia I felt that others would identify me with him. I wanted him to stop shouting “¡Viva Mexico!” The whole scene is indelibly marked in my memory, especially when the siren of the police car at last broke the murmur of the crowd and increased the man’s appeals to Mexico. When they took him away I was relieved.

I knew instinctively even then that Mexicans were supposed to disappear into the anonymity of the city. Anything that made us stand out in bold relief, such as a shouting Mexican, made us all uneasy. As a preschool child nobody had given me talks about American society, the melting pot, or Anglo-Saxon values. They didn’t have to. I and others like me received the message in a thousand nonverbal ways: differences in food, clothing, speech; a sense of fear. I wanted to be like them and envied their clean homes and orderly lives.

Many years later in Mexico I learned that although I had become a professional person with standing in the United States I was considered a “poncho,” an Americanized Mexican born in the United States, a displaced person with no real culture or homeland. This experience is similar to that of Puerto Ricans from the mainland; they are often considered “Nuyorican” by their relatives on the island. There is a critical struggle going on over the identity of the Mexican that is rooted in basic ambivalence. In small museums in the states of Puebla and Queretaro is evidence of a deep anti-European, anti-Catholic strain. In Peru and Bolivia as
well as in Mexico and Puerto Rico, local curanderos (healers) still resist the Catholic faith by performing their sacred rituals after 450 years of Catholic, European hegemony. Local artists depicted the Aztec and Mayan warriors as the romantic heroes of a pre-Columbian past. The Indian, in plumed headdress, lances the blue-eyed, blonde, bearded Spaniard, knocking him from his horse. In Mexico, 1973 was officially designated as "El Año de Juárez," el Indio. Juárez was clearly of Indian descent—dark skin, dark eyes, black hair, stocky. And yet the social, economic, and political reality of Mexico, as of all other Latin American nations, is just the opposite. It is the Europeanized, Catholic, white element that predominates. Throughout Latin America the advertisers use rubios and rubias (blonde men and women) for their models. The middle class there refers to the peasants as inditos—primitive and backward children. In Argentina the descendants of British, Italian and German settlers do not identify themselves with the Spanish-speaking Indian strain of the population. In Brazil there is deep suspicion and confirmed reports that the government, through its Bureau of Indian Affairs, is following a policy of genocide against the Indians in the Amazon region.

It is their economic interests that have led the middle class to disassociate themselves from their own people. The economic penetration of all Latin America that began in earnest in the second half of the nineteenth century perpetuated a class structure that to this day has caused a great gap between rich and poor. The wealthy have no desire to be identified with an indigenous culture, so they create a culture based on consumption.

There was a strong element of racism in Latin America from its inception as the insistence on limpieza de sangre (purity of blood) by the Inquisition shows. Although this policy was aimed at Jews and Moriscos (Spanish moors), it inevitably was extended to the Indian population of Latin America and still later to the African slaves. In some instances, as in Puerto Rico, the Indian population was completely decimated by a combination of disease, warfare, hunger, and extermination. The intermarriage that followed the conquest of Latin America was an unavoidable necessity. The Church insisted on blessing these unions, but it proved to be more of a forced wedding than a blending of cultures, religions, and peoples.

The "converted" Jews and Moriscos that found their way to the New World in spite of the Inquisition became an integral part of Latin American society. Some Jewish converts took the Christian name of "de la Cruz" (of the Cross) to emphasize the extent of their loyalty to the new faith. To this day in places such as Santiago, Chile, important families with the name "de la Cruz" are the descendants of these converts. All Latinos in this country, are a combination of various Indian groups, with Spanish, Portuguese, African, and Jewish strands. With all of these elements of blood and spirit combined in the crucible of his life,
the Latino is instinctively a brooding person.

None of us knows who he or she is. The Spain of los reyes catolicos ("the Catholic kings") was itself an amalgam that was unified by blood and the cross. To this day the Basques and Catalans revive ancient nationalistic feuds that were never settled. In their campaign against the Jews and Moriscos, especially in Andalucia, Isabella and Ferdinand destroyed one of the oldest centers of cultural creativity. This was the land of the cabalistic Jews and of people such as I'bn Arabi. Many of these displaced peoples came to the New World to build new lives. They were among the soldiers, adventurers, and settlers who brought down the Inca, Mayan, and Aztec empires. Uprooted African blacks were brought to the Caribbean, the eastern areas of South and Central America. These people also intermarried and brought their gods and beliefs to the New World. All of these diverse elements were held together—at least on the surface—by European military might. The emergence of the coalition among peasants, intellectuals, and liberals during the wars of national liberation in the early part of the nineteenth century broke the European political tyranny. Unfortunately, it was quickly followed by European and American economic control. The old patterns of cultural behavior based on Mediterranean and Indian values of honor, respect, and deference to authority were devastating to a population faced with aggressive individualists committed to rationally organized economies and the logic of free enterprise. The native middle class became middle class precisely because it adapted to the abstractions of the economic system and the behavior patterns of the Western European self-made man. It became the privileged buffer between their people and the international market economy. The industrialization that began in Latin America at the end of the nineteenth century further displaced indigenous cultural values. The behavioral patterns of the rural areas transferred to the cities spread incoherence. To be respectful, submissive, with downcast eyes was to invite exploitation. To survive one had to learn how to be aggressively independent, forthright, listo, and individual without the fetters of personal shame.

There is a brooding solitude at the core of the Latino's selfhood. As Octavio Paz has written "we get drunk to confess what lurks in our depths, the white society drinks to forget itself." No one should be fooled by the polite deference manifested in smiles, "sí señor," and the stereotype of the Josés and Marias; these are but ritualized avoidances that hide unresolved feelings of anger and rage. A cultural habit of avoiding direct confrontation has led us to repress our

angry feelings, chew them, swallow them—but they remain eating away at our insides.

As we look around we have to wonder how many of us are part of the problem: have not all of us to some extent been maneuvered into being subtle supporters of a system of human relations that ultimately divides us and absorbs us? Hobbes told us over 300 years ago that our identities were being shaped not by what we were inside but by our class, power, prestige, possessions. In eighteenth century France an honnête homme was defined as being honest precisely because he knew his assigned place and kept it. Identity was exhausted by rank in society: a person was no less, but no more than that. Today deference remains but it is edged by insecurity created by a competitive society.

When we look at the actual situation, we are amazed to see blacks and Chicanos telling other Latinos and blacks to go slow or that they were not chosen for the job because they have no previous experience. Unfortunately affirmative action programs have often become positions of exploitation for blacks on the East coast and Chicanos on the West coast. They have set up their own “old boy” system—but it is the same system. So we are caught in a web of roles and behavior that makes us do to others what is being done to us. To avoid being victims we are forced to become the victimizers. We must not be naive about the power of systems to absorb us—none of us is so pure that power cannot corrupt us.

Latinos have somehow partially maintained their language, religion, and culture although they are constantly reminded of how much they have actually lost. We are in a diaspora—we belong nowhere. We cannot go home nor be content here—so we make a home within ourselves. And we see the real poison of racism: white people who forgot who they are forced others to forget who they are. We were made dull, we were not born dull. But we assist the process by playing the role, jugando el papel que el otro requiere de nosotros, that another assigns to us.

We have to break out of those roles, the patterns that bind us in a system of relationships that impoverishes all of us. The real hope is an imaginative politics based on a people connected to their sources; otherwise we are simply doomed to perpetuate a system that is a permanent state of war. The means is a process of transformation that points us homeward, i.e., inward to our sources, el tesoro de nuestra riqueza, the treasure chest of our riches.

Through a variety of ways Latinos/Hispanics are becoming aware of a profound sense of alienation from ourselves and others. I had originally planned to speak out forcefully and eloquently on our present strengths and hopes for the future. But the possibility of our creating a new future is still problematic. I am not sure if we will choose to do it; that we have the capacity to create ourselves anew, I have no doubt. What then is the basis for pessimism? Too often we try to blame the “Gachupines,” the Spanish conquerors, or the new intruders, “the Yan-
quis," for our problems. No doubt there is some justice in this. But there is something else in us that tends to immobilize us, to isolate us from ourselves and others so that the forging of a new people is aborted by individuals incapable of rising above their desire to be invisible and alone. The reason for this is both cultural and historical. We know that the Indians of our heritage charted time backward and not forward. The Mayas, for example, calculated three hundred thousand years into the past but calculated no further into the future than twenty years. Every two decades the world was doomed to end. Time was cyclical and each person was connected to the cycles of death and rebirth. The arrival of the Spaniards and their conquest destroyed this cycle by imposing upon it linear time. There followed a series of political, economic, and social upheavals that postponed a radical analysis and response to the conquest. There was urbanization, the beginnings of industrialization, wars of national liberation, and the arrival of the international political economy, especially in the form of the American businessman. All of these events prevented us from resolving the issues of our own impotency until recent years.

We have survived in this country and our own homelands. Yet this survival has often been miserable, and many have gone underground to work within the system to wait for a better day. Our isolation really masks a gnawing fear that we are powerless. We substitute for power a scathing rhetoric that attempts to prove our intellectual superiority. This type of detached superiority actually means that the system has won. While we outsmart the master in our minds, the real masters are reinforced in their belief about our inferiority because of our overt acts of docility. True, the master needs the slave for his services, but subtly the slave needs the master for his own identity. To show the bureaucrats of the system that we are real men and women, we engage in periodic paroxysms of violence. The system responds to these outbreaks by giving us consumer goods that will send us back to our solitude. By responding to the logic of the system we become mere rebels since our response is directed by the consciousness of the system. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Gabriel Garcia Marquez writes an epic story of Latin America through the life of a family, the Buendias. There is plenty of activity: thirty-two revolutions, lovemaking, death, mass murder, birth—all of the elements of the drama of life and history. Yet nothing really changes for the characters; at the heart of the issue is a deadly solitude that permanently lames the individuals. All of the main characters die alone, incapable ultimately of sharing their life with others. The novel ends with the final obliteration of Macondo, the fictional city founded in the heart of the jungle. Just before Macondo is blown off the face of the earth by a biblical hurricane, the last survivor of the Buendia family is reading the Sanskrit manuscripts that contain the key to the future of the family. As he reads the parchment he is blown away and with him the memory of Macondo and all its
inhabitants—all condemned to death because they never lived. The author concludes with this powerful statement: "Races condemned to one hundred years of solitude did not have a second opportunity on earth." This is not just death, but total and absolute annihilation with no possibility of new life to redeem it.

Treating the alternative is the most difficult task of our unfinished story. I would like to return to our most intuitive people: our intellectuals, artists, poets, and playwrights. This is a crucial strategy because so many of our social scientists, theologians, and philosophers who have suffered from the inferiority complex bred by years of being ningunos ("nobodies") have always turned elsewhere for their theories and insights. The majority of Latin American intellectuals spend most of their time studying the works of western European and North American theologians and social scientists. But nowhere do they refer to the gods and goddesses of Latin America, to the contribution or the role played by our myths in the universal symbols of nourishment, destruction, and creation. The alternative liberation that they seek is important, but it is equally important to build the new theology, taking into account the indigenous pre-Columbian resources of our people.

What I and others search for is a universalism that exists in the indigenous vision. We look again for the beginning of a new age that the Caribs, Mayas, Aztecs, and Incas saw in the landing of Columbus. Our Indian people shared with the rest of humanity a belief that the whole of creation participated in a cosmic process of create, nourish, and destroy so that the next generation might renew our lives and the earth. There lives in the consciousness of the Latino the impending sense of the new world that was promised by the gods. It arrived, but brought with it a system of oppression for the majority of our people. Under the surface of disappointment is a response of solitude and invisibility that exacerbates our incoherence. But side by side with this docility there is emerging the hope of another apocalypse that we hope will not end in violence but in the creation of a new humanity: "It is as though the guilt of the victor stands on the threshold of a creative breakthrough in the darkening consciousness of the victim as prelude to the birth pangs of a new cosmos."3

The purpose of our writers, theologians, philosophers, and professors must not be to "civilize" us in the present system but to politicize us. Two Latin American novelists, Alejo Carpentier in The Lost Steps and Luis Asturias in

The Green Pope, lead us in their works on an imaginative journey into the subconscious that they see as the beginning of our search for reunification and spiritual renewal. Their concerns with the past “demand a kind of cyclic computation where one is aware of moving into the future as much as one is aware of recreating the past.” They urge us to not repeat the past or fall under the spell of its romance, but to recreate it: by choosing and discerning those elements that will lead us now and in the future out of a dead end. For these writers the peasants are not mere natives but are the roots of our past, of our cultural continuity. Their culture is in our bones. By acknowledging it, we cause the darkness of the apocalypse to recede, and García Márquez’s novel of destruction takes on new meaning. There is a collective breakdown in Macondo. The author is reminding us of the indigenous myths, and in these myths we find a fuller expression of universal archetypes: the re-creation of the individual person and of the world that follows destruction. The appeal to these myths has both a psychological base and a value as social protest:

Asturias is therefore taking up the stream of writing which had been established by the Indians centuries before him. Always it expresses the need to transcend the condition of entrapment by use of the universal myth. Therefore, in Asturias's portrait of the President as the archetype of the Terrible Mother (in El Señor Presidente), there is at once social protest in its own right against the dictatorship of Estrada Cabrera, and also the continuity of the Indian literature of myth. The novel, on these levels, describes a condition of social and psychological entrapment which is also universally applicable to all races and cultures of the world that have developed an indigenous myth of suffering.

By wrestling with our heritage we can go beyond the despair of entrapment that ends in political passivity. It is important to know that our ancestors knew about and participated in a universal drama of creation, nourishment, and destruction. This is the process that we choose to reenact with the necessary adaptation to our own historical period.

Politics is a threefold dialectic—the creation of a new environment, the nourishment of our systems, and the freedom and ability to put those systems out of business when they no longer serve our needs. But the spiral continues as we choose to create again. It is a spiral because we move beyond the cyclic repetition of the past in order to recreate the past toward an open future. Systems take on a life of their own only when we lapse into solitude, invisibility, docility. The world and any system that shapes it is a persistent cocreation of persons rooted

4 Ibid., p. 85.
in their sources giving expression to the truth by naming themselves and the world simultaneously. Thus no system has the right to become an object over and against us; its objectivity is never perfect or finished because we as personal creators are not finished. We are always more than our creations.

I return to where I began: it is precisely because we cannot be who we are in our deepest selves that we have to reject this system. We do not reject a system because it is called capitalism, socialism, or materialism; white or racist. We ultimately reject a system because these realities are symptoms of a deeper demonic cause; we share complicity in our own alienation. When we are strong enough to confront the system, what will we bring to it if not our authentic selves to pass judgment on it? Do we need jobs, housing, employment? Yes. But we want more than that; we want the right to all of these human necessities and the right to be ourselves. This means confronting racist institutions but now with a purpose: to use the means of the old system to create an alternative. This does not mean that we will reject our sisters and brothers of other cultures and races. Far from it. We owe it to them not to continue to give the impression that making it in this system is what life is all about.

If we love ourselves, our God, and our fellow human beings, we owe it to ourselves to create conflict. The conflict is capable of breaking the spell of the deep sleep into which we have been cast hearing that we live in the best of all possible worlds.

Let us consider why we are not at home in this system by examining an attempt to lull us back to sleep. Bilingual education for Latinos/Hispanics may be a subtle form of cooption and assimilation. It is clearly intended to be transitory; it is a tool to give people new opportunities. The ultimate goal is still assimilation—bilingual assimilation. But the issue to the Latino is the question of biculturalism. Clearly language has much to do with culture, but many of the advantages of bilingualism are considered economic: bilingual secretaries, businessmen, lawyers, and so forth. This reduction of our native language to status pursuits divorces it from its cultural matrix. To emphasize the bicultural means that there is a struggle going on within us; the bicultural never allows us to be truly at home here. We live in an economic system that wants us all to be “non-body” producers working to have a better future. Once again it is our artists, Luis Asturias and Octavio Paz, who warn us that we are a people of festival, celebration of the body, and of the eternal return contained in the present. The cultural implications of this must not be lost. The Anglo-Saxon inheritance castigates the Hispanic for an attitude of mañana because it is nonproductive. The English forebears of this nation sought purity from the world and the body through hard work. As Weber and Tawney have taught us, it was this kind of religious ideology based on purification that contributed so much to the rise of the capitalist
economy. But the religious views that helped make the Anglo-Saxon superior in banking and industry made him uncomprehending of those who are not Calvinists or Horatio Algers. The Indian was considered to be a lazy and soulless heathen, never a person.

As a result, as Octavio Paz has written, the United States has no Indian past, no dialectical opposite, no shadow, no specifically American roots that can fulfill, balance, complete, or transform the European ones. The United States did not merge with the Indian but extinguished him. This cruelty had another result: the strain of domination and segregation in the culture exalted behavioral patterns traditionally called virile—aggressiveness, individualism, and competitiveness.

In comparison the Spaniards, who were also cruel, at least did not deny the humanity of the Indian: they at least granted him a soul. Therefore, the approach in Latin America, thanks largely to people like Bartolomé de las Casas, the first Bishop of Mexico, was to assimilate and convert, to include the Indian, which resulted in the mestizo reality of the region. Initially the Indians yielded themselves to the Spaniards, and resisted too late. What remained after the conquest was a people of superimposed pasts that every Latino carries in his or her bones—the continuity of several thousand years of history. It is this facing between two pasts, between two civilizations that provides the Latino with an internal dialectical force that lies fallow. Octavio Paz powerfully demonstrates the emergence and confluence of the Indian and the Spanish traditions in the frenzy of the festival. In a recent article Paz states that festival is what makes the Latino political. It is a sign and time of resistance. Earlier Paz had written:

...modern time, linear time, the homologue of the idea of progress and history, ever propelled into the future, the time of the sign non-body, of the fierce will to dominate nature and tame instincts, the time of publication, aggression and self-mutilation—is coming to an end.

The myth of the eternal return frees us; it is the return of the revolution as festival. Festival celebrates the other, communion; la fiesta is Dionysiac, frenzy, voluptuousness, color. It is a communion that is participation not separation, joining not breaking away, a great coming together, a bathing in the waters of the eternal return, in the primordial waters of beginning. It is baptism, renewal, transformation, a fundamentally different existence beyond the Anglo-Saxon purity and impurity, the deferral of pleasure and repression that separates us from our bodies, one another, and the world. But above all festival, fiesta time, is the victory of the love of the body, renewed, re-created, redeemed. The spirit

5 "Reflections: Mexico and the United States," The New Yorker, September 17, 1979, p. 140.
6 Ibid.
of the eternal return rejects the linear one-dimensional search for a future and roots us firmly in the present, here and now. But the here and now is past, present, and future fulfilled in a new incarnation of who we are. Thus if a society is essentially defined by its concept of time, there can be no more glaring difference between the Latino and the Anglo-Saxon. The Anglo-Saxon, as Philip Slater has written, lives for the future, saving money for the sake of money, deferring pleasure and relationships and sees pleasure and festival as a waste because it is a loss of money and power.8

It is because of our rootedness in an incarnate spirit that knows itself in festival and erotic connections that we, as Latinos, must not allow ourselves to turn against the body as Anglo-Saxon society would have us do. We have to act as a countercommunity, a countersign to the stunted lives based on the war of all against all. To begin with ourselves, with our bodies is a point of reconciliation of ourselves with ourselves and with others; it is also a point of departure leading beyond the body, to the other. We have an opportunity to stand as a symbol of what every person is capable of—a new creation. According to Octavio Paz this is the age of *el quinto sol* ("the fifth sun"), the era of motion, of earthquakes, of the collapse of the pyramid of established power—this parallels the historical situation in which the whole world is living. We will not be saved by power and stability but by the capacity for change.9 We can be a people characterized by resistance, a subversive people, through whom a different spirit speaks. We can manifest humanity's hope of renewal. We cannot afford to be absorbed, fused, or bought off. To hang on to our Indian-Spanish past is to reaffirm festival, the body, death and rebirth, the erotic, the present here and now, the love of the other, and the resources within our creative selves.

There are universal resources to be rediscovered in our Indian and European heritage that speak of hope, creation, love, and community. It will be our task to educate ourselves to these sources of transformation both those within our Indian/Hispanic roots and those that are to be discovered here in our new land. To bring together countertraditions from both cultures is to affirm that our sources speak in all times and places. We are the crucibles of the new incarnation of the sources. If none of us are at home in the system, we have ourselves and each other once again; it is all that we have, and it is more than enough.

Politics is more than laws and the implementation of them through a constitution and governing parties. It has to do with participation in the building of human community. The institutions that are created are the result of the linkages or patterns by which people have chosen to bind themselves in a social


union. Therefore, politics of its very origin and nature presupposes a human-made network of human relationships that can be put out of business to form new institutions. In this sense we are all (and must be) political. And now we are ready, finally, to redefine, to transform our solitude. The quality of this solitude is fundamentally different from that of docile solitude; the retreat that we speak of here is temporary not permanent. It is a withdrawal into ourselves to seek the strength and creativity to return to our people to make concrete and act out the vision that was revealed to us in our solitude. This is a solitude with a transformative purpose. Our time has come not because we are on the cover of Time but because our period of gestation is over. Again we are called upon to be the fathers and mothers of the divine by giving birth to the divine child—our new selves—so that we shall be as gods, co-creators made in the image and likeness of God:

The hibernation is over. I must shake off the old skin and come up for breath. There's a stench in the air, which from this distance underground, might be the smell either of death or of spring—I hope of spring. But don't let me trick you, there is a death in the smell of spring and in the smell of thee as in the smell of me. . . . And I suppose it's damn well time. . . . Even hibernations can be overdone, come to think of it. Perhaps that's my greatest social crime, I've overstayed my hibernation, since there's a possibility that even an invisible man has a socially responsible role to play.  

This is the essence of alienation: we repress our feelings, lose control of our actions to set roles. To politicize people is to put back into the hands of the people themselves their own relationships which are the means to build human community. This is what it means to participate in the creation, nourishment, and destruction of human relationships. When the human institutions by which we structure life become destructive, it is our right and duty to put them out of business. This is the essence of nonviolence. To create conflict and change, to initiate the breaking of such patterns is to love one another enough to create an opportunity for both sides to experience themselves afresh.

The inherited patterns into which we were socialized can now be used in a new way, as created patterns. For example, the inherited isolation that was so debilitating can now be freely chosen to create something fundamentally new. But for isolation to be creative it must be a temporary strategy. In the final analysis the most revolutionary people in a time of breakdown will be those persons who can create new relationships among strangers. Whoever shares with Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, or Cubans a consciousness of wanting to build a society in the

service of others—these people too will belong to La Raza, Boricua, and el Pueblo. In this way the original meaning of such phrases will have been transformed. Once a sense of identity has been achieved, it is necessary to move beyond the initial exclusivity of the original meaning. By redefining the concept to include people who share common joys and sorrows is to demonstrate that ethnic identities belong to humankind. Boricua and La Raza, therefore, are no longer statements of color, language, or race as much as they are phrases indicating a consciousness—a consciousness of creating linkages with others in justice.

The politics of transformation, or if you prefer, permanent revolution, is always taking the next concrete step in the creation, nourishment or destruction of the next encounter. It is a process whereby the black worker (or the Puerto Rican and Chicano farm worker) for the first time opens up construction (agricultural) unions to his membership, comes to recognize what kind of housing he is helping to not build, recognizes through his work and its immediate rewards new aspects of his own being, struggles to alter the leadership of his union, etc., etc. Transformation is not salvation but sanctification of human relations, never perfection but an imperfection, but ever renewed movement toward networks of wholeness.\(^\text{11}\)

When Harold Abrahams, the real life hero of Chariots of Fire, realizes that his dream of becoming the world's fastest runner will require the help of a professional trainer, he hires one and deeply offends the masters of Caius and Trinity Colleges who serve in the movie as the embodiment of the upper class that Abrahams wishes to overawe with his running. The Cambridge masters invite him to dinner in order to convey their disapproval. Ensconced in the handsome master's dining room, elegantly attired for the formal meal, they impart their disquiet at his breach of the gentleman's code of athletic competition. Not at all compliant, Abrahams spiritedly defends his resort to expert coaching. “Would you like me to play the gentleman and lose?” he demands. “Better to playing the tradesman,” the Master of Trinity fires back. Abruptly getting up from the table, Abrahams closes the scene with a speech that puts the dispute in its historical context. “Gentlemen, you wish victory achieved with the apparent effortlessness of gods. I believe in excellence and I'll carry the future with me.” Since Abrahams goes on to win the 100 meter dash at the 1924 Paris Olympics in splendid triumph, the audience is left to conclude that he understood the world in the making while his donnish critics clung to an outworn creed. “Not so,” says Martin Wiener, or so we can infer from his new book, which examines how the gentlemen scholars of Oxford and Cambridge have continued to shape English values despite challenges from such determined outsiders as Harold Abrahams.

As the bulging receipts from Chariots of Fire indicate, the subject of individual motivation fascinates us in this season of depression fears. Why some people want to win races can substitute for why others do (or don't) work hard,
defer pleasure, save money, and take risks. No longer willing to take economic rationalism for granted, scholars such as Wiener have turned to cultural influences in their studies of economic decline. Truths about the universal propensity to truck and barter that were used to explain market relations in the palmy days of growth are fragmenting into the puzzles of particular preferences in the new era of limitations. Thus *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit* offers more than a case study of one nation's resistance to the productive ideal; it marks a new strategy for analyzing the nexus between social norms and economic decisions.

It is Wiener's specific purpose to demonstrate that the contemporary problems of Great Britain can best be understood as the consequence of a pervasive dislike of industrial capitalism in the very nation that brought it into being. Looking at the past 130 years of English history, he argues that Margaret Thatcher will have to change more than monetary policies to move her country out of the economic doldrums, for the attitudes that blew the economy off course a century ago still prevail.

Although cast as the story of a failure, Wiener's study actually documents a success—that of the English upper class in preventing the leaders of the industrial revolution from turning their economic prowess into social and political power. His account begins with a dramatic reversal: having astounded the world with power looms, spinning jennies, steam engines, and iron horses, the English, Wiener says, recoiled from what they had wrought. The Great Exhibition mounted in the Crystal Palace in 1851 to celebrate the new age of technology actually represented a turning point. After that schoolmasters, scholars, statesmen, and social critics took alarm at the spiritual cost of material progress and embarked on a campaign to save the English from their own inventiveness. Instead of embracing their obvious destiny as the world's modernizers, educated Englishmen conspired to contain economic development at home. In this effort they were aided by the nation's aristocratic rulers who were bent on getting the manufacturing tyros to give up their money-grubbing ways. Together they fashioned an image of England as the world's civilizer and invented the concept of the gentleman "to keep the middle classes in order," as Bertrand Russell described it. Meeting words with deeds they lambasted the marketplace and lampooned the self-made man. Words narrating the past glories of the English, words rhapsodizing on rustic virtues, words excoriating the crassness of commerce rolled off the newly perfected rotary presses. Repeated over four generations this attack on modernity congealed into an inveterate national hostility to the leitmotifs of progress: innovation, competition, and efficiency. To this cultural about-face Wiener attributes the English economy's present lackluster performance.

The crucial institution in the long, wordy struggle against commercial mores was the English public school. From this redoubt the critics of industrial society
sent forth streams of carefully cultivated crusaders. Two royal commissions created in the 1860s to study the need for modernizing the endowed schools ended up making them models for all preparatory education. Explicitly endorsing the goal of molding the character of English gentlemen, the commissioners extolled as well the virtues of a classical curriculum. Studying the literature of the ancients, they claimed, would refine the intellect, perfect the prose, and instill the morals needed by a cadre of civilizers. Instruction in the natural sciences was to be tolerated only if it did not take time away from the venerable quadrivium. So completely did the public schools dominate the life of the mind in England that science could scarcely get a foothold in the universities. Quoting from T.H. Huxley's testimony before a parliamentary committee in 1868, Wiener recounts the story of an Oxford dinner party in which the guests were asked if it would be fair to say that someone might have taken the highest honors there without ever having heard that the earth went round the sun to which all present replied, "yes." So implacably opposed to any course of study with practical implications were the schoolmasters of England that utility actually became a source of opprobrium. Parochial without being local, the public schools successfully imposed a uniform standard of gentility upon the nation. The manners learned, the friendships formed, the prejudices acquired at a Harrow or Eton became necessary adjuncts to any career. Even England's industrial leaders, from Isambard Brunel, England's first great engineering genius, to Marcus Samuel, the creator of Shell Oil, sent their sons to public schools that taught them, among other things, to despise the world of their fathers.

The opponents of the spirit of industry found in rural England the perfect foil for the wretched cities of the industrial North. Since the capitalist practices of both landlords and factory owners had emptied the countryside of contentious tenants and poverty-stricken cottagers, a bucolic setting lay ready at hand to symbolize all that was enduringly satisfying. Only outside the smoky pale of manufacturing towns could one find the serenity and beauty that was truly England. Leaving the world of objects to the captains of industry, the foes of economic progress seized the goods of the spirit—the images and ideas through which a people come to understand their shared experience. Alerted to the disruptive force of commerce, successive generations of English writers kept alive the nation's identity with Blake's "green and pleasant land." From Mill, Arnold, Dickens, and Ruskin; to Toynbee, Tawney, and Morris; to Priestley, Schumacher, and Betjeman, poets and scholars entered the lists against the more and bigger mentality of the modernizers. Inventiveness was recast as love of gadgetry, systematic efficiency as a soul-numbing repetitiousness, progress as a shibboleth for the mindless pursuit of novelty. Affecting everything from architecture to broadcasting the campaign to rebottle the genie of industry finally reached the campus of the politicians. By the twentieth century both Conservative and Labor party
leaders were ready to forswear free trade and empire in order to restrain the dynamic of growth.

Having described so well the pervasive English contempt for the boisterous virtues of business, Wiener sets himself something of a task to explain how the big bang of industrial creation occurred in the first place. His answer lies in the aristocracy's capacity for accommodation. Because they had already been converted to the profit motive in the management of their estates, they appreciated the inventive genius that was transforming English manufacturing. Indeed their own enhancement of agricultural yields had created the necessary conditions for an industrial take-off. Prosperous and confident in a capitalistic world, they were willing to tolerate the industrialists as long as their right to rule went unchallenged. Isolated in the North, the Bible-reading autodidacts of England's factory towns were cut off from the nerve center of the body politic in London. The aristocratic leaders were therefore able to set their own pace for extending political power to the new men, and they used the extra time to polish the rough diamonds of industry. Thus were the natural spokesmen for modernization—and their heirs—weaned away from an earlier enthusiasm for economic progress. When the northern parvenues had been safely encapsulated within the conceptual order of the aristocrats and intellectuals, an enlarged and culturally homogenous ruling class was ready to monitor the whole nation's encounter with money, machines, and the market. Industry continued to feed and clothe the people, but a sentimental cordon sanitaire had been thrown up to halt the spread of its meretricious values.

Letting the verbal brilliance of his English witnesses make his case for him, Wiener confines the discussion of purely material factors in British retardation to an appendix on the limits of economic explanations. His abundant quotations provide stunning proof of the English command of their language while his argument suggests what that might mean in a land where the right word still holds a cutting edge. His assemblage of marvelous anecdotes also demonstrates what real class barriers are. How bland in contrast appear those American claims to a class system based on correlations between family income and social mobility to which college freshmen are exposed because of their schoolmasters' creed. Getting a feel for the meaning of English economic decline is more difficult. In point of fact, during the century for which Wiener has documented the antipathy to material progress, England's gross national product grew unabatingly with the greatest rise in living standards attained (and attained) in the 1970s. What England has actually experienced is a relative decline. Once commercially preeminent, the English have had to watch a succession of competitors pass them by. But even this has become a source of wry amusement as they have seen other displaced frontrunners such as the United States join them on the sidelines. Rather than a decline in income, the English have suffered a decline in productivity. The
refrigerator the Danes can produce in two days takes five in a British factory. But if, as Wiener and his reviewers maintain, English national pride is more closely tied to the achievement of civility than the assembling of appliances, where is the sting? Unless the malaise is in the culture itself and not in its economic consequences, a possibility that I would like to explore.

No small part of the rhetorical force of Wiener's argument comes from his exploiting our sense that there is something untoward about the English rejection of the industrial spirit. Their refractory behavior seems downright puzzling—as though an acrobat somersaulting through the air should all of a sudden go limp. Here are the English flinging railroads across the land, plunging deeper and deeper into the earth's bowels for mineral treasures, setting hundreds of spindles dancing to the steam piper's tune. New vistas of material wealth open up; new heights of inventiveness are reached. But no resonating ideology emerges to celebrate these triumphs or forge a new national identity. Successive waves of transforming technologies break over the country, leaving behind gasoline engines, electricity, synthetics, and computers, but still no corresponding revolution in values. The material base of the society—the ways of work, the location of wealth, the rates of population growth, the distribution of commodities—is totally restructured while the goods of the mind—the cherished goals, the imagined past, the aesthetic preferences, the moral convictions—remain firmly rooted in the preindustrial era. English history becomes an anomaly. Clearly figuring in this judgment, however, is our own assumption that structural change will produce compatible cultural responses. We expect congruence between social systems and cultural values, perhaps summoning to our mind those patterned variables we learned in sociology. Traditional society with its patriarchal authority, inherited status, geographic mobility, and functionally diverse work is arrayed against modern society with its participatory politics, earned status, and specialized tasks.

The theory behind this expectation is Talcott Parsons's structural functionalism, a conceptual tool of great power that made values the linchpin connecting the subjective world of each social member to the objective systems that composed social living. Ideology, in Parsonian sociology, shed its Marxist stigma as false consciousness and became instead that complex of shared beliefs that made coherent social action possible. Recast as a kind of social cement, ideology no longer appeared as a class weapon, but rather as a collective response to structural changes permeating the consciousness of all. By successfully documenting the arrest of the spirit of industry in the homeland of industrial society, Wiener has struck a blow at structural-functionalism far more devastating than his explicit attack on economic theories. Indeed, with the profoundly traditional Japa-
inese becoming the industrial giants of the late twentieth century, only the history of the United States remains to validate the presumably universal modernization process. Wiener, however, has not abandoned the structural-functionalist concept of culture with its assumption that ideas are the invisible, but efficient, mediators between social purposes and practices. And this flaws an otherwise stellar academic performance.

An alternative and, I think, more accurate interpretation of English history would emphasize the continuity of upper-class resistance to social change. There is little evidence that the industrial spirit ever acquired a place in English culture from which it might be said to have declined. The traditional rulers of England were as much the arbiters of public taste in the half-century before the Great Exhibition as they were afterwards. More to the point, they were firmly in possession of political power and used it ruthlessly between the time of the American Revolution and Napoleon's defeat to stamp out all reform groups. The critics of aristocratic rule who formed various radical associations in London, Birmingham, and Manchester were harassed by threats of sedition when they were not actually arrested or hounded out of the country. Equally conspicuous in the first half of the nineteenth century were the panegyrics to rural life in the writings of Cobbett and Disraeli. The nation's receptivity to capitalism during the early modern centuries of agricultural and mercantile expansion, which Wiener quite rightly connects with England's pioneering role in industry, has been traced by Alan Macfarlane back to the fourteenth century. The men who integrated the machinery in the first textile mills had been prefigured by those who organized coal mining in the sixteenth, convertible husbandry in the seventeenth, and calico printing and china making in the eighteenth. If the upper class invented the concept of gentleman to keep the middle class in order, as Russell quipped, they did so long before Arkwright and Watt, for the social mobility studied by Lawrence Stone for the Elizabethan age and Geoffrey Holmes for Augustan England ended up in the same process of gentrification.1

To tell the story of the enduring domination of a closely guarded elite instead of Wiener's suspenseful tale of the blocking of a rising bourgeoisie makes much more salient the role of class power in English history. As Perry Anderson has argued, the eighteenth-century constitutional reform movement was easily beaten back by England's traditional rulers because members of the middle class were traumatized by the French Revolution.2 Themselves excluded from political

power, they took cover with their social superiors once the radicalism of the French mobs became clear. Thereafter the English government yielded to reformers only when the hissing of the safety valve announced that the time had finally come. Within this political context, the success of a high-brow campaign to politicize gentility is not so surprising. What is less obvious is the impact of this rhetorical war upon the economic decline it is supposed to have caused. Wiener leaves it to his readers to supply the intervening variables. We must make the connection between antipathy to hard work, efficiency, competitive striving, and innovative boldness, on the one hand, and missed opportunities, lackadaisical management, and the general censure of pushy profit-making, on the other. Our assumptions about the operation of values in social action supply the causes.

*English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit* has little to say about the working class or even that sizeable middle class outside the charmed circle of Oxbridge-educated gentle persons. Wiener dismisses the idea that trade union "obstructionism" is a cause of declining productivity by asserting that the elite enjoys a disproportionate influence upon public opinion. If not exactly a non sequitur, this statement does less than justice to the contributions to economic development made by men of obscure origins. The antibusiness snobbery instilled in public schools cannot explain why ambitious outsiders with no other incentive than that of making money were unable to take advantage of the room at the top caused by the disdain drain. The history of entrepreneurship after all is one of "creative destruction," to use Schumpeter's expression. Rarely has that destructive force come from those who have already succeeded, however recently. Innovation comes from new men and flourishes in those societies where the already-established cannot cut off access to opportunity.

In the developments within industrial capitalism over the past century we can locate some of the means for beating back challenges from below. The increased capitalization in machinery led to concentrations of wealth and a very high cost of entry into production. Both undercut the effectiveness of competition that Adam Smith had counted on to mediate between individual self-interest and the social benefit of improvements. These structural changes within the economy greatly facilitated the meshing of economic and political power in England as elsewhere. The cult of civility no doubt supplied a gloss on all this, but England's ruling class has not been loath to exercise class power directly. It is this dimension of the problem that is obscured when Wiener justifies neglecting popular culture on the grounds that the values of the elite permeate the whole society.

---

3 It is interesting in this connection that a recent Gallup survey of European and American values, reported in the *London Times*, June 11, 1982, p. 12, revealed the English and Americans much closer together than either with Europeans in their unusual pride in work.
because of its disproportionate influence. Influence is clearly not the only force at work. Peter Sellers once put his considerable talents as a mimic to use by tapping a series of telephone calls of himself imitating job-hunters. Sellers as a Pakistani followed Sellers, the cockney, then Sellers with the intonations of the man on the Clapham bus, and finally Sellers with an impeccable “U” accent. The reactions of prospective employers were all too predictable and point to a critical distinction about culture and social control: to shape opinions about what is genteel is not the same thing as using power to circumscribe the lives of those who do not possess gentility. Shaw’s verbal class-distinction does more than pander to social prejudices, it functions as part of the economic structure.

Wiener has boldly carried the case for culture into the well-fortified turf of economic analysis. The critical acclaim for *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit* will properly be hailed as a triumph for the “wets” of mentalité studies over the “dries” of data collection. With bookies and mediums enjoying better prediction rates than business forecasters it is no wonder that readers are receptive to arguments that embrace the untidy human perversities excluded from mathematical modeling. The culture concept, however, is freighted with its own ideological baggage that should be unpacked. To assume that the values of ordinary people are created by elites is to exaggerate the control that exists over the contents of other people’s minds and suggests that the lower classes voluntarily participate in their own oppression. While not exactly exonerated, the use of class power is thus sanitized. The danger in a book as persuasive as Wiener’s is not that economic factors will be underestimated in our accounts of social change, but rather that the exercise of class power will be overlooked and we will end up with yet another intellectual strategy for blaming the powerlessness of the poor upon themselves.
One April morning in Delhi, urban renewal came to the ghetto of magicians. At first, that day, all seemed normal: a tiny bald illusionist was driving knives through the neck of his apprentice; a conjurer was persuading large woolen balls to drop from the armpits of strangers. Then the vans and bulldozers came. Clean-cut youths with foreign educations blared evacuation orders through loudspeakers. The ghetto was an eyesore; the civic beautification program of the Sanjay Youth Central Committee required that slums be cleared and their inhabitants sterilized. By the end of the day, the ghetto was flattened. But some of the magicians escaped. The next day a new ghetto was reported, hard by the railroad station. Bulldozers, vasectomists, and troopers were rushed to the scene; they found nothing. In following days the ghetto reappeared in business districts, suburbs, amid the hovels of the poor and the formal gardens of the
rich. Within a week the magicians' moving slum had become a fact known to all the inhabitants of the city, but the wreckers never found it. The civic beautification program fell victim to escaped illusionists.

This fable appears in Salmond Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*—a novel that brilliantly uses the techniques of literary modernism to explore the dilemmas of modernization. The fable of the magicians' ghetto dramatizes a Hobson's choice between tradition and modernity, between the filth, famine, ignorance, and superstition endemic in many developing countries and the autocratic methods of modernizing elites who seek to impose sanitized uniformity on entire populations. The fable also suggests the limits of modernization: the impossibility of rubbing out magical thinking with bureaucratic rationality, the obstinate refusal of ordinary folk to be emancipated or improved by their forward looking leaders. The moving slum of the magicians epitomizes the intractability of tradition in a modernizing world.

Loose and baggy words such as modernization and modernism pose a host of problems. Yet they are an indispensable shorthand for the vast and complex process that has overtaken most parts of the world during the last several centuries: the shift from the old morality imposed by patriarch or priest to a new internalized morality of self-control; the replacement of supernatural by secular standards of value and meaning; the drive for systematic development of the physical environment as well as the inner landscape of the self. Contrary to the assumptions of many American social scientists, modernization has not been a universal or inevitable process. Beginning in the capitalist West, modernization has been shaped by particular cultures and economic systems in many specific ways. And it has rarely been an unambiguous liberation. Freeing individuals from old constraints, entrepreneurial and bureaucratic elites have sought to restructure the self to meet the needs of the Nation, the Party, or the Firm. And they have provoked popular resistance in the name of indigenous customs and traditions—as Rushdie's modernist fable suggests.

Modernism is an even looser and baggier term than modernization. In general it has been used to describe the literary and visual arts that have experimented with form and style in a self-conscious effort to confront the impact of modernization. The modernist label is more valuable to literary critics than to historians; it tells us nothing about an artist's attitudes toward the version of modernity he experiences. He might be enthusiastic, hostile, or ambivalent, and still be a modernist. Literary critics, preoccupied by formal innovation and by a handful of modernist texts, have neglected to explore the full historical significance of the culture of modernism. A historical exploration of modernism might illuminate the concrete actuality of that abstract modernization process.

Certainly Rushdie's fable suggests historical applications beyond its Indian setting. It has obvious relevance to problems encountered by modernizing elites
throughout the Third World. In Iran, for example, where the cant of economic
development concealed the Shah's brutal exercise of power and the preservation
of Western influence, the program of progress provoked a fierce Islamic revival.
Western journalists tended to view this reaction as an effort to “turn the clock
back 1300 years”—as the New York Times put it. In actuality it was a revolt against
forcible modernization, a revolt energized by a restorationist ideology with deep
roots in local traditions. The Islamic revival may have many unlovely aspects
under Western eyes, but to dismiss it as a return to barbarism is to fall into the
arrogance of the Sanjay Youth Central Committee.

The story of the magicians' ghetto has a less obvious but equally important
relation to the contemporary United States. In this quintessentially bourgeois
society, tradition in the Old World sense has played a comparatively limited role.
Yet in recent years, historians have made clear that possessive individualism—the
ideology of capitalist-style modernization—was long hemmed in by indigenous
and imported moral traditions. The modern resystemizing of selfhood was de­
layed, here as elsewhere, by the individual's commitment to family, community,
and faith. But during the last hundred years, particularly among the more edu­
cated and affluent, these older loyalties became attenuated; the modern ideal of
self-development became an end in itself. A cult of personal growth has come to
parallel the national creed of economic growth and has eased accommodation to
a secular, corporate society, geared to routine work and consumption-oriented
leisure.

By now it should be clear, though, that this accommodation has been as
messy and incomplete as the civic beautification program in Delhi. We are in the
midst of a widespread revulsion against the effects of modernization. The vision
of a society composed of free-floating selves, liberated from oppressive tradi­
tions and organizing their lives for maximum pleasure and productivity, has fallen
on hard times. Discontent with progressive platitudes cuts across the political
spectrum, energizing the Moral Majority, splitting the Democratic party leader­
ship from the more traditional rank and file, provoking neighborhoods' opposi­
tion to shopping malls and other “improvements,” promoting politicians' obei­
sance to “traditional values.”

It is important to point out that this resurgence of antimodern sentiment is
not just a blue collar phenomenon. A sizeable segment of the college educated,
realizing the emptiness of the personal growth agenda, has resisted incorpora­
tion into the dominant culture. Struggling to preserve larger commitments out­
side the self, they have also preserved what was strongest in the 1960s counter­
culture: the antimodern critique of rapacious economic growth and the bureau­
cratic warfare state. Despite superficial differences in cultural styles, skepticism
about capitalist progress unites a wide variety of Americans.
The muddled, contradictory character of antimodern sentiments is nowhere more evident than in contemporary religious ferment. Despite the secularization of mainstream culture, yearnings for transcendence persist. The resurgence of evangelical Christianity, the reappearance of a religious peace movement, the widespread preoccupation with magic and the occult, the proliferation of sects and cults—all make clear that the confident hopes of the Enlightenment have not been fulfilled: religion has not been cast aside like an old suit of clothes that no longer fits. American culture, like so many others, is pervaded by restorationist ideologies and traditional ways of thinking.

Makers of conventional wisdom, whatever their ideological persuasion, have addressed this confusion by reducing it to a familiar formula: a conservative mood, a resurgence of God-given authority for parents and churches, a New Right conspiracy to promote "apple-pie authoritarianism." Amid journalistic clichés, it is good to see two books that aim to take a larger view of the cultural dilemmas created by modernization. Both Edward Shils's Tradition and Marshall Berman's All This is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity address that subject; otherwise they are about as different as two books can be. Tradition is a mature work, gray in style but formidable in range and power; despite its enormous subject it is carefully argued and hedged with qualifications. All That Is Solid is an energetic, impressionistic tract, filled with sweeping assertions and breathtaking simplifications. Of the two, Shils's book is far more worth pondering.

This is somewhat surprising, since from time to time Shils has made some extraordinarily superficial arguments about American culture. His earlier sociological work showed the defects of the functionalist tradition: a neglect of class conflict, an assumption that modern industrial society was a smoothly integrated organism. More recently, he has joined the fashionable effort to trace all current problems of American universities to the misplaced egalitarianism of the 1960s. Some of the same neoconservative myopia mars Tradition. Shils tends to see modernism as a monolithic front in behalf of personal liberation and to exaggerate the role of intellectuals in promoting the modernization of culture. This disembodied history-of-ideas approach recalls similar arguments made by Daniel Bell (The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism) and Robert Nisbet (The Twilight of Authority). All tend to divorce culture from social structure and to focus on a few emancipationist manifestoes as the essence of modernism.

But despite these flaws, and despite lapses into banality and sociologese, Tradition is a wise book. With much patience and many examples, Shils argues that traditional patterns of thought and behavior are inescapable and indispensable, not only in religion and family life but in scientific research, socialist thought, even avant-garde art. Shils recognizes that his respect for tradition
marks him as a maverick. Despite the current chatter about a return to traditional values, progressive assumptions are embedded in American habits of mind and speech. We have long been encouraged to assume that institutions and values frequently become out of date, that irresistible revolutions occur in everything from sexual behavior to cybernetics, that constant change is irreversible and redemptive. Behind this progressivism, Shils observes, is the modern faith that human beings are "self-determining moral entities, free from original sin and the burden of inheritance." This belief in individual autonomy has sparked resistance to oppression but has also led us to ignore the grip of the past. In Shil's view we are afflicted by cultural amnesia. His willingness to reassert the claims of memory makes Tradition often fascinating and sometimes profound.

Part of Shils's achievement is that he deftly explicates the meanings of some key words in the progressive vocabulary. "Originality," for example, in its earliest usage referred to original sin; only after the seventeenth century did it begin to become an honorific term signifying "creative" departure from tradition. And "create" is another key word; until about the same time it had been applied to God alone. Modern evaluations of artistic achievement require that the artist implicitly be deified as a creator who owed nothing to his ancestors—an absurd notion, but consistent with the modern faith in individual autonomy. Shils devotes similar attention to the word "natural," so often used to justify hostility to traditional moral constraints. "The belief that restraint of impulse is bad and gratification good" has become part of the antitraditional tradition of the Enlightenment. It is not a natural phenomenon but a social construction.

Shils's sensitivity to the social construction of reality is his strongest analytical trait. He is keenly aware of the resources people draw on to give meaning to their lives: the dense textures of family life, the innumerable particularities of communal association, the mysterious bond between generations, the sense of a sacred cosmic order. And he is properly suspicious of ideologies that seek to tear this tissue of social relations in the name of self-expression or spontaneity. Parents who refuse to impose their beliefs on their children do them a profound disservice, Shils argues; the absence of family tradition impoverishes future generations. "A family which incorporates into itself little of the past . . . deadens its offspring; it leaves them with a scanty set of categories and beliefs which are not easily extended or elaborated." As Shils observes, this absence of belief is hardly remedied by compulsory public schooling. The result is an increasing number of young people incapable of moral indignation or commitment.

This sort of argument is the stock-in-trade of the conservative curmudgeon, eternally railing against the misbehavior of the young. But Shils's conservatism is of a higher order. He is no uncritical traditionalist; he realizes that traditions can be stifling as well as sustaining, and that the modern drive for personal au-
tonomy has brought enormous gains. Yet he also recognizes a central irony: the success of the progressives' program has depended on the survival of the traditions they scorned. "Living on a soil of substantive traditionality, the ideas of the Enlightenment advanced without undoing themselves," Shils writes. Moral and cultural traditions, by softening the abrasive effects of individualism, made possible real gains in freedom. Untrammeled individualism has always been unendurable, though many progressives have yet to make that discovery.

Shils's own faith in progress is tempered by observation and experience. Author of *The Intellectual Between Tradition and Modernity: The Indian Situation*, he knows the secret of Rushdie's ghetto. He knows that programs of modernization have often run afoul of the aspirations of ordinary people, concealing new forms of chaos with a veil of technical rationality. And he is willing to assert: "the fact that a practice or belief has persisted for an extended period of time is an argument for its retention." There may be more powerful arguments against its retention, but the crucial point is that traditions exist because they serve human needs. They do not automatically deserve contempt. The only reason these statements should seem startling is that our dominant culture is still intoxicated with change. Shils is sober.

To move from Shils to Berman is to leave the dry air of the classroom lecture for the more humid atmosphere of the encounter group. Breathless and upbeat in tone, *All That Is Solid* surveys some classic modernist texts to illuminate "the experience of modernity." Berman begins by presenting Goethe's *Faust* as a "tragedy of development" in which Faust's longings for self-development lead him to "new frontiers" of personal and economic growth—but at a fearful cost to such people as Faust's lover Gretchen and the old couple Philomen and Baucis who are "in the way" of his mammoth construction project. Berman then analyzes the section of the *Communist Manifesto* that describes the melting of "all fixed fast-frozen relationships" in the bourgeois epoch. Again emphasizing the innovative self-destruction promoted by capitalist development, Berman notes that capitalists themselves have usually failed to recognize the destructive dynamism of their own economic system. Baudelaire is then ushered in to show how the modern city street creates a curious mix of anonymity and intimacy. His testimony is followed by that of Russian writers from Pushkin to Dostoevsky to Mandelstam, all of whom are alleged to represent "the modernism of underdevelopment," the blend of envy, admiration, and hostility that "backward" peoples feel toward modernizing, cosmopolitan cultures. Finally Berman discusses "modernism in New York" by describing the modernizer Robert Moses's destruction of older urban neighborhoods, then celebrating the efforts of recent modernists (Jim Dine, Twyla Tharp, Claes Oldenburg) to come to terms with the
demonic “expressway world” Moses created.

This brisk tour contains some interesting analyses of modernist texts (particularly of the *Communist Manifesto*), but fails as an exploration of modernity. Berman’s aims are laudable but unfulfilled. He wants to link modernism and modernization, but he rarely strays beyond a half dozen texts. He wants to revive a dialectical approach to modernity, to grasp modern tragedies as well as modern triumphs, but his dialectic remains little more than a rhetorical device. Social and personal devastation are acknowledged but always assimilated to his abiding faith in growth. He never addresses the insoluble conflicts between modern skepticism and ancient faith, between modernizing elites and subject populations, between progressive children and traditional parents. Instead, what really fascinates him is “an emerging economy of self-development that can transform even the most shattering human loss into a source of psychic gain and growth.” This is *Creative Divorce* on a cosmic scale. Substituting slogans for analysis, assertions for evidence, *All That Is Solid* is worth very little as cultural history. But it is an interesting symptom of the uncritical progressivism still current on the left.

Like most progressives, Berman has no interest in the past except as a foil for the exciting present and future. He appears to believe that modern urban society has a special claim not only to tragedy and conflict but also to “glamorous spectacle” and artistic achievement. “The twentieth century may well be the most brilliantly creative in the history of the world,” he announces, recalling Richard Nixon’s confidence that he had just lived through “the most important week in the history of the world since the creation.” When professors (or politicians) pontificate about “the history of the world,” it is time to raise a skeptical eyebrow. The skepticism only deepens when Berman endorses Goethe’s (alleged) view of traditional European society: “all it has to offer is dead weight pressing down on its subjects, crushing their bodies and strangling their souls.” Berman cannot imagine anything but a “closed, repressive, vicious Gothic world” before the coming of modern Enlightenment. Even a nodding acquaintance with social history would have presented him with a very different picture. During the past twenty years, E.P. Thompson, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Jacques Le Goff, and legions of other social historians have made clear that traditional societies in Europe were far more complex and fluid than had previously been supposed. And the people of those societies were not the rutting brutes of progressive fantasy: they formed erotic unions, raised children in joy and sorrow, feared loneliness and loss and death. The point is not to romanticize them but simply to grant them their full humanity. They experienced all the conflict that human flesh is heir to; their lives could be as baffling as our own.

Yet the people of traditional societies had symbolic resources which are
now depleted in many parts of the world. For many, religion made life understand-able and tolerable. Here too it is possible to sentimentalize: many did not believe, or believed halfheartedly, or were browbeaten into belief. Religion could tyrannize as well as console. But the astonishing thing about Berman's book is that it contains almost no discussion of religion beyond a few predictable shudderings at the tyranny of priestcraft. Only once does he hint at the complexity of the subject: when he mentions the Russian priest George Gapon's "naive and intensely religious radicalism—far more typical of the Russian masses, Lenin said later, than his own Marxism." Somehow (we are left to wonder how) religion could promote radicalism as well as reaction. Despite his ambition to grasp the experience of modernity, Berman ignores the tangled and essential relation between religion and modernization.

Berman's ignorance of history is equally apparent in his treatment of the rise of industrial capitalism. His chapter on Faust traces early industrialization in Europe to "the romantic quest for self-development." This is a literary conceit, not a historical argument. It does not seem to occur to Berman that the coming of industrial capitalism involved the exercise of power relations, that some classes of people sought to meet their needs and interests by dominating other classes in novel ways, and that the dominant classes promoted a modern ethic of self-control that often sanctioned far less spontaneity than the traditional ethos he scorns. For him, modernization in any form has always been rooted in ordinary people's desire for "more abundant life."

From this perspective Berman can dismiss the antimodern resentments of Third World leaders. "What they are projecting onto aliens, and prohibiting as 'Western decadence,' is in fact their own people's energies and desires and critical spirit." In spite of his understandable affection for metropolitan craziness and diversity, Berman's cosmopolitan pretensions mask a deeply provincial contempt for cultures outside his own secular, urban experience. From his view, anti-Western restorationist ideologies have simply resulted from despots' ability to keep their followers in the dim light of false consciousness. The same condescension pervades progressive commentary on American evangelicals—all those dolts duped by TV preachers. If, as Berman assumes, the modern worship of "ever-renewed development" is an upthrust from below, then antimodern tendencies must be antideocratic.

Berman's conviction that modernization has democratic roots leads him to some extraordinary assertions about contemporary scientific policy. "If scientific and technological cadres have accumulated vast powers in modern society, it is only because their visions and values have echoed, amplified, and realized our own," he writes. "They have only created means to fulfill ends embraced by the modern public: open-ended development of self and society, incessant trans-
formation of the whole inner and outer world." Of course, the modern public has little or no influence on scientific and technological cadres. Scientific policy, like so much else in the bureaucratic corporate state, is primarily shaped by people with wealth and power. Overlooking the obvious fact of elite domination, Berman insists that "in the process of development, we are all experts." So be reassured. The nuclear arms race is really an exercise in democracy.

Berman's naiveté is the reductio ad absurdum of progressives' common assumption that the people are on their side. The problem with this view is that ordinary folk have usually been the most tenaciously traditional element in society — yet their cultural conservatism has often promoted political and economic radicalism. Culturally conservative radicals have preserved moral resources for challenging possessive individualism and the unjust distribution of power. Looking backward to traditional values of self-sacrifice and mutual obligation, they have looked forward to a more just society. Recall the "intensely religious radicalism" of Gapon's peasants, the communal and religious roots of American radical movements from the Populist Party to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Contemporary antimodern sentiments constitute an untapped reservoir of resistance. Instead of fretting about apple-pie authoritarianism, would-be democrats might address the concerns of those who (like Philomen and Baucis in Faust) are in the way of modernization.

Berman, like many other progressives, seems curiously isolated from the concerns of ordinary people. He dismisses Philomen and Baucis, along with their "distinctively Christian virtues," as obsolete. He fills his book with lofty pronouncements about what modern people have done and must do. He asserts that "the vast majority of modern men and women do not want to resist modernity: they feel its excitement and believe in its promise, even when they find themselves in its way." (The obvious question is: how does he know?) Coercive language creeps continually into his prose, as when he mentions "the dialectic [of ceaseless creation and destruction] that modern men must embrace in order to move and live." Obsessed with the "adventure" of self-development, Berman seems unaware that most modern work is not a matter of Faustian dynamism but of settled routine, interrupted by the irrationalities of the business cycle. Assuming they are lucky enough to find work, the file clerks and keypunch operators who staff our corporate system can hardly be expected to embrace their labor as an adventure.

Unable to contemplate the everyday experience of modernity, Berman also seems insensitive to the modernist culture he claims to know so well. He grossly oversimplifies modernism as "the realism of our time"—a reflection of the chaos, the novelty, the cravings for change that characterize modern times. There is some truth in this view, but it overlooks the dialectics within modernist culture:
the desire for stillness amid manic modern striving; the longing for a sacred center of meaning even as one accepts the knowledge which erodes it. Many of the greatest modernists simply cannot fit inside Berman's framework: Faulkner, Yeats, Eliot, Bruno Schulz, Henry Adams, Mark Rothko—to mention only a few, all of whom rejected progressive pieties and chose to live with conflict rather than evade it. Berman commits the unpardonable modernist sin by dissolving insoluble conflict in the spurious harmony of growth. His highest hope is to "get back in touch with a remarkably rich and vibrant modernist culture . . . that contains vast resources of strength and health, if only we come to know it as our own." In other words, modernism can be a kind of tonic if only one can learn to like the taste.

For the victims of modernization, under either corporate capitalism or state socialism, the therapeutic idiom does nothing to address the widespread sense of powerlessness, disintegration, and drift. It cannot revitalize participation in public life or restore a larger sense of meaning and purpose to people's lives. Even Berman, with all his hymns to the autonomy of the modern individual, glimpses the underlying sense of helplessness when he complains that "we have mostly lost the art of putting ourselves in the picture, of recognizing ourselves as participants and protagonists in the art and thought of our time." Leaving aside the problem of who "we" are, the question remains: why has a numbing sense of passivity become a chronic cultural malady of the twentieth century?

To begin to answer the question, it is important to realize that the relation between modernism and modernization is more complex than either Berman or Shils suggests. Both treat the modern cult of self-development as the creation of a handful of artists and intellectuals whose lust for intense experience was fundamentally at odds with bourgeois restraint. This view represents the first, heroic stage in the historiography of modernism: an epic of Bohemian manifestoes and success by scandal. A firmer historical grounding for modernism might cast stronger light on current cultural predicaments.

Struck by superficial antinomies between Bohemian and bourgeois, historians of modernism have failed to see that the avant-garde cult of self-development through intense experience was not the exclusive property of a coterie. It was the most extreme expression of a cultural tendency pervading the Western bourgeoisie during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the United States, as an entrepreneurial, Protestant culture became more secular and bureaucratic, longings for emotional spontaneity and instinctual vitality began to
pervade the middle and upper classes—those who felt their lives had become arid, safe, devoid of both danger and ecstasy. By the early twentieth century, the gospel of self-development was heard in suburban Sunday schools as well as in Greenwich Village.

Yearnings for more abundant life were not incompatible with bureaucratic imperatives of efficiency, as Berman and Shils assume; on the contrary those rebellious desires were assimilated by social scientists, teachers, advertising executives—the professional and managerial elites who sanitized and popularized the ethic of self-development. Far from challenging bureaucratic rationality, the new ethic promoted a rationalization of the inner life, an anxious, calculating hedonism well suited to the daily rhythms of routine and release under corporate capitalism. Promising self-development on the installment plan, managerial elites became the enemies of the traditional values many still claim to defend.

Besides examining the institutional base of this popularized modernism, it is also crucial to understand that (contrary to Shils) the modernist longing for more life was not merely a lust for the experience of sensation unencumbered by traditional restraints. Modernism was not only a reaction against tradition but a recoil from the effects of modernity itself—particularly the impact of secularization. It was not traditional Christianity but the complacent bourgeois cult of material progress that outraged Dostoevsky, William James, and a host of anonymous souls who shared the modernist passion for intense experience. At its most profound that passion can only be called religious. All the sanctions for struggle and self-sacrifice, for a life of transcendent significance, seemed to have evaporated in what Nietzsche called the weightless atmosphere of late nineteenth-century modern culture. For many, the tragic depths of life seemed shallower without the old supernatural cosmology.

It is no wonder, then, that so many modernists have sought a sacred stillness in the midst of modern chaos, no wonder they have revalued primitive art and ritual, myth and magic. Berman dismisses this antimodern modernism as a sign of bad faith; in actuality it is the one modernist strain that has resisted full incorporation into the dominant capitalist culture. In contrast, the modernism that rejects all meaning and merely gropes for formal novelty is easily made into a commodity by salesmen of chic. Nihilism sells.

Antimodern modernists, however entangled with doubt, have rejected nihilism. Their work is far too complex, various, and elusive to be plundered for "lessons." Nevertheless it implies a powerful critique of Enlightenment progressivism which might help to ventilate stale thinking about contemporary politics and culture. Consider the common tendency of modern bureaucratic thinking to focus on immediate techniques rather than ultimate values and purposes. Berman celebrates this debased pragmatism (without irony) as the liberating
message of Mephistopheles: “Accept destructiveness as part of your share in divine creativity, and you can throw off your guilt and act freely. No longer should you be inhibited by the moral question Should I do it? Out on the open road to self-development, the only vital question is How to do it?” Melville, who knew better, created his own embodiment of Faustian pragmatism in Captain Ahab. “All my means are sane,” says Ahab, “my ends alone are mad.”

Melville's laconic comment on the madness of amoral pragmatism is hardly programmatic, but it does suggest a liberating critique of modern cant. The same is true of the Polish novelist Bruno Schulz, who posed the fantastic riches of his childhood haunts, the cinnamon shops, against the tawdry “pseudo-American” modernity of The Street of Crocodiles. And in the novels of Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Milan Kundera, antimodern modernism becomes pointedly political. Whatever their differences, both writers have sensitively explored the tendency of modernizing elites to erase cultural memory, severing human ties to the past in an effort to resystemize the unattached self. As one of Kundera's characters observes, “the struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting.”

Kundera has been celebrated in this country as an anticommunist, but his critique also applies to the American version of modernity. Remembering can be a subversive activity under capitalism as well. Democratic critics of the corporate system are wary of nostalgia because it seems faddish and easily commodified. But memory is not reducible to nostalgia. As Shils observes, the past can effectively be used to judge the present. That is one function of tradition, in cultural criticism and everyday life. Many ordinary people have continued to enact the antimodern modernist critique of Enlightened progressivism: they have remembered. The current preoccupation with “traditional values,” despite its entanglement with militarism and its distortion by the media, is at bottom part of the struggle of memory against forgetting.

If would-be democrats listened more carefully to the popular cri de coeur against modernization, they might realize that political egalitarianism could still draw strength from cultural conservatism. It is in the interests of managerial elites that people suffer cultural amnesia, that they lack continuities with the past and loyalties outside the self, that their only abiding commitment is to their own personal growth. The cult of self-development helps to satisfy the corporate need for free floating units of “human capital.” The point is not to abandon the liberal concern for individual freedom and minority rights, or to subsume it in some sentimental vision of preindustrial community, but to acknowledge that the modern faith in perfect autonomy is destructive and illusory. “The Enlightenment was a very great accomplishment and it has become part of our tradition,” Shils writes. “It would be an exercise in the discriminating appreciation of traditions
Contested Terrain

to discern what is living and what is dead in the tradition of the Enlightenment." The task is delicate and urgent. A failure to reconsider progressive platitudes might well mean that democratic thinkers would remain on the margins of public discourse, talking largely to each other, trapped in their own ghetto of illusion.
Since the Reagan victory in 1980, the political anxiety of the democratic left has focused on the new right, both as the quasi-religious, technological populism of the Moral Majority and the National Conservative Political Action Committee, or as the more elitist neoconservatism of *The Public Interest* and *Commentary*. This has caused the neglect of a form of conservatism that is rooted in a distinct part of the American establishment. It includes the internationalist, corporatist, and moderate liberalism of *The New York Times* as well as the academic conservatism of the American Enterprise Institute. One of its most influential voices has been Samuel P. Huntington, whose longstanding antipathy to democracy has found its most recent expression in his book *American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony*.

Huntington's work is remarkable for its attempt to synthesize his own practical experience (with the State Department, various branches of the armed forces, and the National Security Council) and scholarly writings, on the one hand, and, on the other, the major interpretations of American political life represented by the work of Tocqueville, Bryce, Croly, Parrington, Beard, Myrdal, Hofstadter, Lippman, Boorstin, and most important, Louis Hartz. Hartz's *The
Liberal Tradition in America (1955) sought to explain the absence of original American political thought by identifying the enormous power of Lockean liberalism to consolidate a political consensus and stifle the emergence in American history of conservative and radical traditions of thought. Although this consensus has promoted national unity—with the exception of the Civil War—it also, according to Hartz, has encouraged intolerance of political diversity at home and indifference toward the unique political experiences of other nations. To overcome these harmful tendencies, Hartz believed that Americans have to “transcend” their liberal tradition. Huntington likewise believes in the force of the American political consensus, and that it makes the United States “exceptional.” Also like Hartz he believes that it harbors perils as well as blessings, promise and disharmony, for American political life. But Huntington has settled on a different kind of cure for America’s political ills.

Huntington constructs arguments for a strong state and against radical change. The viewpoint is American, conservative, and proestablishment. In an article published in 1957 Huntington argued that the authentic marks of a conservative are not so much beliefs in a set of permanent principles, or associations with a particular class, but rather the committed defense of “the established order . . . against any serious challenge.” For American conservatives this produces the ironic necessity of having to defend the relatively liberal political institutions of the United States. Huntington has adopted this political stance as his own. He believes that preserving a viable American consensus requires not ideological innovation, as does Hartz, but the dampening of popular political activity. This means both discouraging citizens from making use of traditional ideals to criticize existing political practices—or to foster equality and political participation—and encouraging the strengthening of the state.

Supposedly, the basic intellectual materials with which Huntington assesses American political life are indigenous to the United States. But as we shall see, his book’s historical moorings are suspect. Actually, the book is anchored less strongly in the dynamic course of American politics than in a new kind of state conservatism, by way of his love for West Point, admiration for superpower, anxiety about instability, affection for authority, and fear of democracy.

---

Huntington bases his interpretation of American politics on the “American Creed.” Creeds are characteristically religious; as authoritative testaments of faith, however, they may serve as ideological rites of passage for membership in any organization. For Huntington, this has been the function of the American Creed in the United States. While its citizens may share a common language, they lack a common ancestry of race, ethnicity, or social culture, and the task of uniting the people falls to the political structure. Formally, this framework is the Constitution, but for Huntington a more basic element, replacing the absent primordial ties, is the American Creed. The Creed possesses an integrity and strength that insulates it from changes in America’s economy and society and saves the nation from disintegration by factions associated with region, class, race, and ethnicity.

Contributing to the Creed are five political ideas that stem from various branches of early American political culture: constitutionalism, individualism, liberalism, democracy, and egalitarianism. During political crises, interest groups employ one or more tenets of the Creed against each other, but enough elements of the Creed are continuously shared by all to prevent any revolutionary political strife from arising. But in Huntington’s view, the Creed not only enhances stability; it generates a kind of political conflict whose power exceeds that of political antagonisms rooted in the “social structure” (i.e. class and status). By highlighting the political role of the American Creed, Huntington enshrouds the divisive forces of capitalist development, geographic and military expansion, and racism in American political life. Indeed, Huntington’s political focus is so state-centered that he never discusses the power or authority of corporations and the marketplace. This permits him to argue that major political conflict in America does not reflect battles between rich and poor, white and black, the powerful and the powerless, but between “the movement” and “the establishment.”

The source of this central conflict for Huntington is not the separate ideas that comprise the Creed but a common strand among them, which Huntington calls “the antipower ethic.” It engenders habitual opposition to authority in general and government in particular, even as it holds the Creed together. Moreover, this ethic represents the political use of America’s democratic ideals. One could argue that the various elements of the Creed constitute an ideological foundation for the democratic structuring of political power. After all, a citizenry that characteristically possesses a critical standard for judging the exercise of power is a citizenry capable of maintaining its effective sovereignty. But Huntington sees power and authority as properties of elite institutions rather than politically associated citizens, and he sees the Creed operating as a “norm” antagonistic to the power and authority of corporate and governmental institutions, in opposition to what Huntington believes are the necessary features of institutional self-maintenance: hierarchy, inequality, specialization, and expertise.
The antipower ethic generates the "anxiety," "agony," and "disharmony," of American politics that erupt periodically in a futile effort on the part of the people to close a "gap" between institutions and ideals ("the IVL gap"). The most enduring feature of American political life is, therefore, a continual experience of legitimation crisis:

The widespread consensus on liberal-democratic values provides the basis for challenging the legitimacy of American political practices and the authority of American political institutions. . . . If people try to make government more legitimate by bringing practice more into accord with the political principle, they will weaken government rather than strengthen it. . . . As a result of the IVL gap, the perennial gap between the actuality of institutional practice and ideal standards, the legitimacy of American government varies inversely with belief in American ideals.

Given the extraordinary stability of American political ideals and institutions through the past two hundred years—even a Civil War didn't shake them too much—how does Huntington manage to produce so much worry about our ideals threatening our institutions? How does Huntington's view of American history encourage his readers to defend the American state, suppress their motivation for political reform, and question the validity of American ideals rather than the justice of such stark phenomena as capitalism, bureaucracy, centralization, inequality, technological imperatives, racism, social disintegration, sexism, or militarism?

He does so in the name of political realism, first of all by introducing a sobering comparative perspective. All other European, Latin American, and Asian societies, he alleges, are more deferential and authoritarian than the United States. They also experience a lesser degree of disharmony. The most "harmonious" society is "traditional India," where the caste system legitimates all social inequalities; Japan receives Huntington's most lavish praise. Its traditional values permit a "vertical" organizational structure. Huntington agrees with Chie Nakane, who asserts that the great strength of this structure "lies in its effectiveness for centralized communication and its capability of efficient and swift mobilization of the collective power of its members." Huntington then cites these traits for their "relevance" and "usefulness" for large, industrialized, bureaucratized societies such as the United States. The message is clear: the United States is antiauthoritarian in the extreme; it should become more moderate and less democratic.

American history confirms Huntington's charges against the Creed by view-
ing the past role of the Creed through a psychological lens. The American Creed has operated as a mechanism for “coping” with the “cognitive dissonance” generated by the IVI gap; its form varies according to the intensity of belief in the Creed and the clarity of perception of the IVI gap. Huntington describes the four stages in which the Creed appears in American history as attitudes toward the gap: “moralistic reform” or “eliminating the gap,” “cynicism” or “tolerating the gap,” “complacency” or “ignoring the gap,” and “hypocrisy,” or “denying the gap.” Although Huntington does not seek to prove that the “logic” of this pattern always repeats itself in history, he finds these states of mind appearing historically as political neuroses, each of which in succession hangs up America to some degree according to a wearying pattern of eternal recurrence.

“Moralism” is the most dangerous part of the cycle and Huntington's greatest concern. When it holds sway, middle- and lower-socioeconomic classes outside the establishment, normally politically silent, become mobilized along with the vocal segments of the country's elites. They join together, engage in political protest, and try to close “the gap” by political reform. In Huntington's American history, four periods stand out because of their excessive “moralism,” and he calls them “creedal passion periods.” They are the Revolutionary, Jacksonian, and Progressive eras, and “the years of protest, exposure, and reform of the 1960s and early 1970s.” In them, the antipower ethic of the Creed leads to a popular focus on

some combination of economic and political power: imperial power, money power, slave power, corporate power, executive power. . . . The common goal in all four periods was the break-up or reduction of organized power, its reform and control, the opening up of the processes of decision-making to public participation.

These periods parallel the periods of “critical realignment” identified by Walter Dean Burnham as watersheds in American history, during which “a major change rooted in the behavior of critically large minorities of American voters . . . . directly alters electoral coalitions, the shape of election outcomes, and the flow of public policy.” However, three other periods in American history that Burnham also categorized as eras of critical realignment notably do not qualify as “creedal passion periods”: the early 1800s, the 1860s, and the 1930s. Why? Because according to Huntington, the “focus of change in these periods concerns the role and power of social forces; the focus of change during creedal passion periods concerns the structure and character of political institutions and practices.” By redrawing the boundaries of major eras of political conflict according to this conceptual map, Huntington makes the excluded eras morally and politically benign. And the conflict of creedal passion periods now seems less important for the development of the country's basic institutions, more readily under-
standable as an essentially psychological affair. Thus, when Huntington differentiates creedal periods from other periods of realignment because of the kind of politics involved, he suggests a contrast between emotionalism and realism. Creedal politics "has been more intense, more idealistic, more infused with moral passion than it has been at other times when the pragmatic bargaining among interest groups predominates the scene."

Huntington's effort to sully and psychologize the motivation of democratically inspired protest becomes manifest in his description of the five major characteristics of all creedal passion periods. Each one, he claims, exhibits five characteristics: 1) abundant moral passion and concern for political ideas; 2) affirmation of the "democratic ideals of liberty, equality, individualism, and popular control of government, and opposition to authority, hierarchy, bureaucracy, and especially power"; 3) a high degree of political participation and spontaneously generated organization; 4) an outpouring of means of communication; 5) an "obsession" with exposing presumed sources of corruption that "may soon spread to a concern with the evils of corporation, church, school, and association." The first, third, and fourth traits are obviously essential to popular political activity and describe these eras. As to the second and fifth traits, there is good reason for doubt on both scores. A closer look at the Revolutionary era, "the prototypical period of creedal passion," illuminates how Huntington uses his conceptual matrix to derogate the political rationality of democratic protest.

Huntington relies on the respected work of Bernard Bailyn, Gordon Wood, and others to characterize the creedal politics of the Revolutionary era. Yet these accounts, in contradiction of Huntington's position, argue that American revolutionaries were not motivated by hostility toward authority and power. First, acceptance of economic inequalities and deference to social hierarchies were universal in the colonies. Secondly, while the many ideological sources of opposition to the Crown—the thought of classical antiquity, the Enlightenment, English common law, dissenting Protestantism, and Radical Whiggism—enabled American revolutionaries to advocate the overthrow of British rule as both necessary and just, no pamphleteer of the Revolution ever challenged the idea of governmental authority but rather its source, not the power of political rulers but rather their unprecedented use of it. Arguments for liberty and against pow-

er were rhetorical vehicles for transferring sovereign political authority to the colonists.  

To some extent, Huntington believes that the Revolution was, in his words, a “rational response” to the usurpation and abuse of authority by the Crown and its agents. Yet he makes clear his belief that in each of the subsequent creedal passion periods, the politically activated “moralism” of Americans increasingly damaged the effectiveness of their political institutions. As guides to political action, American political ideals became increasingly anachronistic because, for Huntington, lasting political change materializes independently of morally inspired efforts at political reform; it emerges from long-term processes such as “industrialization,” “modernization,” and “global involvement.” Huntington believes that these “objective” historical processes, unbridled by moral ideals, ought to provide the basic guidelines to which “realistic” political thought and action should adapt.

A historical analysis that erases the presence of moral concerns during years of political change explains why Huntington can exclude the Civil War and New Deal eras as creedal passion periods. Yet it is not easy to see how the period of the Civil War, when Americans slaughtered one another over constitutional interpretations and the legitimacy of slavery, did not concern “the structure and character of political institutions and practices.” In addition, how can Huntington exclude the New Deal, which at least led to the national recognition of minimal rights for organized labor and activity by the federal government to promote the general welfare? If the Civil War and New Deal eras were creedal passion periods, Huntington could not call “idealistic” political activism in America “obsessive.” Instead, activism would appear “effective” in American history and it would have to be acknowledged as a source of some of the United States’s most redeeming, egalitarian features. Huntington is not a racist, and he favors the New Deal. He simply wishes to neutralize the politicalness of those eras so that their positive value in American political consciousness may be viewed primarily in their contributions (which there certainly were) to administrative centralization.

For Huntington, the historical appearance of morally inspired political protest does not reflect the disarray of economic, social, and political institutions, but rather the periodic eruption of atavistic ideas in the American moral consciousness. It should not be surprising, then, that Huntington advises Americans to cool their political aspirations. The origins of ideological norms, he claims,

are historically obsolete, and because their roots are subjective and psychological rather than objective and political, they will be unreliable guides to "rational" political action. Rather than reforming institutions to fit their ideals, Americans should conform their ideals to fit their institutions.

If democratic ideals provide a faulty compass for beneficially directing political practice, why should we trust the guidance offered by institutions? What is it that they require that makes political protest "obsessive"? The answers belong to the conservative's stock of knowledge, and Huntington's conservative answers flow from a theory called "functionalism" that he uses to defend the inherent goodness of established institutions. This theory posits the existence of objectively ascertainable needs for social institutions—as if they possessed natural urges toward environmental adaptation. Their health consists of their stability or equilibrium; institutional imperatives are nonideological and value-free. Thus Huntington believes that in later creedal passion periods serious conflict arose between America's "developmental need" and its "ideological norm" of the Creed. Drawing on this theory, Huntington also argues that institutions function most efficiently if they operate independently of any class base. Consequently, political activity that reflects class antagonisms must be kept to a minimum because it hampers institutional adaptation to the "realities" of modern life. In this view, popularly motivated social and political change becomes obsessive because it uselessly generates instability and disrupts institutional equilibrium. Since functionalism ratifies the existing structure of power as rational and condemns political protest as irrational, it has an obvious use in Huntington's political analysis. It authorizes free action for elites because the domain for legitimate politics shrinks to include only technical problems of system management whose solution must come from the top.

Given Huntington's view of the existence of functional constraints on the health of institutions, individuals who operate them must do so competently and can do so according to nonideological, "objective" criteria. Such competence is much easier to judge if the institution is organized in a clearly hierarchical pattern of authority, because then a unitary standard of expertise exists. Effective military organizations have such a structure and follow such a standard. Not surprisingly, Huntington's first book lamented the incompatibility of typical American values with those that foster the competent performance of the military function. If Americans more warmly embraced the military ethic, he urged,

their political climate would offer a more suitable atmosphere for the expert solution to America's security needs. This need for Americans to adjust their values is particularly necessary, said Huntington, in America's contemporary condition. Before World War I, the primary question concerning security affairs was "what pattern of civil-military relations is most compatible with liberal democratic values." Security concerns could be subordinated to democratic needs. Now, America's world-wide economic and military preeminence downgrades the importance of preserving democratic values. Security must become our paramount preoccupation; and it is provided by the state.

The primacy of "national security" in Huntington's thought, fused with his interpretation of the American Creed as an antipower ethic, has disturbing political implications. In The Soldier and the State Huntington argues for "objective civilian control" of the military in all matters outside the domain of the military's professional competence. Although he took pains to differentiate the ideology of fascism from "conservative realism," the two possess, nonetheless, some unsettling resemblances. The values of conservative realism include nationalism, loyalty, pessimism, corporatism, power, order, hierarchy, and a belief in the "permanence, irrationality, weakness, and evil in human nature." Besides their military usefulness, such values automatically bestow moral virtue on pyramidal structures of authority and the selfless pose of bureaucrats who resist emotional appeals from below. Huntington's belief in conservative realism imbues the power of hierarchical institutions with moral authority and emphasizes the political priority of the state's security against hostile forces. As a result, when issues of military security dominate politics, as they must for Huntington's America today, the preoccupations of national security acquire primary political value and become the keystone around which other social institutions ought to be coordinated. The effect is to eliminate any justification for politics.

This subordination of authoritative moral and political activity to the security operations of the state, stitched to a functionalist theory of institutions, drains the natural political competence and authority of the people and invests it in the elite of the nation's military, governmental, and economic institutions:

6 Ibid., p. 3.
7 Ibid., pp. 59–79, 91–94.
popular limits on institutional authority must weaken institutional power; popu­
lar direction of institutional power must diminish institutional competence and
legitimacy.

Such beliefs enable Huntington to advocate unspecified limitations, in *The
Crisis of Democracy*, on popularly inspired attempts to shape governmental pol­
icy and, in *American Politics*, on programs for political reform shaped by “creedal
passion.” In the former, Huntington urges the greatest possible dissociation of a
president’s “electoral coalition” from his “governing coalition,” which must in­
clude “key people in Congress, the executive branch, and the private establish­
ment.” In the latter, he worries out loud whether today, when America’s “in­
creasingly sophisticated economy and active involvement in world affairs seem
likely to create stronger needs for hierarchy, bureaucracy, centralization of pow­
er, expertise, big government specifically, and big organizations generally,” the
American Creed can sustain an “effective system of government” able “to com­
pete internationally” and to handle its “foreign enemies.”

More specifically, Huntington’s world picture of “conservative realism,”
combined with fears about a pervasive “antipower ethic,” leads him to argue for
new protections for the powerful from political criticism. Political leaders re­
sponsible for deploying American power should not be asked to publicize their
actions if they are to perform their job well. Given the “obsession” of Americans
for “exposure” during creedal passion periods, “the most effective exercise of
power is the concealment of power; to cover up power becomes the first impera­
tive of power.” Top political leaders, as a matter of course, must hide what the
function of their office requires of them in order to satisfy the antipower ethic of
the American people. Accordingly, Huntington minimizes Nixon’s subversion
of open government as a political crime. The secrecy surrounding the bombing
of Cambodia was necessary in order to “avoid embarrassing Prince Sihanouk
and complicating peace negotiations with the North Vietnamese.” Regarding
Watergate, Huntington believes that “along with his other misdoings, Nixon was
guilty of not carrying over into his private conversations with his aides the hypo­
critical clichés demanded of public rhetoric.”

Indeed, what is most threatening about creedal passion periods, for Hunt­
ington, is not the “abuse of power” but “the erosion of authority.” During creedal
passion periods, the fragility of political authority and power increases. Abuses
of power and authority are no greater than at other times; only popular sensitiv­

8 “The United States,” in Michael J. Crozier, Samuel P. Huntington, Joji Watanuki, *The Cri­
sis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission*
ity to them has heightened. Moreover, by the time the public becomes aware of abuses of power and authority, the power and authority under attack have already weakened; the danger has diminished. Protest is therefore superfluous because the problem already has been solved. Effective public criticism does less to correct abuses of power than to delegitimate the institutions associated with the abuses. In addition, such erosion of authority makes leaders uneasy, more likely to abuse their power. According to Huntington, illegal wiretaps on newspapermen and foreign policy personnel in the administration after the leaked *New York Times* story on the bombing of Cambodia were not the fault of Nixon, Kissinger, and Hoover. At fault was the American passion for exposure. Huntington's message is that "moralism" generates a passion for exposure that induces an inordinate desire for secrecy in government and leads to abuses of power. Huntington does not want a corrupt government; he wants a privatized one, one that receives less flak at home and exercises greater freedom of action abroad.

In the final chapter of his book, Huntington produces his most breathtaking paradox. While he has taken great pains to show that popular political movements in American history have failed to close the gap between reality and ideal, and indeed have often produced the opposite of the intentions of the protestors, there is one form of action that has successfully bridged the gap: American military action in foreign countries. After a cavalier analysis of the causes of the dictatorships of Trujillo, Batista, and Somoza, and of the effects of American military intervention in Chile, the Philippines, Vietnam, South Korea, and the Caribbean, Huntington informs us that abuses of power by the right in those nations always appeared after the withdrawal of American military forces. It is still possible to realize the ideals of the American Creed if the arena for their actualization is beyond America's borders and their advocates are American armed forces.

Huntington's effort to resolve America's legitimation crisis results in him closing his book with the following political advice: "The promotion of liberty abroad thus requires the expansion of American power; the operation of liberty at home involves the limitation of American power." This amounts to urging more military protection for corporations abroad and more economic freedom for corporations at home. It encourages attempts to maintain America's domestic peace and international predominance by depoliticizing its citizenry and militarizing the nation. To ensure institutional stability, the public must become disciplined, supportive servants of the state. Huntington's interpretation of the function of the state actually translates as the unfettered ability of the executive to administer the realm. Democracy becomes equated with mass loyalty, while the most harmonious political environment means the quiet ascendancy of a presidential administration in alliance with the country's hegemonic social and
economic forces.

But the promise of disharmony in American politics does not force a choice between our ideals and our institutions, as Huntington would have it. Democratic ideals have never entailed the abdication of leadership, the eradication of authority, or an antagonism towards power. The real choice is between democracy and empire, because empire destroys what democracy requires: a close link between the ideals of citizens and the workings of their institutions, the participatory power of citizens in sustaining them, the active cooperation of the citizenry in the determination of their common ends wherever they live and work in common. In Huntington's America—structured to enhance the authority of the executive, the use of the military, and the power of corporations—such democracy has no place. Huntington has summoned Americans to deactivate their ideals for the well-being of their institutions, so that democracy becomes safe for empire.

If no one seems in control these days, if power seems ineffective and political competence a thing of the past, the cause does not stem from the potency of American ideals but from the program of "the established order"—the expansion of the military, the pauperization of the middle and lower classes, the greater concentration of capital in the economy, and the diminution of the role and resources of political bodies at every level that develop the virtues and skills of the citizenry as a whole. This program continues to destroy the fundamental conditions for leadership, authority, and competence in a democratic society, namely the political power of the people, Huntington's real fear.
It has been estimated that two million people read *Main Street* during the 1920s. As a result, Sinclair Lewis became a pariah in small towns all over America. One town near Sauk Centre, Minnesota, where he was born, banned *Main Street* from its public library. If Lewis could have put that in the novel, he would have.

When *Main Street* first appeared in 1920, “America found that a new image of itself had suddenly been thrust upon it,” according to Mark Schorer, Lewis’s biographer. The old image of the small town as a repository of virtue and home-spun wisdom blurred and faded in the glare of Lewis’s ferocious insights. His Main Street and its denizens were ugly, self-satisfied, repressive, and ignorant. The Midwestern small town was modern hell, “negation canonized as the one positive virtue ... prohibition of happiness ... slavery self-taught and self- defended ... dullness made God.”
But the provocation (and the truth) in Lewis’s vision did not lie in its negativity. If Main Street was boring, squalid, and mean, it was also “the climax of civilization,” a “bewildered empire” that fed a quarter of the world. Lewis’s ambivalent attitude toward American civilization has often been noted. Like his protagonist Carol Kennicott, he could not seem to decide if he hated or loved Main Street, and so he vacillated between sentiments. Both the uneven tone and the vitality of his novel come from this double view. Carol herself is sensitive but pretentious, open but intolerant, critical but impotent.

In Main Street Lewis turned fiction into sociology, analyzing the class system of Gopher Prairie, its values and its social networks. Main Street precedes Middletown as a document of American life. Carol’s story is a case history. Thousands of American women recognized themselves in her, and many wrote to Lewis to tell him so.

How did Lewis see Main Street, and how has small-town America changed in the sixty-odd years since the novel was published? What truths does it tell about our society? What does Main Street say about American democracy? (“No use running this democracy thing into the ground,” Will Kennicott tells Carol to explain why he does not go hunting with the town barber.) Can we call Lewis’s vision outmoded? Does Carol Kennicott still live in Gopher Prairie? Or has our society changed so much that we should evaluate Main Street as a historical curiosity, a chronicle of a world that has passed away?

Without a doubt, the physical setting of Main Street has changed drastically for the better. In old photographs it was a muddy mess in spring and fall, dusty in summer, snow- and ice-covered in winter. When Carol arrived in Gopher Prairie, she saw “a row of one-story shops covered with galvanized iron, or with clapboards painted red and bilious yellow. The buildings were as ill-assorted, as temporary-looking, as a mining camp street in the motion-pictures.” She despaired at “Main Street with its two-story brick shops, its story-and-a-half wooden residences, its muddy expanse from concrete walk to walk, its huddle of Fords and lumber-wagons.” On the street where she lived sat “meek cottages or large, comfortable, soundly uninteresting symbols of prosperity.” Her overriding impression was of “unsparing unapologetic ugliness.” Inside her house lurked “shadows of dead thoughts and haunting repressions.” Perhaps ghosts still inhabit the 100-year-old house where I live in Iowa, but I don’t feel them. With self-conscious sophistication we have learned to love old woodwork, clapboard, flowered wallpaper, heavy oak dressers, rambling front porches, and cyclone cellars. Indeed, we pay extra for some of the things that Carol abhorred.
Some resemblances between today's small town and the Gopher Prairie of 1915 signify decadence, not growth. Old towns in central Iowa with diminishing resources and shrinking populations echo Lewis's evocations of muddy squalor. These towns are dying; other communities down the road shine with prosperity, with the bleached and ominous orderliness of an Edward Hopper painting. Here is the American Dream made flesh: well-kept lawns, repainted Victorian houses, wide tree-lined streets, neighbors sitting on their porches or bicycling en famille in the evening. On the other side of the tracks, however, live the poor: descend­ants of Oakies who never got to Chicago, perhaps a few blacks, and now some Cambodians. “Swede Hollow” (as Gopher Prairie’s slum was called) may have become “The Bottoms,” an ethnic stew, but tensions remain between the poor and the solid citizens, and among the poor themselves. Economic democracy has not yet come to Main Street.

Relationships between town and country have altered as the numbers of farmers have decreased and their prosperity has increased. Retired farmers still move into town, as they did in Lewis's book, but working farmers' spouses, sib­lings, and children often work in town, protecting the family livelihood from the vagaries of agricultural commodities markets. Any farmer who still makes his living from the land has got to be pretty well-off (or have good credit, which amounts to the same thing) in order to survive. The long-term trend, not yet visible when Lewis wrote Main Street, has been for large corporate enterprises to take over and swallow small family farms. The merchants and other townspeople can no longer be called “parasites,” as Carol claimed, for the farmers de­pend too much on them. The relationship is symbiotic: when the farmers fail, the towns suffer too, and vice versa. Both are apprehensive about the effects of corporate farming on local economies.

The big city functions simultaneously as a model of urbanity and as a har­binger of chaos for the small town. Although for many years young people fled to the cities and “resolutely stayed there,” as Lewis observed, recently the populations of small towns have increased through immigration. As urban life becomes more stressful, dangerous, and unsatisfying, the small town is seen as the ultimate suburb, a simple idyllic place without crime or locked doors, with friendly sales clerks, helpful neighbors, good public facilities and personalized services. What it lacks in excitement the small town offers in security, predict­ability, and convenience. As Lewis said, Main Street is the climax of civilization, or our fantasy of what civilization could be.

But it remains isolated, physically and psychologically, from the great centers of activity and innovation. Despite the availability of nationwide air transportation, flying from one Midwestern city to another or to either coast is relatively difficult. Layovers are often long, connections inconvenient, ticket prices high. During recent airline fare wars, it cost more to fly from Des Moines
to Los Angeles than from New York to Los Angeles. Train service, once moderately priced and easily available, has disappeared or become luxuriously expensive. Airports are far away, distances between cities great, bus transportation inadequate or nonexistent. Bad weather often makes travel impossible. We feel cut off from the civilization of which Main Street is the supposed climax.

This breeds a sense of unreality, the rags and tatters of the isolationism that ruled U.S. politics for many years. What does the Third World or the Soviet Union have to do with us (except insofar as it affects the price of soy beans and corn)? Criticized in Iowa for paying "too much attention" to foreign affairs, both John Culver and Dick Clark lost their U.S. Senate seats in recent years. In 1914, Will Kennicott said of World War I: "Oh yes, it's a great old scrap, but it's none of our business. Folks out here are too busy growing corn to monkey with any fool war that those foreigners want to get themselves into." The simple-minded jingoism on the other side of the coin also afflicts us: "We've got to beat the Russians" is a favorite litany.

Inside this landscaped bell jar, pat answers and platitudes flourish; ignorance breeds paranoia. A friend recently sat in a small-town diner listening to farmers complain about "the niggers" in a place where no blacks live. Inhabitants of small towns find it difficult to believe that life in the faraway outside world is really as bad as the media say. Are black welfare mothers really having trouble feeding their children? Why do Haitian refugees commit suicide in detention camps? Suffering strangers become mere exemplars of virtue or vice in a socioeconomic morality play. Thus Ronald Reagan's "welfare-queen" anecdote found a receptive audience, and he expected that his scorn for the "guy in South Succotash" would, too. "In Gopher Prairie, the Sam Clarks boasted, 'You don't get any of this poverty that you find in cities—always plenty of work—no need for charity—man got to be blame shiftless if he don't get ahead.'"

"Getting ahead" is still what many small-town people mean when they talk about democracy. The myth of equal opportunity justifies systematic inequality. (Main Street merchants "often said, 'One man's as good as another—and a darn sight better.' This motto, however, they did not commend to farmer customers who had had crop failures." ) The small-town class system replicates the national hierarchy. The local ruling class is small and accessible, but nonetheless distinguishable, an articulated part of the larger structure beyond the town. It has changed little since 1920, when Lewis described the Gopher Prairie aristocracy as "all persons engaged in a profession or earning more than 2500 dollars a year, or possessed of grandparents born in America." Ezra Stowbody, Main Street's banker, remembered when he, a doctor, a lawyer, and a Congregational pastor ruled the town, and he complained that Norwegians and Germans owned stores and that the town's social leaders were "common merchants." The actual composition of the elite is not so important as its existence, which proves that
upward mobility does happen while restricting entry into the upper reaches of the social hierarchy. An elite cannot exist if everyone can join it.

Along with status and its perquisites goes real political and economic power. The bank manager, who grants or denies loans to farmers and home buyers, is a regular member of the local aristocracy, as are the high school principal, the doctor, the factory manager, the lawyer, and the realtor, all of whom control access to money, status, and power in their turn. Social pressures on them are intense. In Main Street the lawyer Guy Pollock observes, “the penalty we tribal rulers pay is that our subjects watch us every minute. We can’t get wholesomely drunk and relax. We have to be so correct about sex morals, and inconspicuous clothes, and doing our commercial trickery only in the traditional ways, that none of us can live up to it, and we become horribly hypocritical.”

Aristocrats have little private life; their every action is public and symbolic, subject to discussion or censure. When Carol gave an elaborate party, the guests assumed that she was trying to make them think her husband was richer than he really was. In today’s small town, the elite is expected to look after its own. An executive recently told me that his lodge brothers pressured him to buy his new car locally, although he could have saved substantially by purchasing it elsewhere. Service-givers are expected to shop at the stores of their clients. In a small society, everyone is conspicuous, but none more than those at the top.

Small-towners often deny the existence of a local class system; and because the environment is small and seemingly self-contained, it is easy to believe in a universal middle class. Carol had “the same confused desire which the million other women felt; the same determination to be class-conscious without discovering the class of which she was to be conscious.” Only when she went to Washington to work did Carol discover the joys and strength of solidarity instead of individualistic materialism. Then she gained the detachment and compassion to return to Gopher Prairie. “With sympathy she remembered Kennicott’s defense of its citizens as ‘a lot of pretty good folks, working hard and trying to bring up their families the best they can.’” But still, she realized, “I’ve been making the town a myth . . . the perfect home town . . . I’ve been forgetting that Main Street doesn’t think it’s in the least lonely and pitiful. It thinks it’s God’s Own Country.”

The myth of democracy humanizes and softens the reality of inequality, protecting Main Street from the outside world. “With the world a possible volcano, the husbandmen were plowing at the base of the mountain.” There is real Sisyphean poignancy in this vision. Lewis also points out, however, that when people in a small place think that their microcosm constitutes a complete reality, they come to believe that the rest of the world must be just like them. “Such a society functions admirably in the large production of cheap automobiles, dollar-watches, and safety razors. But it is not satisfied until the entire world also admits that the end and joyous purpose of living is to ride in flivvers, to make ad-
Classics of Democracy

Advertising pictures of dollar-watches, and in the twilight to sit talking not of love and courage but of the convenience of safety razors." The arrogance of imperialism starts and ends on Main Street. Compared to the sharecropper in India or Brazil, even the poorest American small-towner belongs to a democracy of patricians.

A social system is no mere chain of institutions; the glue holding it together is a mixture of attitudes, values, and individual acts. Lewis saw Main Street as an intolerant, narrow place. Whatever its inhabitants did not sanction was "heresy, worthless for knowing and wicked to consider." Self-satisfaction, rigidity, repression, censoriousness, and hypocrisy characterized the dominant mentality. Criticism was taboo: "Maybe that guy's got the right dope, but what's the use of looking at the dark side of things all the time? New ideas are first-rate, but not all this criticism. Enough trouble in life without looking for it!" declares Will, who also says, "There's just three classes of people: folks that haven't got any ideas at all; and cranks that kick about everything; and Regular Guys, the fellows with sticktightness, that boost and get the world's work done."

It could be argued that with improved communication through the mass media, it is no longer easy to preserve such complacency. But reading almost any newspaper in the United States shows its pervasiveness. If the Soviets have a poor grain harvest, the tone of the news reports is triumphantly condescending, as if our material success also proved our moral superiority. A feminist pointed out to Carol that the Midwest "is double Puritan—prairie Puritan on top of New England Puritan." The Protestant ethic lives, and in many ways it is a mean, small-minded ideal of divinely sanctioned inequality and cutthroat competition in the name of individual salvation.

At the same time, social pressures enforce conformity and fair play on Main Street. The tyranny of the majority that Tocqueville described long ago still exerts its power. For Main Street's Guy Pollock, democracy meant mediocrity, but his definition of democracy was a grinding down to the lowest common denominator, a process of systematic thwarting, "the historical Anglo-Saxon way of making life miserable." Thus Pollock called himself a "living dead man," and Lewis decried Main Street's "rigid ruling of the spirit by the desire to appear respectable. It is . . . the contentment of the quiet dead, who are scornful of the living for their restless walking." This repressiveness survives in small towns, where gossip places limits on individual nonconformity.

Political conservatism and antidemocratic ideologies flourish in this atmosphere. In Gopher Prairie, "you mention the word 'cooperative' to the merchants and they'll lynch you! The one thing they fear more than mail-order houses is
that farmers' cooperative movements may get started," Vita warned Carol. At Carol's party, a mill manager "thundered": "All this profitsharing and welfare work and insurance and old-age pension is simply poppycock. Enfeebles a workman's independence—and wastes a lot of honest profit." As of 1982, Iowa still had a right-to-work law that put such attitudes into practice.

Although it seems unlikely now that townspeople would drive away a free-thinking socialist (and small-time entrepreneur) like Miles Bjornstam, acceptable political discussion is still very conservative, and everyone knows the unwritten rules of public discourse. The local gods of free enterprise, religious observance, and moral probity must be propitiated.

Organized religion is a powerful social institution in small towns, more important than Lewis acknowledged in Main Street. All kinds of social activity take place in churches or under church auspices. Ministers are influential members of the community. Religious language is a weapon in local as well as national debates. In small towns all over America, the nuclear-freeze movement grew out of church sermons, courses, and workshops that called nuclear war a mortal sin. And the political clout of fundamentalist preachers and parishioners goes back to the Puritan theocracy of seventeenth-century New England. In some small towns, virtually all social life still revolves around organized religion; this is almost as true in Iowa as in Arkansas. If the majorities there want prayer in public schools or a constitutional amendment outlawing abortion, they find it difficult to understand why everyone else doesn't want these things, too. Democracy for Main Street is not necessarily democracy for New York City.

Likewise, many middle-class women in small towns find hard to grasp the idea that they are unequal to men. "I don't feel unequal," they say; nor, if they work, do they expect to make as much money as a male breadwinner. The sexual division of work persists in their minds as in their husbands', and it is ratified by strong religious beliefs that extend to gender roles as well. A state ERA was defeated in Iowa in 1980 after anti-ERA advertisements implied it would lead to homosexual marriages. Although polls before the election had given the amendment a 70 percent approval rating, in every county where the ads appeared, it lost. Clearly, strong feelings against homosexuality, a social and religious taboo, matter more to many Iowans than legal rights for women.

In communities where taboos constrain social life and personal experimentation, expression finds other, more acceptable outlets, especially in the arts. Local arts councils have coordinated their humble efforts with state and federal endowments. The community theater that Carol tried to run flourishes in many small towns. Though poorly funded, other activities, such as exhibits and artists' visits, do go on. Local elites, and particularly the wives of eminent men, dominate the local arts councils that organize such events. Audiences therefore tend to be small, self-selected, conservative, and unrepresentative of the community.
as a whole. Neither the society nor the arts are democratic. The arts councils try
to bring artists to the public schools, but few on-going programs support and re-
inforce their occasional visits. Football is far more important. Music comes
from high school marching bands more often than orchestras, and poets must
sometimes coach athletic teams as well as teach high school English.

This is not to say that Main Street is a cultural wasteland; surprising num-
bers of artists and craftspeople exhibit their work locally, traveling from county
fairs to cattle congresses and flea markets. Local writers publish articles in re-
gional magazines, but the content of their work rarely threatens established in-
tstitutions and values. The world they portray is pleasant, respectable, orderly,
and faded at the edges. In order to commit the outrage of Main Street, Lewis
had to make a definitive break from the culture that had nurtured his unsatisfied
spirit.

Main Street sixty years later is a spacious, clean street with houses at each
end (the rich to the north, the poor to the south), and a business district
in between that stretches for two or three blocks. Dating from the era of Carol
Kennicott, the buildings above the shops have been renovated, but they are
architecturally undistinguished. In some towns with strong ethnic heritages and
foreign names, the fronts are brightly painted, with Scandinavian or Slavic trim.
In other, declining towns, many stores are shut and deserted, their paint peeling,
and the streets are empty. The grandiose old bank that Lewis described as “an
Ionic temple of marble. Pure, exquisite, solitary,” is now a hollow shell. In one
small Iowa town, an antique dealer has moved into the abandoned bank. Inside
the vault, whose heavy door stands open, he has put rusting farm implements
and kitchen tools. Old black dresses and moldering furs that Carol might have
worn hang in the former ladies' lounge.

Old trees make a continual canopy over the pavements at the prosperous
residential end of Main Street. On summer evenings when a storm is approach-
ing, the sky turns a queer jaundiced color above the neat old houses and the
neighborhood becomes preternaturally quiet. Because of the trees, it is a street
without horizons. To see the sunset one must drive to the edge of town, where
the corn sprouts its greenest in midsummer after a late planting delayed by heavy
rains. After the merciless winter, the summer sun is holy in its benevolence. This
place lies isolated but somehow at the center of things. Here is fertility; the
husbandsman plows at the foot of the volcano. If only one could forget what lies
beyond the rolling land: Main Street lies only 200 miles downwind from the SAC
base in Omaha. After such reality, are fantasies of paradise enough?
To the editors:

It is easy enough for Richard Busacca and Mary Ryan to get "Beyond the Family Crisis." They begin by assuming there is no such thing, though one has been "much ballyhooed," with "fevered regard" for the family's plight being evinced by left-wing, right-wing, and in-between-wing critics. But the authors' promised "rethinking" of what is really at issue when the term "family crisis" gets bandied about boils down to a redefinition of the family that eliminates any crisis by fiat. Indeed, the misguided notion that we face a family crisis serves as "a smokescreen for a fundamental crisis in the organization of social reproduction." Our "fixation on the family" is passé, an atavism in the new age dawning all around us. For the family that provokes critical frothings has been, or is being, superseded by a modern model, a new "social reproduction system." The critics just haven't caught up to social evolution.

There is something very odd about this argument. Upon inspection, the force of Busacca and Ryan's case comes down to a counsel of rational acquiescence in a new engine of "people production," the latest one thrown up by our industrial, technological, liberal, capitalist order. We should stop making an "ideological totem" out of the family and come to appreciate "the inevitable emergence of a politics of social reproduction."

The authors' language is the best clue to their values and their vision. Their language is one of unrestrained functionalism, a set of descriptive terms and an explanatory framework that by no means represents some neutral mode of scholarly reflection. For example, their history of the loss of traditional family "functions" follows the standard functionalist schema of Talcott Parsons. This functionalist history is eerily disembodied. One finds structures determining functions and functions evolving structures but one rarely encounters deep political
conflict (or it is "doomed" if it is out of synch with the inexorable march of structural-functional imperatives) and one never meets up with a self-defining human subject.

Notice—a distinguishing feature of functionalist argument—the way in which abstract, impersonal nouns are granted agency; observe the generous deployment of the passive voice. "History records"; "the family was invested"; "homosocial bonds took on"; "seventeenth-century New England presents"; "the parents, children, and servants ... were enjoined"; "thus it is no accident that" (there are never accidents in the functionalist universe).

Functionalist history is matter-of-fact, and Busacca and Ryan are no exception to this general rule of thumb. One finds affection being "redistributed" along with income and goods. People, as well as products, are "produced." History marches along. Nothing functions better than functionalism. In the functionalist teleology writ large, the family performs requisite functions for the macro-order. As these requisites change, the family transmutes. This leads to the evolution of "ideal-typical" types. A functionalist doesn't ask why people may be devoted to a particular social institution. Theirs is not to question "why." The raison d'être of any institution is given and its "meaning" is exhausted once one has described its functions within a structure in which those decreed functions function. "Good," to the extent it exists, resides in states of affairs. Human social life and historic change are marked by a calculus of inexorability. One might call this the ideal-typical cage of functionalist argumentation.

Confronted with a new structure of "social reproduction," then, one can either inveigh, fulminate, ballyhoo, throw up smokescreens, and show fevered regard or one can, sensibly, acquiesce in this transformation, one can endorse, in Busacca and Ryan's words, an era whose "hallmark is acceptance of the central role of the state in organizing, regulating, and subsidizing social reproduction and a corollary acceptance of the politicization of the once private universe of personal and family life." Is that all? Cast in the words of functionalist common-sense one should, I suppose, feel relief. There isn't a real crisis after all—just the shaking-down and fine-tuning attendant upon major social change—in this case change that locks us into an order with enhanced power to police, regulate, and constrain in more and more areas of social life, up to and including "people production."

There is only one problem with all of this: it is a tidying-up of social reality that easily becomes fatuous. *Pace* Busacca and Ryan, the family is not really or simply, or only the way a society gets recruits and structures its reproductive "functioning." The family remains the locus of the deepest and most resonant human ties, the most enduring hopes, the most intractable conflicts, the most poignant tragedies, and the sweetest triumphs human life affords to the vast majority of us. Passion, intimacy, the surprising depth of love and hate, and the as-
Readers Write

tonishing strength of human endurance and concern—families tap and evoke all of these. Small wonder all sorts of folks are fevered and ballyhoo a lot. Many of us do not see the new world of “social reproduction” as having some prima facie, irresistible force. Many of us do not find that the social and personal meanings, fears, and hopes inseparable from images of “family” can be accounted for in functionalist formulation. Busacca and Ryan to the contrary, there is a family crisis—it is a crisis of meaning and it goes to the heart of our self-understandings and our social existence.

Jean Bethke Elshtain

Amherst, Massachusetts
CONTRIBUTORS

THOMAS BENDER teaches history at New York University. He is the author of Toward an Urban Vision and Community and Social Change in America, both recently reissued by Johns Hopkins University Press.

ANDREW J. POLSKY teaches in the political science department and the urban studies program at Barnard College.

DUANE LOCKARD teaches urban politics at Princeton University. The third edition of his The Politics of State and Local Government is forthcoming from Macmillan.

GLENN YAGO is the author of The Decline of Transit, which will be published in 1983 by Cambridge University Press. He teaches sociology at the State University of New York, Stony Brook.

JOHN SHATTUCK is national legislative director of the American Civil Liberties Union and head of its Washington Office.

ELDON KENWORTHY teaches Latin American politics in the government department of Cornell University.

DAVID ABALOS is a sociologist at Seton Hall University.

JOYCE APPLEBY is the author of Economic Thought and Ideology in Seventeenth-Century England, and a member of democracy's editorial board. She teaches in the history department at the University of California, Los Angeles.

JACKSON LEARS is a historian at the University of Missouri, Columbia, and the author of No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880–1920.

JOHN R. WALLACH teaches political theory at Yale University.

LINDA A. RABBEN is an anthropologist and the editor of the Grinnell Magazine, Grinnell, Iowa.

ERRATUM: The epigraphs printed on page 119 of our Fall 1982 issue accompanying the article by Norman O. Brown, should have appeared on page 103, accompanying the article by John H. Schaar.
The Progressives reformed more than just politics

Moving beyond conventional political interpretations of the Progressive Era, a leading cultural historian shows how its spirit of innovation and moral rectitude influenced the arts, education, journalism, philosophy—every aspect of American civilization. Robert Crunden brings leading progressives to life in a series of miniatures that are "meaty, delightfully written, fascinating."—Frank Freidel, University of Washington

"Graceful, well-informed, provocative."—Thomas Bender, New York University

Ministers of Reform

The Progressives' Achievement in American Civilization, 1889-1920

ROBERT M. CRUNDEN

$17.95

BASIC BOOKS, INC.
10 E. 53rd St., New York, NY 10022
democracy's back issues are now available singly or in complete volumes

Use this form to order additional copies of democracy to pass along to your friends or colleagues or to replace issues that are missing from your collection. Back issues are $5 each; $2.50 each when ordering 10 or more. Save $1 on each copy by ordering a complete volume for $16. Payment must accompany your order.

VOLUME 1

Number 1, January 1981: "The Current Crisis"
Articles by Sheldon S. Wolin, Christopher Lasch, Lawrence Goodwyn, David Dickson, Norman O. Brown, Walter LaFeber, William E. Connolly and Michael Best, Joyce Appleby, Isaac Kramnick.

Number 2, April 1981: "Democracy's State"

Number 3, July 1981: "Political Economy"
Articles by William E. Connolly, Staughton Lynd, Michael Best and Jane Humphries, Philip Green, Ivan Illich, Eldon Kenworthy, Shuichi Kato, Andrew J. Polsky, Larzer Ziff.

Number 4, October 1981: "Culture vs. Democracy"
Articles by Christopher Lasch, Sheldon S. Wolin, Casey Blake, Michael Rogin, Todd Gitlin, Michael Fischer, William Appleman Williams, Steven Hahn, Nicholas Xenos.

VOLUME 2

Number 1, January 1982: "Nuclear Politics"
Articles by Mary Kaldor, Arno J. Mayer, Frank A. Burdick, Ivan Illich, Carlos Fuentes, Tsurumi Shunsuke, David A. Hollinger, Wilson Carey McWilliams, Joel Rogers, William Leach.

Number 2, April 1982: "Religion and Democracy"
Articles by Sheldon S. Wolin, Peter Steinfels, Julius Lester, Christopher Hill, Jean Bethke Elshtain, John Abbotts, Maurice Zeitlin, Herbert J. Gans, Christopher Lasch, Robert Ross, William Appleman Williams, Casey Blake, Julia Preston.

Number 3, July 1982: "Party Prospects"

Number 4, Fall 1982: "The Democratic Citizen"

Send to: Back Issues, democracy, 43 West 61st Street, New York, NY 10023.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Zip</th>
<th>Volume 1</th>
<th>Volume 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#1 copies</td>
<td>#1 copies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#2 copies</td>
<td>#2 copies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#3 copies</td>
<td>#3 copies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#4 copies</td>
<td>#4 copies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Volume</td>
<td>Volume</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Payment must accompany order. Back issues are $5 each; $2.50 if you order 10 or more. Complete volumes are $16.

I enclose $________ for a total of _______ back issues.
RARITAN
a quarterly review

Richard Poirier, Editor in Chief
Thomas R. Edwards, Executive Editor

IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES
Stanley Cavell on Paul Braudel
Michael Schudson, "Why News Is the Way It Is"
Svetlana Alpers on Photography
George Levine, "Darwin and the Problem of Authority"
Eve Sedgwick, "Homophobia, Misogyny, and Capital"
Edward W. Said, "Secular Criticism"
Andrew Hacker, "Need Incomes Be Equal?"
David Kalstone on Robert Lowell
Georges Bataille, "The Notion of Expenditure"
Elaine Showalter on Woman and the Demon
William Rothman on Cinema and Sentiment
Robert Garis, "A Critical Education"
John Hollander on Originality
David Bromwich on Edward Thomas

Raritan: A Quarterly Review
Rutgers University — 165 College Avenue
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903
Subscriptions: $12/year, individuals; $16/year, institutions
$21/2 years, individuals; $26/2 years, institutions
The next issue of *democracy* will focus on technology, with articles by David Noble in defense of Luddism, Max Pfef­fer on industrial farming, Christopher Lasch on the science fiction of Doris Lessing, and contributions from Evelyn Fox-Keller, Charles Sabel, and Sheldon S. Wolin.

Also in the spring issue: Casey Blake on Lewis Mumford; Barbara Ann Scott on federal education policies; Michael Rogin's review essay “On the Jewish Question.”

Future issues will include Joyce Appleby on Thomas Jefferson, Barbara Epstein on the family and the left, Maurice Isserman on Irving Howe, and Cynthia Enloe on women and the military.

The editors of *democracy* welcome proposals for articles. Upcoming themes include the family and the state, education, and progress and progressivism.