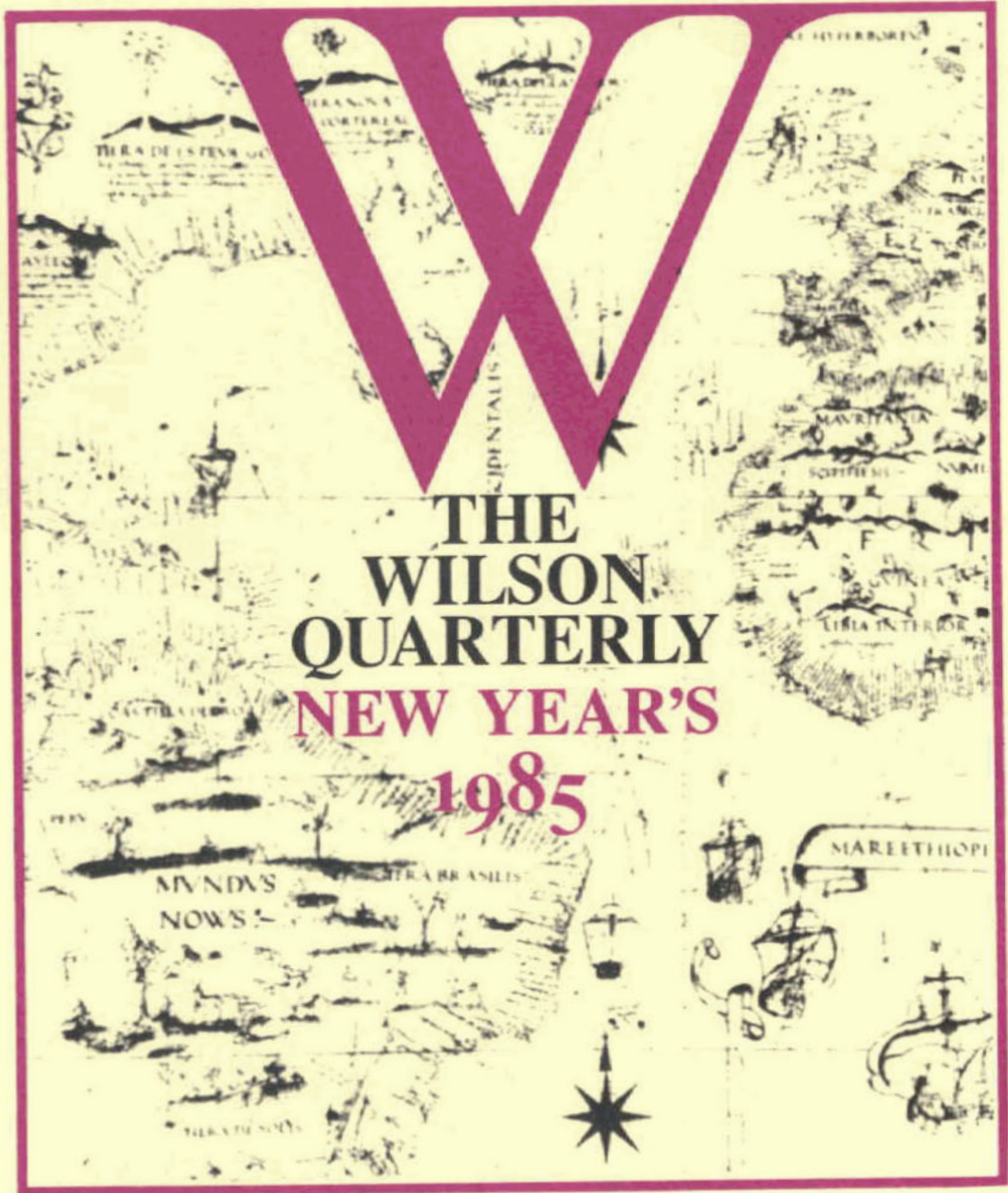


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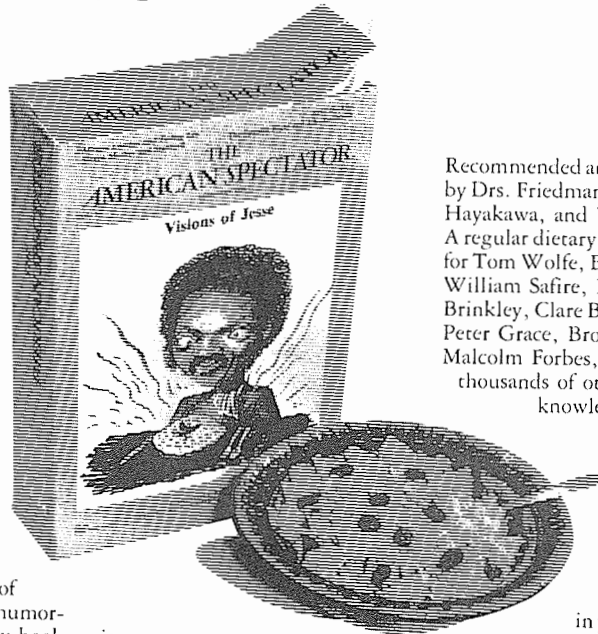
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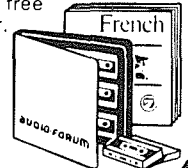
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Editor's Comment

Behind the fog of statistics, the quality of life for America's 27 million elderly varies greatly from place to place. Health and wealth are important, of course. But other things matter too. We have in mind Granny Smith, a spirited 87-year-old Maryland farmer's widow, who has survived a broken hip, lives alone in a mobile home, keeps up with changes in the neighborhood, and says that she has little to complain about. Her sons take her to the doctor and to church suppers. Her daughters help with the housework and shopping. Her grandsons mow the lawn. All live within a five-mile radius. All prize her wit and wonder at her strength. She sees herself in them, and vice versa.

A sense of continuity, and of collective duty, enriches the Smith clan. In the Soviet Union, children are obligated by law to look after their elderly parents. In China and Korea, no law is needed. But in the United States, this young-old connection, the statistics indicate, has been frayed by social mobility, by family dispersion, by divorce, by an emphasis on individual self-fulfillment, perhaps by prosperity itself.

Today, far fewer of America's poor are elderly than in 1950, and for the first time, many of the elderly inhabit retirement communities. Everyone lives longer. What all this will do to American society is unclear. What is clear is that it behooves the young and the middle-aged to pay attention. They will be old folks someday too. Our essays on the "Elderly in America" begin on page 96.

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page	11	PERIODICALS	
	44	Research Reports	
	48	PORTUGAL	
	49	Prisoners of Glory <i>by Kenneth Maxwell</i>	
	67	Discovering Democracy <i>by Thomas C. Bruneau</i>	
	82	Background Books	
		IDEAS	
	84	Does Murphy's Law Apply to History? <i>by Paul Schroeder</i>	M
	94	THE ELDERLY IN AMERICA	
	96	Stretching the Span <i>by Albert Rosenfeld</i>	
	107	The Trade <i>by Timothy M. James</i>	
	126	Stitching a Safety Net <i>by W. Andrew Achenbaum</i>	
	137	Background Books	
	140	CURRENT BOOKS	
		REFLECTIONS	
	154	John Dos Passos and His Invention of America <i>by Alfred Kazin</i>	P
	167	FDR and the 'Secret Map' <i>by John F. Bratzel and Leslie B. Rout, Jr.</i>	R
	174	Commentary	

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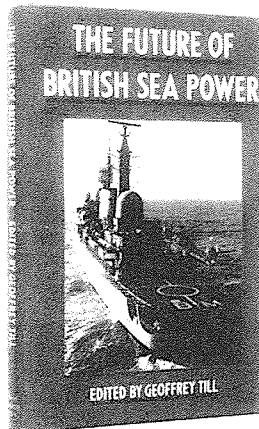
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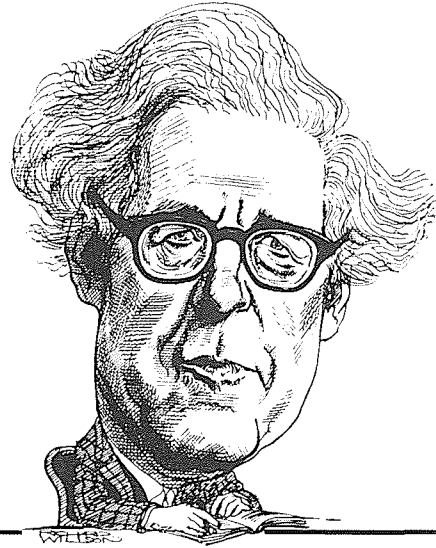
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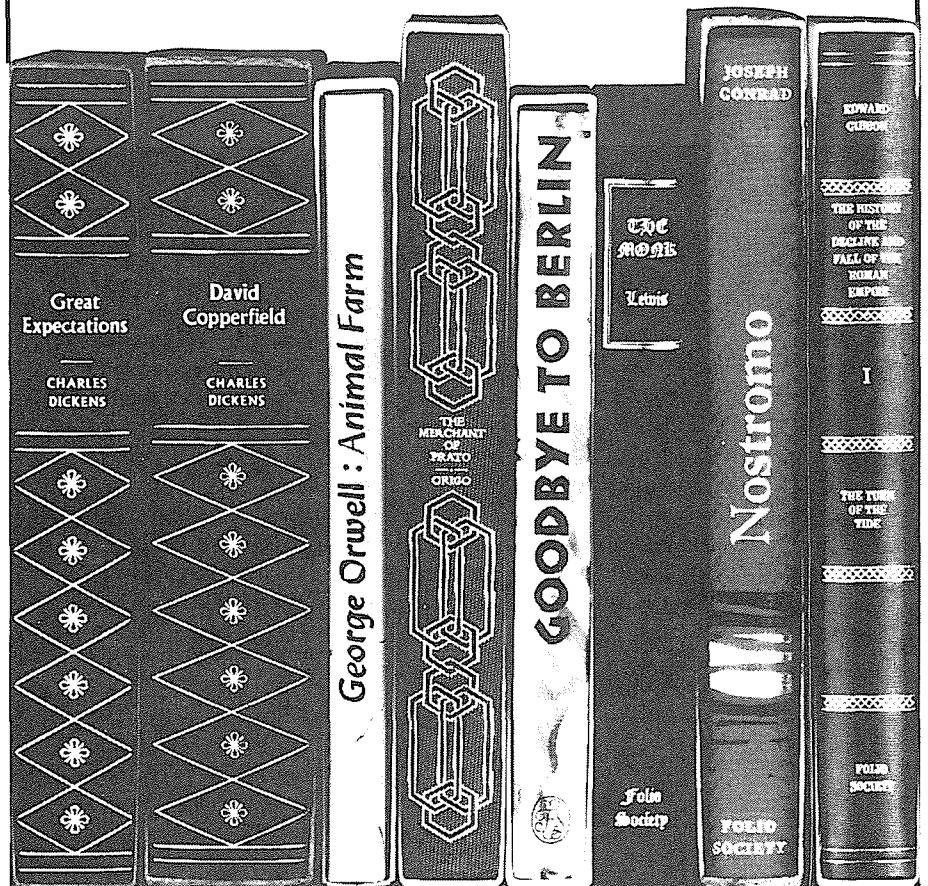
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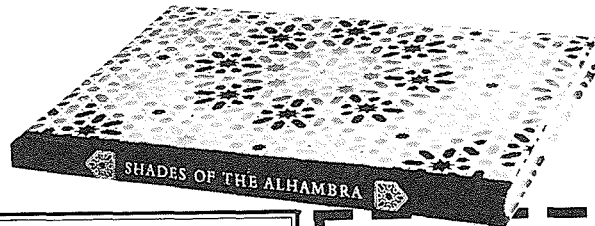
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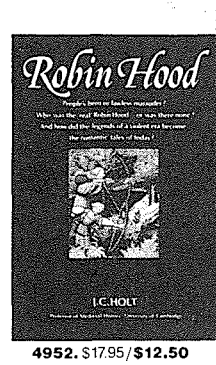
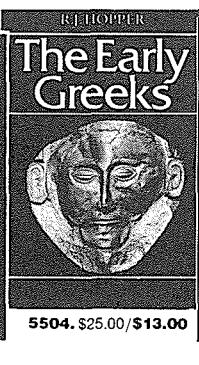

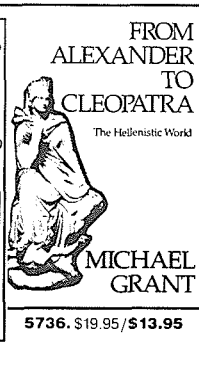
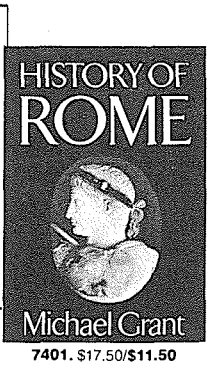
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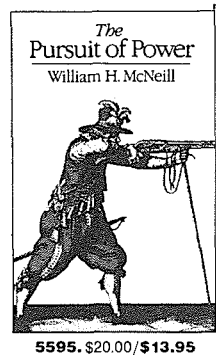
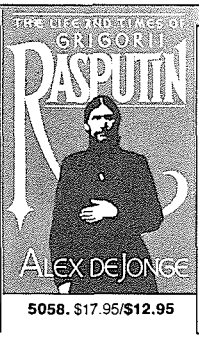
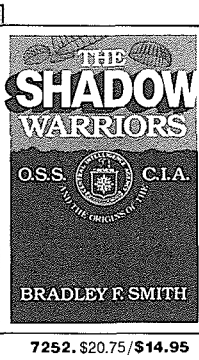
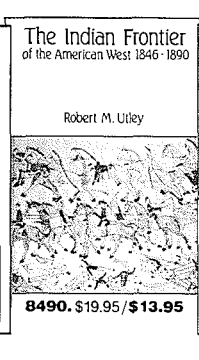
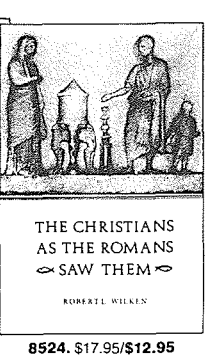
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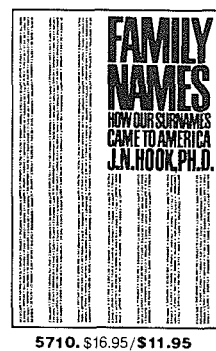
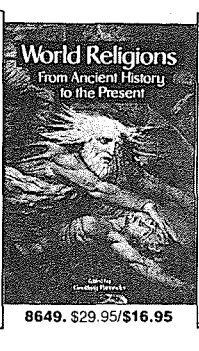
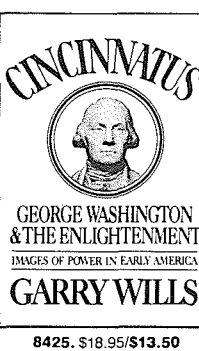
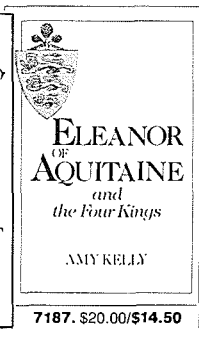

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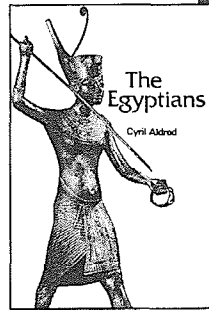
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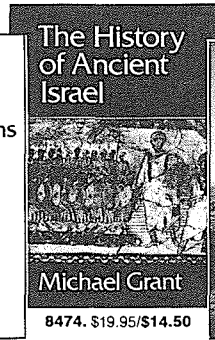
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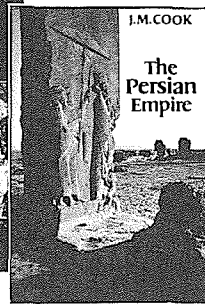
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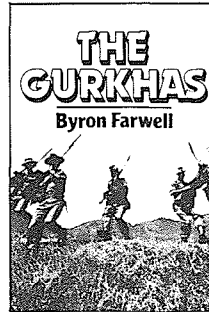
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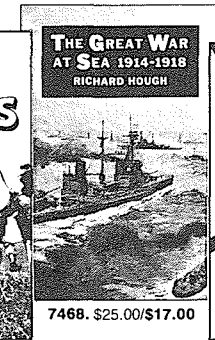
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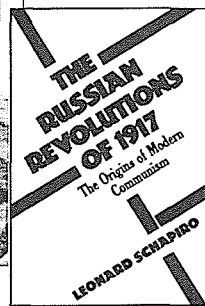
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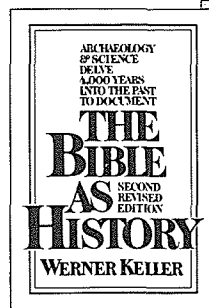
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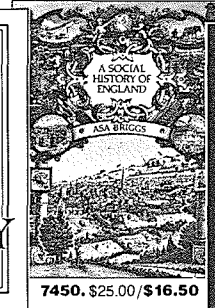
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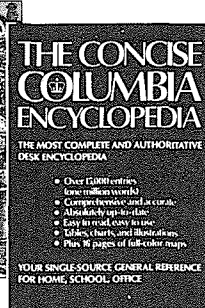
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POLITICS & GOVERNMENT 11	RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY 30
FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE 15	SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY 32
ECONOMICS, LABOR, & BUSINESS 20	RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT 35
SOCIETY 24	ARTS & LETTERS 37
PRESS & TELEVISION 27	OTHER NATIONS 40

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

R for Democrats

"Now What?" in *The New Republic* (Nov. 26, 1984), P.O. Box 955, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11737-9855.

President Reagan's re-election victory dealt the Democratic Party its fourth loss in the last five presidential elections and its third loss by landslide proportions. It was, according to the editors of the *New Republic*, who had endorsed Walter Mondale, a "shattering defeat."

Now what? The Democrats could blame the debacle on former Vice President Mondale's shortcomings as a campaigner or on President Reagan's considerable political skills—and thus invite another disaster. Or the party could "reconsider the way in which it addresses America's problems." Mondale and other top Democrats had promised such a reassessment after the party's 1980 setbacks, but economic recession handed Democrats some easy congressional gains in 1982 (26 new seats in the House of Representatives) and cut short the search for fresh ideas. Senator Gary Hart (D.-Colo.) was touted as the candidate of "new ideas" during the 1984 Democratic presidential primaries, but apart from his proposals for military reform and a "flat rate" income tax, "precious few were ever put into concrete form."

Walter Mondale articulated "the fundamental Democratic principles—justice, community, democracy—that the party must maintain regardless of the new ways it finds to express them." But he was also an unabashed advocate for the party's numerous special-interest groups, a political kiss of death, in the *New Republic's* view. Many top Democrats mistakenly believe that to represent the aspirations of minorities, blue-collar workers, women, and others in the rickety Democratic coalition, they must echo every specific demand voiced by the groups' *spokesmen*, real or self-appointed.

If Jesse Jackson emerges as the chief spokesman for blacks, the Democrats' problem could become acute. Blacks cast more than 25

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

percent of all Democratic ballots in 1984 and are the party's largest single voting bloc. But Jackson's leftish Third World rhetoric tends to alienate other voters: The Mondale-Ferraro ticket claimed only 36 percent of whites' votes.

The *New Republic's* editors hope that black mayors and other black elected officials will contest Jackson's leadership. Similarly, they look to the 33 Democratic governors—who "have been dealing creatively with some of the nation's most difficult domestic problems and balancing budgets at the same time"—for the party's new agenda. In foreign policy, the editors argue that party leaders must stop insisting "that America is wrong in defending its interests abroad."

President Reagan is sitting in the Oval Office in part because he told the voters that America's best days were yet to come, and his opponent said it was not so. "The Democrats need to find leaders who believe it is so—and can make it so in reality, not just in television ads."

Who Wants to Be Vice President?

"Making the Most of the New Vice Presidency" by Paul C. Light, in *The Brookings Review* (Summer 1984), Brookings Institution, 1775 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

"Hardly worth a pitcher of warm spit" was U.S. Vice President (1933–41) John Nance Garner's estimation of his job. Were Garner around today, he would probably take a kindlier view, suggests Light, a National Academy of Public Administration researcher. During the last 10 years, the Vice Presidency has become an office to be reckoned with.

The "new" Vice Presidency began to take shape when Gerald Ford succeeded Spiro Agnew as President Richard Nixon's Number Two man in 1973. Ford demanded and won more staff and independence in return for bolstering the troubled Nixon White House. Ford's Vice President, Nelson Rockefeller, gathered more perquisites and took the chairmanship of the White House Domestic Council, a top policy-making body. Walter Mondale, under the Carter administration, expanded and consolidated these gains.

Mondale's tenure "raised expectations about the role to be played by future Vice Presidents—and made it more difficult for future Presidents to turn back the clock," Light says. He became a member of President Jimmy Carter's "inner circle" of advisers, had regular private talks with his boss, gained complete access to high-level meetings and secret information, and got many of his allies appointed to important jobs in the administration. Conscious of the Washington motto, "Where you sit is where you stand," Mondale secured an office in the West Wing of the White House, just down the hall from the Oval Office. George Bush inherited it in 1981, suggesting that Mondale's innovation may become a tradition.

The Vice Presidency has also taken on impressive institutional trappings, Light reports. Vice President Bush has a staff of 70 and an office budget of \$2 million; in 1961, Lyndon Johnson had only 20 aides and

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

WHO IS THIS MAN?

— who keeps stumping the panel on "What's My Line"?



*Al
Capp*

Hubert H. Humphrey was perhaps the epitome of the old-fashioned Vice President.

"Bears striking resemblance to highly articulate ex-Senator" said the caption of this affectionate Al Capp caricature.

no special budget allotment.

Now that the Vice Presidency has become a substantive office, Light believes, presidential candidates should choose their running mates accordingly, not just on the basis of ticket balancing. The rest of us, he adds, will ("alas") have to abandon the old national pastime of ridiculing the Vice Presidency.

*Policy Experts
Are Not Enough*

"A Public Policy Paradox" by Alice M. Rivlin, in *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* (Fall 1984), John Wiley and Sons, 605 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10158.

Making public policy was once part politics, part eenie, meenie, minie, mo. During the last 20 years, however, computer-equipped policy analysts have inundated elected officials with data intended to take the guesswork out of the process. Have they improved the quality of legislation?

Not by much, says Rivlin, founder and for eight years (1975–83) director of the Congressional Budget Office—but not for lack of trying. Nowadays most U.S. universities train policy analysts just as they do lawyers, doctors, and engineers; the graduates have fanned out across the country. They aid governors and legislators "not only in Sacramento and Albany, but also in Little Rock and Santa Fe." They have made their presence most felt in Washington: Congress, for example, employed only 6,791 staffers in 1960, 26,653 in 1982. "No debate on any serious issue—the budget deficits, the breeder reactor, the 600-ship

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

Navy, nutrition programs for low-income mothers—takes place without somebody citing a public-policy study,” Rivlin writes.

She believes that such specialists, deployed throughout the government bureaucracies, have vastly improved the day-to-day management of programs. They can be instrumental in forging new policies. Without analysts’ computer print-outs, for example, the bipartisan presidential commission appointed in 1982 to fashion a rescue plan for the Social Security system would have been hard put to complete its work.

Policy analysis does have its limits. For one thing, the multitude of studies churned out by specialists, many written in maddeningly arcane jargon, simply overload legislators. Moreover, such analyses often reveal just how complicated a problem really is. And analysts’ prescriptions are always subject to error. It all adds up to frustration for the recipients. Too often, Rivlin says, they either succumb to paralysis or, going to the opposite extreme, plump for unrealistically simple solutions.

In her view, that is how Congress and the White House got the nation into today’s budgetary fix—cutting taxes and boosting spending despite ample warnings of trouble. No amount of policy analysis, Rivlin concludes, can overcome human reluctance to face facts.

The Best Things in Politics Are Free

“The Power of the Primary Purse: Money in 1984” by Michael J. Robinson, in *Public Opinion* (Aug.-Sept. 1984), American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1150 17th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-9964.

Money makes the world go ’round, especially the political world. Or so the conventional wisdom would have it. In fact, argues Robinson, a George Washington University political scientist, in presidential election campaigns, “he who spends more does not necessarily do better.”

Robinson cites last year’s Democratic presidential primaries to support his argument. Walter Mondale, the biggest overall spender (\$18 million), did indeed finally claim the nomination. But things look different when individual primaries are inspected: The biggest spenders won in only 10 of 29 primary contests. In New Hampshire, for example, candidate John Glenn outspent both Gary Hart and Mondale but still came in third. Later, when the race had narrowed to just Hart and Mondale, the Colorado Senator’s upstart candidacy was fatally damaged by defeats in New York, Pennsylvania, and Texas—states where he outspent his rival by 2 to 1. (The April 3, 1984, New York race was the most expensive, costing Hart \$1.2 million and Mondale \$554,000.)

“Money did matter once upon a time,” says Robinson. But under the federal campaign spending ceilings imposed in 1974, no presidential candidate can bury his rivals with dollars. He also discounts the value of TV advertisements, which consume the lion’s share of most campaign war chests. The typical American sees some 10,000 TV ads every year and “is well beyond the point at which commercials could deter-

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

mine a presidential preference." Far more important than paid TV time are candidates' day-to-day performances on the stump under the scrutiny of local print and TV journalists and in such forums as televised debates and talk shows.

Why, then, do candidates spend so much time and energy raising money? One reason, suggests Robinson, is that, in the eyes of the all-important reporters and pundits, "raising and spending money has become a bizarre test of the seriousness of a candidacy."

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

Up in Arms

"The Case against Arms Control" by Seymour Weiss, in *Commentary* (Nov. 1984), 165 East 65th St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

Most Americans believe that accords with the Soviets on nuclear arms control are, in general, good and necessary. Weiss, a retired U.S. diplomat, emphatically disagrees.

"Just what evidence exists," he asks, "that recent nuclear arms limitations agreements with the USSR have actually contributed to U.S. security?" In his view, none. The United States enjoyed clear nuclear superiority over the Soviets during the 1960s; today, the Soviets are ahead "both in fact and in the perception of most of the world."

Agreements such as the 1972 SALT I pact and the (never ratified) 1979 SALT II agreement required virtually no force reductions by either side but established upper limits on expansion. Moscow built as many missiles as it was allowed (and more, if allegations of its treaty violations are true); the United States failed to keep pace. The relaxed attitudes bred in Washington by arms agreements made it hard to win congressional funding for new U.S. weapons. As former Secretary of Defense Harold Brown put it, "When we build, they build; when we cut, they build."

Does not arms control at least save money? Not really, Weiss argues. He points to the 1972 Antiballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. The ban on all but limited defenses against nuclear missiles did spare the United States the immediate expense of installing an ABM system that would have cost \$10 billion or more. But today Washington faces the prospect of spending many times that sum to build the MX missile, needed to reduce U.S. vulnerability to a Soviet first strike.

Then perhaps just talking with the Kremlin leadership would be worthwhile? Wrong again, writes Weiss. British prime minister Neville Chamberlain met many times with Adolph Hitler, "but proximity did not breed a general comprehension of reality. Conversely, Winston Churchill required no intimate contact to perceive the truth."

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

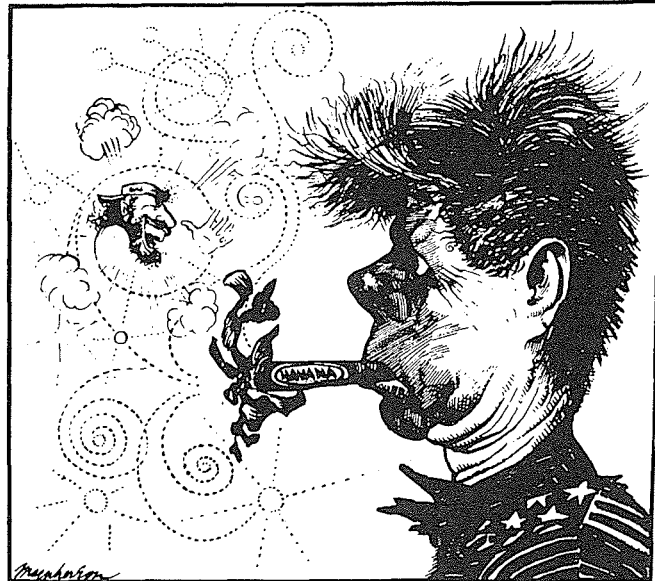
The truth in the case of the Soviet Union, Weiss says, is that its leadership is bent on creating a "socialist" international order. "What is the basis for believing that the Soviets will ever agree to limit or reduce the very military power they require to maintain and advance their national objectives?" Weiss sees only two conditions under which arms talks would make sense: if Moscow were to abandon its designs on other nations or if U.S. military power were to become so great that the Soviets had no choice but to bargain honestly. Neither condition is likely to be fulfilled soon. In the meantime, Weiss contends, arms control will remain a repository of "false and dangerous hopes."

*Remembering
The Bay of Pigs*

"The 'Confessions' of Allen Dulles: New Evidence on the Bay of Pigs" by Lucien S. Vandembroucke, in *Diplomatic History*, Dept. of History, 106 Dulles Hall, Ohio State Univ., Columbus, Ohio 43210.

The April 17, 1961, Bay of Pigs invasion by 1,500 U.S.-backed anti-Castro Cuban exiles was a fiasco that looms large in recent American history. Within days, every invader was either killed or captured.

In an editorial, the *New York Times* set the tone of future interpretations when it wrote that "basic and inexcusable miscalculations were made by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) [which] presumably



Coming only three months after his inauguration, the Bay of Pigs failure was particularly embarrassing to President John F. Kennedy.

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

gave poor advice to the White House and the State Department." But the recently opened papers of then CIA director Allen Dulles tell a somewhat different story, according to Vandenbroucke, a Brookings Institution researcher.

In an article that was never published, Dulles, who resigned shortly after the Bay of Pigs affair, maintained that he never assured President John F. Kennedy that the exiles would succeed, only that they had a "good fighting chance, and no more." Nor was there any CIA promise that the invasion would trigger an immediate popular anti-Castro uprising. Kennedy, Dulles complained, was only "half sold on the vital necessity of what he was doing [and was] surrounded by doubting Thomases." Moreover, the President steadily "whittled away" at the CIA's plan, fearful of unfavorable public reaction to a large-scale invasion, especially if its U.S. sponsorship were revealed.

To minimize publicity, Kennedy shifted the landing site from the coastal town of Trinidad to the more remote Bay of Pigs. What he did not seem to realize was that a quiet landing would cut the chances of sparking a popular uprising and that the Bay of Pigs, surrounded by swamps, offered little shelter for the exiles should the attack falter.

Dulles, not wanting to deepen Kennedy's doubts, chose not to disabuse him. "We felt convinced," he wrote, "that when the chips were down . . . any action required for success would be authorized [by Kennedy] rather than permit the enterprise to fail." Accustomed to dealing with Dwight D. Eisenhower, who had fewer inhibitions about the uses of American power, Dulles and his CIA colleagues clearly thought that Kennedy too would eventually see the wisdom of their plan, Vandenbroucke writes. Given the leeway that the clandestine services had enjoyed during the 1950s, the assumption was not unreasonable—just wrong.

How the Israelis Fared in Lebanon

"Lessons of War: The IDF in Lebanon" by Richard A. Gabriel, in *Military Review* (Aug. 1984), U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kans. 66027.

The Israeli Army is one of the world's crack military outfits. Yet, during the 1982 Lebanon War, Israeli generals fell victim to a classic military malady: They were prepared only to "fight the last war."

The "last war" for the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) was the 1973 Yom Kippur War, notes Gabriel, a Saint Anselm College political scientist and a U.S. Army Reserve officer. In 1973, as in previous wars, the Israelis confronted several hostile neighbors on largely open terrain. (Before 1982, the Israelis had not fought a major battle on Lebanese soil.) The 1973 experience confirmed existing IDF battlefield doctrine: Rely on tank columns supported by infantry in armored personnel carriers to drive quickly and deeply into enemy territory.

No doctrine could have been more ill suited to Lebanon, where Syrian troops were dug into mountain positions in the east, while Palestine

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

Liberation Organization (PLO) forces held the towns and cities in the west. In narrow mountain passes and city streets where there was little room for armor to maneuver, the IDF insisted on using tanks instead of infantry to spearhead its assaults. "It paid dearly in the number of ambushes that it suffered [and] it allowed the enemy the advantage of engaging or disengaging at a point of his choice." Forty of the 1,240 Israeli tanks mobilized for the invasion were destroyed by enemy fire; another 100 were temporarily knocked out of action.

The Syrian forces did most of the damage, effectively employing infantry and antitank missiles against the outmaneuvered Israelis. The IDF, Gabriel says, should have responded by sending its foot soldiers ahead to clear the way for the tank forces. The PLO's guerrilla tactics seemed to stymie the IDF: The Israelis resorted to artillery barrages and air strikes to counter guerrilla harassment.

The outcome of the conflict was never much in doubt. The IDF outnumbered its foes by 2 to 1 and was vastly better equipped and trained. But Israel's losses of 368 dead and 2,383 wounded during the invasion and the subsequent siege of Beirut were a heavy price to pay for a nation of only four million people.

Floating Outposts

"Military Necessities and Political Uncertainties" by Michael Vlahos, in *Worldview* (Aug. 1984), P.O. Box 1935, Marion, Ohio 43305.

In 1960, the United States boasted 150 major air and naval installations around the world. Today, it has just 30. And while declining numbers have made each remaining base more precious, hostility or instability in the host countries have made the status of each more precarious.

Some 480,000 U.S. military personnel are on active duty in Europe, Japan, South Korea, Australia, and at sea. But the Stars and Stripes flies in only three Third World locales: the Philippines, Diego Garcia (in the Indian Ocean), and the Panama Canal Zone. Total U.S. manpower in these areas is 22,000. America has no permanent bases in the volatile Middle East. And U.S. forces are scheduled to withdraw from the Canal Zone in the year 2000. The Philippines could well become inhospitable if President Ferdinand Marcos's beleaguered regime collapses.

Even in Greece and Spain, writes Vlahos, director of Security Studies at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, it takes "seemingly interminable wranglings and elegant diplomatic choreography" to win renewal of the leases for U.S. bases. Host governments regularly hike the rent and impose limits on what can be done on their land (e.g., barring Israel-bound U.S. war materiel).

The United States needs secure, no-strings-attached military bases, and it needs to free itself of the necessity of striking deals with unstable or simply unsavory governments. "What the U.S. needs, in fact, is a cross between a ship and an island," Vlahos says. His unusual pro-

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

posal: Build huge "floating bases."

Using the technology developed for offshore oil-drilling platforms, the Pentagon could manufacture mobile, man-made islands big enough to serve as airfields or to support naval task forces. The price tag for these floating facilities would be huge, Vlahos writes, but "no more so than . . . a 20-year investment in a land base." And only three would be needed: one each in the Indian and Mediterranean oceans, and one in the western Pacific. Without such independent bases, he fears, the United States will not for long be able to defend its interests overseas.

Down with 'Star Wars'

"Preserving the ABM Treaty: A Critique of the Reagan Strategic Defense Initiative" by Sidney D. Drell, Philip J. Farley, and David Holloway, in *International Security* (Fall 1984), MIT Press (Journals), 28 Carleton St., Cambridge, Mass. 02142.

In 1972, the United States and the Soviet Union signed the Antiballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty sharply limiting their defenses against nuclear missiles. Both sides judged such defenses "to be futile, destabilizing, and costly," recall Stanford researchers Drell, Farley, and Holloway.

That logic still holds, they maintain, despite the claims made for President Reagan's proposed "Star Wars" defense.

The President's Strategic Defense Initiative is now only in the research phase. The Pentagon has asked for \$26 billion over the next four years to work on the technology for a three-tiered system, including space-based lasers, that would down Soviet missiles in flight. "Sooner or later," the authors believe, this research will lead to U.S. violations of the 1972 treaty. (As for charges that Moscow has already broken the ABM agreement, the authors find no convincing evidence.)

A space-age ABM might be worthwhile if it could live up to President Reagan's promise that it would render nuclear weapons "impotent and obsolete." But the authors judge this to be a technological impossibility. [For a defense of the Star Wars proposal, see *WQ*, Spring 1984, p. 15.]

Massive technical difficulties must be overcome even to reach the point where a high percentage of the Soviets' 1,400 intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) could be shot down, thus enhancing nuclear deterrence. A minimum of 320 orbiting "laser battle stations," supplied with fuel by 250 space-shuttle missions, would be needed. And even assuming U.S. technological success, there would be Soviet responses to contend with: a new round of ICBM deployments, "space mines" and other anti-battle station weapons, decoy rockets.

Calling the system "defensive," the authors add, will not stop Soviet leaders from fearing that "the United States might be intending now—or might decide in a crisis—to launch a first strike, relying on its ABM to deal with a diminished Soviet response." And a new set of defensive weaponry would make infinitely more complicated (and unlikely) the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) that President

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

Reagan favors.

The authors do not call for a full halt to Star Wars research; they favor limited scientific exploration "as a hedge against technological breakthroughs or Soviet ABM deployments." They also say that the ABM Treaty (especially its compliance features) may need to be updated. But they warn that casting aside one of the few symbols of mutual Soviet-American commitment to prevent nuclear war would be a mistake.

ECONOMICS, LABOR, & BUSINESS

After Ma Bell

"Beyond the Bell Breakup" by Peter F. Drucker, in *The Public Interest* (Fall 1984), 20th & Northampton Sts., Easton, Pa. 18042.

When Ma Bell passed away in January 1984, with the breakup of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT&T), hardly anybody grieved. Drucker, a noted management expert who teaches at the Claremont Graduate School, believes that Americans may yet sorely regret the demise of the giant telecommunications monopoly.

Its splintering was the result of a federal antitrust suit launched by the U.S. Department of Justice in 1974 but pursued without enthusiasm. Federal officials were surprised when AT&T decided, late in 1981, to settle out of court. Drucker believes that the company had begun to view its monopoly as a no-win business proposition.

As a regulated monopoly, AT&T was required (and had long been committed) to making low-cost telephone service available to all Americans. It subsidized cheap local service for individuals by charging long-distance callers (primarily businesses) high prices. By the late 1970s, however, competitors such as MCI were making inroads into the lucrative long-distance business. Meanwhile, federal courts ruled that AT&T could not use its control over the phone lines to fight back. AT&T still handled 90 percent of the nation's long-distance calls in 1981; by 1984, its share had fallen to 60 percent.

There were other signs that AT&T's "natural monopoly" was coming to an end. For example, state regulatory authorities, dedicated to low-cost services, would not permit the company to "waste money" by scrapping functioning but technologically obsolete equipment such as electromechanical switchboards. That gave AT&T's rivals another competitive edge—marketing computerized switchboards.

Inevitably, Drucker believes, AT&T would have made its own adjustments to these challenges. The government's antitrust suit rushed things along and encouraged the company to take drastic action.

He sees many likely ill effects. The cost of local service will surely rise as the seven new, independent regional Bell companies ask state regulators for sharp rate increases to replace Ma Bell's old long-distance subsidies. The nation's vaunted technological lead could suffer if the

ECONOMICS, LABOR, & BUSINESS

new AT&T (comprised of the Long Lines division, the \$12 billion-dollar Western Electric manufacturing arm, the famed Bell Telephone Laboratories) does not adapt well to a competitive, unregulated marketplace. And the lack of an integrated, nationwide communications system worries U.S. defense planners. (In fact, the Pentagon is seeking from the courts certain exceptions to AT&T's breakup agreement.)

Uncle Sam, Drucker concludes, never should have stuck his nose into Ma Bell's business.

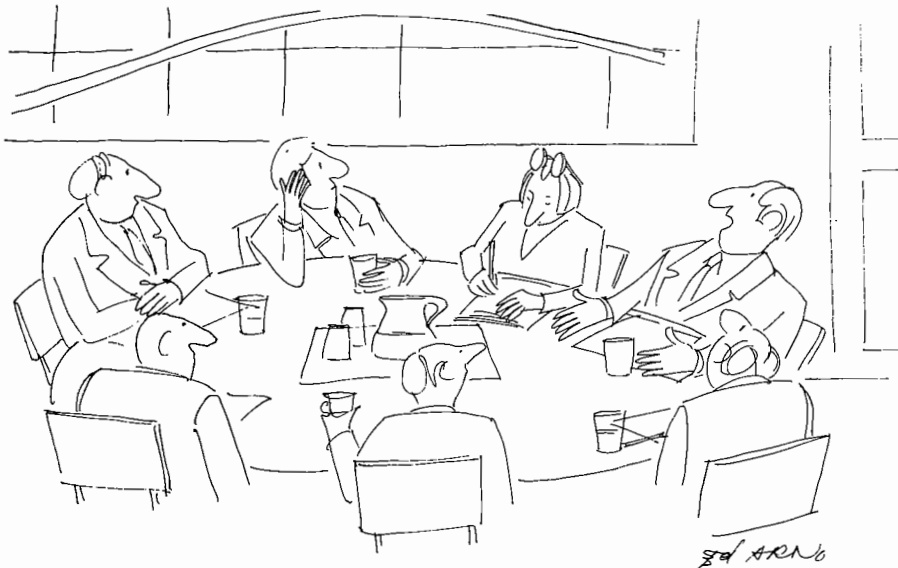
Why Listen To Oracles?

"Are Economic Forecasters Worth Listening To?" by Peter L. Bernstein and Theodore H. Silbert, in *Harvard Business Review* (Sept.-Oct. 1984), P.O. Box 3010, Woburn, Mass. 01888-9975.

If you like having egg on your face, economic forecasting may be the profession for you.

Despite its many spectacular failures, write Bernstein and Silbert, New York financial consultant and banker, respectively, the art of reading tea leaves is indispensable to business. An executive who makes no effort to anticipate the future will find himself out on the street selling apples. And simply extrapolating predictions from present conditions is a certain recipe for failure.

Even the expert *individual* forecasters, the authors concede, are



From the *New Yorker*: "The question before the board is this: Do we believe Milton Friedman, Alan Greenspan, or Jimmy the Greek?"

ECONOMICS, LABOR, & BUSINESS

bound to be wrong much of the time. A 1983 study by Stephen McNees and John Ries, both economists at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, showed that the most accurate forecaster in any one year had little hope of repeating his success the next. But, based on a study of 44 "blue-chip" forecasters' performances from 1977 through 1983, Bernstein and Silbert argue that an *average* of many auguries may be useful.

The group went wrong more than once. In 1978, for example, the "consensus" forecasts for both inflation and change in the gross national product (GNP) were far off the mark. But in general, the authors found, the average view was fairly accurate. During the entire seven-year period, the margin of error for estimates made in October of the next calendar year's GNP was only 1.1 percentage points. Moreover, the forecasters' accuracy improved as the target year approached.

The "blue-chip" average thus gave "a good sense of the character of the target year," the authors say. And absolute precision in such matters is irrelevant, they note. Executives do not care whether GNP will grow by 4.5 or 5.5 percent; they need only a sense of the overall prospects for their businesses. Without that sense, they might as well just start wishing on stars and knocking on wood.

The Future of Work

"The Changing Workplace" by Sar A. Levitan, in *Society* (Sept.-Oct. 1984), Box A, Rutgers—The State University, New Brunswick, N.J. 08903.

Revolutions in the American workplace are announced with numbing regularity. But according to Levitan, a George Washington University economist, Americans can look forward to "business as usual," at least for the next 10 years.

The likely impact of computers and robots, he contends, is often overstated. Even if some 250,000 robots (in Levitan's view, a high estimate) were on the job by 1995, they would replace only a fraction of the 129 million Americans who will then be working. And high technology carries a high price tag, Levitan notes. He doubts that corporations will be able to afford the heavy investments needed to "robotize" and computerize their operations quickly.

Moreover, labor costs should stay low enough to make the replacement of men and women by machines a relatively low business priority. By 1995, the number of 16- to 24-year-olds in the population will drop by seven million, to 28.5 million. But immigration, delayed retirements, and further increases in the number of working women should ensure a large labor pool and a relatively slow escalation of wages.

Still, Levitan foresees growing affluence for Americans, thanks largely to increases in the number of two-paycheck families. By 1995, women will constitute 47 percent of the work force (versus 43 percent today), and, assuming that today's birthrate of 1.8 children per couple remains stable, they will take fewer breaks to bear and raise children. At the same time, workers' educational attainments will probably continue to exceed the demands of the marketplace. Each year, nearly one million college

ECONOMICS, LABOR, & BUSINESS

graduates enter the job market. During the 1970s, one-third of these recent graduates had to accept jobs below the normal professional-managerial level. Levitan expects the mismatch to continue.

Workers whose spouses are also holding down jobs, who are relatively independent financially, highly educated, and have children are likely to ask for two things: more flexibility in their working hours and more paid leisure time. Employers will probably go along. But that is no revolution. After all, Levitan concludes, those are things that workers have always sought and won in increments.

A Left Turn By Big Labor

"Labor's Bad Bargain: The AFL-CIO Lurches Left" by Max Green, in *Policy Review* (Fall 1984), Heritage Foundation, 214 Massachusetts Ave. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002.

Leftists have long criticized the American labor movement for its political conservatism. Now, says Green, a former labor union official, they have less room for complaint.

He contends that the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), which includes 96 labor unions representing 13.7 million workers, is veering sharply to the left.

There was some truth in the radicals' old complaints. Under the leadership of Samuel Gompers (1850–1924), who founded the American Federation of Labor in 1886, the U.S. labor movement aimed not to overthrow the capitalist system (as Marxists urged), or even to seek gains through politics, but to win better wages and working conditions for unionized workers through collective bargaining. Labor's political involvement grew during the New Deal, but it still kept partisan politics at arm's length. As an AFL-CIO official once said of George Meany (AFL-CIO president, 1955–79): "Where he agreed with the liberals he was *with* them, but he was not *part* of the liberal movement. He was the leader of the labor movement, a broad spectrum from far left liberals to far right conservatives."

By the late 1970s, Meany was beginning to change his tune. The key reason, in Green's view, was Big Labor's ebbing strength. In 1955, the AFL-CIO represented about 30 percent of the nation's nonfarm workers; 20 years later, only some 15 percent.

Meany decided that protectionist trade legislation and revised federal labor laws were needed to stem the membership decline. But Big Labor lacked the political muscle to push such measures through Congress on its own. Meany and his successor, Lane Kirkland, therefore forged a political alliance with "liberal-left" groups. Because of these new friendships, Green contends, "Labor is no longer free to speak its own mind."

To court civil-rights groups, the AFL-CIO has endorsed racial hiring quotas, which it long opposed. To curry favor with feminist organizations, it supports "comparable worth"—the principle that people with different but "comparable" jobs (e.g., a secretary and a truck driver) re-

ECONOMICS, LABOR, & BUSINESS

ceive the same wage—even though this would limit a union's freedom to negotiate wages. And the AFL-CIO's fervent anticommunism is largely a thing of the past. It opposes military aid to the government of El Salvador, besieged by Marxist-Leninist guerrillas, and only mildly condemns Nicaragua's Sandinista regime.

"What has labor got for all its compromising of principle?" Green asks. Nothing. Nor, he predicts, is it likely to gain much more while a majority of Americans, and a majority of union members, oppose so many of the causes it has embraced.

SOCIETY*Controlling U.S.
Medical Costs*

"Public Attitudes about Health-Care Costs: A Lesson in National Schizophrenia" by Robert J. Blendon and Drew E. Altman, in *The New England Journal of Medicine* (Aug. 30, 1984), 1440 Main St., P.O. Box 9140, Waltham, Mass. 02254.

Faced with a hefty and fast-growing national bill for medical care, Americans are telling public-opinion pollsters that they would welcome an overhaul of the U.S. health-care system—as long as no one asks them to make any sacrifices.

In 1982, total U.S. health-care outlays (including government and private spending) reached \$322 billion—about 11 percent of the gross national product (GNP). By the year 2000, report Blendon and Altman, both analysts at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the annual cost could reach \$1.9 trillion, or 14 percent of GNP. At \$1,550 per person per year, U.S. expenditures already far exceed those of Great Britain (\$400), France (\$800), and West Germany (\$900).

Fifteen public-opinion surveys conducted since 1981 have consistently picked up "schizophrenic" attitudes toward cost containment, the authors say. Majorities regularly inform pollsters that rising costs are the health-care industry's Number One problem *and* that the United States spends too little on health services. Two out of three Americans think that federal health-care spending should be increased; 59 percent favor a national health-insurance program, even if a tax hike is needed to pay for it.

Underlying these seemingly contradictory views are two others—"widespread discontent with the nation's health-care system and pervasive satisfaction with personal medical care."

In sum, Americans remain very attached to "Doc," the trusted family physician. Two-thirds of those polled accuse doctors of being money grubbers, but 72 percent find no such fault with their own physicians. Most Americans balk at the idea of using health-maintenance organizations or medical clinics, though they offer cheaper service than doctors in private practice. On the other hand, 66 percent would gladly require

SOCIETY

the poor to use these facilities.

Americans tend to favor reforms that have little direct impact on them. Thus, 60 percent back federal price controls on doctors' services. Yet, Americans are nearly unanimous in their opposition to a British-style nationalized medical-care system or to curtailing federal spending for high-technology treatments such as kidney dialysis, which costs Washington about \$20,000 per patient per year.

A public so muddled in its thinking will be hard to lead, the authors say. But they believe that doctors should make it their business to turn public opinion around and begin the hard work of cutting costs.

State Lotteries: Few Winners

"The Social and Economic Impact of State Lotteries" by H. Roy Kaplan, in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (July 1984), Sage Publications, 275 South Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90212.

State governments are gambling that lotteries will provide a painless way to increase revenues. But to H. Roy Kaplan, a sociologist at the Florida Institute of Technology, lotteries are a poor substitute for "dependable, equitable, and responsible methods of revenue generation."

Using games of chance to finance public projects is nothing new. The Virginia Company raised money for its 1607 settlement in Jamestown through sales of lottery tickets, a method also used by the 1777 Continental Congress to pay for the American Revolution. (Benjamin Franklin, legendary for his frugality, was nevertheless an avid bettor.) After 1800, countless lotteries were sponsored by state and local governments as well as churches and colleges—including Harvard, Yale, and Princeton. The sales were nothing to sneeze at. The citizens of New York State bought \$1.5 million in lottery tickets in 1826. Lotteries were, however, invitations to corruption, and scandals cooled the lottery craze. By 1878, they were illegal in every state but Louisiana.

New Hampshire began today's revival by launching its new lottery in 1963. Now, 17 states run lotteries, claiming that they are needed to



An 1820 ticket for a lottery sponsored by the state of Pennsylvania. The proceeds were earmarked for the "improvement of internal navigation."

SOCIETY

boost sagging revenues and that they draw customers away from organized crime's illegal gambling enterprises. (Last November, voters in three more states authorized the creation of new lotteries.)

In fact, state lotteries have disappointing records, Kaplan says. The lotteries provide only three percent (\$2 billion) of the total revenues of the states that sponsor them. Boosting state income taxes by as little as one quarter of one percent would raise the same amount. Lotteries are not only less efficient than taxes, they are less fair. The poor spend a larger proportion of their income on such games of chance than do the well off. Finally, the hope that legalized gambling would hurt organized crime has proved to be an illusion.

Above all, Kaplan is critical of state governments that encourage their citizens to hinge "their aspirations for better lives on the ephemeral possibility of winning." He hopes that the 30 lottery-free states will stay that way.

Black Farmers In the Old South

"Black Family Formation and Tenancy in the Farm South, 1900" by Stewart E. Tolnay, in *American Journal of Sociology* (Sept. 1984), University of Chicago Press, Journals Division, P.O. Box 37005, Chicago, Ill. 60637.

In the American South after the Civil War, many ex-slaves, newly liberated from the great plantations, were quickly caught in a new trap: tenant farming. Tolnay, a University of Georgia sociologist, believes that the new mode of agriculture greatly harmed the black family.

After the war, many freed slaves hoped that Washington would redistribute southern lands, giving them a modest "40 acres and a mule." Instead, plantation owners retained their property and divided it up into small tracts, which they leased to their former slaves for cash or a share of the crops produced. About 75 percent of southern blacks became tenant farmers, Tolnay reports. (Some 36 percent of southern *white* farmers also rented their land.)

What difference did that make to black families? If blacks had become landowners instead of renters, Tolnay maintains, they probably would have married later and borne fewer children. In societies of "peasant" landowners, young men often delay marrying until they inherit land or save enough to buy it. Tenant farmers have no such incentives. In fact, data from the U.S. census of 1900 show that black men in areas of the South where tenant farming was prevalent married roughly two and one-half years earlier (at an average age of 22.8) than did their counterparts elsewhere in the South.

Once married, peasant farmers would often "restrict the number of their offspring as a strategy for improving their children's chances of buying a farm or to assure that their own landholding was divided among a small number of heirs." For tenant farmers, however, it made more sense to have as many children as possible to put to work in the fields. And by 1900, the average black farm family had eight children.

SOCIETY

Tenant farmers' children had little prospect of improving their lot. Needed as farm hands, they received little schooling. At the same time, the plenitude of cheap labor reduced farmers' incentives to invest in modern tractors, irrigation systems, and other technology. The result, in Tolnay's view, was an "ugly cycle" of rural poverty whose effects are still being felt today.

PRESS & TELEVISION

Post-Mortem for Newspapers

"Why Newspapers Die" by David Skylar, in *The Quill* (July-Aug. 1984), 840 North Lake Shore Dr., Ste. 801W, Chicago, Ill. 60611.

During the past 35 years, 253 U.S. daily newspapers have ceased publication, and 145 have merged with other papers. During 1982 alone, the presses stopped at three major dailies—the *Philadelphia Bulletin*, the *Cleveland Press*, and the *Buffalo Courier-Express*.

"Television is killing newspapers," lament failing publishers. Nonsense, says Skylar, a consultant to the newspaper industry. He contends that bad management by top press executives is usually to blame. "Newspapers don't compete against TV at all," he maintains. "They compete for readers, who read, as opposed to watchers, who watch." (Only 20 percent of all households tune in to the TV evening news on any one day.) Publishers of magazines and books have expanded their audiences at least as quickly as the population has grown. Only newspapers have failed to keep pace. Between 1950 and 1980, while the U.S. population swelled by 70 million, newspapers won only 8.5 million new readers.

Skylar also disposes quickly of other common explanations for newspaper failures. One is that TV evening news broadcasts inevitably "scoop" afternoon papers, thereby dooming them to redundancy. Actually, 1,258 of the nation's 1,699 dailies hit the streets after noon, and most of them, while relatively small, are in good health.

Equally unconvincing to Skylar is the notion that newspapers face economic hard times. Overall, the business is "outrageously profitable," he says. The industry rings up \$18 billion in advertising revenues annually—equal to all radio and TV income combined. On top of that, publishers take in \$5 billion from newsstand and subscription sales.

Skylar believes that publicly owned newspaper chains (e.g., Gannett, Knight-Ridder, the New York Times Company), whose shares are traded on the stock markets, generally do better than their privately owned competitors. The reason: They "have sophisticated marketing management to cope with adverse conditions, to anticipate change. They constantly reinvest in their people and products." The Hearst, Scripps-Howard, and Newhouse chains, all privately held, have suffered more than their share of newspaper failures. Skylar accuses their top management of an "accountant mentality," of worrying more

PRESS & TELEVISION

about their ledgers than about their readers.

Americans, better educated and more affluent than ever, are reading as never before. But they are not reading newspapers. The fault, in Skylar's view, lies squarely with editors and publishers who fail to realize that the literate public wants sophisticated, well-written newspapers, not bite-size bits of "TV-type news."

Creating the First Tabloids

"Problems of Class and Race in the Origins of the Mass Circulation Press" by Alexander Saxton, in *American Quarterly* (Summer 1984), 307 College Hall, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa. 19104.

In 1830, the United States could claim only 65 daily newspapers, all of them published by and for the urban gentry. Within just a few years, says Saxton, a University of California, Los Angeles, historian, a "favorable coincidence of technology, flush times, and politics" paved the way for a new breed of popular mass-circulation tabloids.

The pre-1830 "blanket sheets" measured 24 by 35 inches, unfolding to a grand four feet across—suitable for spreading out on a gentleman's library desk. They sold for six cents a copy, or \$10 a year, "the equivalent of a week's wage for a skilled journeyman," Saxton reports. The average "blanket sheet" had 1,200 subscribers.

The men who created the new "penny press" were, like many of their readers, skilled workers (mostly printers) caught up in the political ferment of the day—the rise of the egalitarian Workingmen's movement and the creation of the Jacksonian Democratic Party. An economic boom and the availability of inexpensive printing presses helped their cause.

The first successful mass-circulation paper was the *New York Sun*, launched in 1823 by a 23-year-old printer named Benjamin Day. Within a year, its circulation grew to 10,000. Soon to follow were the *New York Herald*, *Boston Daily Times*, and *Philadelphia Public Ledger*. Priced at one penny (\$3 annually), scaled down to a manageable 8½-by-11-inch format, the tabloids were hawked by street vendors. While the staid blanket sheets focused on commercial news fit for "men of affairs," the popular penny papers were brimful of crime, violence, humor, and sex. Sensationalism was not all they sold: The printer-editors lampooned the law courts for dealing harshly with striking workers and advocated shortening the 12-hour working day and better pay. They were strong supporters of President Andrew Jackson and his push for territorial expansion.

The economic depression of 1837 killed off many of the early dailies. Later, more penny papers were born. By 1850, 254 dailies were being published in the United States. Ironically, the broader markets created by the pioneers of the penny press required better printing presses and more efficient distribution systems than printer-editors could afford. It took \$5,000–10,000 to launch a new paper in 1840, \$100,000 in 1850. Publishing once again became a rich man's business.

PRESS & TELEVISION

*Radio's Rough
And Ready Days*

"Written on the Wind: The Impact of Radio during the 1930s" by Alice Goldfarb Marquis, in *Journal of Contemporary History* (July 1984), Sage Publications, 28 Banner St., London EC1 8QE, England.

Radio's golden age occurred during the 1930s in both Great Britain and the United States. Apart from that coincidence, virtually all that radio broadcasts in the two lands had in common was the English language.

So argues Marquis, a California historian. In America, both the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), founded in 1926, and the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS), created the following year, were purely commercial ventures. NBC was launched by three radio manufacturers who saw professional broadcasts as a way to boost sales. (The strategy worked: Every time NBC opened a station in a new city, radio sales in the listening area doubled within a month. By 1929, one-third of all U.S. households owned a radio; by 1935, 70 percent.) The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), by contrast, was a public corporation from its inception in 1927.

American radio was an exuberant hodgepodge of vaudeville acts, variety shows, soap operas, music, news, and, of course, advertisements. "As early as 1922," Marquis writes, "Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover [argued] that it was 'inconceivable' that such a great medium for public service should be 'drowned in advertising chatter.'" He was



Punch needled the BBC's most popular offering: "What I says is . . . there's too much of this here Variety and most of it's all the same."

PRESS & TELEVISION

to be disappointed. By 1928, industry giant NBC was taking in \$10 million annually from advertisers. Meanwhile, intellectuals regularly flailed the networks for pandering to low tastes—"the tastes of the mentally deficient," as literary critic Henry Volkening put it.

The BBC faced no such accusations. In fact, it was frequently taken to task for ignoring the preferences of its mostly working-class audience. Directed until 1940 by the dour and opinionated John C. W. Reith, the BBC was a rather dull bastion of propriety and good taste, Marquis reports. Classical music, lectures, and religious programs were its common fare.

The gulf between the BBC and its American counterparts was widest in reporting the news. Partly because of CBS president William Paley's hunger for prestige, American radio correspondents such as Edward R. Murrow and William L. Shirer scoured Europe for stories. By contrast, the BBC's charter and Reith's temperament made for timid journalism. For example, when British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden resigned in February 1938 to protest his government's appeasement of Hitler, CBS broadcast his farewell speech. The BBC did not.

American radio "showered an unconscionable load of trash on the American public," Marquis says. But the failure of the BBC in its early days was more fundamental. It betrayed its chief responsibility: to inform.

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

*Rethinking
The Faith*

"Revolution in the Church" by Thomas Sheehan, in *The New York Review of Books* (June 14, 1984), P.O. Box 940, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11737.

"The dismantling of traditional Roman Catholic theology, by Catholics themselves, is by now a *fait accompli*." In their most vigorous intellectual renaissance since the High Middle Ages, declares Sheehan, a Loyola University of Chicago philosopher, Catholic theologians are radically rethinking their faith.

Early in this century, the Pontifical Biblical Commission, worried by "modern" readings of the Bible, proclaimed that the Bible was both literally true and inspired word-for-word by God. In 1965, however, amid the liberalizing influence of the Second Vatican Council, the same commission declared the Gospels to be neither an exact historical record nor an eyewitness account of events. Moreover, Catholic thinkers were for the first time allowed to read the works of their Protestant counterparts without special permission, which spurred a rigorous reexamination of the Bible.

The conclusions of such leading Catholic theologians as Hans Küng of the University of Tübingen and Holland's Edward Schillebeeckx would probably shock most ordinary Catholic churchgoers. In Roman Catholic seminaries, for example, "it is now common teaching that Je-

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

sus of Nazareth did not assert any of the divine or messianic claims the Gospels attribute to him and that he died without believing he was Christ or the Son of God, not to mention the founder of a new religion."

Based on close scrutiny of ancient texts, Küng and his colleagues have even cast doubt on Jesus' resurrection. And if Jesus did not rise from the dead, Sheehan notes, the chief evidence for life after death is gone. That would deprive the Catholic Church of much of its authority as spiritual arbiter. (Ironically, Küng does not reject the possibility of an afterlife; he just denies that there is any concrete proof that it exists.)

Not surprisingly, the Vatican has taken a dim view of these ideas. In 1979, Pope John Paul II demoted Küng by stripping him of his professorship in Catholic theology. Yet, Sheehan believes that the new theologians, by undermining the Vatican's claim to infallibility in theological matters, are having an effect. The Catholic Church's growing involvement in secular issues, such as nuclear war and abortion, he lays to a retreat from the theological arena.

Sheehan believes that any effort by the Vatican to quash the theologians' revolt is doomed to fail. Yet, it also seems unlikely that a church that has survived for nearly two millenia will change quickly.

A Revival of Jewish Orthodoxy

"American Jews Rediscover Orthodoxy" by Natalie Gittelson, in *The New York Times Magazine* (Sept. 30, 1984), 229 West 43rd St., New York, N.Y. 10036.

Jews in the United States have long agonized over whether it is best to assimilate to American culture or to cling to the ways of their forefathers. Now, writes Gittelson, executive editor of *McCall's* magazine, more and more Jews seem to be deciding that it is possible to do both.

Of the nation's six million Jews, some 4.8 million belong to the mainstream and relatively assimilationist sects—the Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist movements. But Gittelson reports that membership in the more fundamentalist Orthodox movement, at about 1.2 million souls, is at a postwar high and growing steadily. "Often superaffluent, no longer insecure in the New World or uncertain about their American identity, these Jews have been freed by secular success to assert triumphantly their Jewish selfhood."

Scientists, film stars, and journalists are among the "new Orthodox." The movement itself is variegated—from the "far right" Hassidim, with their centuries-old costume (for men) of beards and long, black coats, to the more liberal Orthodoxy to which most of the newcomers adhere. Yet all of the Orthodox share a commitment to obey 613 biblical commandments and rabbinical laws. Among their practices: Praying three times daily, strictly observing the Saturday *Shabbos* (sabbath). Orthodox men wear *zizit* (fringed vests) beneath their shirts to remind them of God's presence and refrain from even touching their wives for nearly two weeks of every month.

The growth of ethnic consciousness and religious faith in America, along with sympathy for Israel's plight, have contributed to the Ortho-

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

dox revival. And none too soon, say the new Orthodox. Harvard's Center for Population Studies estimates that at today's level of intermarriage, assimilation, and fertility there could be as few as 10,000 "identifiable" U.S. Jews remaining by the year 2076. The Orthodox, with their far higher birthrate, hope to prevent that.

But above all, Gittelsohn concludes, the return of some Jews to "old-time religion" is a personal quest for spiritual meaning. And the new Orthodox, in their strict practices and deep faith, "seem to feel constantly exhilarated that they are carrying out God's plan."

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

*Missing: Most
Of the Universe*

"The Invisible Universe" by John D. Barrow and Joseph Silk, in *New Scientist* (Aug. 30, 1984), Commonwealth House, 1-19 New Oxford St., London WC1A 1NG, England.

There is bad news for stargazers fond of contemplating the infinite: About 90 percent of the universe may be invisible. According to astronomers Barrow and Silk, of the Universities of Sussex and California, Berkeley, respectively, weak telescopes are not the problem. The "missing" part of the universe may be right in front of our noses. We just cannot see it.

The notion that there is more to the universe than meets the eye is a deduction from modern "cosmological" theory. During the 1920s, American astronomer Edwin Hubble laid the cornerstone for contemporary cosmology with his discovery that our own Milky Way is not the only galaxy in the universe. Later, the Big Bang theory postulated, among other things, that the universe is expanding and that the other galaxies have been moving away from ours since the Big Bang some 15 billion years ago.

During the last five years, physicists have added a theory of "inflation" that elaborates on what happened during the first instants of the Big Bang. This new understanding led scientists to conclude that the universe is expanding much more slowly than was originally thought.

Knowing the rate of the universe's expansion (assuming inflation theory is correct) allows physicists to calculate its theoretical density. According to these computations, there should be roughly 10 atoms per cubic meter of universe—far more atoms than scientists thus far have been able to find.

That means that there is probably some kind of "nonluminous" matter in the universe that has so far gone undetected—and that there is a lot of it. Attention, the authors say, has focused on a group of "exotic creatures": neutrinos, gravitons, photinos, axions, and gluons. For the present, these particles are only creatures of theory. Nobody has yet seen a single one of them.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Competition And Evolution

"The Great God of Competition" by Daniel Simberloff, in *The Sciences* (July-Aug. 1984), The New York Academy of Sciences, 2 East 63rd St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

Competition among species is now commonly accepted as one of the chief forces in evolution. But according to Simberloff, a biologist at Florida State University, its impact has been exaggerated.

Simberloff does not challenge Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. But Darwin's notion of natural selection concerned competition *within* particular species. His scheme was given a new twist during the 1950s by Yale zoologist G. Evelyn Hutchinson, who argued that competition for food *between* different species leads to evolutionary changes that enable each to survive. For example, of two bird species with plant seed diets inhabiting the same area, one might evolve a larger beak that would allow it to grasp larger seeds that the rival species could not.

Hutchinson's theory won rave reviews in the scientific community. Important support for "Hutchinson's Law" came from a 1956 study by E. O. Wilson and William Brown, both of Harvard. The study suggested that related species developed sharper differences when they lived in overlapping habitats than when they lived apart. The reason: increased competition in the zone of overlap. During the 1960s, Princeton's Robert MacArthur developed a sophisticated mathematical model to predict the outcome of such interaction. "It is only a slight overstatement," Simberloff writes, "to say that this one man provided employment for two decades' worth of theoretical ecologists."

Not until the 1970s did scientists seriously question Hutchinson's Law. McGill University biologist Peter Grant re-examined the 1956 Harvard study and found that it overestimated the differences between species. Meanwhile, ecologists began to wonder whether they had made some unwise assumptions. Are changes in the size of a species's beak, body, or feet always due to competition with other species? Or do environmental variations also cause such changes?

Today, Simberloff concludes, ecologists are beginning to realize that they overstated the importance of competition between species. It is a "formidable force," but so are changes in climate, vegetation, and terrain, as well as the vagaries of parasitism and disease.

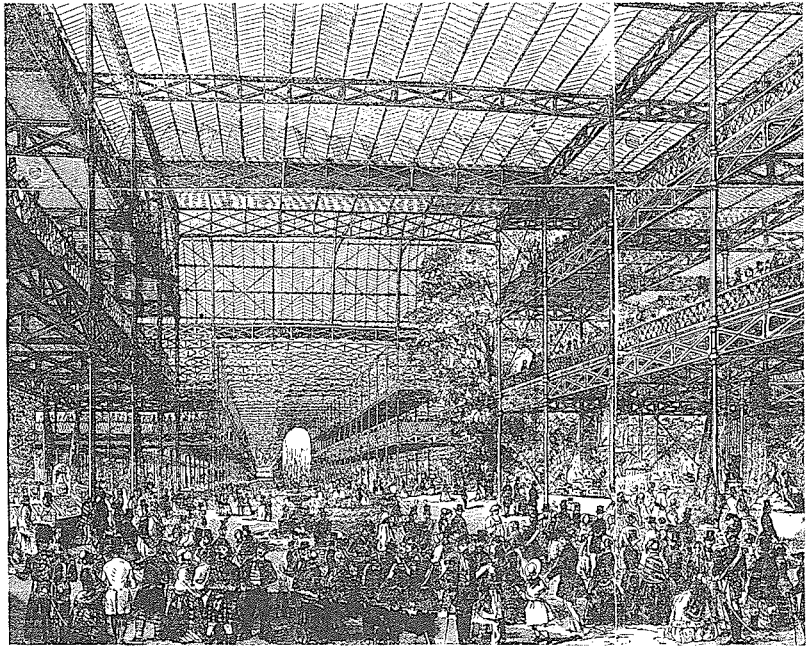
The Skyscraper's Great Ancestor

"The Crystal Palace" by Folke T. Kihlstedt, in *Scientific American* (Oct. 1984), P.O. Box 5919, New York, N.Y. 10164.

Today's glass-and-steel skyscrapers are hailed as modern marvels. But the technological advances that made them possible date back to the century-old design of England's Crystal Palace, which Franklin and Marshall College's Kihlstedt calls "one of the most influential buildings ever erected."

The glass-and-iron structure was built in London in 1851 to house the

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY



An 1851 *Scientific American* portrait of the Crystal Palace's interior.

first world's fair, The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations. Designed by Joseph Paxton, the Duke of Devonshire's head gardener and builder of many greenhouses, the palace covered 19 acres in Hyde Park. Seen from the outside, the quarter-mile-long building indeed resembled a gigantic greenhouse. Hollow cast-iron columns supported the 900,000 square feet of sheet glass that made up both the walls and the roof. Commenting on Paxton's design, the British magazine *Punch* joked, "We shall be disappointed if the next generation of London children are not brought up like cucumbers under a glass."

Paxton's simple but sturdy structure represented a radical departure from prevailing architectural styles, which relied on heavy, monumental forms in wood or masonry. Innovative engineering allowed the designer to break old constraints. As Kihlstedt notes, the Crystal Palace was "the world's first . . . large, free-standing iron-frame building, [and] the first building with what today would be called glass-curtain walls." What allowed Paxton to use glass walls—which provide no lateral stability against the wind—was his unique system of "portal bracing," which insured a rigid joint between vertical and horizontal cast-iron girders.

Under severe deadline pressure, Paxton improvised several new building techniques. The Crystal Palace was the first large building assembled from prefabricated modules. In addition, all parts were standardized and interchangeable. Specially designed machines took the

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

place of craftsmen in preparing and painting miles of wooden gutters. The exhibition hall went up in 17 weeks, surviving (after being moved in 1852) until a fire gutted it in 1936.

With its simplicity of structure and novelty of design, declares Kihlstedt, the Crystal Palace ranks "with a handful of other preeminent buildings such as the Pantheon." It remains a monument to "the time when engineering was throwing off the mantle of intuitive craft to take on that of applied science."

RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT

The Frontier Lives

"Survival of the American Frontier" by Frank J. Popper, in *Resources* (Summer 1984), *Resources for the Future*, 1755 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Americans are forever searching for "new frontiers." Meanwhile, says Popper, a Rutgers urbanologist, the *old* American frontier is alive and well.

The end of the American frontier was officially declared by the Bureau of the Census in 1890. By then, thanks to population build-up on the Pacific coast, it was no longer possible to draw the traditional national "frontier line" beyond which there were fewer than two people per square mile. Yet, many pockets of land where population density was below that level remained—and most have survived for a century. Today, about one-quarter (949,500 square miles) of the United States is still technically "frontier."

About half of this territory, 17 percent of the U.S. land area, has never even been surveyed.

Alaska (586,412 square miles) is almost entirely untouched; Nevada is 80 percent "frontier"; Idaho, 44 percent; Montana and Utah, 41 percent. Vast tracts of unsettled land remain in California, Colorado, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming. Some aspects of the old frontier survive in altered form, according to Popper. Homesteading on federally owned land was largely discontinued in 1934; but several states allow it on land that they own, and the federal government permits it in selected areas, such as Alaska's Kuskokwim Mountains. To apprehend squatters, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management is creating a "contemporary cavalry" of sorts, Popper says. And lands where settlers once warred with Indians, the British, the Spanish, and others now serve as sites for military training exercises and weapons tests.

Obviously, the open lands are not what they were. Agriculture, big mining and timber operations, and public irrigation projects have all left their marks. The defining characteristics of America's remaining wilderness are its harsh terrain and climate, and its lack of water—qualities that have spared it greater encroachment by humans.

RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT

Yet rich resources (notably coal, oil, and natural gas in Alaska) remain largely untapped. Popper cautions, however, that these open lands are neither as fragile as many environmentalists contend nor as ripe for easy exploitation as others suggest.

Before authorizing the 1803 Louisiana Purchase, President Thomas Jefferson prophesied that although it might take Americans 100 generations to settle the West, another thousand generations would be sustained by it. Seven generations later, Popper observes, Jefferson's predictions seem surprisingly close to the mark.

*Cleaning Up
The Superfund*

"After 'Voluntary' Liability: The EPA's Implementation of Superfund" by Carol L. Dorge, in *Boston College Environmental Affairs Law Review* (vol. II, no. 3, 1984), 885 Centre St., Newton Centre, Mass. 02159.

In 1980, Congress passed "Superfund" legislation aimed at cleaning up the nation's toxic-waste dumps. Since then, argues Dorge, a Chicago lawyer, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has dragged its feet in enforcing the law.

The 1980 statute (officially, the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act of 1980) established a \$1.6 billion Superfund that the EPA could draw on to eliminate hazardous-waste deposits. The Superfund would be replenished by reimbursements from industrial polluters. The law also empowered the EPA to take "emergency action" by suing suspected offenders to force them to conduct and pay for their own cleanups. In Dorge's view, the EPA has used this provision as a way to avoid carrying out its full responsibilities.

As of August 1984, the Superfund had disbursed only \$360 million. The EPA itself estimates that outlays of up to \$16 billion will eventually be needed to complete Superfund's mission. Even the replacement of controversial EPA head Ann Gorsuch Burford with William Ruckelshaus in May 1983 failed to accelerate the agency's efforts.

Instead, the EPA has relied heavily on its emergency powers, threatening alleged polluters with lawsuits to get them to agree out of court to "voluntary" toxic-waste-control efforts. One reason the EPA prefers using the emergency rules is that they make suspects' liability easier to prove: Dumping *any* toxic wastes leaves a company liable under the emergency rules, while to be reimbursed for Superfund outlays, the EPA has to prove that a suspect's wastes are "harmful." Often, Dorge suggests, both the innocent and the guilty are dragooned into out-of-court settlements. They settle because it is cheaper to do so; but low-cost toxic-waste cleanups also mean less effective ones.

Congress never meant the EPA to use its emergency powers either to force industry to play by two sets of rules or to skim on cleanups, Dorge contends. Using the Superfund as intended, she argues, would be good for both industry and the environment.

ARTS & LETTERS

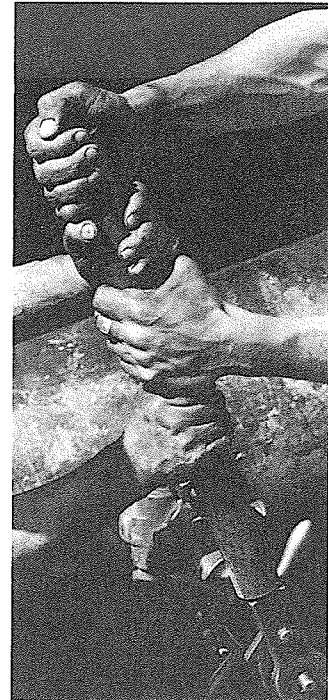
*Where Photography
Went Wrong*

"Whatever Happened to the Family of Man?" by Nicholas Lemann, in *The Washington Monthly* (Oct. 1984), 1711 Connecticut Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

Fifty years ago, documentary photographs by the likes of Walker Evans and Margaret Bourke-White captured the national imagination and enriched *Life*, *Look*, and a rackful of lesser popular picture magazines. Today, writes Lemann, a *Washington Monthly* contributing editor, that kind of photography is moribund, and the nation is poorer for it.

Photojournalism became a powerful social and political influence in the United States during the Great Depression. The federal Farm Security Administration (FSA) commissioned photographers such as Dorothea Lange, Ben Shahn, and Evans to capture on film the poverty of Oklahoma's drought-stricken Dust Bowl and other rural areas. They brought back striking images that "turned causes that might have seemed abstract into human flesh and blood," Lemann writes. The photos also helped to rally popular support for New Deal legislation. During World War II, pictures of Americans from all walks of life working together on the battle front, in factories, and in victory gar-

The "last hurrah" of traditional photojournalism was the famous 1955 Family of Man exhibition at Manhattan's Museum of Modern Art. Arthur Lavine's eloquent untitled picture of the hands of two workingmen was one of 503 by different photographers.



ARTS & LETTERS

dens lifted morale at home and overseas.

By the early 1960s, however, photojournalism was on the way out. Once-popular illustrated magazines began to lose readers to TV competition, and Washington had long since lost interest in FSA-like projects. Photographers themselves, meanwhile, began to regard their work as art and their business as self-expression. They began trying to "convey what was behind the lens, rather than what was in front of it," argues Lemann. A leader in the new "art" photography was Diane Arbus (1924–71), famed chronicler of midgets, transvestites, and other oddballs. Even Arbus's pictures of "normal" people convey her private conviction that "all of us are freaks."

Today, a photographer's place is supposed to be in the studio; a photographer's in a museum, art gallery, or up-scale fashion magazine. Only newspaper and newsmagazine photographers—long the "poor relations" of photojournalists—still carry cameras around their necks. "I can't think of an image that stays in my mind as a symbol of poverty [under] the Reagan administration," Lemann laments. He blames the demise of photojournalism. When the occasional powerful image does appear (e.g., in pictures of the 1984 Olympics), it only serves as a poignant reminder of what has been lost.

Defending Modern Literature

"Venerable Complications: Why Literature Is a Little Hard to Read" by Richard Poirier, in *Raritan* (Summer 1984), 165 College Ave., New Brunswick, N.J. 08901.

Modern literature is frequently denounced for its obscurity and impenetrability. That is to mistake virtues for vices, argues Poirier, editor of *Raritan*, for the opacity of literature is "essential to its value."

Serious literature has always been created for the few rather than the many. The spread of literacy during the 19th century created a broader potential audience, but also precipitated fears among writers that, as Henry James put it, the "monstrous masses" would undermine the "tradition of sensibility." In a kind of holding action against popularization, literature after the mid-19th century increasingly became "an extraordinarily demanding and self-conscious inquiry into its own resources and procedures," often requiring "translation" by a literary critic.

Today, literature is more exclusive than ever before. Poirier cautions against blaming TV or the arrival of a technological society in general for literature's isolation. In fact, he contends, technology is as much tormented by, as it is the tormentor of, literature. Writers and poets have always been nostalgic for a mythical unsullied past, and from the time that book two of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* was published in 1589, they have made modern industry and its products the scapegoat for their sense of loss.

"Literature's distaste for Technology reveals, at last, a squeamishness about its own operations," Poirier contends. Literature, created out of language and shaped by religious, economic, and political influences, is no more "natural" than is technology. And yet literature *is* dif-

ARTS & LETTERS

ferent, he insists. While TV and other products of technology impose themselves with "force and indifference," reading requires active human involvement.

That quality, in Poirier's view, elevates literature above even the other arts—painting, music, dance. He writes: "More than any other form of art or expression it demonstrates what can be made, what can be done with something [language] shared by everyone, used by everyone in the daily conduct of life, and something which, moreover, carries most subtly and yet measurably within itself, its vocabulary and syntax, the governing assumptions of a society's social, political, and economic arrangements."

Tragedy for Our Times

"What Is Happening to Tragedy Today?"
by James Mark, in *Journal of European
Studies* (June 1984), Alpha Academic,
Halfpenny Furze, Mill Lane, Chalfont St.
Giles, Bucks HP8 4NR, England.

Tragedies on the grand scale of the ancient Greeks and Shakespeare are no longer written. Of late, literary critics on both sides of the Atlantic have argued that tragedy itself is dead. Mark, a British writer, insists that tragedy lives on.

During the fifth century B.C., Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides portrayed awesome human suffering. They challenged their audiences to affirm their faith in "an ultimate order that transcends our understanding," writes Mark. Shakespeare's tragedies likewise suggested an orderly but implacable universe, in which flawed heroes who violate sacred trusts of love or duty die terrible deaths.

In an "atomized, fluid" society, it is not possible for playwrights to people the stage with the noble figures—kings, queens, warriors—of more traditional tragedies. The hero of a serious contemporary play is more likely to be a kind of Everyman, and an unsympathetic one to boot. And the modern tragic universe is almost always meaningless, rife with absurdity and cosmic injustice.

The avatar of modern drama may well be *Waiting for Godot* (1952), by Samuel Beckett, in which two pathetic characters, Vladimir and Estragon, cling together unhappily in a kind of limbo waiting reluctantly for a character (Godot) whose identity is a mystery. Jean-Paul Sartre's *No Exit* (1945) portrays three characters in hell, whose sentence it is to endure one another's company. Mother Courage, the heroine of Bertolt Brecht's 1941 play of the same name, is forced to prostitute her daughter as the price of holding her family together during the Thirty Years' War (1618–48).

How can these works of despair be considered tragedies? The playwright's own attempt to impose order on the chaos of modern life and the sympathy that audiences feel for the plays' characters are both affirmations of the human struggle. This is a greatly diminished view of tragedy, Mark concedes. But as long as man must grapple with uncertainty and the question of his ultimate fate, tragedy will survive.

OTHER NATIONS

*How Hitler
Rose to Power*

"How Guilty Were the Germans?" by Istvan Deak, in *The New York Review of Books* (May 31, 1984), P.O. Box 940, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11737.

The dry facts of Adolf Hitler's life (1889–1945) document his rise to power, but explaining how an entire nation could embrace insanity is another matter. According to Deak, a Columbia historian, new scholarly studies are beginning to provide some answers.

The conventional view is that Germany's tradesmen, shopkeepers, and farmers—all hit hard by Germany's economic troubles after World War I—constituted the core of Hitler's National Socialist (Nazi) Party when it first scored big in the 1932 elections. But close scrutiny of party rosters and German voting records reveals that the Nazis enjoyed a much broader appeal. Among their supporters were university students, civil servants, and factory workers. Women (drawn by the ideals of *Kinder, Küche und Kirche*, or Children, Kitchen, and Church) and the elderly cast a surprisingly large share of Hitler's ballots. What the new studies do confirm is that the rural Protestants of northern Germany were far more favorably disposed toward Hitler, an Austrian, than were their Bavarian-Catholic countrymen.

A group of reactionary politicians and businessmen mistakenly judged that they could control the Nazis. In January 1933, they managed to get Hitler named chancellor, even though the Nazis remained a minority party.

Much of Hitler's charisma can be attributed to his stout nationalism and to his call for a return to traditional values. His violent anti-Semitism was not nearly as popular. Deak writes that most Germans who voted for Hitler in 1932 (when the Nazis won 7.3 percent of the popular vote) did so "less because of the Party's extreme anti-Semitism than because of the Depression, fear of communism, the desire to revenge the Versailles Treaty, and sundry other reasons." Indeed, in a 1938 opinion survey of party members, more than half voiced "extreme indignation" at Hitler's harsh treatment of the Jews.

Given Germany's relatively small Jewish population—500,000 in 1933—and the fact that most of the death camps were isolated or located outside Germany, it is conceivable that few Germans were fully aware of the extent of the Final Solution.

That is not to say that they had no inkling, argues Deak. Not only did six million Jews perish at the hands of the *Schutzstaffel* (SS), Hitler's elite military force, but "the Nazis starved to death or otherwise murdered three million non-Jewish Poles and 3,300,000 Russian prisoners of war." Word of such monumental brutality must have filtered back to ordinary Germans. Yet, few even inquired after their missing German-Jewish neighbors. In the end, Deak writes, "what condemns the German population . . . is not that they volunteered to kill [Jews], because they generally did not, but that they were indifferent."

OTHER NATIONS

A French Population 'Bust'?

"The French Population Debate" by Richard Tomlinson, in *The Public Interest* (Summer 1984), 20th & Northampton Sts., Easton, Pa. 18042.

Throughout the Third World, many governments are trying desperately to curb population growth. In France, however, national leaders are urging their countrymen to have bigger families.

The French are not alone in facing a population "implosion." Among the nations of noncommunist Europe, only Greece, Ireland, Portugal, and Spain can claim a birthrate equal to or exceeding the 2.1 children per adult woman needed just to keep population constant. But only the French, with a rate of 1.8, have made *dénatalité* a major public issue. Two years ago, President François Mitterand announced that boosting the birthrate would be a top priority of his administration, and he has named a cabinet member, Georgina Dufoix, to manage the government's population programs.

Mitterand's willingness to go public on what is, after all, a sensitive issue that might spark charges of racism and sexism, is actually not so unusual. The French Communist Party has long favored outlawing all forms of contraception; conservative historian Pierre Chaunu calls birth-control pills a greater threat to Western society than nuclear arms.

For the French, writes Tomlinson, a British scholar, public concern over *dénatalité* has a long tradition. They date the beginning of their decline as a world power to the 19th century, when French population growth began to level off. Between 1870 and 1940, population stagnated at 40 million. Marshal Pétain, who signed the 1940 armistice with Hitler, summed up the reasons for his country's defeat with the words, "Too few children, too few arms, and too few allies."

In 1945, General Charles de Gaulle prescribed "12 million beautiful babies in 10 years," and Paris created family subsidies to promote childbearing. Population climbed to 47 million by 1962.

Mitterand attributes the gain to French family policy and hopes to repeat its apparent success. As incentives, he has established an \$85 monthly stipend for pregnant women and parents of children under age three; families with three children receive a \$125 monthly check for two years. But *dénatalité* has long been a French affliction, and it is not likely to go away soon.

Computerizing The Soviet Union

"Technology and Freedom in the Soviet Union" by S. Frederick Starr, in *Technology Review* (May-June 1984), P.O. Box 978, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11737.

Sophisticated computers, often bought from the West, are being deployed throughout the Soviet Union. It remains to be seen, however, whether the new technology will simply allow Moscow to tighten its grip over the country, or allow Soviet citizens to win a greater mea-

OTHER NATIONS

sure of personal freedom.

Five hundred years of Russian history offer little basis for optimism, notes Starr, president of Oberlin College. The Russians have consistently made new inventions into servants of the state. Thus, while Johann Gutenberg's printing press revolutionized the West by making possible the wide dissemination of ideas and information after the mid-15th century, the tsarist government claimed a near monopoly of Russian presses until the early 19th century, reserving the machines to publish official documents.

At first glance, Starr concedes, today's pattern appears similar. The Kremlin views computers as "the last best hope" to make the Soviet Union's creaky centralized economy work. Manufactured or imported by the state and for the state, computers have been used to render the existing administrative system, including the police, more effective.

But Starr also sees signs that things might be different this time. The Russian peasant culture that bred passive acceptance of the state's dictates is dying. In 1950, two-thirds of the Soviet population still lived in the countryside, but less than one-third of today's citizens do. "Urban life in the present-day USSR, no less than that elsewhere in the world, means large apartment complexes, individualization, fragmentation," Starr writes. Young Russians are more accustomed than were their grandparents to thinking for themselves—for example, every year 20 percent of all Russian workers now change jobs. Industrialization and new technology are largely responsible.

"The best evidence of the growth of a freer mentality . . . is the way the rising generation exploits minor technologies [photocopying machines, cassette tape recorders] for its own private ends," says Starr. To retain the allegiance of these young Russians, he believes, Kremlin leaders must avoid simply using modern technology as a Stalinist whip.

*China Wrestles
With Romance*

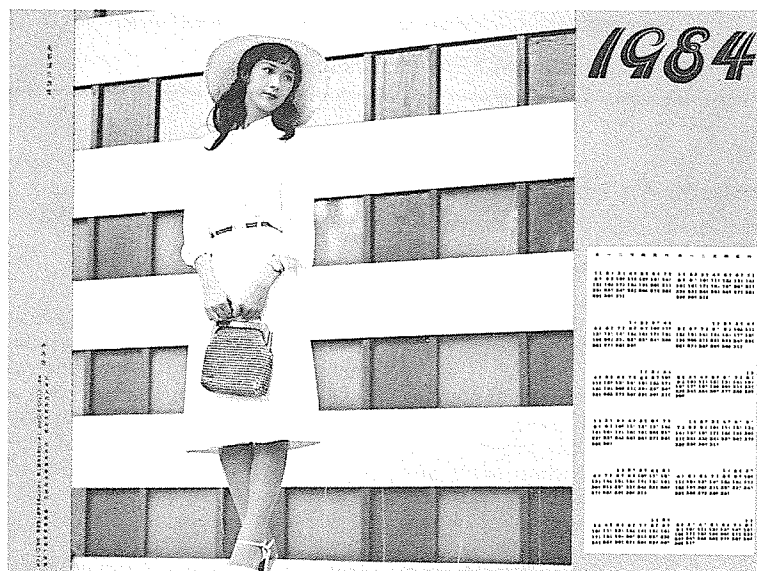
"Making a Friend: Changing Patterns of Courtship in Urban China" by Gail Hershatter, in *Pacific Affairs* (Summer 1984), The University of British Columbia, 2021 West Mall, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1W5, Canada.

Many constraints were loosened as Communist China's traumatic Cultural Revolution faded a decade ago, including those on courtship. Today, reports Hershatter, a Williams College historian, the Chinese are struggling to rewrite the book of love.

China's lovelorn and lonelyhearts have no Dear Abby to hear them out, but many write to the *China Youth News* ("Dear Comrade Editor . . ."), and their problems are revealing. Before the Communist takeover in 1949, writes Hershatter, "marriage was unambiguously an alliance between families," often arranged by professional matchmakers. Later, marriage was viewed "as a simple union of revolutionary comrades." Now, things are a bit less clear-cut.

The post-Mao liberalization has not meant the dawn of a new era of

OTHER NATIONS



Western ways may be making some inroads into communist China, but if this Chinese "pinup girl" is any indication, only very slowly.

license (though lovers grapple "behind every bush in Beijing's Purple Bamboo Park"). The role of the matchmaker (now often a zealous worker in the Communist Youth League) is still crucial. "From grammar school on," explains Hershatter, "powerful cultural factors inhibit male-female interaction." Youngsters, especially girls, who prematurely (i.e., in their teens) express romantic interest in members of the opposite sex risk being branded "hoodlums." So when the time for courtship finally comes, the first steps can be rather awkward.

Public concern over such adolescent angst has become serious enough to draw city governments into the matchmaking business. In 1980, local *hunyin jie-shausuo*, or "marriage-introduction institutes," were opened in several major cities. Some 12,000 singles promptly signed up in Beijing alone.

The complaints that show up most frequently in the *China Youth News* concern conflicts between romantic and material considerations. The opportunities for upward mobility in the Chinese job world are scant, so "marrying up" is for many the only way of moving up. In the summer of 1982, Li Jianxin wrote to the *News* about another familiar difficulty: His career and education were opening new doors to him, but as a result of his advancement the "common language" of Li and his poorly educated wife was diminishing. What should he do? The *News* threw open the question to the readers. "Comrade Editor" had no pat answer.

RESEARCH REPORTS

Reviews of new research by public agencies and private institutions

"Hispanics: Challenges and Opportunities."

Ford Foundation, Office of Reports, 320 East 43rd St., New York, N.Y. 10017.
66 pp.

Author: William A. Diaz

America's large and growing Hispanic population is perhaps its most diverse "minority group."

The nation's 14.6 million Hispanics (their number as of 1980) are black, brown, and white. Only one-third are foreign-born. Sixty percent of all Hispanics in the 50 states are Mexican-Americans; 14 percent, Puerto Ricans; six percent, Cubans. Twenty percent, mostly Central and South Americans, check off the "Other Hispanic" box on U.S. Census Bureau forms.

As a group, Hispanics fall between whites and blacks on the income scale, reports Diaz, a Ford Foundation official. In 1982, the median income of Hispanic families was \$16,227, compared with \$13,598 for blacks, \$24,603 for whites. But different Hispanic groups face different socioeconomic prospects. For example, over one-third of Puerto Rican families surveyed in 1981 had nobody at work, compared with only nine percent of Mexican families.

In fact, Puerto Ricans are poorer than American blacks. Part of the explanation is that Puerto Ricans are concentrated in the job-poor industrial cities of the American Northeast. More to the point: The share of Puerto Rican families headed by single women jumped from 15 percent in 1960 to 41 percent in 1979—an even steeper rise than blacks experienced.

Mexican-Americans, nearly half of them residents of two states (California and Texas), tend to be more prosperous than Puerto Ricans but still

concentrated in low-paying farm and unskilled jobs. Cuban-Americans, many of them wealthy or middle-class refugees from Fidel Castro's rule, are the most affluent of the Hispanic groups, having found blue- and white-collar jobs. South and Central Americans have also fared relatively well.

Education does little to bridge the gap between Hispanics and other Americans—or even among Hispanic groups. In 1981, 36 percent of 18- and 19-year-old Hispanics were high school dropouts (compared with 15 percent of their white peers and 19 percent of their black counterparts). Again, Hispanic experiences vary. A 1976 survey showed that Mexican-Americans and Puerto Ricans averaged 2.6 years less schooling than whites, while for Cubans and South Americans that figure was cut to one year.

According to Diaz, most Hispanics still think of themselves as "Chicanos" or "Cubans," not as "Hispanics." Immigration reform, for example, means much to Mexican-Americans but little to Puerto Ricans. Bilingual education excites the interest of an activist minority of Hispanics, but most do not care about how their children learn English—only that they do.

Diaz thinks it unlikely that Hispanics will unite behind a single creed, interest group, or political party. The various roads they follow in their pursuit of the American Dream will probably convince Hispanics as much of their differences as of what they have in common.

"Governmental Finances in 1982-83."

U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233. 89 pp. \$4.25.

During fiscal 1983, Americans' tax burdens eased for the first time in 12 years, the U.S. Department of Commerce reports.

Federal, state, and local governments took in \$665.8 billion in 1983, down slightly from the \$671.4 billion they collected the year before. Uncle Sam can take most of the credit: Federal tax revenues (\$381.1 billion) were down by nearly six percent in 1983, while local governments increased their tax takes by nine percent, state governments by 5.4 percent (the smallest state tax increase in 25 years).

Washington's receipts from individual income taxes dropped by \$9.2 billion in 1983; corporate income tax payments fell by \$12.2 billion.

But governments at all three levels still spent more than they did the year before. Outlays jumped by 9.7 percent (to \$1.4 trillion), financed in part by increasing nontax revenues (e.g., from the U.S. Postal Service and from increased payroll contributions to Social Security) but mostly by borrowing some \$200 billion from the taxpayers.

The overall public debt grew by 17.9 percent (to \$1.8 trillion) in 1983, the biggest one-year jump since 1945. Washington's share of the bill was \$1.4 trillion, up by 20.5 percent over 1982. State and local governments, which owe lenders a comparatively measly \$454.5 billion, increased their borrowing at half of their Big Brother's heady rate.

"The Costs of the Soviet Empire."

Rand Corporation, 1700 Main St., Santa Monica, Calif. 90406. 66 pp. \$7.50.

Authors: Charles Wolf, Jr., K. C. Yeh, Edmund Brunner, Jr., Aaron Gurwitz, Marilee Lawrence

The Soviet Union maintains a presence of considerable proportions outside of its own borders. Charles Wolf, Jr., and four Rand researchers have taken on the daunting task of measuring how much it costs the Soviets.

Their conclusion: The price tag was between \$32.9 billion and \$42.6 billion in 1980, up from between \$4.9 billion and \$7.9 billion in 1971.

The Rand analysts did not count Soviet *defense* outlays [estimated 1980 total: \$213 billion]. Rather, they looked at the price to Moscow of keeping within its orbit its six Eastern European satellites and Afghanistan, as well as such clients as Cuba, Vietnam, Angola, North Korea, Syria, Nicaragua, and South Yemen. The Soviet ef-

forts included export credits, military and economic aid, covert activities, and "implicit" trade subsidies (e.g., selling oil at below-market prices).

The authors excluded the costs of all Soviet military activities except those in Afghanistan.

Greatly complicating the task of making such estimates is the difficulty of finding an accurate yardstick to use in converting rubles into dollars. Official exchange rates are virtually meaningless.

Thus, imperial obligations claimed between 2.3 and three percent of the Soviet gross national product (GNP) in 1980, measured in dollars. In rubles, the Rand team's estimate for 1980 is 6.1 to 7.2 percent. (The compa-

able costs of the U.S. "empire," by contrast, averaged .37 percent of GNP annually during 1971-80.)

One thing *is* clear: Moscow's commitments abroad are rapidly becoming more expensive. During the 1970s, costs grew by nine percent annually in constant dollars, by 16 percent in rubles. And more and more of Soviet outlays must be made in precious "hard currency," needed to buy Western grain and technology: The hard currency share has shot up from 30 percent in 1971 to 68 percent in 1980. During the same period, implicit trade subsidies claimed a growing share of Moscow's imperial

budget, jumping from 11 percent in 1971 to 56 percent in 1980.

What do all the facts and figures add up to? The Rand researchers believe that the best way to curb Soviet expansionism is to raise the costs of empire. By restricting commercial loans and credits to Moscow's East European satellites, the United States and its West European allies could force Moscow to shoulder a larger share of the burden of financing inefficient communist economies. Secondly, they favor stepped up U.S. efforts to counter Soviet-backed insurgencies in the Third World, where the Kremlin today gets the best value for its rubles.

"Failure of Labor Law—A Betrayal of American Workers."

U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Education and Labor, 2451 Rayburn House Office Bldg., Subcommittee on Labor-Management Relations, Washington, D.C. 20515. 31 pp.

In 1935, amid the economic turmoil of the Great Depression, Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act to encourage "the practice and procedures of collective bargaining." But half a century later, some labor leaders are calling for the law's repeal.

With the aid of sophisticated anti-union consultants, some U.S. corporations are exploiting the law's weaknesses to derail labor union organizing efforts. Unions face consultants in up to two-thirds of all drives for new members. Workers voted for union representation in 55 percent of all the elections held in 1970 but only 40 percent of those in 1983.

The House Subcommittee on Labor-Management Relations (with two Republican members dissenting) also asserts that lax enforcement of labor laws by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) is giving the "union busters" the upper hand.

The result, in the subcommittee's

view: Many business executives now believe that "it often pays . . . to violate the [labor] law."

Some employers fight unions by (illegally) firing prounion workers: One out of every 20 workers who votes for union representation today loses his job. The cost to the employer is slight. It takes the NLRB three years to resolve an unfair labor practice complaint; the worst penalty that can be imposed on the employer is a requirement that the worker be reinstated with back pay.

Exacerbating such deficiencies, the subcommittee contends, are antilabor Reagan administration appointments to the five-member NLRB. From September 1975 to March 1976, the NLRB decided 329 cases in labor's favor, while 54 went the employer's way. It heard fewer cases during 1983-84, and workers won only 111 of them, while employers won 92.

Explaining his union's desire to

wipe labor laws off the books and return to the "law of the jungle," one labor representative said: "We are living under the law of the jungle right now, except that unions are living in a

cage and the employers are well armed." The subcommittee agrees with his diagnosis but not his prescription. Needed, it says, is drastic reform of existing laws.

"America's Volunteer Military: Progress and Prospects."

Brookings Institution, 1775 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. 63 pp. \$6.95.

Author: Martin Binkin

After some stormy years during the 1970s, the volunteer military today is enjoying smooth sailing. But Binkin, a Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, sees more trouble ahead.

After the military draft was abolished in 1973, the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines struggled to attract enough new recruits; many of those who did sign up were below par in education and intelligence test scores. Indiscipline, low re-enlistment rates, and sagging morale plagued all the services. (Women were the silver lining during this period: About 88 percent of the women who enlisted in the Army during 1974-76 were high school graduates, while only 52 percent of the men were. But women constituted only nine percent of new recruits.)

Binkin blames the services' woes on three developments: Military pay lagged behind inflation; the Vietnam-era GI Bill expired in 1977, just as Washington was sharply expanding financial aid to civilian college students; and a healthy U.S. economy siphoned off potential enlistees.

The bad economic news of the late 1970s was, in a way, good news for the Pentagon. It made enlistment attractive to young people looking for work, and a one-third boost in military pay during 1980 and 1981 sweetened the deal. The surge in national pride in recent years has also made life easier for recruiting sergeants.

Indeed, military manpower is so

plentiful today that the services now discourage subpar soldiers from signing up for second tours of duty.

But Binkin warns that the flush times probably will not last long. During the decade ahead, he writes, "the military may have to attract not only more recruits, but better ones." Finding the high-quality soldiers needed to operate sophisticated new weapons will not be easy, given the nation's educational woes. But quantity is sure to be an even bigger headache.

The Pentagon plans to boost the armed forces to 2,270,000 by 1989, an increase of about 157,000 over current levels. At the same time, the pool of 18-to-21-year-olds will be shrinking.

Binkin estimates that to meet its manpower needs through 1988, the Pentagon will have to attract more than half of the 750,000 qualified men available every year, as opposed to the 42 percent share that was needed during the early 1980s. (The pool does not include college students, the mentally unfit, prison inmates, etc.)

To meet the challenge, the Pentagon could drastically increase pay and benefits, use more civilians, or increase its reliance on women. (There are now 196,000 women in uniform, 9.3 percent of U.S. forces.) A crunch could still come.

During the next four years, Binkin says, it may be necessary to choose between reviving the draft and scaling back plans for national rearmament.



During the 15th century, Portuguese mariners were destined, as the poet Luis Vaz de Camoens wrote, to "track the oceans none had sailed before." But before long, the country's seamen had competition. This 17th-century print shows a Portuguese vessel being attacked by English and Dutch warships at the entrance to the Persian Gulf.

Portugal

One decade ago, little Portugal was front-page news in America. Would this NATO ally, in the aftermath of a surprise coup against Western Europe's oldest dictatorship, succumb to the Portuguese Communist Party's drive for power? Would it become "the Bulgaria of the West"? Washington feared the worst. Happily, Portuguese democrats prevailed. But the people whom dictator António de Oliveira Salazar had long isolated from change could not go back to old ways and old dreams. Since 1974, shedding the African remnants of what was Europe's last (and first) overseas empire, the Portuguese have had to adjust not only to political freedom but also to gritty economic realities. Entry into the Common Market and a presidential election lie ahead. Our contributors trace Portugal's long odyssey from imperial grandeur to the uncertainties of union with the rest of Europe.

PRISONERS OF GLORY

by Kenneth Maxwell

May 20, 1498. Ten and a half months out of Lisbon, two vessels commanded by Vasco da Gama, a Portuguese nobleman, anchor off Calicut, a port on India's Malabar Coast. When the seamen go ashore, history records, the first question asked of them is, "What the devil has brought you here?"

The reply: "We have come to seek Christians and spices."

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to follow the African coast around the Cape of Good Hope and then to cross the Indian Ocean. They paid a high price. As a result of scurvy and other hazards, when the *São Gabriel*, the only ship to complete the 24,000-mile round trip, sailed up the Tagus River to Lisbon in September 1499, just 44 of the 170 men who began the voyage remained aboard to celebrate. But Portugal's boldest voyage of discovery stirred Renaissance Europe.

King Manuel ("the Fortunate") eagerly advised the court of

Spain that da Gama had found not only “rubies and all kinds of precious stones” but also pepper and other spices, then prized in the European diet because they could make the salt beef from the cattle slaughtered each fall edible all year. In a letter to Lisbon’s Cardinal-Protector in Rome, he signed himself as the “Lord of Guinea and of the conquest of the navigation and commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia, and India.”

Manuel’s pride was excusable. To 15th-century Europeans, da Gama’s feat meant far more than had the discovery of America six years earlier by Christopher Columbus, the Genoese captain who had sailed for Spain. What the New World offered was unclear; but da Gama had made the first direct modern contact between two old worlds, the East and the West.*

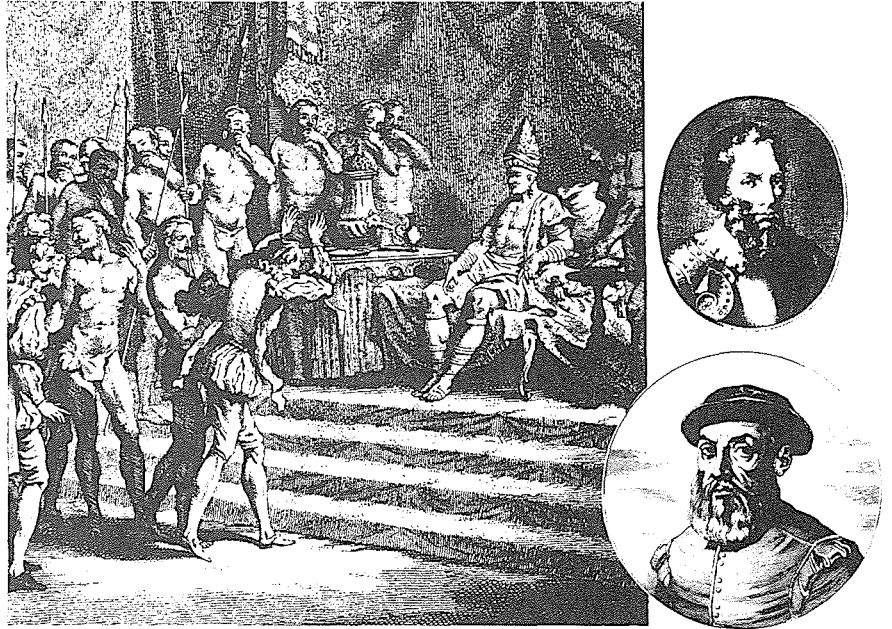
Other breakthroughs were to come. During Portugal’s brief golden age of discovery, which ran from the 1440s to about 1500, its mariners—da Gama, Bartolomeu Dias, Pedro Álvares Cabral, Ferdinand Magellan—vastly expanded the world known to Europeans. The Portuguese went on to establish colonies in Africa, the Far East, and South America. The places where they landed added scores of new names to Europe’s commercial lexicon—Lunda, Mombasa, the Maldives, Ormuz, Diu, Goa, Galle, Macao, Tsingtao, Malacca, Melinda, Timor, Rio de Janeiro.

The traders served God as well as Mammon. “The preachers take the gospel and the merchants take the preachers,” said the 16th-century Jesuit António Vieira. The Portuguese named the waters off Salvador, their first capital in Brazil, the Bay of All Saints (and nicknamed it the Bay of All the Sins). They also exported such European innovations as the movable-type printing press, which they introduced in the Middle East and possibly Japan. Portuguese words entered the languages of the Japanese (*tempura*), the Indians (*caste*), and other distant peoples.

In sum, as Lisbon would never forget, it was the Portuguese who first “linked up, for better and for worse, the widely sun-

*Marco Polo (circa 1254–1324) had journeyed overland to China some 200 years earlier—one of several travelers, most of them Italian, to bring back tales of Eastern silks and spices. By da Gama’s time, some of those commodities were reaching Europe, but only via the Middle East at the hands of traders from Venice.

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Portuguese mariners: Vasco da Gama saluted the ruler of Calicut in India two years before Pedro Álvares Cabral (top right) reached Brazil in 1500. Ferdinand Magellan led the Spanish fleet that sailed west around the globe during 1519–22.

dered branches of the great human family,” as historian Charles R. Boxer has noted. “It was they who first made Humanity conscious, however dimly, of its essential unity.”

But why the Portuguese?

During the 15th century, there were scarcely more than one million Portuguese, most of them illiterate peasants. Smaller than Scotland, just 130 miles wide at its broadest point, Portugal was short of every natural resource but shoreline. Between the mountainous north and the arid south, only one-third of the country could be cultivated. And when Portugal* came into being as a kingdom during the 12th century, other European mariners were already in business—the Basques, the Catalans, the Genoese, and the Venetians.

But the Portuguese, sharing a peninsula with a more powerful neighbor, Spain, had a genius for survival, for deftly exploiting the rival ambitions of bigger powers. It was what would keep their tiny country independent through most of 700 years

*The word *Portugal* was derived from *Portus Cale*, the old Roman name for Oporto, now the country's second largest city.

of turbulent European history. They would not be conquistadors, like the Spanish who followed them, but maneuverers—"opportunists of action," as the 20th-century dictator António de Oliveira Salazar once described himself.

Opportunity called early. Lisbon in the 12th century was on the sea route used by both Venetian and Genoese traders sailing to northern Europe, and European crusaders bound for the Mediterranean and the Holy Land to fight the Islamic legions they called "Moors." Afonso Henriques, the founder of Portugal's first monarchy, the House of Burgundy, got the help of one group of passing English and French crusaders in taking Lisbon from the Moors in 1147. The last Moors were expelled from Portugal in 1249, some 250 years before the Spanish conquered their remaining Muslim fiefdom, Granada, in 1492.

Foreign help was crucial again during the 14th century. John of Aviz, the bastard son of Portugal's last Burgundian monarch, defeated a larger force of Castilian invaders at Aljubarrota in 1385—with the aid of English archers provided by England's John of Gaunt, who had ambitions of taking over Castile.

Down to Africa

The Portuguese King John married John of Gaunt's daughter, affirming what was to be a lasting link with the British. The 1386 Anglo-Portuguese Treaty of Windsor—a classic treaty of alliance by a small country seeking big-power protection against a larger neighbor—remains Europe's oldest mutual defense pact. It was to bring Portugal into World War I and serve as "neutral" Portugal's excuse to allow the Allies to use antisubmarine bases in the Azores during World War II.

The Portuguese learned the limits of their own power early. In 1415, King John led a force that seized the Moorish port of Ceuta, on the Moroccan side of the Strait of Gibraltar. The aim was to strike a blow at the infidels for Christendom, but in the process, the Portuguese learned that the Moroccans were enriched by a steady procession of camel caravans coming north from Guinea, laden with gold and spices. Beyond control of Ceuta, the Portuguese had little military success in Morocco. So their leaders made a decision: If the Portuguese could not win glory and wealth on land, they would turn to the sea.

In 1419, King John's energetic third son, Prince Henry ("the Navigator"), then 25, moved to Sagres, a bleak outpost on southern Portugal's Algarve coast, to set up a center for maritime exploration. It was to earn Portugal its niche in history.

The timing was propitious. During the 15th century, Portu-

gal was largely at peace, while larger European powers were embroiled in various conflicts—the Hundred Years' War, the Wars of the Roses, the advances of the Ottoman Turks in the Levant and the Balkans. Portugal's Spanish rivals, Castile and Aragon, were immobilized by a state of near-anarchy that would last until their union in 1479 under Ferdinand V and Isabella I.

The great achievement of the captains, cartographers, and other specialists whom Prince Henry recruited was to determine the patterns of the prevailing ocean winds and currents—and to recognize that the sea could be used to link distant continents. That knowledge would give all of Europe access to what is now the Third World, and the Portuguese had it first.

Their mariners began sailing down the uncharted littoral of West Africa around 1420. The early returns were meager—the first Portuguese *feitoria* (trading post) was not set up until about 1445—but the captains of the small but fast caravels gradually took part of the traffic in Guinea gold away from the Arab caravans. Coins called “Portugaloisers” appeared in Antwerp and other northern European cities.

Soon, the Portuguese were bartering brassware and trinkets, as well as cloth, carpets, and silks from Granada and Tunis, for gold, slaves, and “grains of paradise,” or Guinea pepper. The trading posts became forts. A 15th-century chronicler told how an African chief bested a rival: He told “his men, who were Negroes, to whiten their faces, legs, and arms with clay . . . masquerading them in all other ways so that they might even more readily be taken for Christians.” The enemy fled “to the accompaniment of a great victory and much merriment.”

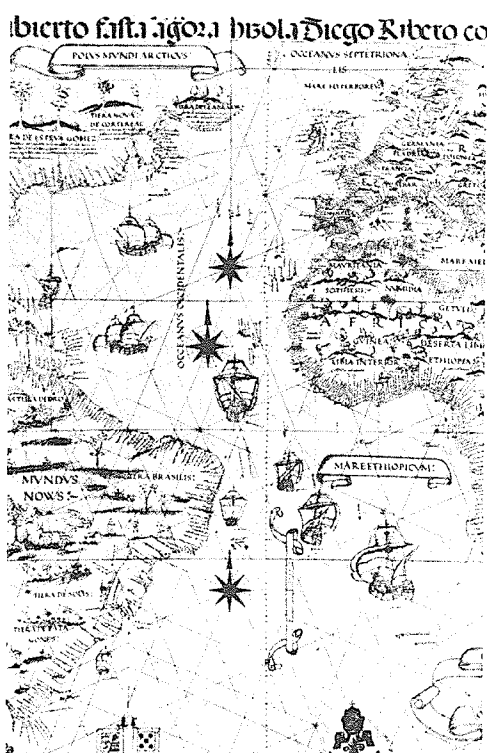
Sugar, Slaves, Gold

Portugal prospered. By 1457, the Lisbon mint was able to issue a gold coin, the *crusado*, for the first time in 74 years. Slaves—perhaps 150,000 were imported during the last half of the 15th century alone—were in demand in Portugal, Spain, and other European markets.

The Atlantic outposts of Madeira and the Azores, first colonized to supply the ships in the West African trade, produced sugar cane, another prized commodity. Plantations were started on the Cape Verde Islands and on other islands off Africa, using slave labor.

By that time, some 60 years after Prince Henry began launching his expeditions, Lisbon had replaced the Algarve as Portugal's maritime center. The port on the Tagus offered favorable winds and currents. Lisbon also had old trading ties with

PORTUGAL



A 1529 map. Under a 1494 treaty, Portugal's sphere of influence ran from Brazil east to Japan. Spain had the rest of the Western Hemisphere.

the Muslim world and a community of expatriate Genoese and other Italians skilled in the use of exchange and credit. They knew how to finance long-distance trade.

Italian merchants—Lomellini, Affaitati, Giraldi, and Marchione—were bankers to the Portuguese court and its envoys. They invested in sugar and the slave trade, and forged links with bankers from southern Germany: Through them, they traded Portuguese oil, wine, fruit, and salt, as well as African spices and gold, for German silver and copper.

As Dias was rounding the southern tip of Africa in 1488, and Cabral was discovering Brazil in 1500—and as the Spanish were still seeking a Western route to the Indies—a Portuguese Atlantic commercial system based on sugar, slaves, and gold was already thriving. The Portuguese provided the commodities; the foreign bankers saw to the capital and the markets.

Before long, Lisbon's interest turned to Asia. The landing at Calicut had launched what Indian historian K. M. Panikkar has called Asia's "Vasco da Gama epoch," a period of European intervention that would not ebb until after World War II. As in

Africa, the Portuguese did not initially seek to settle territory. They built a thalassocracy, a lucrative empire of sea routes and coastal trading cities. Europeans would pay well for the Indian and Indonesian pepper, nutmeg, and cloves, the Ceylonese cinnamon, and the Chinese silks and porcelain that the Portuguese could buy cheaply with German (and later American) silver.

By the 16th century, Portugal's thalassocracy had made it Europe's richest nation, and the kingdom enjoyed a period of commercial and cultural flowering. But that would soon change. King Manuel had ambitions of acquiring Aragon and Castile. To that end, he married Ferdinand and Isabella's daughter and matched their Christian zeal. Though in 1492 Portugal had accepted some 60,000 Jews who had been expelled from Spain, in 1496 Manuel turned around and (aping the Spaniards) compelled those Jews who would not leave the country to convert to Christianity. The so-called New Christians were treated harshly; in Lisbon alone, hundreds were slain in a 1506 pogrom.

Waiting for Sebastian

Manuel's Spanish ambitions faded, but Iberia's religious zealotry did not. Following the Protestant Reformation in northern Europe (which put the Anglo-Portuguese alliance in limbo), Lisbon took the Catholic Counter-Reformation to heart. As Spain had done nearly 60 years earlier, the Portuguese church in 1536 established a Holy Office of the Inquisition. With the king's brother as inquisitor-general, the Inquisition tightened book censorship and began an epoch of repression: Armed with royal statutes requiring "purity of blood" for holders of key posts, Inquisition officials hounded New Christians (many of them leading merchants) and anyone else who might be accused of "heretical" ideas. Besides a profusion of informers, the Inquisition fostered the *auto da fé* (act of faith)—the public burning of heretics at the stake. The first was held in Lisbon in 1541.*

Around the same time, the court also opened Portugal to the Society of Jesus, the self-appointed police of the Counter-Reformation. Both the Jesuits, who would dominate education and missionary activity, and the Inquisition would play large roles in shaping national life.

As the Inquisition proceeded, Portugal's overseas fortunes darkened. Within a century of the voyages of exploration, the Spanish, British, and Dutch were building their own empires,

*The Inquisition turned over people who would not renounce alleged heresies to the state for trial. Some 1,500 were garroted or burned in *autos da fé* before capital sentences were abolished in the 1760s; many more died in prison.

THE RIGHT STUFF, 15th-CENTURY STYLE

To 15th-century mariners, the distant seas held naught but terrors. When Prince Henry's captains first ventured south along the African coast around 1420, it was still widely believed that they might fall off the Earth's edge—or be poached in sun-boiled seas or seized by monsters. An Italian named Pietro D'Abano had written that mag-



Prince Henry

netic mountains in Africa pulled ships to shore. "Men laugh while being attracted," he claimed, "and at last are held fast."

The real hazards were bad enough: storms, shipwrecks, scurvy, and hostile natives. In 1446, Nuno Tristão, sailing a caravel 1,800 miles from Lagos, the base in southern Portugal for the early exploratory voyages, came upon the Gambia River. While exploring it in rowboats, Tristão and 21 others were killed by canoe-borne Africans armed with poisoned arrows. Five crewmen (three of them boys) escaped. When they brought the 50-ton caravel into Lagos two months later and reported to

Henry, he was moved to give pensions to the lost men's dependents—a rare gesture in those days.

The tall half-English prince never sailed with the captains he commissioned, but not for lack of grit. An ascetic who often fasted for months, Prince Henry long financed the voyages with income from his estates and royal monopolies of soap and fish sales, and by borrowing from the Order of Christ, an organization of soldier-missionaries of which he was governor. For the school of navigation he set up west of Lagos in Sagres, he recruited geographers, mapmakers, and other experts, among them Jews who had traveled in the Muslim world and knew where the Moors' African gold and spices came from.

Borrowing from the Arabs, his designers produced the caravel, a ship with lateen sails that could be steered close to the wind. The caravels could return home against the northwesterly Atlantic winds faster than Europe's standard square-sailed craft.

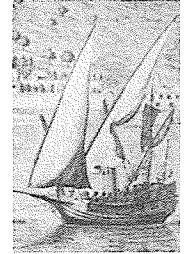
and Europe was flooded with the imported commodities on which Lisbon had prospered. The empire's golden era had already passed by 1580, when Portugal lost its independence to Spain—the result of a disastrous failure of leadership.

King Sebastian, an impetuous 22-year-old who admired his ancestors' overseas exploits and fancied himself "a captain of Christ," led an army of 23,000 to Morocco—and defeat. Sebastian was slain, but rumors that he was held captive somewhere refused to die. Ordinary folk cherished a persistent belief that he would return to fulfill a grand destiny for Portugal.

Various evidence, including Marco Polo's account of his 13th-century land journey to China, persuaded the prince that voyages down the African coast would both open the wealth of that land to Portugal and yield a sea route to the East. Besides riches, he hoped to find the kingdom of Prester John, a Christian monarch who, as a persistent European legend had it, ruled great stretches of Africa or, perhaps, Asia. With these aims in mind, Henry dispatched ship after ship to the south—30 of them in one three-year period. Each of his captains had the same order: to go farther than all predecessors and bring back a native for interrogation.

The captains returned with wondrous tales. The Venetian Alvise Cadamosto, who ventured as far as "the Kingdom of Gambia," told of "horse-fish" (hippopotamuses), of girls who bound their breasts "to make them grow so long they sometimes reached their navels," and of a monarch who kept at least 30 wives deployed in villages he planned to visit. The Africans, it was found, thought that the Portuguese used the eyes painted on their ships' bows to find their way. Voyage reports were kept secret to prevent the Spanish and others from learning what the Portuguese were finding.

Progress was slow. Not until about 1442 did the caravels start bringing back the slaves and gold (most of it from mines near the Upper Senegal, Upper Niger, and Volta rivers) that made the ventures profitable. After that, Henry and the Crown began licensing merchants and court nobles to finance voyages, some of which returned profits of up to 700 percent. At the Crown's request, the Vatican issued papal bulls (decrees) that authorized the Portuguese to convert pagans and generally served to charter an empire all the way "to the Indies."



A caravel

Prince Henry got a share (one-fifth or so) of the profits. But when he died in 1460, at age 66, he was deeply in debt. By that time, the islands of Madeira, Cape Verde, and the Azores had been colonized, but the Portuguese had advanced down the African coast only as far as Sierra Leone, roughly 2,200 miles from home. The greatest achievements, and great rewards, still lay ahead.

The reality was different. Sebastian left no heir, and his throne went to an uncle who was also childless. Seizing the opportunity, Spain's Habsburg king, Philip II, claimed Portugal by right of his Portuguese mother (Sebastian's aunt) and sent troops to occupy Lisbon. For six decades, Portugal languished under Spanish domination.

Not until 1640 did a successful rebellion, profiting from Spain's preoccupation with a war against France and a revolt in Catalonia, install a new Portuguese dynasty, the House of Bragança. By then, the empire was frayed. The Dutch had seized

Ceylon, Luanda (Portugal's chief West African slaving port), and part of Brazil, now a big sugar producer. Needing help against further Spanish incursions, the Portuguese sought new alliances and again found the British willing—for a price.

Under a 1661 treaty, England's King Charles II received a bride, the Portuguese princess Catherine of Bragança, and a dowry of two million crusadoes. Charles also got control of Tangier and of Bombay, Britain's first foothold in India.

Mad Dogs and Englishmen

Portugal's fortunes were increasingly tied to Brazil, and for a time this meant economic revival. The Dutch threat faded, and during the 1680s the first great gold rush of modern times began after a strike in the Brazilian interior.

During the 18th century, Portugal prospered, mainly on Brazilian sugar, tobacco, cacao, hides, cotton, and gold, as well as on silver smuggled from Spain's American colonies. Port became a valuable export as "the Englishman's wine" when Britain banned French claret in 1678. Not needing to raise taxes, the Bragança kings had no need to consult the Cortes (Parliament). Its 1698 meeting was to be its last for 122 years.

But prosperity brought change. Foreigners—Germans, Italians, and, above all, the English—came to deal in wine or Brazilian sugar and tobacco. Welcomed as sources of capital and marketing skills, they gained an extraterritorial legal status that gave them their own courts and commercial organizations. In Oporto, the port wine capital, English "shippers" built an opulent "Factory House" where they dined lavishly while managing a virtual monopoly on wine exports.

After returning to London in 1752 from a visit, the former British ambassador Lord Tyrawly reported that "a great body of His Majesty's subjects reside in Lisbon, rich, opulent, and everyday increasing their fortunes and enlarging their dealings." Another British traveler, William Costigan, noted in 1787 that "excepting the lowest conditions of life, you shall not meet anyone on foot some hours of the violent heat everyday but mad dogs and Englishmen."

At the same time, while northern Europe was caught up in that surge of interest in science, human freedom, and social progress known as the Enlightenment, Portugal's rulers insisted on church orthodoxy and absolute monarchy. The Inquisition was still pursuing heretics and censoring books. With 50,000 clerics on church rolls at a time when the population was less than three million, Portugal was, as Boxer put it,

“more priest-ridden than any other country in the world, with the possible exception of Tibet.”

As time went on, King John V, modeling himself on France’s “Sun King,” Louis XIV, emptied his country’s ample treasury on extravagances. Some 45,000 workers built a monastery-palace at Mafra; a Swiss who visited the site in 1726 marveled that “three-quarters of the king’s treasures and of the gold brought by the Brazil fleets were changed here into stones.” Voltaire said of King John in 1750: “When he wanted a festival, he ordered a religious parade. When he wanted a new building, he built a convent. When he wanted a mistress, he took a nun.”

Portugal’s isolation from the Enlightenment disturbed the nation’s intellectuals. Among them was the Marquês de Pombal (1699–1782), who became Portugal’s virtual dictator for 27 years, until the death in 1777 of his patron, Joseph I, John V’s successor. Pombal’s aims were furthered by a dramatic event: the 1755 Lisbon earthquake.

On November 1, All Saints’ Day, about one-third of the opulent city was destroyed. Voltaire described the quake in *Candide* (1758): “The sea was lashed into a froth, burst into the port, and smashed all the vessels lying at anchor there. Whirlwinds of fire and ash swirled through the streets and public squares; houses



Farmers, fishermen, and merchant seamen had roles to play in Portugal's golden age, but in this 16th-century woodcut only clerics stood close to the Crown. Says the deferential inscription: "To God in Heaven but to you in the world."

crumbled, roofs came crashing down on foundations." The Royal Opera House and Joseph's palace were wrecked. Of Lisbon's 40 parish churches, 35 collapsed. Only 3,000 of the 20,000 houses remained habitable. The death toll was at least 15,000.

Pombal acted swiftly. Amid Lisbon's ruins, engineers went to work on what stands today as a classic product of rational 18th-century urban planning. New buildings were constructed to a standard, economical design, hills were leveled, streets were laid out in a grid, and a large new riverfront square was built. Its name: Praça do Comercio (Place of Commerce).

Pain without Screaming

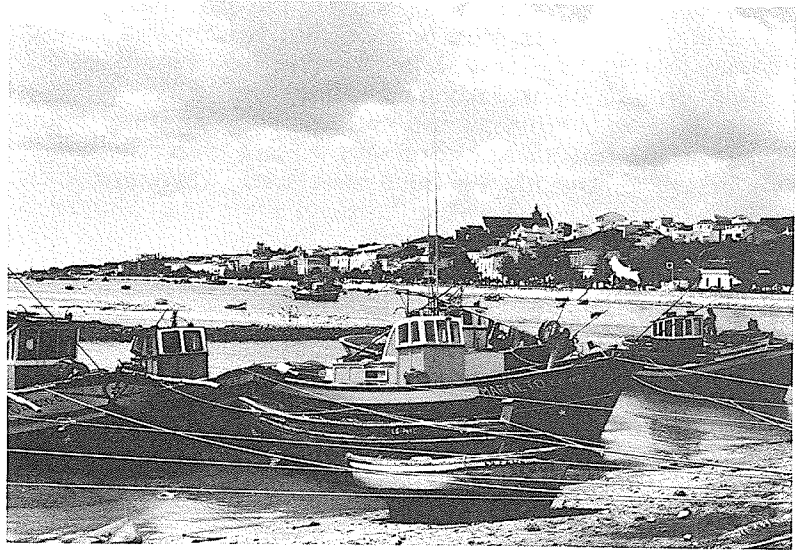
Portugal, Pombal had decided, would be an up-to-date state where both businessmen and aristocrats would have pride of place. He set up both a school of commerce and a college of nobles; there Portugal's future leaders were to be taught foreign languages, mathematics, and the sciences, free of the influence of the Jesuits, whom Pombal blamed for many of Portugal's ills. He closed the Jesuit college at Évora, purged the prestigious University of Coimbra of Jesuit influence, and turned over the Inquisition's censorship powers (as well as control of lower education) to a royal board.

Besides curbing church power (the entire Jesuit order was banished in 1759), Pombal also faced Portugal's old dilemma: how to limit foreign economic influence while retaining foreign (especially British) political and military support. To strengthen Portuguese business, he moved to bring "all the commerce of this kingdom" into monopoly firms and did so first in areas where the British traders were powerful: Brazil and the port wine region. The aim, as Pombal's representative in the port district said, "was to hurt them in such a way that they cannot scream."

All opposition was crushed. After 5,000 people in Oporto rioted over high wine prices, which they blamed on Pombal's company, 478 were tried for treason and 13 were hanged.

As was the case with the Enlightenment everywhere, Pombal's efforts had mixed results. He advanced industry and education, and ended antisemitism and slavery in Portugal (though slaves were still shipped to Brazil). Yet he was ruthless even by 18th-century standards. Police and spies were everywhere, and jails were full of people held without charge.

A contemporary, Canon António Ribeiro dos Santos, noted that Pombal "wanted to civilize the nation and at the same time to enslave it; he wanted to spread the light of the philosophical



Lagos was the starting point for the early exploratory voyages of the 15th century. Today, the port is known for herring fishing and tourism.

sciences and at the same time to elevate the royal power to despotism." The competing goals—modernity and firm rule—would surface repeatedly in Portugal over the years as its income from the overseas colonies slowly declined.

Authority, and much else, was shattered by the Napoleonic Wars. The 1807 invasion of Portugal by the French Army began a century of turmoil that would further erode the empire.

British troops, led by the future Duke of Wellington, finally expelled the French in 1814, but by then Portugal was ravaged: Factories and vineyards were destroyed; art treasures were ruined. The Portuguese court, which had fled to Brazil, showed no desire to come home. Instead, Brazil was raised to the status of a kingdom, co-equal with Portugal.

The trans-Atlantic arrangement was short-lived. In Portugal, a rebellion erupted that led to the convening of the first Cortes since 1698. King John VI had to return to Lisbon in 1821 and accept a liberal constitution providing for representative government and an end to the Inquisition. As Brazil declared its independence, its motherland fell into a series of struggles among constitutionalists, "absolutists," and other monarchists.

Eventually, the diminished Portuguese Crown was further weakened by another foreign humiliation—this one from its ancient ally Britain. The Portuguese mounted a claim, with Bel-

gian and German support, to a stretch of the African hinterland separating Angola and Mozambique. But Britain had its own plans for the territory (now Malawi) and in 1890 demanded that Portugal drop its plans. Lisbon complied.

By the 20th century, agitation from emerging trade unions and political paralysis in Lisbon set the stage for a rebellion by civilian republicans, most of them merchants. When it occurred in 1910, almost without a shot, Portugal's last king, Manuel II, sailed off on the royal yacht to exile in England.

Enter Salazar

The republican regime never enjoyed a popular consensus. Its legalization of the separation of church and state pleased urban Portuguese but angered rural northerners. Political feuding and government deficits mounted, and by 1926 Portugal's military leaders decided that the republican experiment should be replaced by a dictatorship. To run it, they turned in 1928 to an obscure economics professor named António de Oliveira Salazar.

An austere 39-year-old bachelor from central Portugal, Salazar took complete control, ruling first as finance minister, later as president of the Council of Ministers. The New State constitution that he drew up in 1932 created a "corporate" regime on the pattern of what Benito Mussolini had just established in Italy. But despite its fascist trappings—a Mussolini-inspired labor law that banned strikes, Gestapo-inspired secret police—the New State was essentially a Catholic authoritarian regime. A century and a half after the reign of Portugal's last strong man, Pombal, Salazar maintained stability not by Nazi-style repression but by deftly balancing competing interests—small farmers and merchants, large landowners and big (often family-controlled) businesses.

Salazar never traveled outside Portugal (save for meetings with General Franco in Spain) and eschewed ceremony. The only time he was ever seen in a tuxedo was at a 1957 dinner he gave for Queen Elizabeth II. His strength lay in a talent for political manipulation—combined with peasant stubbornness. Despite strong pressures from both Britain and the Axis powers, mindful of his country's fruitless sufferings as a belligerent in previous wars, he kept Portugal neutral in World War II.*

*Salazar sympathized with Hitler and Mussolini, and for a time Portugal supplied both Germany and the Allies with the critical metal tungsten. But in 1943, after the tide had clearly turned against the Axis, he allowed the Treaty of Windsor to be invoked to allow the British (and their U.S. allies) to use bases in the Azores. His reward was postwar membership in NATO and a Western guarantee that the integrity of Portugal's colonial territories in Africa and Asia would be respected.

He seemed to savor a romantic image of Portugal and its empire, a vision of a world lost in time, certain of verities long dismissed elsewhere, that appealed not just to tourists. Salazar, the U.S. diplomat George Ball noted after a 1963 Lisbon visit, appeared to live "in more than one century, as though Prince Henry the Navigator, Vasco da Gama, and Ferdinand Magellan were still active agents in the shaping of Portuguese policy."

Portugal had a lazily beautiful rural landscape of a kind visible nowhere else in Europe outside the Balkans. Tradition was strong. Local bigwigs ruled their bailiwicks as if the 19th century had never ended. But the social cost of backwardness was high. Portugal's rates of infectious disease, infant mortality, and illiteracy matched Turkey's. Lisbon sparkled; the working-class towns on the other side of the Tagus did not. In Barreiro, families on aptly named Sulphuric Acid Street often had to move across town to escape fumes from the nearby chemical works.

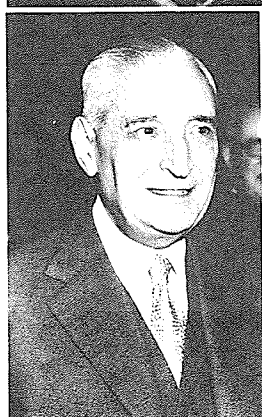
A Pox on Oil

Unlike Pombal, who had used the power of the state to ruthlessly force through a crash program of modernization, the New State froze Portugal's economic and social patterns. "We are antiparlamentarians, antidemocrats, antiliberals," Salazar said in 1936. "We are opposed to all forms of internationalism, communism, socialism, syndicalism." To govern, he said without apology, "is to protect the people from themselves."

Debt, which brought obligations, was to be avoided. Portugal accepted only \$64 million in U.S. Marshall Plan aid between 1949 and 1957, just six percent of Greece's total and 12 percent of Spain's. While other Western leaders were using deficits to spur growth, Salazar made a fetish of balanced budgets. To him, *no* news promising economic (and therefore social) change was good news. "Oil in Angola?" he said when told of a strike in his richest African colony. "That's all we need!"

He promoted the family as the source of "social harmony." Parental authority was emphasized: For years only heads of families were allowed the "civic responsibility" of voting for the rubber-stamp National Assembly (only one party, the National Union, was allowed). The New State had other enforcers of harmony, notably the International Police for the Defense of the State (PIDE); the dreaded PIDE maintained a network of informants and suffered no constraints on its power to harass and even torture suspected dissidents.

Yet Salazar enjoyed sizable support. The church and the small landholders of the heavily Catholic north backed him. So



António de Oliveira Salazar (1889–1970) exalted the traditional rural life exemplified by these northern peasants. "Men change little," he said, "and the Portuguese hardly at all."

did the *latifundiários*, owners of big farming estates in the central and southern regions who feared a loss of their holdings if the Left took power. (The outlawed Portuguese Communist Party, formed in 1921, was especially strong in the south.) Other backing came from Portugal's interlocking financial and industrial conglomerates. The Melo family's Companhia União Fabril (CUF) dominated commerce in Guinea and controlled 70 percent of Portugal's tobacco market. The Champalimaud group had a near monopoly of cement production.

But Salazar could not freeze the world. In 1961, India seized Goa from a 3,500-man Portuguese garrison that had been ordered to "conquer or die." In Africa, as the French and British were freeing *their* colonies, black nationalist guerrillas rose up against the Portuguese in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea. Salazar refused to negotiate. By 1968, the Portuguese had 130,000 troops deployed in Africa. In that year, however, the dictator, then 79, suffered an odd mishap; his chair collapsed and he fell, suffering a stroke from which he never recovered.

His successor, named by the figurehead president, Rear

Adm. Américo Deus Thomáz, was law professor Marcello Caetano, a former New State official and Salazar protégé. Caetano hoped to shore up the war-strained economy and preserve the New State by promoting capitalism and foreign investment. Yet, the growing economic crisis that would cripple his regime began where it was least expected: in agriculture.

Troubles

Beginning in the late 1950s, Portuguese farm boys had left home by the thousands for jobs in Western Europe. Conscription for the African wars only increased the exodus. By 1975, some 1.5 million Portuguese—one-third of the labor force—were living abroad. About 700,000 resided in France, where, during the 1970s, the minimum wage was higher than what even skilled workers in Portugal could earn.

Due to emigration, much of the north appeared in the early 1970s as if it had been visited by the plague: Whole villages were dying, roads were deserted, fields abandoned. In a nation where crop yields are poor at best—half the European average in wheat, for example—farm output plunged. The cost of rising food imports added a new drain on Portugal's finances. When skilled hands joined the exodus—they made up one-third of the 120,000 who departed in 1973—industry suffered. Portugal had to import labor from the Cape Verde Islands, giving Lisbon its first large black minority since the 18th century.

The 1960s had brought much foreign investment. The United States, West Germany, and the World Bank financed the development of electric power and other projects. By the mid-1970s, such companies as International Telephone and Telegraph, Timex, and Britain's Plessey employed some 70,000 workers, mostly in assembling products to be sold elsewhere. Another 70,000 made garments; 15 of that industry's 25 major firms were Swedish owned.

But by the early 1970s, this growth began to seem precarious. The ban on independent trade unions assured foreign employers of high profits by assuring low pay—and Portugal's wages were one-seventh of Sweden's, one-fifth of Britain's. If pay rose, the jobs might go. If wages did not rise and labor unrest broke out, the foreign firms might leave anyway.

Meanwhile, Portugal's own big firms went international—and became less dependent on the fate of the colonies. The CUF became Iberia's largest business, a complex of more than 100 companies representing one-tenth of Portugal's industrial output. Besides having projects in Brazil, America, and Europe,

it brought Dutch and Swedish partners into the big Lisnave shipyard on the Tagus estuary. Such "well-managed" enterprises got generous government aid.

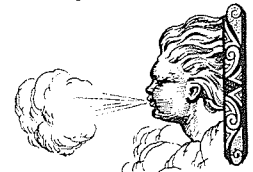
With "internationalization" came the erosion of the early New State alliances. The small businessmen who thrived under Salazar felt threatened by Caetano, whose ministers found them "uneconomic." Mergers were encouraged. As the distribution of goods became constricted, hoarding appeared. Even codfish caught by the Portuguese on the Grand Banks off Newfoundland became scarce. Government planners also began to wrangle with both peasant farmers and the big landowners, most of whom failed to use their subsidies to modernize their operations. Meanwhile, the industrialists grew increasingly unhappy with the wars, and not just because of the labor strains and tax burdens they caused and the foreign capital they scared off. By poisoning Lisbon's foreign relations, the struggle in Africa clouded the nation's chances of joining the European Economic Community.

By 1973, nearly half of Portugal's trade was with the Common Market. The industrialists knew that Portugal's isolation was now more a state of mind—a hangover from Salazar's day—than a reality. To the very business interests that it had fostered, the New State had become a hindrance.

And the rulers of the New State had become captives of the overseas empire they sought to save. "Refusing any kind of a bargain, we do not sell or lease our colonies," Salazar said, and his successors dared not disagree.

In *Portugal: Fifty Years of Dictatorship* (1975), António de Figueiredo traced this intransigence to a "metaphysics" of empire supported by a popular thirst for national prestige dating back to the era of Henry the Navigator. Surely, it also reflected the back-against-the-wall psychology of a small power faced with outside pressure. Salazar had the old Portuguese talent for international maneuvering, as his deft management of Lisbon's World War II neutrality showed. He kept Portugal in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and he silenced critics among the Western allies by threatening to evict NATO forces from the Azores. But in the end, he had harnessed that talent to fantasies of imperial grandeur, and his successors could not sustain them.

In the spring of 1974, the fantasies were finally ended.



DISCOVERING DEMOCRACY

by Thomas C. Bruneau

Shortly after midnight on April 25, 1974, Lisbon's Radio Renascença played "Grandola vila morena," an old ballad that was an anthem of the Portuguese Left. For a few listeners, most of them middle-ranking Army officers waiting in barracks up and down the country, the spirited lyrics had special meaning. The end of 48 years of dictatorship was at hand.

The ballad was the signal for rebel units to take up positions in six cities. As people were going to work in Lisbon that Thursday morning, Army vehicles were rolling to the waterfront Praça do Comércio and other key points in the capital. Radio announcements by a group called the Armed Forces Movement (MFA) explained that a coup was under way "to put an end to the regime which had oppressed the country for so long."

The collapse of the late António de Oliveira Salazar's New State was swift. Almost no one would fight for the dictatorship. When a squadron of "loyalist" tanks entered Lisbon, its men declined to fire on the rebels: A young sublieutenant who clearly approved of the coup happily said to an MFA officer, "I am here to attack you, but all I want to do is laugh." Students took to the streets chanting "Down with fascism," and the censorship office on the Rua da Misericórdia was ransacked. When a joyous mob of 15,000 gathered at Caxias prison, near the capital, guards freed all 200-odd political prisoners.

Prime Minister Marcello Caetano surrendered to the MFA's representative, Gen. António de Spínola, a popular veteran of the long antiguerrilla campaigns in Africa. "You must maintain control," Salazar's successor told the general. "I am frightened by the idea of power loose in the streets."

Today, nearly 11 years after the beginning of the transformation of one of the world's oldest nations into Europe's newest democracy, the "Revolution of the Flowers" has noticeably wilted. Demonstrations for one group or another—about 50 political parties sprang to life within two months of the coup—are now infrequent, and the red carnations hawked by vendors are no longer worn as symbols of freedom. Like Lisbon's political graffiti, the excitement of liberation has faded.

According to a 1984 poll, while nearly all Portuguese believed that the revolution brought something new to their poverty-ridden nation, only 44 percent thought that their own

lives had changed. A good many reckoned that the change had been for the worse. Asked which government had run the country the best, more people (35 percent) chose the Salazar or the Caetano regimes than any of the 15 governments—six “provisional,” nine constitutional—that had appeared since 1974.

Though labor unrest, rumblings in the military, and other fissures in the war-strained New State had been visible for months, the April 1974 coup came as a surprise. Portuguese citizens, few of whom knew what the MFA was, rushed to stock up on food and gasoline. A different sort of shock reverberated among Portugal’s North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) partners, particularly the United States. The troubled Nixon administration, worried—amid its agonies over the Watergate scandal—about Communist violations of the fragile truce in Vietnam and concerned about Soviet expansion elsewhere, reacted quickly: It barred Portugal’s military men from access to NATO’s confidential nuclear strategy briefings.

Whatever the reaction abroad, Lisbon’s new rulers inherited a society that had gradually been falling apart. Viewed in retrospect, some sort of revolution seemed almost inevitable.

Grinding on for 13 years, the wars in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea had become extremely costly to Portugal. By 1971, 11.2 percent of all Portuguese men of military age were in uniform. Of the Army’s 179,000 troops, 142,000 were deployed in Africa, fighting a jungle war of attrition against Soviet Bloc–armed black guerrillas with tactics (including a “hearts and minds” campaign) much like those used by American forces in Vietnam.

Though casualties went unreported, they were worse, relative to population size, than U.S. losses in Vietnam. In *Portugal: Fifty Years of Dictatorship* (1975), António de Figueiredo cited an estimate of more than 6,000 dead and 12,000 wounded by 1970 alone.

One of the other casualties was Portugal’s economy. By the time of the coup, the country’s inflation rate had reached 30 percent (the highest in Western Europe), its trade deficit was the worst ever, and unemployment was rising—despite a steady exodus of emigrants seeking work or avoiding conscription.

With nearly half of government spending going to the mili-

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After initial hesitation, civilians cheered the April 25, 1974, Army coup that ended Portugal's New State. Soon, red carnations were worn everywhere, giving post-coup turbulence a name: The Revolution of the Flowers.

tary, Portugal's rate of "fixed" investment—the kind that creates jobs and exports—was the lowest in Western Europe. To compensate, Lisbon had in the mid-1960s begun to lure foreign manufacturers to its low-wage economy. While this strategy brought growth for a while, by the mid-1970s it had soured.

Portugal, which imports 80 percent of its energy and more than half of its food, was hit especially hard by the global bout of recession and inflation that followed the 1973 Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) oil embargo. As Portugal's export markets went soft, the cost of everything from codfish to bullfight tickets raced ahead of wages. Though both unions and strikes were illegal in the New State, Communist-led workers staged some 40 major walkouts in 1973. Plants owned by International Telephone and Telegraph, Grundig, British Leyland, and other firms closed down; Britain's Plessey had to double its minimum wage, to \$200 per month. There was violence: Riot police broke up a rally of employees of the national airline TAP at Lisbon airport, and several were injured by gunfire.

In the spring of 1974, by one estimate, 400,000 workers in Lisbon and the nearby Setúbal industrial area went on strike, some for as long as three weeks. On the day of the coup, Prime

Minister Caetano planned to hold a Cabinet meeting to discuss an expected May strike by the New State's own civil service.

While all this was going on, unrest was spreading in the military. Formed in mid-1973, and first known as the Captains' Movement, the MFA was originally a group of some 200 middle-level officers with a professional complaint. Short on junior officers, the Caetano regime proposed awarding officer rank to draftees who had served abroad and re-enlisted after a one-year course at the national Military Academy. These *mali-cianos* would have the same status as career men with four years of education at the academy. Some of them might advance faster than the regulars, since their conscript time would count toward promotion.

The government soon dropped that proposal, but the MFA went on to other matters. Its battle-weary leaders—many of whom had served with General Spínola in Guinea—concluded that, although the African wars could not be won, the regime would fight on, and more Portuguese would die in a lost cause. Caetano himself had once said that “without Africa we would be a small nation; with Africa we are a big power.”

No Lebanon, No Chile

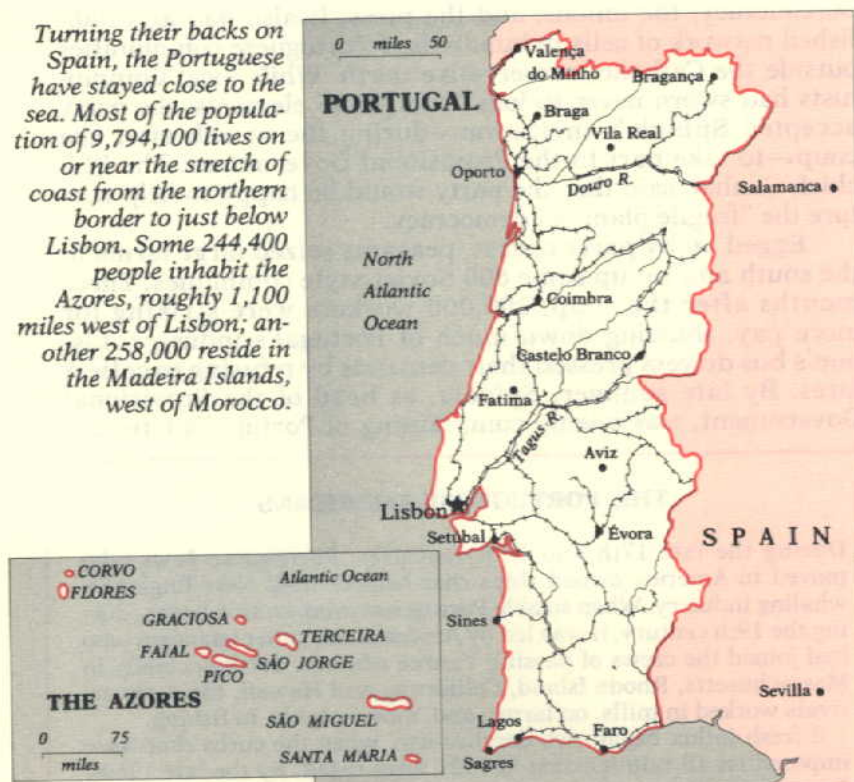
In March 1974, Caetano fired both Gen. Francisco de Costa Gomes, the armed forces' chief of staff, and Spínola, the deputy chief. Spínola had recently published *Portugal and the Future*, a call for peace and the creation of a colonial federation. He compared Portugal's struggles against the African guerrillas with the trouble a man trying to doze in a haystack might have with a flea: “The flea has carried out his mission, which was by feeding off you to keep you from sleeping. But you cannot carry out yours, which was to find the flea. Imagine this happening for a whole week; you would die of exhaustion.”

Caetano went before the National Assembly to defend his war policy and extracted a loyalty oath from more than 100 senior officers. MFA leaders saw no alternative to a coup.

Portugal's politicians suspected nothing. Indeed, when the young officers struck, several notables were traveling abroad: Socialist Party leader Mário Soares was in Bonn; Álvaro Cunhal, the exiled Communist Party chief, was in Prague. The coup quickly became a revolution, largely because the New State simply unraveled. Its bureaucrats and security forces simply quit working. So did much of the country.

Yet, the notably civil Portuguese gave the lie to Salazar's old maxim that “to govern is to protect the people from them-

Turning their backs on Spain, the Portuguese have stayed close to the sea. Most of the population of 9,794,100 lives on or near the stretch of coast from the northern border to just below Lisbon. Some 244,400 people inhabit the Azores, roughly 1,100 miles west of Lisbon; another 258,000 reside in the Madeira Islands, west of Morocco.



selves." Despite all the tumult of the first year of the revolution, fewer than a dozen citizens died in political violence. Portugal was not Lebanon, Chile, or Cuba.

But a revolution it was. With the end of government censorship, publishing exploded. *Avante*, a previously clandestine Communist Party weekly, suddenly appeared on newsstands, along with three dailies that had been taken over by the party. (Indeed, during the first two post-coup years most of the Portuguese press was Communist.) Students held "general assemblies" in the schools and purged libraries of works on the old regime. Contraceptives went on sale, and once-banned plays and movies appeared: Staid middle-aged couples trooped to movie theaters to see why *Emmanuelle* and *Last Tango in Paris* had caused a stir elsewhere in Europe.

Of all the parties that emerged, the only one with any history and organization was the 53-year-old Partido Comunista Português (PCP). It had money (from Moscow), and allies in the

bureaucracy, the unions, and the press. It also had an established network of cells in hundreds of Portuguese communities outside the Catholic, conservative north. While local Communists had sworn never to join "bourgeois" elements, the party accepted Spínola's invitation—during the month after the coup—to take part in the Provisional Government. The PCP chief, Cunhal, said that the party would be happy to help nurture the "fragile plant" of democracy.

Egged on by party cadres, peasants seized large farms in the south and set up some 600 Soviet-style communes. Three months after the coup, 200,000 workers were striking for more pay, shutting down much of Portugal's industry. Lisbon's bus drivers pressed their demands by refusing to collect fares. By late summer, Spínola, as head of the Provisional Government, was openly complaining of Portugal's leftward

THE PORTUGUESE-AMERICANS

During the late 17th and 18th centuries, Portuguese Jews who moved to America owned ships that helped build New England's whaling industry. When sizable Portuguese immigration began, during the 19th century, it was led by Azoreans and other islanders who had joined the crews of passing Yankee whalers. Settling chiefly in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, California, and Hawaii, the early arrivals worked in mills, on farms, and, most notably, in fishing.

A fresh influx began two decades ago, when the curbs that were imposed on all immigration in 1921 were eased. By the late 1960s, Portuguese immigration trailed only that from Britain, Italy, and Taiwan. Better educated than their predecessors, nearly 85 percent of the "new" immigrants have come from mainland Portugal. Today, one million U.S. residents claim Portuguese ancestry. California has the most (31 percent of the total), but the recent arrivals have chiefly headed for Rhode Island (where 9.5 percent of the population has Portuguese roots), Massachusetts, New Jersey, and New York.

The Portuguese remain clannish, especially in New England, but time and marriages to outsiders are bringing "Americanization." As of 1910-12, there were some 15 Portuguese-language newspapers in New England, California, and Hawaii; now there are about 10 small weeklies and one daily (in Providence, Rhode Island). On the other hand, the list of Portuguese-descended notables has grown beyond composer John Philip Sousa and writer John Roderigo Dos Passos (see p. 154). Azores-born Humberto Cardinal Medeiros was the Catholic archbishop of Boston for 13 years, before he died in 1983. And the chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee is Peter ("Tony") Coelho, 42, a three-term U.S. Representative from California—and the grandson of fishermen who came to America during the early 1900s.

drift: "The country," he said, "is sick."

The two years following the revolution brought not only six provisional governments but also two major attempted counter-coups—one from the right, one from the left. Spínola, acting as head of state but representing the center and right of the political spectrum, envisioned a democratic Portugal that would have ties with Western Europe and would shed its colonies gradually. But Vasco Gonçalves, Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho, and other leftist officers who had gradually taken over the MFA—and made it a kind of parallel regime—began talking of authoritarian rule and instant freedom for the colonies.

The leftist captains found in the PCP both a sympathetic ideology and an organization that no other party could match. The Communists emerged from the revolution with 4,000 members, a roster that they increased to 100,000 within a year. They also had control of the largest of the newly legalized union federations and impressive financing. The Soviets funneled an estimated \$10 million a month to the party through the Moscow Narodny Bank in London.

A Rebuff to the Left

Spínola, lamenting the "general state of anarchy," was forced into exile in Brazil by the MFA radicals in March 1975. The colonies were turned loose,* and the radicals began talking of ruling indefinitely. MFA officers hinted that, if "the people" wished, the Army might upset plans for a national assembly to frame a new constitution.

Nonetheless, elections for a constituent assembly were held on schedule on April 25, 1975. Fully 92 percent of the six million eligible voters (everyone over 18) turned out for the first real election in Portugal in 49 years—and they rejected the Left.

A stunning 72 percent of the vote went to the prodemocracy parties: Soares's center-left Socialists (who led with 38 percent) and two parties on the right. The PCP got just 12 percent, and the total leftist vote was only 20 percent.

Earlier, following the captains' march to the left, several Western governments had tried to influence events in Portugal.

*Within a year of the coup, independence was handed to Guinea (now Guinea-Bissau), Mozambique, and the islands off Africa—the Cape Verde Islands, and São Tomé and Príncipe. Timor (later seized by Indonesia) simply declared its independence. China declined to take over Macao, the Portuguese enclave near Hong Kong, and it remains in Lisbon's hands. Washington had hoped that mineral-rich Angola would be turned over to one of the three principal rebel groups, Holden Roberto's pro-Western National Front for the Liberation of Angola, but Spínola was exiled before he could accomplish that. Lisbon simply withdrew from Angola in November 1975, and by early the next year the resulting civil war was won—with Soviet and Cuban help—by Augustinho Neto's Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola. Today, all that is left of the Portuguese empire, besides Macao, are the island provinces of Madeira and the Azores.

PORTUGAL



In this 1976 cartoon, Socialist Prime Minister Mário Soares and Portugal's bespectacled president, Gen. António Ramalho Eanes (right), rebuff would-be coalition partners, among them Communist Álvaro Cunhal (far left).

The Nixon administration was particularly aroused. Portugal's strategic importance was clear. It anchored the Atlantic end of NATO's southern flank, which already had its share of unstable governments (Turkey, Greece). And during the 1973 Mideast War, when other European nations refused to let U.S. transports flying supplies to Israel refuel at their airfields, the big C-141s and C-5As used the American base in the Azores, where Soviet submarine movements were also monitored.

Yet Washington felt unable to intervene in Lisbon, particularly in view of the congressional restraints that had been placed on the CIA after the 1973 overthrow of Salvador Allende's Marxist regime in Chile. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger had a gloomy October 1974 meeting in the U.S. capital with Soares, then foreign minister. Kissinger told the Socialist chief that, in allowing PCP participation in the government, he may have become Portugal's Kerensky—a dupe who would be swept away (along with democracy) when the Communists took total power.

There was even a suggestion that Portugal's expulsion from NATO might be necessary—an idea that prompted Senator George McGovern to comment that Kissinger had concocted a "vaccination theory" by which the "loss" of Portugal "would at least have had the benign effect of frightening the rest of West-

ern Europe back to strong, anti-Communist unity.”

But, in the end, Portugal was not lost to the West. Simply put, the PCP did not have the votes to win power. The noncommunist parties had worked hard to establish democracy—with foreign help. Governments in West Germany, Norway, and other NATO countries, as well as West European Socialist parties and labor unions, countered the Eastern Bloc’s aid to the PCP. The Common Market advanced \$180 million in loans, on condition that Portugal establish a multiparty democracy.

Finally, the Ford administration (President Nixon had resigned in August 1974) perceived that a Communist takeover was not inevitable and joined the European efforts. Along with the NATO allies, Washington made it clear to Moscow that any Soviet attempt to pry Portugal out of the alliance would not be tolerated; by early 1976, the Red menace had faded.

Today, Portugal has enough problems of its own. The lengthy, 312-item constitution adopted in mid-1976 divides power between a president, who is elected every five years, and an Assembly of the Republic. In the 1976 presidential elections, Gen. António Ramalho Eanes, who had repelled a threat from the left in 1975, was elected with 61.5 percent of the popular vote. He won re-election in 1980 with 56.4 percent; he has provided an important stabilizing force in Lisbon.

The assembly is supposed to be chosen every four years, but if it cannot form a government—a too-frequent occurrence—the president can call early elections.

The Portuguese have gone to the polls four times to elect assemblies. All that this effort has brought them is a succession of nine different coalition governments.* Yet so far, Portugal is doing somewhat better, in terms of governmental stability, than it did in its previous attempt at democracy. Between 1910 and the military coup of 1926 (from the right, that time), Lisbon’s politicians produced 45 governments in 16 years.

All in all, polls show that the Portuguese value their new freedoms. They may even become inured to Lisbon’s fractious politics. In *Portugal: Birth of a Democracy* (1978), British journalist Robert Harvey suggested that “it is possible that instability is becoming institutionalized, Italian-style.” Though Rome has had 44 governments since 1945, the Italians survive; the mail gets delivered and the civil servants get paid.

*The current coalition, in power since 1983, joins Prime Minister Soares’s Socialists, still the top vote getters, and the center-right Social Democratic Party (PSD), generally second at the polls. No government since 1976 has included the rigidly pro-Moscow PCP. It now pulls about 18 percent of the vote, more than the Spanish Communists (close to four percent) but far less than the Italian Communist Party (30 percent), whose leaders have espoused a “Eurocommunism” that is supposedly independent of the Kremlin.

**PORTUGAL'S WINE-MAKERS:
COPING WITH COMPETITION**

António de Oliveira Salazar, prime minister from 1932 to 1968, once called himself Portugal's "housewife." Yet, while he kept things tidy, he never gave his old industries a good scrubbing. Indeed, the New State exalted traditional ways. But now that Portugal's economy depends heavily on exports, the old ways can be a liability.

Take the wine industry—particularly port, which has been Portugal's leading export since the 17th century.

Port comes from a region of 62,000 acres of terraced vineyards in northern Portugal's Douro River valley. The finished wine is "fortified" with brandy (to a level of 20 percent alcohol), bottled, and marketed by some 75 "shippers," most based in the city of Oporto. But the basic wine comes from the area's 25,000 farmers, most of whom have very small plots. Though they are often at odds with the shippers—and have lately been pressing for the right to blend and sell their own port—the farmers are deeply conservative and wary of change of any kind.

In 1975, for example, the military-dominated regime in Lisbon dispatched a young Army officer to head the farmers' association in the port region. When he sought to ingratiate himself by proposing to change the name of port wine to Douro wine—after the region's name—the farmers sent the officer back to the capital. Revolutions may be fine for Lisbon, they suggested, but not for the Douro wine-makers.

Portugal is the world's seventh biggest wine producer (the top six: Italy, France, the Soviet Union, Spain, Argentina, and the United States). Wine exports earned the country \$200 million in foreign exchange during 1983 (port's share: 60 percent). Directly or indirectly, wine employs 15 percent of the work force. Lisbon newspapers follow the September-October grape harvest as closely as the *Des Moines Register* tracks Iowa corn yields.

The average adult consumes 85 liters annually, a level exceeded only in Italy and France. (The U.S. average in 1983: nearly eight liters, or 2.1 gallons, up from about half that in 1970.) The Portuguese prefer their robust reds and whites. Port and the sweet, fizzy rosés launched in the 1960s under such labels as Mateus and Lancers are largely for export.

But the bloom is off the rosés: In their chief market, the United States, white wines are ascendant, and Mateus and its compatriots have been replaced as the top imports by inexpensive Italian brands. Port is under pressure too. Sales are off in its main markets, Britain and France, partly due to the competition of "port" from South Africa, Australia, and California.

Portugal's one rising star is *vinho verde*, or "green wine," best known as a slightly sparkling white. Its low alcohol content (about

eight percent, versus 13 percent for typical Portuguese table wines) suits current U.S. and European tastes.

The Portuguese launched green wine in Britain during the late 1970s with a rare astuteness. While the government trade office in London mounted a snappy ad campaign ("One swallow makes a summer"), the producers sweetened the wine to British tastes and let supermarkets sell the cheaper brands under their own labels. *Vinho verde* now has 25 percent of Portugal's British wine sales. There are hopes for similar success in America, where the wine sells under such names as Quinta da Aveleda and Casal Garcia.

Portugal needs more such winners, but officials fret about its ability to produce them. The industry needs "a complete overhaul," says Bento de Carvalho, vice-president of the National Wine Board. There is "no policy whatsoever for planting vines, replanting existing vines," and trying new ideas.

The government is moving cautiously to streamline the industry. About half of the 180,000 Portuguese who make wine (most turn out fewer than 150 cases a year) have been nudged into cooperatives—the better to meet the Common Market's exacting rules for everything from the size of bottles to the tonnage of grapes that can be grown on an acre of vineyard.

But only large organizations can experiment with new varieties that may turn into export triumphs. One example is the 150-year-old José Maria da Fonseca Company, which makes Lancers and is also known for high quality wines, such as the sturdy red Periquita. Under the leadership of António d'Avilas, director of J. M. da Fonseca International, and in partnership with America's Heublein, Fonseca has produced a subtle, flowery Muscatel, called João Pires, that can match any dry Muscat from Alsace and a fine Cabernet Sauvignon, named Quinta da Bacalhôa. Its grapes grow on vines that were imported from Bordeaux and grafted onto rootstocks brought from America; the winemaker is Australian. Though the Portuguese can find Quinta da Bacalhôa only in some Lisbon-area wine stores, in Britain it is sold (like green wine) in supermarkets.

Wine has long been a valuable Portuguese resource. During the 18th century, for example, the fortified wine that the Portuguese made on the island of Madeira became a favorite of the colonials in America (including George Washington) and enabled Lisbon, in return, to import grain from Virginia and the Carolinas. Yet today, Portugal does not even have a wine-making school. Its best young vintners study abroad—usually in France.

—By Alex Macleod

Alex Macleod, 44, is a professor of political science at the University of Quebec in Montreal.

Guidebooks for tourists note that a Portuguese characteristic is *saudade*, a melancholy yearning or nostalgia for past glory. Whatever the validity of that old cliché, visitors to the country since the revolution note a new exuberance. The old fear of authority has given way to a brisk self-confidence. Anthropologist Joyce Firstenberg Riegelhaupt tells an anecdote about a Lisbon lawyer meeting a foreign journalist in 1974:

"We have made a considerable anatomical discovery this April: The Portuguese have teeth," the lawyer proudly declared.

The journalist, confused, replied that surely it had been the mildest of revolutions. "No," the lawyer explained. "What I mean is that you can see us smile."

\$99 a Month

In many ways, Portugal during the mid-1980s seems like France and Italy during the early 1950s and Spain during the 1960s. Lisbon has its high-rise apartments, and glittery little bars such as the Procopio and the Snob are still filled past midnight with people talking politics, but the city is dominated by the kind of 18th-century façades—iron grillwork, balconies, and pastels—that were torn down long ago in Madrid. In Spain, new businesses, and a rising middle class, were blossoming in the 1960s. In today's Portugal, that phenomenon has barely begun.

Portugal's income per capita, \$2,092 in 1983, is barely half that of Spain and Greece. The country also trails Western Europe in literacy (70 percent in 1981), education, and infant mortality. Vacant housing is so scarce that squatters celebrated the revolution by moving into the homes of Portuguese emigrants.

Some 68 percent of the people are still dispersed in rural villages. Urbanization has advanced little since Salazar's day, when fewer than one-third of the Portuguese hailed from towns of more than 5,000, and most lived in hamlets of fewer than 100. Wood-wheeled carts are still common in the countryside.

By a 1978 reckoning (Portuguese statistics are often a bit musty), the country had just 118 cars for every 1,000 people, fewer even than Spain's 178 cars per 1,000. Portugal's high auto-fatality rate—the worst in Western Europe—reflects not heavy traffic but poor roads.

Portugal has only two TV channels, both state run and based in Lisbon (like the radio networks and all but one of the 22 national newspapers). The fare includes performances of concert music, drama, and opera, as well as sports (including hockey played on roller skates), Brazilian-made soap operas, called *telenovelas*, and foreign cartoons (many from the Soviet Union) dubbed in Portu-



The last Portuguese troops left Luanda on November 11, 1975, when Lisbon officially gave up Angola. Most of some 500,000 white settlers followed.

guese. There is little U.S. programming, a bit more from Britain. A recent offering: "The Jewel in the Crown," a series about the end of British rule in India.

In the New State, the right to vote was granted to only about 20 percent of the adult population—males who could read and write and had paid a certain minimum tax, and women who had at least a secondary education. Now adult suffrage is universal. The new constitution provides for separation of church and state (though 96 percent of the Portuguese are baptized Catholics) and for divorce. Abortion was legalized in 1984, but is permitted only in situations involving incest, rape, and deformed fetuses; nonetheless, the measure earned President António Ramalho Eanes, who signed it, a jab in the Catholic press as "the president who legalized the death penalty."

The constitution also specified a "socialist" society, with safety nets for all. Yet, thanks to its poverty, Portugal is still no Scandinavian welfare state. A National Health Service was created to provide free medical care for the needy, and the government is trying to persuade the country's numerous physicians—one for every 500 people—to do more in rural

areas. But the minimum wage that Lisbon established is now just \$99 per month, and the allowance granted for each child in a poor family is all of \$4 per month.

Moreover, many Lisbon politicians now argue that the early rush to establish a state-run economic system was a mistake. During the peak of revolutionary fervor in 1975, Portugal's big banks and insurance companies were nationalized, which also brought state ownership to the scores of other businesses that they owned or controlled. The shipping, railroad, urban transportation, oil, and electric power industries soon followed, and the government wound up running companies that represent 32 percent of Portugal's corporate investment.

Looking for Leadership

But here, as elsewhere, the state-run firms are awash in red ink. Grand projects—petrochemical complexes in Sines and Leixões, the Setenave shipbuilding complex near Lisbon in Setúbal—have been beset by sagging world markets or their own poor management. (Their directors change with each new government.) The companies owe half of Portugal's \$14.2 billion in foreign debt, but many cannot even pay their employees. As of autumn 1984, some 7,000 Setenave steelworkers were owed back pay.

Portugal's foreign debt piled up as a result of labor unrest, the chaos of the revolution, and the loss of the colonial markets. When Lisbon went to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and rich Western nations for help in 1978, it accepted austerity measures that caused "real" wages to plunge 20 percent below the 1975 level. To improve its 1980 election prospects, the government then in power subsequently let the value of the escudo rise (to make imports cheaper) and continued subsidizing food and other essentials. That led to more debt.

In 1983, Lisbon sold some of the large stock of gold—worth \$7.8 billion that year—left in the Bank of Portugal by the pinch-penny New State, but still had to seek new IMF aid. The price this time was new austerity measures that caused a recession and raised unemployment (now about 10 percent).

Prime Minister Soares, who aims to run for the presidency this year, has been cutting back on some of the post-1974 excesses. Many of the expropriated southern farms have been returned to their owners, for instance, and employers have won back the right to fire slack employees. Some politicians talk of moving toward a more laissez-faire economy, as Britain has done under Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government.

One issue on which all parties (except the PCP) have agreed

is Common Market membership. When Lisbon applied to the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1977, it cast its request in terms of a new mission: Replacing its colonial and Atlantic "vocation," Portugal would finally join Europe. After all, almost two million Portuguese now live in Common Market nations, and nearly half the country's trade is with these 10 states.

Portugal—and Spain, which applied after the death of Francisco Franco and his dictatorship's fall in 1975—seem likely to be admitted in 1986. The wait has been useful. If free trade with the EEC were to start now, Portugal's economy would suffer. The Portuguese are now competitive with other European producers only in wine, tomato paste, textiles, and shoes.

Now that this reality has sunk in, the idea of "joining Europe" has lost much of its appeal in Portugal. Its politicians, journalists, and industrialists realize that, once their country joins the Community, it will be the poorest member (behind Ireland), and may find itself stranded on the periphery of industrial Europe. Portugal might well remain a land of sunny beaches, inexpensive wine, and friendly people. While this may not sound too bad, assuming a profitable tourist trade, it would be a far cry from either industrial modernity or the much-celebrated past of great discoveries and overseas empire.

The Portuguese have a tradition of looking for a savior. It goes back at least to the 16th century, when the quixotic young King Sebastian sailed off to fight the Moors in Morocco. No matter that the king's army was crushed and that his death led to 60 years of Spanish rule; it was long hoped and believed that he would return. Democracy has not ended *Sebastianismo*, the popular hankering after a leader who, in times of trouble, will step in and solve Portugal's problems.

In many respects, Salazar served that purpose. He rescued the country from instability during the late 1920s. The Army captains played a similar role in 1974. Polls still show high esteem among Portuguese for strong leadership and a widespread public perception of its absence during the past few years. There is, indeed, a general perception among most Portuguese that stronger government in Lisbon is required for both democracy and economic development to flourish. The question for the Portuguese is how that strength and stability can be achieved, without resort to some new Sebastian—or Salazar.

BACKGROUND BOOKS

PORTUGAL

"Let us hear no more then of Ulysses and Aeneas and their long journeyings, no more of Alexander and Trajan and their famous victories. My theme is the daring and renown of the Portuguese, to whom Neptune and Mars alike give homage."

So declared the 16th-century poet Luis Vaz de Camoens in *The Lusiads*, Portugal's national epic. The *Lusiads* are the sons of the country's mythical first settler, the Roman god Lusus. The poem, modeled on Virgil's *Aeneid*, is a paean to monarchs, mariners, and missionaries, built on the story of Vasco da Gama's 1497-98 voyage to India—which led to Portugal's rise to great wealth.

But first, the nation itself had to arise. As Harold Victor Livermore recounts in *Portugal* (Edinburgh, 1973), cave art shows that western Iberia was visited as early as 18,000 B.C. by the same hunters who roamed France and northern Spain after the Ice Age. The first settlers appear to have come from Andalusia after 4000 B.C.

Sailing west out of the Mediterranean, Phoenician traders set foot on Portugal's shores after 1000 B.C. Later, Celtic farmers and herders moved south from France to the green northwest. They turned some of the hilltop *castros* (forts) they built, or found, into walled cities.

When the Romans, having bested the Carthaginians in Africa and Spain, entered what they called Lusitania after 200 B.C., the natives were ready to resist. Julius Caesar himself, writes Livermore, put down a Lusitanian revolt in A.D. 60. "He operated from Lisbon, whose fidelity he rewarded with the title of Felicitas Julia. It was the only city in the area to enjoy Roman rights."

By the third century, when Emperor Constantine had given it his imprimatur, Christianity had spread to Iberia. After the Fall of Rome, the division of the peninsula that the Romans had called Hispania began.

Germanic barbarians swept down from the north—the Goths into Spain, the Swabians into Lusitania. They adopted not only the Roman administrative structure but also the Roman faith.

Still, Portugal remained remote. In *The Individuality of Portugal* (Univ. of Tex., 1959; Greenwood, 1969), Dan Stanislawski quotes a letter to Saint Fructuosus, in the Portuguese city of Braga, from a Spaniard. The writer tells the priest not to feel "worthy of scorn because you are relegated to the extremity of the west in an ignorant country, as you say, where naught is heard but the sound of tempests."

Eventually, the Swabians came under the sway of the Gothic kings in Toledo. But by the seventh century, the northerners had been pushed aside in most of Iberia by new invaders: Muslim Arabs and Berber tribesmen from North Africa called Moors. Portugal regained its independence in the 12th century, when the Christian Dom Afonso Henriques dislodged the Moors. He named himself Portugal's king in 1139, more than 200 years before a Christian Spain was restored under Ferdinand V and Isabella I.

The Portuguese Seaborne Empire: 1415-1825 (Knopf, 1969), by Charles Ralph Boxer, is a lively narrative of the country's overseas expansion. Lay readers will find William C. Atkinson's translation of *The Lusiads* (Penguin, 1952, paper; reprinted 1981) valuable, not only for illuminating the chauvin-

ism of Camoens's salute to those who advanced "the boundaries of faith and empire" but also for Atkinson's essay on the poet's era.

When *The Lusiads* appeared in 1572, the driving spirit that it celebrated was dying. Atkinson writes that when Camoens returned to Lisbon in 1570 from a journey to Portugal's Asian colony Macau, the city was "just emerging from a devastating visitation of the plague. He had the impression that his country had altered much, and for the worse. The native virtues of the race appeared to him to have wilted under prosperity, people at home not realizing at what cost of blood, sweat and tears their empire had been built." The "heroic temper," Atkinson notes, "was ebbing."

By the early 20th century, the nation that had so vastly expanded the "known" world wanted to shut it out. Portraits of António de Oliveira Salazar, who sought to seal his New State against the social and economic currents that swept through the West before and after World War II, range from Hugh Kay's even-handed **Salazar and Modern Portugal** (Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1970) to the angry **Portugal: Fifty Years of Dictatorship** (Penguin, 1975, paper), by António de Figueiredo, a left-wing Salazar foe. What all chroniclers agree on is the dictator's long obsession with what Kay calls "the notion of the absolute." Said Salazar: "No one can rule in the name of doubt."

Among the useful journalistic accounts of Portugal's struggle to create a democracy after 1974 are **Insight on Portugal** (André Deutsch, 1975), a narrative of the revolution by a London *Sunday Times* team, and **Portugal: Birth of a Democracy**

(Macmillan, 1978), by Robert Harvey, an editor of the *Economist*. Thomas C. Bruneau's **Politics and Nationhood: Post-Revolutionary Portugal** (Praeger, 1984) is the most comprehensive of a short list of scholarly analyses.

With the passing of empire, the chief question raised by Portugal's history may not be how such a small nation did so much and has survived so long, but why its cultural legacy—beyond a language that is spoken by some 150 million people in Brazil, Angola, Mozambique, and other areas—has been so slight.

In **Iberia** (Random House, 1968, cloth; Fawcett, 1978, paper), author James A. Michener wonders that Portugal produced no "Velázquez, no Victoria, no García Lorca, no Santa Teresa, and of course no Seneca. The genius of the Iberian peninsula seemed to have resided in the [Spanish] regions."

Could Portugal's cultural poverty be linked with its tradition of recurrent and sometimes virulent insularity? From the mid-16th century into the 18th, for example, church-influenced censorship barred all books from abroad; the excitement stirred elsewhere in Europe before, during, and after the Protestant Reformation by the ideas and discoveries of Galileo, Bacon, Descartes, Newton, Hobbes, Leibnitz, and others never reached Portugal.

"No national culture," Boxer observes in his book, "can have a healthy and continuous growth, without being periodically fertilized by fresh inspiration and new ideas from abroad." For Portugal, it might be said, the real age of discovery may be only beginning.

DOES MURPHY'S LAW APPLY TO HISTORY?

"Origin obscure" is how *The American Heritage Dictionary* ascribes Murphy's Law. No one who has bought a car, planned a family vacation, or embarked on a corporate takeover has cause to doubt the law: If anything can go wrong, it will. Murphy's Law found adherents first among practicing scientists and engineers. Its influence soon spread. Today, hawks and doves alike invoke Murphy's Law to argue that, as matters now stand, a nuclear World War III is inevitable. Concede to these doomsayers that anything *could* go wrong. Why, asks historian Paul Schroeder, hasn't it? He suggests that the future may have less to fear from general war than mankind's combative past—and the anonymous Mr. Murphy's dour prediction—would lead us to expect.

by Paul Schroeder

Everyone knows Murphy's Law: If anything can go wrong, it will. Most of us, most of the time, do not take it seriously. It merely expresses our sense of the perversity of inanimate objects, the ironies and frustrations of everyday life.

Scientists and engineers, however, take Murphy's Law seriously, though not literally, in building a nuclear power station or planning a space flight. The stakes are too great not to. In a similar way, many thoughtful persons take Murphy's Law seriously, even literally, in the debate over nuclear weapons.

This came home to me recently in a conversation with a professor of mathematics at the University of Illinois. He was sure that a nuclear war would eventually occur unless nuclear weapons were soon abolished. The laws of statistical probability, he said, were all in favor of it. I did not produce a suitable reply then; like many nonmathematicians, I tend to be

daunted by professors of mathematics confidently citing laws of statistical probability.

Only later did it occur to me that my friend had implied that Murphy's Law applied to history. If anything can go wrong, it will. The worst thing that could possibly go wrong would be thermonuclear war; and if it continues to be statistically possible, by virtue of the existence of nuclear weapons, eventually it will happen.

My friend is far from alone in this view. Since 1945, the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* has displayed a clock indicating the time at between two and 12 minutes to midnight—the time left (depending on circumstances) to the human race to eliminate nuclear weapons or be eliminated by them. Jonathan Schell, in his 1982 best seller, *The Fate of the Earth*, plainly argues from Murphy's Law assumptions; so do many other proponents of nuclear disarmament. Even Russians do. Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, the Soviet chief of staff until his abrupt dismissal last September, was quoted in the March 17, 1983, *New York Times* as saying:

We are approaching a dangerous line. There is an old Russian saying: "Even an unloaded rifle can fire once in 10 years. And once in 100 years, even a rake can produce a shot."

Here is real Murphy's Law thinking: Even if nothing *can* go wrong, eventually it will.

Such thinking is not confined to one side in the debate. The advocates of Peace through Strength sometimes use a different set of Murphy's Law assumptions in their argument for increasing and modernizing the free world's nuclear arsenal. If Soviet leaders ever are given a chance at a successful first strike or at nuclear blackmail leading to the West's surrender, they will seize it. Hence, the West must upgrade its nuclear defenses at any cost.

Not every hawk or dove believes in Murphy's Law, of course. Nonetheless, it looms large in the debate. It adds heat and passion, and it prompts calls, from Left and Right, for radical action to stave off impending disaster.

Although I claim no expertise in current world politics or the technical aspects of arms control, as a historian of international politics, I have something to say here. The debate in the West is not only over technical questions about the numbers and "throw-weights" of missiles, or appraisals of Soviet intentions and capabilities, but also over assumptions about the character

of international politics and relations among states as they have evolved over the centuries.

Murphy's Law thinking, among both hawks and doves, ends up with the conclusion, explicit or implicit, that the very *nature* of current international politics makes an intolerable outcome—Red or dead—likely or even inevitable. To the doves, the present system, with its inherently lawless, unrestrained competition between independent states, helps make eventual nuclear war inevitable. The solution, in their view, must be found in a fundamental change in world politics, through arms control, the abolition of nuclear weapons, world government, or whatever. To the hawks, the problem lies in the unwritten rules of the current game, which, they believe, have allowed the Soviet empire and Communist influence to expand rapidly since 1917, while restraining efforts by the United States and its allies to reverse the trend. The rules, hawks argue, must be changed.

Thus, the demoralizing claim is made by both sides that the threats to peace, freedom, and human survival are greater than ever before—and that traditional international politics is wholly inadequate to deal with them.

This is the assumption that I reject.

Murphy's Law does not apply to history. The history of international politics, both in earlier centuries and more recently, points neither to the inevitability of nuclear war nor to the likelihood of Soviet domination.

Both the nuclear threat and Soviet expansion are problems to be faced and managed by the West. They do not constitute steadily worsening crises; in fact, both problems have tended to shrink rather than grow in recent decades. More important still, the character of international politics has not remained static. It has changed decisively, mainly for the better, so that the present system of inhibitions, alliances, and understandings is in most important respects far stronger and better suited to avoiding major wars than any previous one in history. The world, in fact, is now enjoying a period of unprecedented freedom from major wars; and, with wisdom and prudence, that freedom can be indefinitely prolonged.

Obviously, I cannot hope to demonstrate this reality in a

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few pages. I can hope, however, to show why my apparent optimism is not as blind as it may first seem.

Those who argue that the threat to man's survival is both unprecedented (which it is) and growing constantly more unmanageable (which I claim it is not) have an inadequate historical understanding of international politics. They attribute the relative world peace prevailing since 1945 to accident or luck. For example, the eminent astronomer Carl Sagan, in a highly acclaimed 1983 *Parade* magazine article discussing the ecological disasters that even a limited nuclear exchange would cause, comments that more than once since 1945 the world has approached nuclear war. He adds: "I do not think our luck can hold out forever."

Any reasonable person, I think, must accept Sagan's scientific argument. If the historical-political part were equally correct—if since 1945 only *luck* had kept the world from nuclear holocaust—then one would have to join him and many others in cries for some drastic action to turn things around. The crux of the matter, however, is how we assess the *nature* of the historical trend, and what can and should be done about it. My conviction is that for nearly 40 years statesmen of both East and West have not ignored the worsening nuclear threat but have struggled with it, managed it, and to a limited degree even solved it.



That statement needs qualification, of course. There are various aspects of the nuclear danger. The international community's record on dealing with all of them is highly uneven. The record is lamentable on the control and reduction of nuclear weapons; Carl Sagan's concern over the present arms race is entirely justified. On nonproliferation, the record is better but still far from satisfactory. But on the most important aspect, the non-use of nuclear weapons in crises, it is perfect. All of the nuclear powers have repeatedly shown in critical circumstances that they are able to avoid recourse to their most awesome weaponry. At the same time, both by accident and design, nuclear and nonnuclear powers alike have contributed to developing an international system that, from the crucial standpoint of avoiding major and general wars, is far superior to any in the history of international politics.*

*Historically, a *major* war is one between two or more great powers. A *general* war is one involving all or a majority of the great powers. Naturally, the list of the extant great powers at any time varies from era to era. The five "declared" nuclear powers today are the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, France, and China.

The period of almost four decades without major war is significant in a way few laymen recognize. Since the second century A.D. under the Pax Romana, the Western world has known no long periods of general peace. The modern record was 38 years, nine months, and five days (June 22, 1815, to March 27, 1854), from the aftermath of Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo to the effective beginning of the Crimean War between the French and British, on one side, and tsarist Russia, on the other. That record was broken last year on May 15, 1984. The news media did not accord it the attention given to records achieved by Atlanta's Hank Aaron for home runs or Cincinnati's Pete Rose for base hits, but the fact is worth noting.



This world record for general peace will mean little if nuclear holocaust ensues sometime in the future. But it nonetheless points to what has really been happening since 1945. Contrary to all previous historical trends, the international system is growing stronger and more stable over time. Carl Sagan is right; the world has at times come close to general and nuclear war since 1945. The question is this: Just when? The most dangerous episodes were clearly the Berlin blockade, 1948-49; the Korean War, 1950-53; the Hungarian revolution and Suez crisis, 1956; the Berlin crises in 1958 and 1961; and the Cuban missile episode of 1962.

Since then, serious conflicts have occurred—in Indochina, the Middle East, Iran, Poland, Afghanistan. In none of these did the nuclear powers, as had happened earlier, confront each other "eyeball to eyeball," despite often ample opportunities to do so.

In other words, so far as one can now see, the most agonizing, dangerous periods of postwar politics are behind us; the threats to world peace, instead of being concentrated in Soviet-American confrontations, as was the case before, have become more diffuse and peripheral; the system of international relations has not merely escaped catastrophe but in fact grown stronger. For a variety of reasons, massive adjustments have been made or accepted by both East and West—Third World decolonization, France's departure from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the defections of Yugoslavia and China as Soviet allies, the decline of communism's appeal in much of Asia and Africa, the rise of new centers of economic and military power, the weakening of direct American hegemony in the Western Hemisphere. These changes have not undermined the system or brought it down but in the main improved it.

There are strong reasons to believe that this period since 1962 is not just an interval between storms. For now there are among great powers no perceptible signs of what historians call a "sickening of the peace." In the past, governments and peoples have gradually forgotten the horrors of war, become bored with the strains and uncertainties of peace and frustrated by the limits placed upon their ambitions and dreams. Few leaders have ever admitted to *wanting* war, of course; then as now, men have usually claimed to want peace, but peace with "justice" and "progress"—i.e., to want sunshine, but with rain and snow. Today, as always, factions, movements, even states continually call for peace—*after* the struggle they have been waging is won and their cause has triumphed.

The difference in 1984 is that such calls are now confined to rebel movements, to terrorists, to factions involved in civil wars, and to some smaller states. No major power anywhere, including, in my view, the Soviet Union, shows clear signs of sickening of the peace, of seeing a major war as preferable to continuing the present state of affairs. Seeking short-term advantage, national leaders may still do dangerous, aggressive things; but they genuinely want to keep a major war from developing.

If this sounds like evading the issue, overlooking the numerous possibilities for war by miscalculation or accident, then a look at the historical record is useful. It indicates how decisive the desire of great powers to avoid major war can be.



While history is full of exceptions, it is safe to claim that during the last two centuries, while revolutionary movements, terrorists, warring factions, and small states have frequently fanned the flames of crisis, resorted to bloodshed, and fomented international conflict, they have never been able to spark a major war unless some major power or powers allowed them to do so. French revolutionaries and émigrés promoted European war in 1792; but no war would have broken out had the French, Prussian, and Austrian governments not each decided that a war might serve their various purposes. The Turks did much to provoke war against tsarist Russia in 1853 but succeeded in getting it only because Britain and France allowed themselves to be drawn in—and bogged down in the Crimea—for their own reasons. Bosnian terrorists helped touch off World War I; the sickening of the peace among the European great powers caused it. In contrast, from 1815 to 1848, many rebel groups and smaller states tried to undermine the peace in Europe. Though vital

great-power interests were often at stake, the provocations never succeeded.

Our present-day doomsayers fall prey to a kind of Chicken Little hysteria when they proclaim, each time an embassy is bombed or a small country falls into civil war, that the world is trembling on the brink of nuclear holocaust. The sky will not fall, the world will not run amuck, unless the governments and peoples of the major powers, especially those of one of the two superpowers, *choose* to let it or make it happen.



One main reason that the superpowers since 1945 have not sickened of the peace is clearly the sobering effect of the East-West "balance of terror" (a reality that should be considered carefully by those who call for the abolition of nuclear weapons). But there are other more positive reasons.

Within four decades of each of the major peace settlements of the past (1648, 1714, 1763, 1815, 1871, 1919–20), Europe and the Western world were either deep into new cycles of general conflict or poised for one to begin. The settlements themselves provoked discontent. In 1945, the world faced precisely this same problem, in a virulent form. The settlement of World War II was anything but complete; discontent with it was already intense in Europe and North America; and a determination to overthrow the existing order reigned almost unchallenged in Africa and Asia. Yet, during the almost four decades since 1945—years marked by crisis and conflict involving Afghanistan, most of Africa, Bangladesh, Central America, China, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Israel, Korea, Pakistan, Poland, Taiwan, Yugoslavia, Vietnam, and elsewhere—no direct conflict has arisen between the two superpowers.

That no major war has grown out of this long array of crises is not the crucial point. It is, instead, that dangerous problems were solved or managed short of war, that there was a gradual decline in fundamental challenges to the World War II settlement. Of course, challenges continue and bitter disputes endure. But the leaders of no major state today look at the map and say, "These borders will not do; the world's distribution of power and territory must be changed, even if it means war." That would be unprecedented.

Something else is new—the nature and aims of international politics. We are constantly told, correctly, that nuclear weapons have changed the character of warfare, making major

wars obsolete as instruments of national policy. We are also told, incorrectly, that international politics consists of the same stupid pursuit of national power and prestige by the same outmoded, dangerous methods as before. In fact, from the early 17th century to 1945, every major war was fought to gain victory, and fought either to the point of decisive victory or of mutual exhaustion. Diplomacy in these wars was used primarily to promote victory, usually by acquiring allies.

Since 1945, important wars have been fought, with the two superpowers involved, in Korea, the Middle East, Vietnam, and elsewhere. Without exception, great-power diplomacy in these wars has been directed more toward limiting and ending these wars than winning them decisively. Whatever the popular impression may be, American diplomats and military strategists showed far more restraint and prudence in Korea and Vietnam than they did in World War II. So did the Kremlin. Despite all the dangers and intense rivalry in today's superpower relationships, great powers no longer fight wars for decisive victory, as they once did. That is a critically important development.

Nor is it really true, as commentators often assert, that statesmen and military leaders continue to think and operate in the grooves of yesteryear. Eighteenth-century statesmen, even moderate ones such as Count Charles Gravier Vergennes of France, assumed that it was their moral duty to go to war if such ventures promised to enhance the power and glory of their monarchs. Ronald Reagan, a hawk by current standards, does not think that way today.



But, the skeptic will argue, it is the very existence of independent states that is the real danger, not the wishes of particular leaders. The fact that the world is made up of independent states, and that each pursues what its leaders define as a "national interest," gives the international system an inherent bias toward conflict: So contend the "one worlders" and many others. Domestic politics encourage the pursuit of national goals, so the argument goes, while discouraging the sacrifice of these parochial aims to general ends such as world peace. This is an important argument; it correctly recognizes that the causes of wars lie not just in particular policies or actions but also in the structures and purposes of states and of the international system. At the same time, it assumes that the structures of states and the system have not changed. What if, in fact, they have?

We know from much historical research how the struc-

tures of states caused wars in the 17th and 18th centuries. Put simply, European states in that era were largely created by and for war. They were created *by* war in the sense that the existing anarchic situation required them to develop powerful standing armies, and bureaucratic, financial, and taxation systems to support them, in order to survive. They were created *for* war in the sense that the main basis for a state's existence and possession of territory in those centuries was dynastic succession and inheritance of land, creating constant territorial conflicts, chances for gain or loss, and wars of succession. Every monarch thus needed a standing army and a full treasury to seize opportunities for expansion or to ward off attacks and partitions. What some intellectuals and politicians in 20th-century America see as a destabilizing threat to peace—a military-industrial complex—was then a necessity. States possessing such a “complex” survived and grew; those without one declined, were defeated, or disappeared.



Suppose that the purposes and structures of states have now changed; that most modern states, especially the great powers, are now made by and for peace, and are essentially suited not to acquire and defend territory by warfare but to promote industry, commerce, and kindred pursuits. Suppose that industry, trade, and technology are increasingly internationalized, and that many great states are liberal-democratic, so that powerful interests urge their governments not to wreck the world environment in which all must live and work. Suppose that relations among nations have come to include an intricate international network of banking, finance, and commerce, linking both governments and private concerns. Suppose that one could see some states (Italy, Japan, West Germany) transformed from states made for war into states made for peace within a lifetime, and trace a slower evolution in many others. Suppose, in short, that we are only now becoming aware of a transformation being wrought in the structure of states over centuries by the Industrial Revolution, the rise of democracy, and the supranational organization of economic and, to a lesser degree, political life. What then?

Suppose, finally, that this whole case I have presented is accepted (and I am fully aware how partial and superficial it is): What is it supposed to mean? That there is no serious danger of major war? That controlling and reducing nuclear armaments is unimportant? That the Soviet Union, the epitome of the

military-industrial state, presents no serious political and military challenge? Absolutely not.

Mine is not really an argument *for* optimism at all. It is an argument *against* a certain extremely popular kind of crippling fatalism. We should avoid the fashionable dismissal of international politics and the international system of treaties, arrangements, procedures, and institutions. They are vital resources in our struggle to find a way between nuclear holocaust and the West's loss of freedom. In facing our current dangers, whose urgency and magnitude it is insane to deny or to minimize, we must use good judgment.

The history of international politics provides both good news and bad news. The good news is that international politics and the international system have over time unquestionably evolved in character. They have grown in strength and in the capacity to solve problems. Nothing is more demonstrably wrong, more plainly stupid, than the old saw that the only thing to be learned from history is that men do not learn from history. Men have learned, and they do learn—both individually and collectively.

The bad news, of course, is that new challenges and problems always arise, that men and nations have very often failed to adjust to them in time and have learned their lessons only through great disaster. After the next great disaster it will be too late to learn.

I myself oscillate between hope and near despair. One day the contrast between the present international system, stable despite its potential dangers, with that of, say, 1933–39, or 1905–14, or 1783–92, seems to me so striking that a permanent relative peace appears genuinely realizable, and even on its way. Another day, I feel sure that one could say to the world what Prince Bismarck said to the Turkish representatives at the Congress of Berlin in 1878: "This is your last chance; and if I know you, you will not take it."

Of this alone am I reasonably certain: Without patient, careful attention by the major powers to the steady maintenance and development of the international diplomatic system, the threat of nuclear war cannot possibly be managed. And those in America who out of Murphy's Law thinking reject that imperfect system in favor of some illusory cure take us directly onto the path of major war.





When a Bavarian artist did this woodcarving of people seeking rejuvenation in a fountain of youth some 460 years ago, lives were short. Not today. As of 1980, the average newborn American can expect to live 70 years if male, almost 78 if female. Those who reach the age of 65 have an even greater average life expectancy: close to 79 years for men and 83 for women.

The Elderly in America

In "Old Age," an essay that he wrote in 1870, Ralph Waldo Emerson, 67, lamented that "America is a country of young men, and too full of work hitherto for leisure and tranquillity."

Emerson thought that Americans ignored the "particular benefits" of age, especially the value of experience. For youth, he said, "every object glitters and attracts," and life is apt to be "a heap of beginnings" with little result. The elderly are different: "Age sets its house in order, and finishes its works, which to every artist is a supreme pleasure."

In many ways, the extent of that pleasure is a measure of civilization. In poor, primitive tribes, older people who can no longer provide for themselves may be treated harshly. Eastern cultures, and those that nurtured the Judeo-Christian tradition, tend to venerate age. The Arabic term *sheikh* (leader) originally meant "elder." The Old Testament declared that "a hoary head is a crown of glory" and awarded patriarchs including Methuselah long lives exceeding 900 years. In ancient Greece, where most did not reach even their thirtieth year, the Spartans were ruled by a *gerousia*, a council of elders over 60. At first, the Roman Senate was made up of retired magistrates.

In modern times, the role of elders as anchors of society and family, for better or worse, has been a recurrent theme of the literature of many nations—Leo Tolstoi's *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* (1886), Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks* (1901), many of Victor Hugo's novels, where sage elders, such as Jean Valjean in *Les Misérables* (1862), find an "unspeakable dawn in happy old age."

The reality of such portraits is now being tested as never before: Thanks to improvements in public health, medicine, and hygiene, long life has become a mass phenomenon. For most of history, that was rare. In 17th-century France, for example, half of those who survived birth died before reaching the age of 20. As recently as 1900 in America, the average life expectancy was only 47 years. But today it is more than half again as long.

This considerable advance has largely taken place during the past 60 years—that is, mostly during the lives of today's

depression-born elderly. Since 1900, the ranks of the aged in America have grown from 3,080,000, or four percent of the U.S. population, to 27,384,000, or 12 percent.

Their numbers will double again as the Baby Boomers born in the 1950s start to retire. The graying of the nation is, of course, fraught with social and political implications. Even now, for example, programs supporting the aged absorb 27 percent of the federal budget, about the same as the Pentagon. Meanwhile, gerontologists are narrowing down the exact causes of aging—more in hopes of further extending *active* life, than of extending the life span *per se*.

Here, Albert Rosenfeld summarizes the latest research on the aging process, and Timothy M. James surveys the culture of the elderly; historian W. Andrew Achenbaum traces the rise of the U.S. government's commitment to the aged.

STRETCHING THE SPAN

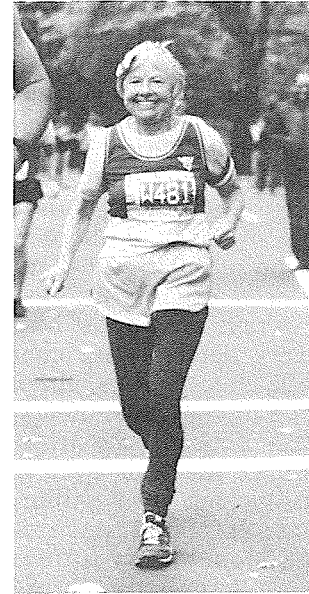
by Albert Rosenfeld

Can we start senescence—the aging process—on its way to obsolescence?

At any previous moment in scientific history, that would have been a ridiculous question. Yet the virtual abolition of old age as we have always known it has become the goal of a number of working gerontologists—specialists in the study not just of geriatrics, the infirmities of the human elderly, but of the aging process itself, in all species.

The possibility of extending our years of useful vigor still does not attract much serious public discussion. We have learned to scoff at all the failed attempts, from before Juan Ponce de León's 16th-century quest for the Fountain of Youth in Florida to the purveyors of "monkey glands" and other frauds in modern times. And for all the present American interest in fitness, many adults remain persuaded that "devoting one's life to keeping well is one of the most tedious of ailments," as the 17th-century French essayist La Rochefoucauld put it.

People just do not run down as they used to. When Madge Sharples, a 65-year-old competitor in the 1981 New York Marathon, was born, the average American newborn could be expected to live only to about age 52.



The gerontologists' goal—to permit the individual “to die young as late as possible”—is apt to be dismissed as just another tiresome sign of what social critic Christopher Lasch has called our “culture of narcissism.”

Nonetheless, we are approaching a more detailed understanding of senescence. Scientists have long established that there is nothing immutable about the life span of a given species. This was proven during the 1930s, when Clive McCay of Cornell showed that rats would live a third longer if their diet were kept balanced but held to near-starvation levels. Today, gerontologists believe that progress toward interfering with the aging process can and is being made.

While nothing like an anti-aging vaccine is in prospect, the mechanism of aging is becoming clearer, thanks to the rapid advance since the 1930s of gerontology and its associated sciences—biochemistry, cell biology, molecular genetics, immunology, endocrinology, and the neurosciences.

The effects of aging are familiar: the progressive loss of hair and teeth, the wrinkling and shrinking, the stoop and shuffle, the fading of hearing and sight. Inside, the lungs' maximum capacity declines (by 40 percent at age 80), and the heart pumps less efficiently as accumulated cholesterol and other debris gather on artery walls. The defenses against infection and stress

begin to wither away, connective tissue stiffens, the sex urge becomes less insistent, and the memory less reliable.

The standard charts illustrating this decline usually begin at age 30, the presumed peak of health and vigor. But most gerontologists now agree that, physically, the peak years end during the early twenties; some argue that they end at puberty. The chief debate now centers on *how* aging takes place.

Even gerontologists used to joke that there were as many theories of aging as there were people seriously studying it. Given the number and diversity of "events" that occur in the body's cells, organs, and systems, the directions that investigation can take are almost limitless. In an aging organism, virtually every deteriorative change can prompt other types, in a "cascade effect." Thus, almost any type of aging change can be parlayed into a whole theory of senescence.

Most of the theories involve (a) a process of "wear and tear" on the human machine over time, or (b) the idea that we have "clocks" ticking away within us that are *genetically* programmed to dictate the manner and rate at which we age and die.

But if one theory turns out to be right, the others need not be wrong. A unified view of aging is slowly emerging that may encompass just about all of the theories, each explaining part of the process.

There are several wear-and-tear theories:

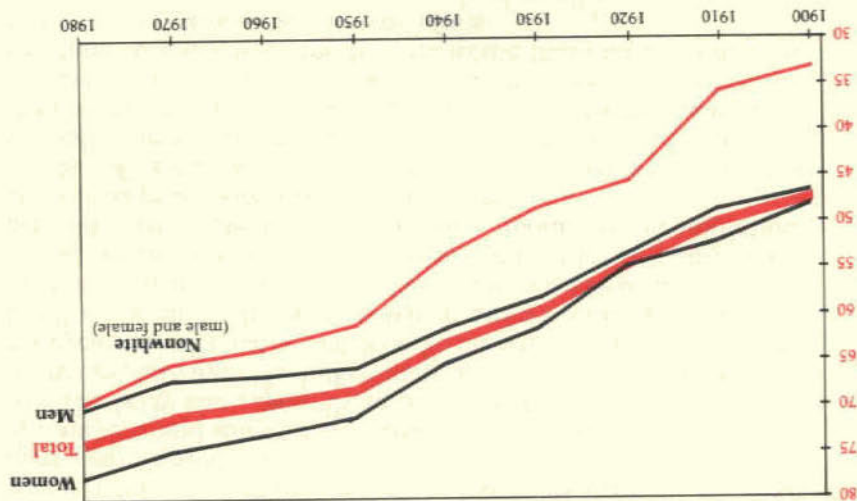
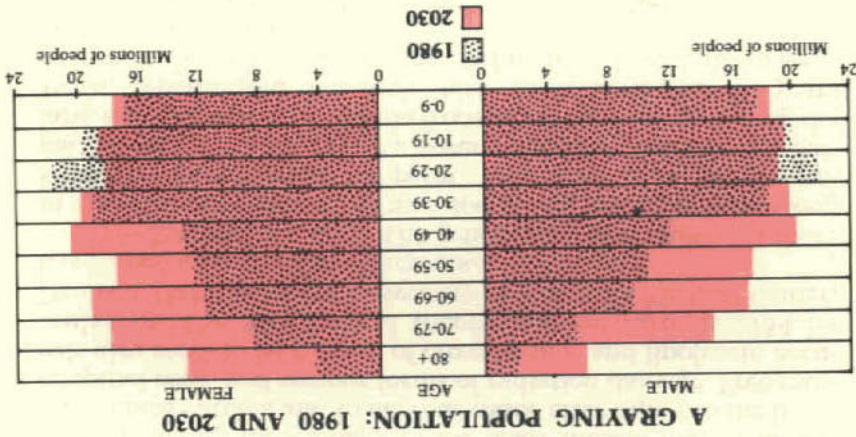
■ *"Garbage" accumulation.* As cells age, they have a harder time disposing of their wastes. Some of this "garbage" is a fatty substance called lipofuscin, which accumulates especially in those cells that in adulthood no longer divide, such as brain and muscle cells. Eventually, lipofuscin may take up as much as 20 percent of a cell's available space. Think of the cell's working molecules as waiters in a nightclub trying to get across a dance floor that grows increasingly crowded: Service would get slower and finally might come to a standstill. Most gerontologists now view this phenomenon as a result, rather than a cause, of aging.

■ *Cross-linkage.* The body has many large molecules that perform indispensable functions. The so-called blueprints of life, the genes, are made up of molecules of the nucleic acid DNA

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America's 55-percent rise in average life expectancy since 1900—a rise of 26 years—nearly equals the gain achieved in all the previous 3,000 years. During the 1960s and 1970s, the 65-plus age group grew more than twice as fast as the whole population; the 75-plus category is the fastest rising of all. Partly as a result, the U.S. median age, just 23 in 1900, has reached 31 and may surpass 33 by 1990. The female edge in longevity, 7.5 years in 1970, has stopped growing, perhaps because more women are holding jobs. 1970, has stopped growing, perhaps because more women are holding jobs.

Sources: National Center for Health Statistics, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Bureau of the Census.



(deoxyribonucleic acid); other sizable molecules are proteins, including hormones and enzymes, and those that make up cartilage, tendons, and other connective tissue. As the cells go about their complicated business, these molecules keep bumping into one another and sometimes become attached—cross-linked.

The body can repair these mistakes, but its ability to do so decreases with age. The linked molecules can stop vital biochemical cycles in cells, cause bottlenecks on critical molecular assembly lines (such as the ones on which amino acids are made into proteins), stiffen connective tissue, and create other forms of havoc. While this process doubtless contributes to aging, most gerontologists now believe that, like lipofuscin accumulation, cross-linkage is more a consequence than a cause.

■ *Free radicals.* In the course of normal oxidation—part of virtually every cellular process—small, highly charged pieces of the interacting molecules are often left over as by-products. They are called free radicals. Because each of these has an electron yearning to unite with the first molecule that comes along, free radicals can cause molecular collisions.

Such collisions are heavily involved in all sorts of injury to cells, including the damage to the heart muscle that continues after a heart attack and to nervous tissue after injury to the brain or spinal cord, and various forms of radiation damage. Free radicals also seem to be a cause of cross-linkage and lipofuscin accumulation. The free radical theory, put forward in 1954 by Denham Harman of the University of Nebraska Medical Center, has gained a great many adherents.

■ *Somatic mutation.* The genes in somatic cells—all those in the adult organism other than sperm and egg cells—were long known to be vulnerable to “point” mutations caused by the impact of, say, a cosmic ray or a potent chemical. The late Leo Szilard, as he turned his attention from physics to biology during the 1950s, hypothesized that such “hits” accumulate over the years to impair the genes, causing the decline of cells and, ultimately, of the whole organism.

This theory has had its strong advocates. Nevertheless, the genes, once we began to understand them at all, turned out to be much more complex than originally thought. They coil and “supercoil” into complex configurations; the irreversible unraveling of these structures is suspected to be instrumental to the aging process. Also, DNA is now known to have a self-repair capacity. The decline of this capacity, as observed in living cells, constitutes another theory of aging.

■ *Error catastrophes.* Once any organism, including a human, is full-grown, one of the main functions of the DNA in its

cells appears to be directing the manufacture of new proteins to be used for renewing the cell's own substance or for export as, say, hormones. In carrying out this "protein synthesis," the DNA's instructions are copied by another nucleic acid that carries the message into the main body of the cell; there, with the help of enzymes, the appropriate amino acids are strung together to form the desired protein.

The fact that cells that keep dividing must continue to copy and recopy their genetic instructions suggested a Xerox model of aging to Alex Comfort, who is a respected gerontologist as well as the author of the popular *Joy of Sex* books: After many copies, a genetic message gradually fades. Even in cells that no longer divide, errors occur as the cell renews itself, and mistakes are made in the activities that depend on it. The cell can usually rectify such mistakes. But if it does not, and a crucial molecule is impaired, some important job does not get done. That, as Leslie Orgel of the Salk Institute for Biological Studies has noted, can lead to further errors—and ultimately to what he calls an "error catastrophe" that can result in the cell's death. The error catastrophe theory does not now have many adherents, but it has spurred much fruitful thinking.

■ *The decline of immunity.* Roy Walford of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), argues that an important cause of aging is a breakdown of the immune system. For instance, in early adulthood the thymus (the gland in the upper chest whose hormones stimulate the white blood cells needed to fight infection and cancer) has already begun to shrink. As life goes on, the immune system loses some of its ability to recognize and attack bacteria and other invaders, as well as incipient cancer cells. The immune cells may also begin to attack the body's own healthy cells, leading to autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis and certain kidney ailments.

As for the "clock" theories, they assume that aging is genetically programmed, that a built-in "timer" exists. But where?

■ *The cellular clock.* One school of scientists holds that there is a timer in each cell. During the 1960s, Leonard Hayflick, now at the University of Florida, demonstrated convincingly that cells have a finite life span. In laboratory experiments, for instance, he was able to prove that one type of cell will divide into two only about 50 times before quitting. Even if these cells are frozen after 30 divisions, stored away, and then thawed, they will still divide only about another 20 times. Hayflick has also shown that the controls for this "aging under glass," as he calls it, are in the gene-bearing nucleus of each cell.

■ *The brain clock.* Other researchers hold that the aging

THE ETERNAL DREAM

Homo sapiens has never been content with just being one of the longest lived mammalian species. Recorded history abounds in charlatans and dreamers who sought or claimed to have found the secret of extreme longevity. Before he died in 1971, for example, Swiss physician Paul Niehans made a career of administering "cellular therapy," i.e., injecting humans' ailing organs with cells taken from young lambs. The technique was effective only in drawing big fees from a hopeful clientele that included Bernard Baruch, Gloria Swanson, and even Pope Pius XII.

The chief cause of this century's great gains in average life expectancy (besides the development of vaccines and "wonder drugs") has been mundane improvements in public health—better sanitation and cleaner water supplies, for instance. Now gone from the list of the leading causes of death are those communicable diseases that can strike at any age, such as influenza, pneumonia and tuberculosis. Typhoid and polio have been virtually eliminated in America; smallpox and bubonic plague now occur chiefly in poor nations. Today's top killers are those ailments that typically appear later in life: heart disease, stroke, cancer, and Alzheimer's disease, the "mystery" brain disorder afflicting nearly 20 percent of the three to four million Americans over 65 who are mentally impaired.



timer is in the area at the base of the primitive brain housing the hypothalamus as well as the pituitary, the gland that controls the release of hormones. W. Donner Denckla, formerly of the Roche Institute and Harvard, believes that the pituitary begins at puberty to release a hormone, or a family of them, that causes the body to decline at a programmed rate. This "aging hormone"—which has not yet been isolated and thus proven conclusively to exist—hinders the cell's ability to take in thyroxine, the hormone produced by the thyroid gland. Thyroxine controls the metabolic rate in the body's key cardiovascular and immune systems, whose failure is involved in the diseases that kill most older persons.

Denckla's theory is backed by experiments with thousands of rats. He has found, for instance, that injections of the extract of ground-up pituitaries cause young rats to age prematurely. Older rats that have had their pituitaries removed and been given thy-

Who lives the longest? In general, primitive people age fast and die young. Still, the societies with the most notable longevity are those of poor mountain dwellers—the Vilcabambans of Ecuador, the Hunzas on the Chinese-Pakistani border, and the Abkhasians of the Soviet Union. While their claims of ages of 120 years or more are unverified, these tribes do include many centenarians. Researchers have not been able to determine whether something in these peoples' gene pools promotes longevity. What they are known to have in common is a slow-paced rural life, regular exercise from negotiating steep paths, and a lean and virtually meat-free diet. The Hunzas consume fewer than 2,000 calories a day, versus about 3,300 for the average American.

The longevity record among Americans is generally awarded to Charlie Smith, a black who arrived from Africa as a slave in 1854 and died in Florida in 1979, allegedly at the age of 137. Where firm documentation exists, however, the longest American lifespans appear to have been 111 or 112 years. The 1980 census found more than 30,000 American centenarians, two-thirds of them women.

What do those who reach advanced years have in common? Studies show that, to a degree, longevity is inherited; or, rather, that long-livers come from families with no history of early heart attacks or other life-shortening ailments. Beyond that, generalizations are hard to make. Insurance company records show that people who are rich and successful tend to live longer than others, though prosperity itself may or may not lead to longevity. Research on centenarians shows that they are people who are relaxed, able to shrug off life's vicissitudes, and notably cheerful in disposition. The apparent moral: He who *worries* too much about his health probably will not live to an extreme old age.

roxine injections (along with critical steroid hormones) have shown "young" characteristics in several areas, including fur growth, and in their cardiovascular and immune systems.

Could Hayflick and Denckla both be right? They could be, and I think they may well be.

Doubters may ask: If a brain clock controls aging, how could it affect cells like those that Hayflick has experimented with in the laboratory? A likely answer is that there is a cellular clock as well, though perhaps mainly intended as a fail-safe back-up mechanism.

Another question: Since almost any one of the wear-and-tear theories can account for nearly everything that happens in aging, why postulate a genetic clock?

There are a number of answers. All creatures seem to have evolved a "species-specific" life span. A shrew will live, say, a year and a half, while a Galápagos tortoise will go on for a cen-

ture and a half or more. If aging was just a matter of random wear and tear, would we not expect to see, now and then, a shrew that is 150 years old? Or a Galápagos tortoise that dies of old age at one and a half? But we never do.

Or take cells in tissue culture. Normal cells have a finite life span; they age and die at roughly the "Hayflick limit." But cancer cells are immortal; they do not age. If cancer cells are exposed to the same conditions as normal cells, how is it that the normal ones age and the abnormal ones do not? The apparent answer is deeply ironic: Cells do have an aging clock, but cancer somehow stops it.

Gerontologists do not want to stretch out, Tithonus-like, the years of senility. They want to increase the *vigor* of the later years. Some would also like to retard, stop, or even, in some respects, reverse the aging process (as Denckla seems to have done in his rats).

Trying to Beat the Clock

It is now common in the laboratory to retard aging and to extend both the life expectancy and the life span of animals, as McCay did in the 1930s. The lives of fruit flies, fish, and other cold-blooded creatures have been extended by keeping them in a cooler-than-usual environment. At the National Institute of Aging's Gerontological Research Center in Baltimore, Charles Barrows has combined this technique and the McCay low-calorie stratagem. Working with rotifers—tiny pond-dwellers with a normal life of 18 days—he added another 18 days up front by restricting their calories. Then he added 18 more days to their mature period by cooling the water they lived in. Result: a tripled life span.

Seeking other life-extending techniques, investigators have used various antioxidants (to fight the damage caused mainly by free radicals), immune-system boosters and suppressors, and temperature-lowering drugs. Old and young rats have been joined surgically tail-to-shoulder so that they share a common circulatory system; the older rats age more slowly. Skin cells of old mice that have been transplanted to young ones easily outlive their original host. Evidently, the cells acquire *something* that keeps them vigorous.

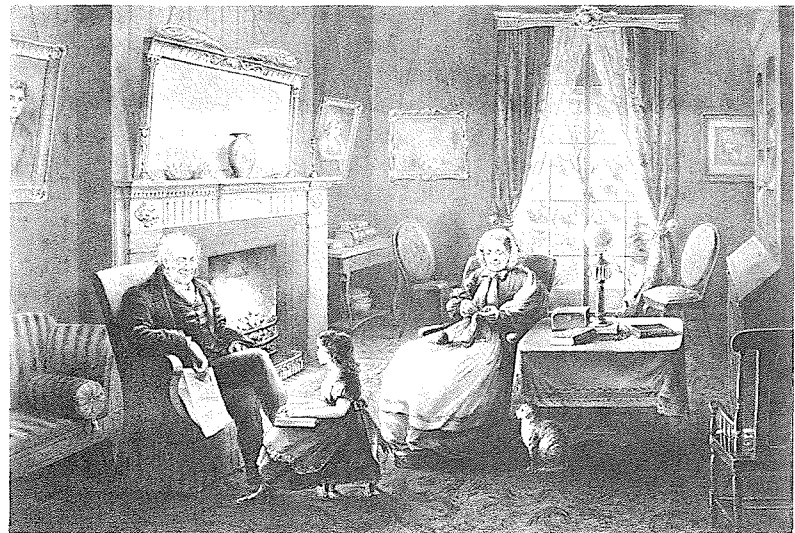
Can aging in *humans* be slowed, if not stopped entirely?

The hormonal brain clock, if it exists, could be counteracted by inhibiting the hormone—not an easy task, but by no means impossible. And if the cellular clock is found, it could be adjusted through genetic-engineering techniques.

A number of possible antidotes to wear and tear in humans are being studied. Vitamins C and E, glutathione, beta-carotene, and selenium are among the antioxidants that may curb free-radical damage—and offer protection against cancer as well. The thymic hormones offer promise as immune-system boosters. A steroid called DHEA (dehydroepiandrosterone), abundant in the bloodstream, may have potential as an aging-inhibitor and as an antiobesity, antidiabetes, and anticancer drug.

Meanwhile, researchers have hopes of producing lipofuscin scavengers, drugs that delay mental decline, and enzymes to replace those that diminish with age. More can be done with diet: UCLA's Walford is working on adapting McCay's low-calorie technique for use with adult animals, including humans.

At present, most medical research is aimed at specific diseases. The juvenile ailments, such as childhood cancer and juvenile arthritis, are believed to be largely genetic in origin, but most adult disorders simply come with age. As it happens, many of the techniques that retard aging in laboratory tests, such as calorie restriction, also seem to retard cancer and other degenerative diseases of adulthood. Surely the simplest way to deal with those diseases would be to deal with aging itself. After a heart by-pass, for instance, the hardening-of-the-arteries process that prompted the surgery goes right on as be-



This 19th-century Currier and Ives ideal of a sedentary Old Age is rejected by gerontologists. They seek to increase the vigor of late life.

fore. To go on pouring money into by-pass operations, or kidney dialysis, or nursing homes instead of trying to alter the aging process makes as much sense as it would have made, say, for the March of Dimes to have thrown all its resources into buying iron lungs instead of helping Jonas Salk and Albert Sabin develop their polio vaccines.

Many argue that even if we can extend vigorous life, we should not. Consider the personal, social, ethical, and political problems that would arise. If people were to live longer and in ever greater numbers, continuing to consume and perhaps reproduce, what—they ask—would happen to Social Security and insurance premiums? Would the global shortage of resources and our problems with pollution worsen? Would we have to put age limits on parenthood or consider the Huxleyan notion of requiring a license for parenthood? What would happen to creativity and progress without the continued influx of new ideas—and opportunities for young people to put them into action? Could *longer* lives lead to gerontocracy? To conflict between younger and older generations?

We must indeed give our most serious consideration to such possibilities. But we should also consider the consequences of *not* doing anything about aging. Though some scientists speak of actually extending the life span, that prospect is not yet with us. What society does face is the probability that the pattern of the final stage of life can be changed from decrepitude and dependency to something much healthier. Is such an outcome really to be deplored? In obeisance to what ethical doctrines should we condemn the elderly, now and forever, to continue to suffer the ravages of senescence? And condemn our societies to continue to bear the resulting burdens? Will we really choose to supplement the genes' tyranny with our own?



THE TRADE

by Timothy M. James

"There is a fullness of time when men should go, and not occupy too long the ground to which others have a right to advance."

So wrote Thomas Jefferson after he had finished his second term at the White House and returned to Monticello, his Virginia estate. At 68, the third president had put public life far behind him. He was now engaged in other interests—science, architecture, even the study of Greek and (with "great avidity") of mathematics.

As usual, Jefferson was ahead of his time. In his day, "retirement," as a stage of life, was virtually unknown. Life spans were short. Most Americans had to till the land or toil at other work right up until their span ran out or they were forced to stop by injury or infirmity. Few had the luxury of even being able to wonder whether their juniors had a "right" to their places in society.

How that has changed! Not only are millions living on to Jeffersonian years (he died at 83). In a way that none of their predecessors could have, the nation's present, huge generation of elders is pioneering what amounts to a new phase of life: a stretch of several years of freedom of a kind that even the flower children of the '60s could not have imagined. Freedom from the burdens of a job, of tending a family, even of the need to earn an income. In the process, they are creating a new culture: the world of the "senior citizen."

The species *Senior americanus* has several characteristics. Compared with the population at large, it is slightly more white; blacks make up more than 12 percent of the whole nation, but only eight percent of people over 65. It is also 60 percent female; as with nearly all mammalian species, women generally outlive men, at present by an average of eight years. But what is special about today's elderly is what they are not.

They are no longer in the labor force. A century ago, more than 75 percent of men over age 65 were still employed or looking for a job; now only 20 percent are. By the end of the century, only one in 10 older Americans of either sex will count themselves as workers.

At present, 69 percent of male and 21 percent of female employees are cleaning out their lockers and desks before age 65. In some years, the average retirement age at General Motors has dipped to 58; for Los Angeles policemen, it is now 48. As sociolo-

gist Stephen Crystal points out in *America's Old Age Crisis* (1982), today's generation of elders is the first for whom retirement "could really be said to be the rule."

It is also the first not to constitute a broad "pocket of poverty." As recently as 1959, roughly one-third of the elderly were below the poverty line, currently defined for the aged as an income of \$6,023 for a couple and \$4,775 for a single person. But the level of old-age poverty in 1983 was 14.1 percent, versus 15.2 percent for the whole population. Of all the old Great Society goals, none has been more fully realized than the elimination of widespread need among the aged.

Moreover, as economist Lester G. Thurow showed in *The Zero-Sum Society* (1980), in terms of mean income per capita, the elderly reached a par with the rest of the population in the 1970s. (The overall income per capita is now \$8,900.) If in-kind aid such as Medicare and food stamps is figured in, says Thurow, they have "a higher per capita income than the nonelderly." Another measure of prosperity is the breadth of high incomes: 2.3 percent of working-age Americans earn \$50,000 or more a year, but the elderly, at 1.3 percent, are not all that far behind.

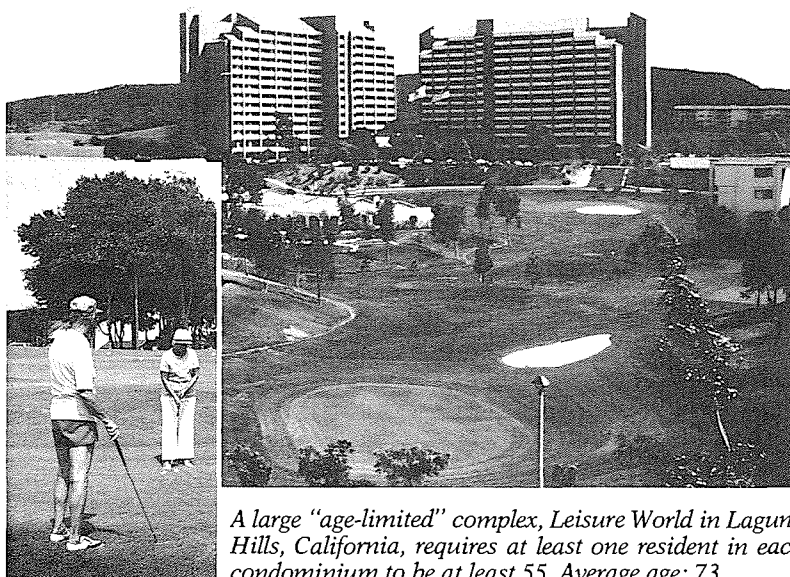
Old-age poverty is now a problem not of income but of distribution. Of all the elderly poor, 72 percent are women, who typically earned less than men when and if they worked at all and typically became widows if they married. Among elderly women, the poverty rate is close to 18 percent. Blacks account for 21.6 percent of the aged poor, and the poverty rate among them is 38 percent, about what it was a decade ago. Elderly poverty also tends to be a rural phenomenon.

Federal Largesse

The rise in prosperity that the elderly as a whole have experienced—and that made mass retirement possible—almost entirely reflects unearned income provided by the patchwork of pension programs that have burgeoned over the past four decades. These now absorb more than eight percent of the gross national product (GNP), up from just 1.7 percent in 1950.

All told, the elderly now receive a healthy 12 percent of the nation's aggregate income, most of it in the form of various retirement benefits. At present, seven percent of these benefits go to former state and local employees. Far more important are pensions from private employers, which now represent 17 percent of the total. These flow to about 23 percent of the nation's

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A large "age-limited" complex, Leisure World in Laguna Hills, California, requires at least one resident in each condominium to be at least 55. Average age: 73.

retirees, and they will spread more widely as company retirement programs continue to expand; today more than 40 percent of private-sector workers have such coverage.

But the core of America's rather random old-age support "system" remains tax-financed federal programs, which now provide 76 percent of all retirement benefits. These programs totaled \$211 billion in 1983 and account for fully half the income of the elderly. Though the federal largesse includes veterans' compensation and myriad other programs, the heart of it all remains Social Security pension payments, which, in 1983, amounted to \$148 billion.

For many seniors, the Social Security checks mailed each month (average amount: \$429) are supplemental income. For those elderly householders living on \$20,000 or more, the checks represent just 16 percent of their aggregate income. But the payments provide more than half the income of 73 percent of all single recipients and 50 percent of those who are married. Without Social Security, 60 percent of the elderly would be poor.

Instead, most of the aged are insulated not only from poverty but also from that related disease, inflation. Largely as a result of the "indexation" of Social Security and other benefits to the cost of living, when inflation was soaring at 12 percent dur-

ing the last year of the Carter administration the "real" income of the aged scarcely dipped at all. But the purchasing power of working Americans' paychecks plunged by 5.5 percent, the largest decline since the government began keeping records in 1913.

In sum, thanks to the generosity of younger taxpayers, as Crystal writes, "grinding poverty is far from being universal or even typical. Most of the elderly poor have been poor all of their lives. Retirement can be accompanied by a significant decline in earnings, but the middle class can usually maintain a middle-class standard of living."

Yet the aged have a woeful image. Psychologists find that many younger people have gerontophobia, a fear of aging that shows up in a revulsion against old people. But even among those without this tic, the elderly are apt to appear as "a hopeless mass teetering on the edge of senility," as pollster Louis Harris says. In 1981, Harris reported that 68 percent of younger people regarded lack of money as a "very serious problem" for the aged, though only 17 percent of the aged themselves felt hard pressed. Similarly, 65 percent of the younger respondents (versus 13 percent of the seniors) thought loneliness a problem for the old, and 74 percent (versus 25 percent) reckoned fear of crime important. Most Americans, concludes Harris, are simply not conscious of their elders as "survivors, resilient and very much alive."

Power and Patriarchy

Perceptions of the aged have long been dark, however. For centuries after their triumphs in the Old Testament, figures of advanced years turned up in literature mainly as objects of scorn—people in a "second childishness," as Shakespeare put it in *As You Like It*, who are "sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything." In art, the old virtually dropped out of sight after the classical era until the Renaissance, when they re-emerged as powerful figures in such works as Titian's homages to various Venetian nobles and Rembrandt's portraits of weathered survivors in the Amsterdam ghetto.

In life and in art, the aged's return to authority followed the spread of the concept of private property. Ownership of land and businesses brought power—and patriarchy, though not always also affection. When the Bourbons installed a gerontocracy of propertied elders in early 19th-century France, a pamphleteer scoured them as "asthmatic, gouty, paralytic beings who have no wish for anything except peace and quiet."

In the American colonies, religious teachings were used to reinforce patriarchal practices. As Carole Haber notes in *Beyond 65*:

The Dilemma of Old Age in America's Past (1983), men praised God and refused to pass on their assets: "Only as long as the individual retained control of the family property was he assured the rights and duties of the patriarch. . . . Patriarchy rested not only on Biblical admonitions, but on the promise of land. The son who failed to honor his father and mother might face grave repercussions."

As America matured, the elderly's power waned. The rise of urban, industrial society played a role. Another cause, Haber suggests, was a shift in family structure.

Early on, people married late and raised large families over many years. In 1800, the average mother had seven children over 17 years; parents reared offspring right up to their own deaths. But by 1900, couples were marrying early, mothers were having fewer children (an average of 3.56, to be exact, over nine years), and everyone was living longer. For the first time, says Haber, "it became increasingly likely that a significant proportion of the old would survive to see all their children grown and married." The "empty nest" syndrome was appearing.

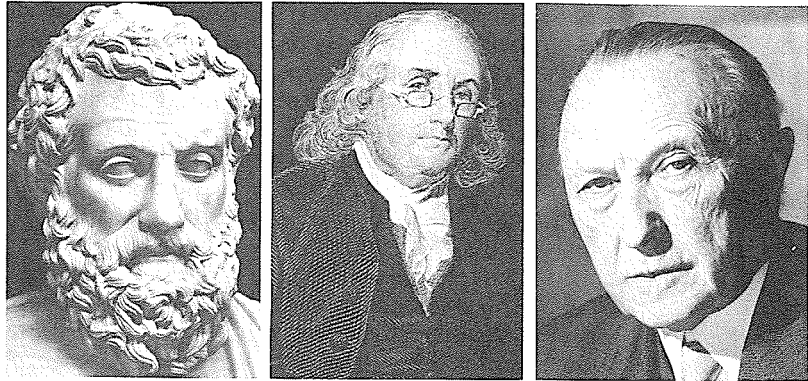
So was the "youth cult." Since about 1890, business had fretted about what to do with people deemed too old to learn new methods: Assembly lines, electric power, and other marvels were reducing the number of hands needed. Soon industry's worries spread to other fields.

In just one year, 1905, Admiral George Dewey declared that "younger men" should command Navy ships, steel magnate Andrew Carnegie set up a fund to pension off aging college teachers, and a Johns Hopkins medical school professor named William Osler created a storm with a widely noted valedictory address. Osler declared that man's creative years run from 25 to 40, after which he loses "mental elasticity" and finally becomes, after age 60, "useless." He wryly suggested that society take a cue from the Anthony Trollope novel *The Fixed Period*, which dealt with a college that gives professors who reach the age of 60 a year of contemplation before a peaceful departure by chloroform.

The Revolt of the Young

Though Osler's speech prompted much editorial anger, it also stirred serious thought about retirement. *Harper's Weekly* reckoned that it might indeed be a "pleasure-time."

By the Roaring Twenties, the youth cult was established. The nation found a 25-year-old hero in Charles Lindbergh; women returned to adolescence by shortening their skirts. The auto, mass production, and other wonders ushered in an era of progress in which, as historian Gilman Ostrander has noted, "it



Some durable doers: Sophocles (who lived to about 90) wrote *Oedipus at Colonus* at 82; Benjamin Franklin (84) negotiated the U.S. Constitution at 81; Konrad Adenauer (91) was West German chancellor from age 73 to 87.

was expected that the sons and the daughters would enjoy advantages that the parents had not been able to enjoy, in a mechanically better world than the parents had known." In the end, Ostrander adds, the '20s brought "the blanket repudiation of the traditional farm-oriented, church-oriented, somewhat patriarchal moral order of the Protestant Republic." The "crux of the revolution was the reversal of the order of authority in a society from age to youth."

Other analysts trace the cult to a compulsion to prove that the country was still young, despite the closing of the frontier and the steady graying of the population. Whatever the cause, vigor was in. By the 1930s, when the Great Depression was adding to pressures for a national retirement program to deal with superfluous older workers, prejudice against the aged was at a peak. One measure of its power was the protest literature it engendered: Three years before President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the 1935 Social Security Act into law, Aldous Huxley published his bitter satire *Brave New World*, which dealt with a nightmarish utopia where everyone aged 60 was sent to an infirmary to be put to sleep permanently.

The youth cult, as William Graebner noted in *A History of Retirement* (1980), helped provide a rationale for the furloughing of older workers. "Retirement was essentially a political device, imposed by one group upon another." And yet, says Graebner, "its imposition was seldom challenged." Indeed, many older workers welcomed it. Why?

In effect, the elderly accepted a trade. As early as the 1920s, "leisure theorists" were arguing that technological unemploy-



Henry Ford (84) retired at 82; Golda Meir (80) stepped down as Israel's premier at 76; Pablo Picasso (91) never quit painting: "Age only matters when one is aging. Now that I have arrived at a great age, I might as well be 20."

ment had to be converted into permanent retirement. Laid-off workers could not count on finding new jobs. Although forced withdrawal from labor might have stirred rebellion among the old, says Graebner, they were instead sold on the idea that technology was only "freeing Americans for new forms of leisure."

Activities for pensioners were promoted by organizations such as Golden Age Clubs, which first appeared in Cleveland in the 1940s and were widespread by the 1950s. Intellectuals got interested in retirement. Harvard sociologist David Riesman wrote about "the home as a 'plant' for leisure." Psychologists developed a handy theory of "disengagement," which held that aging people undergo a natural withdrawal from involvement in family, community, and political concerns that serves to maintain their psychological well-being as their energy declines. Work might actually be harmful for older folks.

By the 1960s, "the meaning of retirement had been transformed," says Graebner. "It was now a form of leisure, a way of spending time following the conclusion of one's work life; it was a stage of existence, inevitable but to be welcomed and even celebrated." The senior citizen was born.

Seniors today are largely creatures of the cities, where services are readily available. In 1980, almost 75 percent of them lived in urban areas. But the elderly, the least mobile Americans, have been in the vanguard of migratory trends. In the 1960s, before others discovered the Sun Belt, seniors were leaving the North for cheaper and warmer living in the South and West. In that decade, the aged population rose by 31 percent in California and 79 percent in Florida, the grayest state: Nearly 18

percent of its people are over age 65, a level that the whole nation is expected to reach by 2020. Half the elderly live in seven states: California, Florida, Illinois, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas.

Seniors have pioneered age-segregated living. An estimated five percent reside in communities that bar people under age 55 or some other minimum. Hundreds of age-limited mobile home parks have been established around the country, and by the mid-1970s, developers had built some 69 retirement villages. Leisure World in Laguna Hills, California, houses 21,000 residents, from retired plumbers to ex-bankers, in a complex that sprawls over 2,095 rolling acres and offers diversions such as hobby shops, dance classes, amateur dramatics, and 18 holes of golf.

Deep Pockets

For those who have joined what demographers call the "frail elderly," developers are now building "lifecare communities." A new resident pays an "endowment" that may range from \$21,000 to \$200,000, depending on the size of his apartment or cottage. For that, plus a monthly fee, he gets not only maid service and medical treatment but also help with shopping and preparing meals. When an endowee dies—as 10 percent do each year—his quarters revert to the community to be sold again. Florida has 33 such developments.

As the spread of age-segregated living suggests, families are becoming as separated physically as they are in years. (And by 1980, that separation was great: The average time between the marriage of a woman's last child and her own death was approaching 30 years.)

Though most old people still live in the same city or town as at least one of their children, many choose to set up house-keeping on their own. As recently as 1952, one-third of the elderly lived with at least one of their children; now less than one-sixth do. In 1960, most widowed women lived with relatives; now fewer than one-third do. Says Crystal: "The current generation of elderly is the first for whom living alone has become the norm when a spouse is not in the picture." Compromises are possible, however: A new wrinkle in housing for the aged is the "granny flat," a prefab one-bedroom hut that children can put up in a yard for their parents in two days (cost: \$18,000).

The elderly do not even depend on their kids for cash. Studies show that only five to 10 percent receive money from their children. More of them help out their offspring; parental aid re-

GETTING AND SPENDING

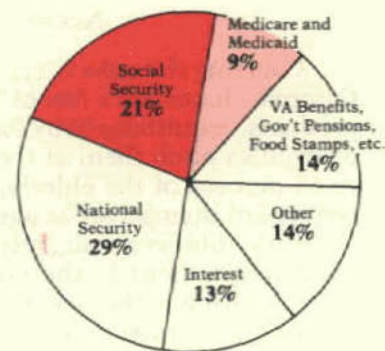
As the pair of pie charts below indicates, the mix of income sources for the aged as a group has changed markedly since 1950. The importance of government payments, especially those made through Social Security, has grown sharply, while that of earnings from labor and income from assets (stock dividends, interest on savings, etc.) has declined. The need for "public assistance"—mostly payments under the means-tested Supplemental Security Income program—has fallen.

Of course, the sizes of the pie slices vary greatly from individual to individual. Take private pensions, included in "Other" along with public-employee pensions, veterans benefits, etc. One study finds that, on average, private pensions provide 15 percent of the income for more prosperous elderly couples, but only one percent for those who have low incomes.

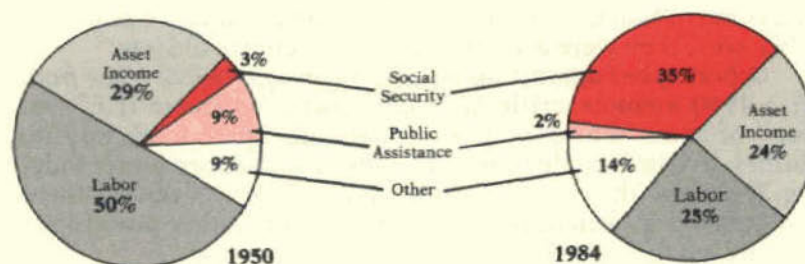


THE AGE-POVERTY GAP

* Defined in 1983 as \$4775 per year for those 65 and over, and \$5180 per year for all others.



THE 1984 FEDERAL BUDGET



WHERE THE AGED GET THEIR MONEY

Sources: Urban Institute, Congressional Budget Office.

mains important to middle-aged children who are rearing their own families.

Businessmen are also discovering that the elderly have deep pockets. Last year, after paying for food, shelter, and other fixed expenses, they had \$33.6 billion available to spend—18 percent of all such “discretionary income.” The elderly account for nearly 12 percent of subscriptions to *Time* magazine, the same amount of over-the-counter drug sales as younger people, and nearly 19 percent of purchases of new American cars (but only six percent of foreign models). As holders of nearly 11 percent of the nation’s 152,038,000 driver’s licenses, they get around—important to operators of gas stations, motels, and tourist meccas. The fact that the aged spend 24 cents of each food dollar on sustenance outside the home makes them favorites of fast-food marketers: The Wendy’s “Where’s the beef?” commercials were plainly pitched at seniors.

Nearer to God and TV

Courting the elderly can be tricky, however. The H. J. Heinz Company launched a line of “Senior Foods” in the 1950s, but the products, essentially baby food, flopped. Makers of cosmetics for older folks pitch them at those “over 40.” Studies show that 40 to 65 percent of the elderly, usually the more affluent, just do not regard themselves as aged.

Many observers suggest that what disturbs the aged most about retirement is the powerlessness that comes with the trade. Writing in the *New Yorker*, in 1983, about Sun City Center, a Florida retirement community of some 8,500 south of Tampa, journalist Frances Fitzgerald noted how many residents wore youthful sportswear and echoed the booster’s boast that theirs is “the town too busy to retire.” The Sun Citians, she concluded, “had simply lost their consciousness of other age groups. They had come to Sun City not to be old but to be young. To put it another way, they were attempting to despecialize old age.”

Others rebel against aging in other ways. In *The View from 80*, a 1980 memoir, critic Malcolm Cowley pondered the “avarice” of some seniors: “They eat the cheapest food, buy no clothes, live in a single room when they could afford better lodging. It may be that they regard money as a form of power; there is a comfort in watching it accumulate while other powers are drifting away.”

The winners in old age, suggests Cowley, now 87, are those who have always been resourceful. “Although we are all in the same boat, with tickets for the same destination, we do not enjoy the same comforts during the voyage. . . . Mere wealth be-

comes less important in age, except as a symbol of power and security. Things harder to measure—health, temperament, education, esteem, and self-esteem—contribute more to one's life. Thus, intellectual poverty proves to be as bad as material poverty. The educated live better than the uneducated, even on similar incomes; they have more interests and occupations (for example, reading) and are entertained by prosperous friends. They may live longer, too, though it would be hard to quote statistics, and meanwhile they enjoy more respect."

With age, churchgoing may increase. A Harris poll found that 71 percent of people over 65 found religion "very important" to them, compared with only 49 percent of other adults. Yet what all this avowed interest reflects is unclear. For rural and working-class people, especially, their church may have been their only "club" all through life; some studies show that in big cities, where other diversions abound, religious activity drops with age. Elizabeth Kübler-Ross and other researchers have established that "good personal adjustment" in the last stage of life coincides with deep religious conviction—although that may mean only that those who are well adjusted enjoy many religious activities.

Next to God, what Americans seem to draw closest to as they age is TV. Among the elderly, viewing is triple the national average of 16.4 hours a week. Yet pressure from advertisers for younger audiences curbs programming for the aged. (A favorite, "The Lawrence Welk Show," was canceled in 1971.) Old folks are notably underrepresented on the tube: A 1979 survey found that seniors had only 2.3 percent of the roles in comedies and dramas.

The Way to a Man's Heart

Still, the aged watch and watch. For many, TV is a good companion. For others, it may be more. Gary Albert Steiner, a media scholar, quotes one aged viewer: "TV gives me life. It gives me what to look forward to—that tomorrow, if I live, I'll watch this and that program."

Books, by contrast, tend to stay on the elderly's shelves. Polls show that only 39 percent of the aged (versus 56 percent of all Americans) are regular readers—perhaps reflecting the fact that today's typical senior had only an elementary or high school education. (Also, he is three times as likely to be foreign-born as other Americans.) The favored fare: modern and historical novels, westerns, poetry.

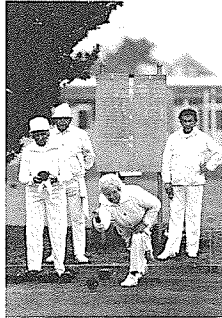
Sex fades, though not sharply. In *A Good Age* (1976), Alex Comfort cites a study of men and women between the ages of 60

KEEPING UP

Besides the reduction of old-age poverty, the big shift in the economics of old age during the past two decades has been the rising ability of middle-class retirees to maintain middle-class lives.

In 1982, the median money income of households headed by senior citizens was \$11,041, or 55 percent of that of the nation as a whole—up from just 38 percent in 1967. At the 55 percent level, the typical older American in good health can live as well as a younger American with a higher cash income.

Why? One reason is that the elderly are less apt to be saddled with tuition, children's orthodontist bills, or a mortgage. Of the 12 million seniors who own their homes, 62 percent own them free and clear.



The elderly also reap benefits beyond their Social Security checks and "in-kind" aid such as Medicare. Some are tax breaks. Most Social Security is tax free, though now seniors with gross incomes exceeding \$25,000 for singles and \$32,000 for couples must pay a small levy on their federal checks. Seniors also get twice the standard \$1,000 personal exemption on their federal 1040 forms, and those with low incomes may also qualify for a special retirement tax credit.

Other cost shavers include property-tax reductions offered by many states and localities, bargain transit fares, and cut-rate Meals on Wheels available to senior shut-ins in some 2,000 communities. Businesses offer the elderly bargains such as "early bird specials" at restaurants, reduced prices for movies, and cheap checking accounts. As banks know, seniors can and do save more than younger Americans.

On the income side, the big winners in retirement are those who have public-service pensions, which, unlike those of their private-sector counterparts, are indexed to inflation. In a 1981 study of state and local retirement plans, the Urban Institute found that, on average, those who retired at 65 after 30 years on the job receive pension benefits worth well over 100 percent of final pay. The champions in the field are "double dippers"—typically, military men who can retire at half pay after 20 years of service, or on three-quarters pay after 30 years, and start a new career. An example, cited in a 1983 *Newsweek* story, is a former Army lieutenant colonel who left the service in 1972 on 75 percent of his \$13,713-a-year salary, then worked 10 years for a private company before retiring again in 1983. By then, cost-of-living increases had raised his Army pension to \$34,309. His total retirement income, including his \$729-a-month in Social Security from both his Army and private-sector years: \$49,057.


**TWO
HOUSEHOLDS**


Mr. & Mrs. Middle	NAME	Mr. & Mrs. Senior
55 & 50	AGE	70 & 65
sales manager/housewife	OCCUPATION	retired sales manager/ housewife
two (at home)	CHILDREN	two (married, away)

INCOME

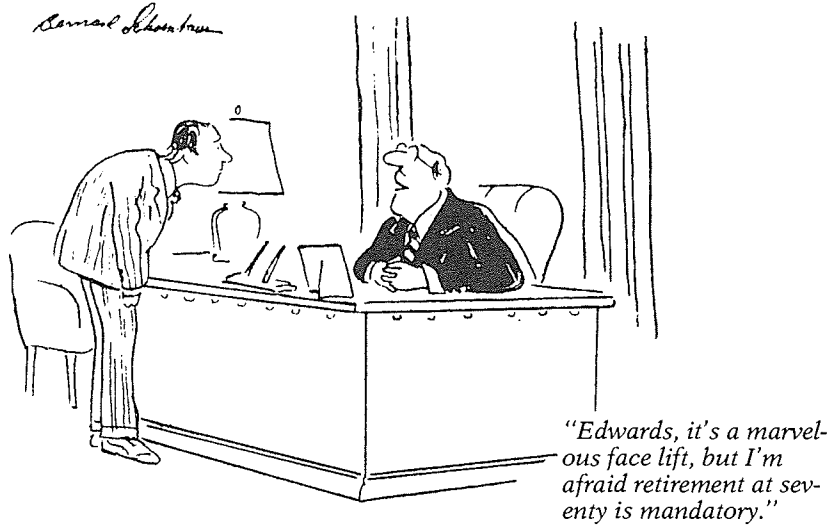
\$30,009	SALARY	0
0	SOCIAL SECURITY	\$4,272
0	PENSION	\$9,974
\$30,009	TOTAL	\$14,246

OUTGO

\$5,843 (23%)	FOOD	\$2,898 (24%)
\$5,546 (22%)	HOUSING	\$3,393 (28%)
\$2,372 (9%)	TRANSPORTATION	\$1,073 (9%)
\$1,333 (5%)	CLOTHING	\$409 (3%)
\$508 (2%)	PERSONAL ITEMS	\$290 (2%)
\$1,443 (6%)	MEDICAL CARE	\$1,091 (9%)
\$1,196 (5%)	INSURANCE, ETC.	\$457 (4%)
\$1,021 (4%)	MISCELLANEOUS	\$615 (5%)
\$6,146 (24%)	TAXES	\$1,923 (16%)
\$25,408 (100%)	TOTAL	\$12,149 (100%)

+\$4,601 YEAR-END NET +\$2,097

Drawn from 1981 Bureau of Labor Statistics and Bureau of the Census data on mean household incomes and expenditures.



and 93 that found no significant decline from past activity up to age 75; after that, 25 percent were "fully active." For most, the desire to have a mate endures. A key development in the American family structure has been the rise of single people living alone—a situation that, in the 1983 census, characterized eight percent of all those between the ages of 20 and 34. But in the 65 to 74 age group, nearly 78 percent of the men and 39 percent of the women were married and living with their spouses.

Studies show that elderly men who are widowed—as 14 percent were in 1980, versus 51 percent of older women—find the experience particularly stressful. They are less accustomed to caring for themselves, more apt to be depressed by being alone when most of their friends are still married. Some surveys indicate that men are more likely than women to die soon after being widowed.

Typically, a widowed man soon finds a new helpmeet. He has many candidates from whom to choose: Of the seven million old people who live alone, nearly four-fifths are women. The lonely ladies who bake casseroles for freshly widowed men are a part of retirement community folklore.

Though polls show that the elderly are far more disapproving of "living in sin" than younger Americans, an unknown but surely large number of those who take new mates late in life choose to skip the formalities, as a result of estate-planning con-

siderations or other complications. For instance, a widow under the age of 60 who ties the knot again may lose her Social Security survivor's benefits.

Alcoholism is a problem among the aged. They also account for nearly one-third of all suicides. Among the very frail, Cowley speculates, suicide reflects "not the fear of death," but the fear of "becoming helpless. It is the fear of being as dependent as a young child, while not being loved as a child is loved, but merely being kept alive against one's will. It is the fear of having to be dressed by a nurse, fed by a nurse, kept quiet with tranquilizers (as babies with pacifiers), and of ringing (or not being able to ring) for a nurse to change one's sheets after soiling the bed."

Only five percent of the elderly reside in the nation's 23,000 nursing homes, but one in five will enter one at some point. The residents' average age is 80, and 73 percent are women. Half have no family; half have a mental disorder.

The disengagement theory was finally discredited partly by the demonstrably high interest that the aged retain in public affairs. Although political activism is highest among people in their thirties and forties, research shows that political consciousness increases steadily with age, even after 65. In a 1982 Gallup poll, for example, 56 percent of the elderly—more than in any other age group—got the right answer when asked to name their congressmen; only 25 percent of the 18- to 24-year-olds managed to do so.

Age and Attitudes

Moreover, the elderly account for 15 percent of the voting-age population. And while turnout is heaviest among 50- to 64-year-olds, the aged run a close second.

That old people are conservative is one of the most durable axioms of American politics. Indeed, in every presidential election since the Truman-Dewey race of 1948 an average of somewhat over 50 percent of elderly citizens have voted Republican; though in recent polls 70 percent of the aged said that they were Democrats or independents, 57 percent of them voted to re-elect Ronald Reagan last November. Yet experts have long argued over whether aging brings political conservatism.

The early 1960s brought a "maturational" view of aging that held that advancing years do bring conservative views. Sociologists have found some evidence that aging yields a less "open" view of the world; people develop a psychological rigidity as they lose power to deal with circumstances facing them. But most researchers now doubt that age itself offers a reliable guide to political behavior.

Definitions of conservatism are always slippery at best, and events have shown that the attitudes of the aged and the young can converge or divide in unexpected ways. For all the press interest in the "youth rebellion" during the Vietnam War, for instance, polls consistently showed that opposition to the war was highest among those over 64. During the Korean War, opposition also peaked among the aged; indeed, only 18- to 24-year-olds favored U.S. involvement.

Most students of aging now adhere to some form of "generational" theory. They hold that the views of the elderly reflect not their years but where they "come from"—their social class, religion, ethnic background, region of birth, and schooling, as well as the experiences that impressed them greatly. According to this theory, a 70-year-old American Legion stalwart is not more conservative than a 30-year-old ex-Yippie because he is 40 years older, but because he grew up during the Great Depression and a patriotic struggle (World War II), while the younger man is a product of Vietnam and other '60s extravagances.

Generational Warfare?

Some researchers speculate that by 2025, when today's 30-year-olds are retired, the elderly could represent 16 percent of the population and 20 percent of the voters. If generational theory holds, the results could be interesting. The future seniors are mostly college educated. Unlike today's oldsters, about 80 percent of whom are registered by party, they are more likely to be independents. Polls show that most of them believe that their goals are better served by interest groups than by the major parties.

Compared with today's old folks, Gallup has found the young more in favor of a balanced-budget amendment (73 percent, versus 65 percent for seniors), more opposed to the Moral Majority (30 percent versus 18 percent), more in favor of the Equal Rights Amendment (66 percent versus 45 percent) and the nuclear-freeze movement (75 percent versus 67 percent). Only five percent of the young, versus 22 percent of the aged, would dislike living near an unwed couple.

So far, the elderly have not voted as a bloc, except on issues that directly concern them. If generation theory holds, seniors will continue to vote not their age—which many refuse to acknowledge—but their diverse backgrounds and interests. Brandeis University gerontologist Robert H. Binstock argues that the elders of the next century will, like those of today, "include stubborn independents, wishy-washy independents, Dem-

ocrats, and Republicans (or whatever the majority parties will be called 50 years from now.)”

Perhaps. But many observers suggest that future seniors could be forced to circle their wagons if, as some projections suggest, Social Security taxes will be slicing away as much as 25 percent of the average worker's paycheck by the year 2030 to support the 40 to 50 million aged that will be in the population then. Stanford University economist Michael J. Boskin has said that this could bring on “the greatest polarization in the United States since the Civil War. It could be age warfare.”

The old pose an issue in all societies. In poor, primitive tribes that are nomadic or live by the hunt, no Golden Years are possible. Among the Hottentots of southern Africa, parents too old to carry food or young children were left to die in the desert. When the Northern Ojibwa Indians lived along the shores of Lake Michigan, an enfeebled tribesman would be abandoned on a small island; if he deserved honors for past achievements, he would be given a tribal feast—in the course of which, during the singing, his son would come up and dispatch him with a tomahawk. In the language of some Peruvian Indians, the word for “old” also means “ugly.” The primitive societies kindest to the aged have been prosperous agricultural ones, those that also treated their children well, and those that had no written language and thus valued old members as repositories of tribal lore.

Rethinking Retirement

But even in the Eastern societies, where veneration of the elderly is at its highest, aging can be traumatic. In Japan, which is experiencing a *rojin buumu* (old people boom) much like America's, the elderly seem no more fond of seeing their power erode than any other people do. When a Japanese turns 60, he is given a party called a *kan-reki*—literally, “returning to being a child.” When old people go to public baths, they often enter the waters after younger bathers, as if thereby to absorb some of their vigor.

In America, a reassessment of just when old age—as defined by retirement—begins has been under way since the late 1970s. Congress began allowing women to go on Social Security at age 62 in 1956; men got that option in 1961. Now the pendulum is swinging the other way. In 1983, the rules were changed to encourage people to work on as late as 70, now the earliest mandatory retirement age for most private-industry workers and all federal employees.

So far, these steps have not slowed the trend toward retire-

ment before age 65. Indeed, most private employers still encourage it. Yet early retirement, once viewed as "progressive," now seems expensive. By 1981, retirement benefits were nearly 18 percent of the payroll costs of private companies. Younger workers are costly to train and may not match the reliability of the early retirees they replace. Moreover, as the Baby-Boom generation ages, the percentage of young adults between the ages of 20 and 34 will fall from 45 to 35 percent by the end of the century. Older workers will be in demand.

At the same time, inflation is tarnishing the retirement trade. At 12 percent inflation, the buying power of a pension declines by nearly two-thirds in 10 years, by 90 percent in less than 20 years. Even with lower inflation, only people with inherited money, unusually generous pensions, or great luck with their investments can be assured of affording a lengthy retirement. But under current rules, a person who retires at 65 and then takes part-time work may have to do without his Social Security benefits until he turns 73.

Changing the Pattern

The squeeze on both taxpayers and the old folks they support might be eased through a breaking of the retirement lock-step. Some experts propose scrapping forced retirement for competency tests that would determine which workers should be put out to pasture and which allowed to stay on the job. But whether employers would go along is doubtful. As Arthur Fleming explained in 1959, when he was Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, mandatory retirement is "a lazy man's device for dealing with a difficult program. By dropping everyone at a fixed age, managers avoid having to decide who should retire and who can go on working."

A 1981 Harris poll showed that 79 percent of workers nearing 65 would prefer to continue part-time work after retirement, rather than stop completely. Indeed, England, France, the Netherlands, and other European countries have "gliding-out" plans that allow older workers to make a gradual shift to a part-time schedule. In Japan, "retired" corporate employees often go back to work in lower positions in the same company.

In America, some experts believe, more radical innovations are made possible—and necessary—by the fact that 65 is obsolete as a useful dividing line between middle and old age. Most people now remain vigorous well into their seventies. Former Carnegie Corporation president Alan Pifer suggests that the standard youth-career-retirement pattern be modified to add a

“third quarter” between the ages of 50 and 75.

Typically, 50 is a turning point. By that age most people have raised their children and reached a peak in the field they started out in; they may be a bit bored. Pifer argues that they could profit from a “repotting”—a move into another specialty, a part-time job, volunteer work, or something else that would generate interests and enthusiasms that will carry them into their seventies.

To make such a repotting work, Pifer concedes, society would have to revise the idea that “productivity” involves only full-time, paid employment. Most important, “There must be a social expectation that people will remain productive. . .and will be accepted by younger people as contributing, fully involved members of the community.”

In a way, the nation’s seniors are already contributing: They are showing their juniors that, in a world of increasingly scarce resources, it really is possible to make do with somewhat less. That talent will be useful in the next century, when the Baby Boomers retire. Then the ratio of Social Security taxpayers to beneficiaries, already a perilous 3.3 to 1, will sink even further, and the huge cost of supporting retirement as it now exists will become even more glaringly apparent.

By then, Thomas Jefferson could again offer an example. Besides knowing how to use the Golden Years, he saw that conditions change from one age to another, and in fact argued that the Constitution should be rewritten every 19 years to fit new needs. In America’s old-age policies, he might agree, the time for a rewrite is at hand.



STITCHING A SAFETY NET

by W. Andrew Achenbaum

Last April, more than 3,000 members of the National Council on the Aging gathered in Washington to discuss "1984 and Beyond: Options for an Aging Society." They heard prideful accounts of the strides made in improving the elderly's quality of life—but also some worries that options for further advances were narrowing. "One fact stands unchallenged," observed Senator John Heinz (R.-Penn.), who chairs the Senate Special Committee on Aging. Unless health costs can be curbed, "neither older Americans nor the federal government itself will have the resources to address any other problem."

Heinz was hardly playing Chicken Little, for the danger is real. The cost of Medicare and other entitlement programs for the elderly has ballooned. In the span of a single generation—during the years between the passage of the Social Security Act of 1935 and Medicare's creation in 1965—Washington shouldered unprecedented responsibilities on behalf of the nation's old folks. By the late 1970s, the burden was becoming heavy, and calls for "reform" were widespread.

Throughout most of its history, America lacked an explicit old-age policy. During the colonial and ante-bellum periods, the elderly were expected to be independent and useful as long as they could. Septuagenarians served during the first quarter of the 19th century as chief wardens of the ports of Boston and Philadelphia. "When persons of mature age and eminent for their experience, wisdom, and virtue" are elected to Congress, Hezekiah Niles, editor and publisher of Philadelphia's *Niles National Register*, wrote in an 1820 editorial, "it is a subject for gratitude and congratulation."

To be sure, Americans have always been age-conscious, but their earliest concern was with the potential handicaps of youth, not of advanced years. Men had to be at least 21 to vote. States barred young men—but not old ones—from running for governor or the legislature. The Constitution set minimum ages for high elected office. Yet prior to the Civil War, there was no mandatory retirement in the private sector. Only seven states imposed any upper age limits on public service, and these were confined to a few judicial posts.

Americans were not, of course, oblivious to the vicissitudes of old age. As the 19th century wore on, they gradually discounted



The Gray Panthers, led by 79-year-old Margaret Kuhn, are just part of the powerful "Gray Lobby" that has blossomed since the 1950s. Some 30 organizations that speak for the elderly have offices in Washington, D.C.

the usefulness of older people. "The old man today. . . slow, hesitating, frequently half-blind and deaf, is sadly misplaced amid the death dealing machinery of a modern factory," wrote Burton J. Hendrick in a 1908 essay, "The Superannuated Man."

But even as times and attitudes changed, few Americans thought it necessary to rethink old notions of how to provide for the needy elderly. The family and the local community had been and remained their chief sources of assistance. Some states, building on a precedent embodied in the Elizabethan Poor Laws, made family members legally as well as morally responsible for their poor and infirm kin, but these measures varied widely. Not until the early 20th century did any states—among them, Colorado, Kentucky, and Ohio—make children's abuse of their aging parents a criminal offense.

If family members were not nearby or defaulted on their obligations the community typically intervened to help. Aged dependents sometimes received provisions at home or were boarded out at town expense. As Europeans had done for centu-

ries, benevolent societies, religious organizations, and other groups built old-age homes for elderly members. Such facilities grew enormously after the Civil War, though even the best-endowed homes, such as Philadelphia's Indigent Widows' and Single Women's Society (founded in 1817) rarely housed more than 100 people during any given year. About three percent of the population over 60 took shelter in public almshouses, which increasingly became de facto old-age homes. Going "Over the Hill to the Poorhouse," as Will Carleton phrased it in an 1871 poem, was a dreadful and dreaded last resort for the old.

Soldiers Before Seniors

A "safety net" for the aged was put into place slowly, in piecemeal fashion, and for a variety of motives. After 1875, transportation companies such as the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and American Express began to provide "retirement" pensions for older workers whom they wished to ease out. Unions, lodges, and fraternal orders built communal homes and took up collections for aged and disabled members. As the Progressive Era dawned, about two dozen states set up pensions for retired teachers. Bigger cities increasingly provided funds for retired police officers and firemen.

Yet, for the most part, the federal government remained aloof. Congress did feel a responsibility to veterans in their twilight years. As early as 1818, it had provided pensions to citizens who had served for at least nine months in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. There was a dramatic increase in veterans' coverage and costs throughout the 19th century as eligibility rules and benefits were liberalized. Washington paid out \$174.2 million for veterans' pensions in 1913, accounting for 18 percent of the federal budget. (Today, 26 widows of Civil War veterans still collect benefits.)

But Congress was not yet prepared to follow the lead of Bismarck's Germany (1889) and Lloyd George's Britain (1908) in providing minimal old-age pensions for the population as a whole. Nor was there any interest in adopting compulsory sickness insur-

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ance, as had occurred in Norway (1909), Britain (1911), Russia (1912), and the Netherlands (1913). When Victor Berger, a Socialist Congressman from Wisconsin, contended in 1911 that "the work of the soldier of industry is infinitely more necessary than the bloody work of the soldier" and that aged workers thus have "a claim on society that is even better than the claims of the soldier," his analogy was more striking than persuasive.

Nevertheless, pressure to do more for the aged increased after World War I, as awareness grew that old age itself was becoming a "social problem." Federal census data, social workers' reports, and special surveys demonstrated that growing numbers of older people needed assistance. "Mere hard work, frugality, and good habits" no longer protect people from poverty in old age, declared Abraham Epstein, research director of the Pennsylvania Commission on Old Age Pensions, in 1922. Epstein claimed that at least 40 percent of America's elderly population was indigent. Business groups, civic organizations, scholars, and "professional altruists" slowly took up the cause.

An 'Earned Right'

In response, many states wrote into law the family's responsibility to its aged members. Voluntary associations built more old-age homes. By 1930, 15 percent of all privately employed nonfarm workers (and 20 percent of all union members) were covered by pension programs. The federal government set up a retirement system for its 330,000 civil servants in 1920; nearly every municipality and most of the wealthier states did the same. Between 1920 and 1931, 18 states enacted relief plans for their neediest senior citizens.

Universal coverage, however, was not yet in sight. Most legislatures chose *not* to provide old-age assistance. The average benefit in states that did was worth less than \$1 a day (about \$2,350 a year today). And because employers often reserved the right to revise eligibility criteria or to discontinue paying benefits, even workers with pension rights could not always count on receiving their due. In a particularly egregious instance, annuitants of a Maryland railroad company saw their pensions revoked in 1922 when they refused to become scabs during a strike by the road's engineers and firemen.

While more and more Americans agreed that old age had become a considerable "problem," few believed that radical reforms were necessary. It was well known that Britain in 1925 had established a contributory pension plan for widows and orphans and that several Scandinavian nations were adopting

SOCIAL SECURITY'S CASH SQUEEZE

In 1977, President Jimmy Carter signed legislation gradually increasing the payroll tax levied on employees to support the Social Security system from just under six percent to just over 7.5 percent. This, he said, would "guarantee" the health of the strained pension program through the year 2030. He was mistaken.

Within three years, payments were exceeding the pension fund's income by up to \$15 billion a year. In 1982, the fund had to borrow more than \$17 billion from Social Security's medical care and disability funds to keep going. The Reagan administration and Congress resolved the crisis in 1983 by agreeing to the system's first benefit reductions and a speedup of payroll tax increases. This tax, now 6.7 percent for employees; is the largest tax of any kind that is paid by one-fourth of the 110 million workers in the system.

The crisis stemmed in part from Congress's 1972 decision to index benefits to inflation. During the Carter years, payments into the system lagged along with the soft economy. But inflation soared, triggering big cost-of-living adjustments—9.9 percent in 1980 alone. By 1982, the system was taking in nearly \$190 billion a year, but paying out almost \$200 billion, including \$140 billion in pensions.

When Congress created Social Security in 1935, no one envisioned that it would come to account for nearly 21 percent of the federal budget. What the creators *did* have in mind is in dispute. Conservatives argue that pensions were meant to be small, to be supported by payroll taxes alone, and to serve as only one leg of a three-legged retirement plan, along with personal savings and private pensions. Liberals say that Social Security was meant to be the *primary* source of support for lower- and middle-income retirees, and that it *should* tap general tax revenues.

Once established, Social Security took on a life of its own, expanding in a series of incremental steps and occasional breakthroughs such as the addition of disability insurance in 1956 and Medicare in 1965. It is an "intergenerational transfer tax" that shifts money directly from workers to retirees. Pensions are not based on individual contributions, which are not recorded. Rather, they are based on individual career earnings. The average monthly payments are now about \$650 for a couple, just under \$400 for a single retiree, and about \$350 for a survivor, usually a widow. Those who had high lifetime earnings get fatter checks (the current maximum: \$703). But

health-care programs to meet the elderly's needs. But any dramatic departure from the status quo in America, many experts and legislators feared, might threaten everyone else's financial well-being. On the eve of the Great Depression, military pensions were still the primary source of government assistance to the aged. In 1929, about 80 percent of *all* money distributed through pensions came from this single source.

the system is skewed to provide "adequacy" for the poor. For more prosperous retirees, who presumably have other means of support, Social Security payments are proportionately low; the highest income groups receive about 27 percent of their top pre-retirement pay. The lowest get about 53 percent.

Social Security's basic problem is that it gives more than it receives. Including employer and employee contributions, 1982 retirees had an average of some \$25,000 "invested" in the system. If they live 17 years after retirement—the national average—they will get back about \$125,000, or five times their stake.

When the system began operating, in 1939, the payroll tax took one percent of a worker's pay, and the average monthly check was \$22.60. Over the years, Congress has doubled the purchasing power of the average check. That was easy when the ratio of workers to retirees was high—and initially it was 9 to 1. But the surge in the ranks of retirees has slashed the ratio, now 3.3 to 1. At this level, pension increases must be accompanied by parallel boosts in the payroll tax, which is now scheduled to rise to 7.65 percent by 1990.

After 1990, taxes paid by the big Baby-Boom generation will keep the pension fund flush. But a new crisis looms when the Baby Boomers themselves begin to retire around 2010. Then the worker-retiree ratio may fall below 2 to 1. Partly because the Baby Boomers will have paid more taxes than their predecessors, their return on their Social Security investment may be only half as generous.

Some critics contend that if workers could "opt out" of the program, they could build a better retirement nest egg on their own. But that assumes they would invest 15 percent of their take-home pay (the amount of their own *and* their employer's Social Security taxes) year after year—a dubious assumption.

Given the faith that most Americans still retain in the system, no big changes are likely. Ronald Reagan once (in 1981) said that participation in it ought to be "voluntary," but he has not pursued the idea. The administration has conceded that the system is, as one White House aide has said, "as American as mom and apple pie. It might not be the best retirement program, but it's the one people know."

—Paul Light

Paul Light is Director of Academy Research, National Academy of Public Administration. This essay is adapted from his book Artful Work: Building a Social Security Compromise, © 1985 by Random House.

The depression, wrote University of Chicago economist (and later U.S. Senator) Paul H. Douglas, "convinced the majority of the American people that individuals could not themselves provide adequately for their old age and that some sort of greater security should be provided by society." Unemployment among the elderly during the Great Depression exceeded the national average of 25 percent. Some 45 private pension plans, covering more

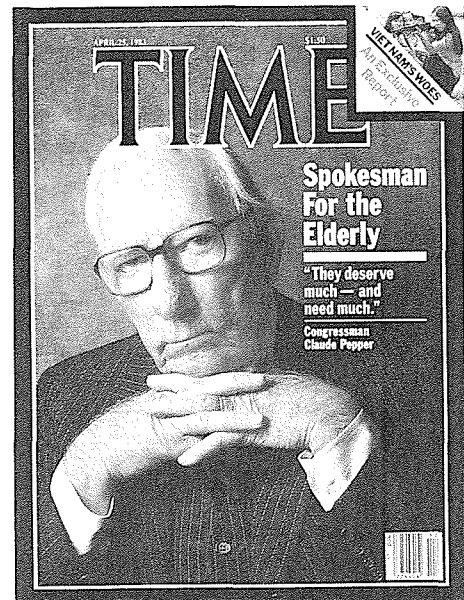
than 100,000 employees, were abruptly discontinued; scores of other corporate programs deferred benefits indefinitely.

People demanded federal relief. Millions of older citizens rallied to support panaceas such as the Townsend Plan, which would have given all Americans over 60 a pension of \$200 a month on the condition that they not work and spend the money within 30 days. Officials of the American Federation of Labor reversed their earlier stance and called for public protection against the hazards of unemployment, disability, and old age.

Finally, on August 14, 1935, after more than a year of serious deliberation and political wrangling, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act. "We can never insure 100 percent of the population against 100 percent of the hazards and vicissitudes of life," FDR declared, "but we have tried to frame a law which will give some measure of protection to the average citizen and to his family against the loss of a job and against poverty-ridden old age."

The act was a turning point in the evolution of a national old-age policy. A federal-state program of old-age assistance was established under Title I. A separate old-age insurance scheme was created under Title II to be financed by a one percent tax, paid by both an employee and his employer on the first \$3,000 of a worker's covered earnings. (As a result, supporters of Social

Press portraits of the elderly, such as this 1983 cover story featuring 84-year-old Congressman Claude Pepper (D.-Fla.), typically dwell on the needs of the elderly but rarely examine how much they now have.



Security claimed that program benefits were an "earned right," not a dole.) An unemployment insurance program was also created (Title III), as were provisions for dependent mothers and children (Title IV), the blind (Title X), and public-health services (Title V and VI).

American policy-makers viewed Social Security as an experiment. They knew they needed time to clarify details and to let Americans get used to the idea of social insurance. So the program began modestly—only 222,000 Americans received benefits under Title II in December 1940.

New Directions

After the war, Social Security expanded gradually. In 1950, farmers, domestic workers, and civilian employees not covered by the Federal Civil Service Retirement System were brought into the Title II pension program. By 1960, participation had become compulsory for self-employed professionals and military personnel, and voluntary for clergy, state-government employees, and people who worked in nonprofit organizations; that year, nearly 15 million Americans received Title II benefits. Meanwhile, Congress acted periodically—in 1950, 1952, 1954, and 1959—to make payments more generous. Disability coverage was added. When John F. Kennedy took office in 1961, these social-insurance expenditures were the largest single item in the federal domestic budget. They have been so ever since.

Amid postwar affluence, the number of Americans participating in private-sector pension plans also began to rise, to more than 20 million in 1960. But Social Security remained the essential—and often the sole—means of support for a growing percentage of the elderly.

Despite all this, a large segment of the population remained (or became) poor late in life. University of Michigan researchers estimated that, during the late 1950s, 48 percent of all families headed by an elderly person were potential welfare recipients (versus 28 percent of U.S. families generally). Social Security officials reported that almost one-third of the aged were living on inadequate incomes. "Fear of illness and lack of sufficient money," declared Anthony J. Celebrezze, the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, in 1963, "are uppermost in the long list of worries" of most older Americans.

Federal programs for the elderly took two new directions during the 1960s as President Lyndon B. Johnson set about creating his Great Society. On the one hand, Washington committed itself to doing more. Social Security beneficiaries be-

ELDERCARE: HOW AMERICA RANKS

Compared with those in other Western countries, America's programs for the aged have tended to be narrow in scope. Highlights:

Money. In America, Social Security pension payments—the main support of more than half the aged—account for 21 percent of federal spending and nearly nine percent of the gross national product (GNP). Elsewhere, the share of GNP devoted to comparable programs is higher: 12.9 percent in West Germany, 14.4 percent in Britain, 16.4 percent in Italy. Yet in terms of its "replacement rate"—the proportion of pre-retirement income provided—Social Security is not ungenerous. For the average retired U.S. couple, the rate in 1980 was 66 percent—under France's 75 percent and Sweden's 83 percent, but above Britain's 47 percent and Canada's and West Germany's 49 percent.

Health care. Most countries help the aged through national health programs—the "socialized medicine" of Britain and Italy, or the employer-employee-financed insurance programs common elsewhere. Sweden's plan, for instance, pays all but a fraction of the bills for doctors, hospitals, and medicine. In America, two-thirds of the elderly's health costs are paid by government programs. Medicare typically pays 44 percent of a senior citizen's medical bills. It is, however, aimed mainly at care of "acute" problems in hospitals: It will help with a heart by-pass, yet it will not assist those who need outpatient care for a chronic ailment such as arthritis. Soaring medical costs, meanwhile, continue to push up out-of-pocket health expenses.

Long-term aid. Institutionalization is more common in some other countries than in America, but only the United States and Canada make wide use of private nursing homes. In Europe, such places are usually run by the government or by nonprofit agencies. Some countries—notably Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and West Germany—offer incentives to families who board aged relatives. Subsidized home-care services are more available in Europe than in America.

As many as 20 percent of the 1,250,000 aged Americans who are institutionalized could be tended at home at lower cost if there were programs to support such care. Nursing-home fees, which have been rising by 18 to 20 percent annually and are the fastest-growing health-care cost, may now run above \$20,000 a year.

Housing. Direct federal involvement in shelter is small in America, but most European governments play a big role. Many subsidize "sheltered housing" offering the aged independent living with common facilities such as dining areas.

But then, American taxes, all told, are relatively low. In 1982, they amounted to 31 percent of the gross domestic product (GNP minus foreign-trade income). That ranked America 17th on a list of 23 countries—ahead of Japan (27 percent) and Switzerland (30 percent), but behind Britain, West Germany (both 37 percent), France (43 percent), and top-of-the-chart Sweden (51 percent).

came eligible for hospital insurance under Medicare, while Medicaid provided care to eligible poor people of all ages. Under the Older Americans Act of 1965, Congress established an Administration on Aging; authorized funds for community planning, special services, and volunteer programs for the elderly; and provided grants to states for other initiatives. By the end of the 1970s, 21 federal departments and agencies administered more than 100 programs that "entitled" older people to subsidized housing, Meals on Wheels, kidney dialysis, and much else.

At the same time, programs to assist the elderly generally were viewed in Washington as distinct from—and tangential to—mainstream antipoverty programs. Such Great Society legislation as the Economic Opportunity Act often excluded the old from participation, thereby confounding efforts to help the elderly help themselves.

By accentuating the *distinctiveness* of the elderly's needs, public officials were able to define "the problem of old age" as a legitimate issue. But they failed to advance a consistent set of objectives. Obvious contradictions were often ignored. For example, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 underscored the sensitivity in Congress to the problems that workers over 40 experienced in finding and retaining jobs. Yet this same act did not help people over 65—an exclusion not corrected until 1978, when protection from job discrimination was extended to age 70. Nevertheless, the material well-being of the typical older person improved during the 1960s and 1970s. The proportion of the elderly with incomes below the official poverty line is now roughly in line with that of the overall population. And yet, America's recent success in dealing with the problems of the aged as a group may have obscured some of the challenges that remain.

'Busting the Budget'

For one thing, the rising tide has not lifted all boats. There remain areas of high poverty among the elderly. More than one-third of all aged women living alone are poor. Being old, black, and female involves a triple jeopardy: 42 percent of this group is poor. How best to help such people, or to reduce their number in the future, is hard to say, since their plight may be due as much to gender and racial discrimination as it is to their age. Does the fact that most poor older people are female make old-age poverty essentially a women's issue?

Another area where we have fallen short involves health care. Medicare and Medicaid, which together cost the U.S. tax-

payer some \$130 billion in 1983, fail to provide a coherent medical package for the aged and the poor. These programs were designed to deal with acute illnesses and to employ the latest technology, and as a result, the federal government pays out enormous sums for kidney dialysis and other sophisticated forms of treatment.

Many have benefited. But should such programs be the centerpiece of a health-care system for the elderly? Do they really address the chronic, degenerative maladies that are the most common health problems that older people face? Unlike other industrial nations, the United States provides few incentives for delivering in-home health care, setting up day-care centers, or promoting preventive medicine at *any* stage of life. We could do better.

And, of course, there is the simple matter of money. Between 1969 and 1980, the cost of Social Security, veterans' payments, and other programs—many of them indexed to inflation—that aid the elderly rose from 19 percent to 27 percent of all federal spending. Liberals and conservatives alike (though for different reasons) worry about maintaining programs for an aged population that is rapidly increasing. The *National Journal's* Robert J. Samuelson asserted in 1978 that subsidies for old people were "busting the U.S. budget." Clearly, the elderly cannot be made into scapegoats, but just as clearly, the nation can ill afford more of the same.

And yet, the prospects for a major overhaul of America's jerrybuilt "old-age policy" are slim. Much as taxpayers groan about supporting the elderly in the manner that has become customary, the fondness for independent living and "free" social services—among both younger and older Americans—is by now deeply ingrained. Few people of any age seriously argue for radical alternatives to federal support for the elderly. In any case, as the 1983 Social Security pension fund "bailout" showed, the current political realities demand bipartisan efforts to keep the system solvent and maintain public confidence. Fifty years of faith binds the United States to the belief that, in the words of Senator Bill Bradley (D.-N.J.), "Social Security is the best expression of community we have in the country today."



BACKGROUND BOOKS

THE ELDERLY IN AMERICA

The first recorded epic may be a chronicle traced on clay tablets some 2,500 years ago in Babylonia. It concerns Gilgamesh, a warrior-king whose quest for the secret of immortality led him to dive to the sea bottom in search of a plant said to have strong powers of rejuvenation.

He got his prize and started home in triumph. But, alas, a snake snatched away the magic plant, and all that Gilgamesh gained for his pains was some advice from the goddess Siduri. She told him to forget immortality and live life to the fullest: "Make every day a day of rejoicing. / Day and night do thou dance and play."

Gilgamesh, notes David P. Barash in a lively survey, **Aging: An Exploration** (Univ. of Wash., 1983), followed Siduri's prescription to the letter. In so doing, he acted in accord with later Old Testament exhortations. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do," the author of Ecclesiastes writes, "do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest."

As Barash observes, "the promise of longevity, even immortality, is offered by many of the world's great religions." The Old Testament authors rewarded men of virtue with long lives. The New Testament promises followers of Christ a hereafter: "He that believeth on me," said the Lord, according to Saint John, "hath everlasting life."

In the Eastern philosophy-religions, the path to eternal life may be rather less exalted. Chinese Taoists, for instance, aim to reach *hsien* (immortality) through an austere diet, various unusual sexual prac-

tices and even breath-holding—all thought to be a means of retarding the aging process.

Much early writing reflects a dread of old age. Aristotle despised the elderly. In *Art of Rhetoric* (circa 330 B.C.), he advised those who address them to note that old folks are "cynical" and given to "subtle but feeble fits of anger."

Cicero also thought old age "intolerable." Yet, at 62, he was sufficiently upset by the Roman preoccupation with youth to champion the elderly in his famous essay **De Senectute** (circa 45–44 B.C.). Nations, he said, "have always been ruined by young men, saved and restored by old."

By the Middle Ages, alchemists in Europe were searching for a "fifth essence"—after air, earth, fire, and water—that would retard senescence. During that unhappy era, Simone de Beauvoir notes in her gloomy but richly detailed chronicle, **The Coming of Age** (Putnam's, 1972), "old men were almost entirely shut out of public life; it was the young who ruled the world."

They had to: So rife was disease in those days that very few reached a vigorous old age. Cesare Borgia, for example, died in his thirties. The Roman Church turned to youthful leaders: John XII began his pontificate at 18; Gregory V, at 24. Even Erasmus, the Dutch theologian whose melding of Christianity with Greek and Roman humanism helped reinvigorate the Roman Church's intellectual life and popular appeal during the Renaissance and Reformation, had trouble with age: In one of his *Colloquies* (circa 1518), he declares that the "exemplary" older person has no white hair, wrinkles, or spectacles.

In the New World, as Carole Haber details in **Beyond Sixty-Five: The Dilemma of Old Age in America's Past** (Cambridge, 1983), the elderly had property and position and, therefore, commanded respect. During the early 1700s, Increase Mather, the Boston Puritan minister and longtime Harvard president, could declare without challenge that "if a man is favored with long life, it is God that has lengthened his days." But even then, Haber notes, there were indigent old folks who were "passed from town to town, were boarded out with neighbors, or spent their final years as almshouse residents."

By the early 20th century, scholars were focusing on the old age "problem." Isaac Max Rubinow's **The Quest for Security** (Holt, 1934; Arno, 1976) was influential in the debate over what became the 1935 Social Security Act; it remains compelling as a portrait both of depression-ridden America and of public agonizing over the social welfare idea that, as Rubinow says, "great minds had been teaching in Europe for 100 years."

In **The Gray Lobby** (Univ. of Chicago, 1977, cloth; 1980, paper), Henry J. Pratt shows how the dramatic gains of the elderly during the 1960s and 1970s—especially after the linkage of Social Security payments to cost-of-living increases—paralleled the "remarkable growth of national senior citizens organizations."

Gerontologist Robert N. Butler's Pulitzer Prize-winning **Why Survive? Being Old in America** (Harper, 1975, cloth & paper) calls for an even stronger government commitment to aid for the elderly. Butler argues that America has "shaped a society that is extremely harsh to live in when one is old" and believes that "the potentials for satisfaction" in late life "are real and vastly underexplored." He also

warns that what prosperity older citizens now enjoy will fade as the typical retirement period lengthens to perhaps 25 years by the year 2000. Says Butler: "The plight of the elderly will worsen for those now middle aged."

Others focus on the plight of the taxpayers who must support programs for the aged. In **Growing Old in America** (Oxford, 1977, cloth; 1978, paper), David Hackett Fischer argues that the young, having been "exploited" by the old in the 19th century, could now be victimized "in a new way, with heavy Social Security welfare taxes oppressing them in the early years of adulthood—a time of life in America today when the economic margin is often thin." In **Age or Need?** (Sage, 1982, cloth & paper), Bernice L. Neugarten makes a case for reducing that tax burden by reserving old-age assistance for the indigent or infirm who cannot provide for themselves.

Further debate on how—and how much—to support the elderly may be found in Milton and Rose Friedman's **Tyranny of the Status Quo** (Harcourt, 1983); Louis Rukeyser's **What's Ahead for the Economy** (Simon & Schuster, 1983); and Theodore H. White's **America in Search of Itself** (Harper, 1982, cloth; Warner, 1983, paper). White analyzes how new subsidies for the elderly have contributed to the unexpected growth characteristic of most post-World War II federal "entitlement" programs.

Example: When Congress added disability insurance to Social Security in 1956, estimates were that the added annual cost would rise to \$860 million by 1980. The actual 1980 bill was \$15 billion.

In the mirror of modern literature, the elderly have often appeared as victims. Since Aldous Huxley's **Brave New World** (1932), where the

removal of older citizens from society and memory was so complete that it was as if they had never lived, the perils of planned human obsolescence have often been a theme in utopian fiction.

In the Oceania (ex-Britain) of George Orwell's **1984** (1949), Winston Smith is told that eventually he will be turned into a gas and that there will be no record of him: "Nothing will remain of you. . . . You will never have existed." In Marya Mannes's **They** (1968), America's young, having used the pretext of an imminent war with China to seize all power in a coup of some kind, wreak vengeance on the elders who had stumbled into an Asian conflict (Vietnam). "They" force people to retire and enter isolated communities at 50; at 65, seniors face either "self-disposal or compulsory liquidation."

Grim portrayals of contemporary old age include Eudora Welty's story **A Visit of Charity** (in *A Curtain of Green, and Other Stories*, 1941), about an old woman in a nursing home, and Edward Albee's **The Sandbox** (1959), a short savage play about uncaring children who wait for their 86-year-old mother to die.

Still, modern fiction has its share of elderly heroes—the amiable New Jersey eccentrics in John Updike's **The Poorhouse Fair** (1959); the tenacious Gulf fisherman in Ernest Hemingway's **The Old Man and the Sea** (1952); and the tough, Polish-born scholar and Holocaust survivor in Saul Bellow's **Mr. Sammler's Planet** (1970).

At 70, Artur Sammler, born to comfort in Cracow but reduced in New York to the elderly's world of

"the buses, or the grinding subway, lunch at the automat," darns his own socks and scours his own sink. He comes to find these routines "part of his youthfulness—youthfulness sustained with certain tremors. Sammler knew these tremors. It was amusing—Sammler noted in old women wearing textured tights, in old sexual men, this quiver of vivacity with which they obeyed the sovereign youth-style. . . . no one knew when to quit. No one made sober decent terms with death."

Books by those who know old age firsthand reflect a strong desire for purposeful living. In **The Measure of My Days** (Knopf, 1968, cloth; Penguin, 1979, paper), a record of her 83rd year, British author Florida Scott-Maxwell observes that "age puzzles me. I thought it was a quiet time . . . but my eighties are passionate. I grow more intense with age."

In his engaging memoir **The View from 80** (Viking, 1980), Malcolm Cowley argues that "in general terms, old people would like to have a clearly defined place in American life; it is something they now lack."

The need for definition, he believes, is at least part of the reason that the aged spend so much time assembling faded snapshots and letters, or conjuring up memories of their childhood and ("hardest to remember") middle years.

These, Cowley suggests, "help us to possess our own identities as an artist possesses his work. At least we can say to the world of the future, or to ourselves if nobody will listen, 'I really *was*'—or even, with greater self-confidence, 'I was and am *this*.'"



CURRENT BOOKS

SCHOLARS' CHOICE

Recent titles selected and reviewed by Fellows and staff of the Wilson Center

SUCCEEDING

JOHN BULL:
America in Britain's
Place, 1900-1975
by D. Cameron Watt
Cambridge, 1984
302 pp. \$34.50

Between 1900 and 1975, Great Britain gradually withdrew from its role as the world's greatest maritime power. The United States took up the British mantle. Watt, a University of London historian, focuses not so much on the "straightforward history" of that transfer of power but on "how this process was perceived and understood" (or misunderstood) by the leaders of both nations. His controversial thesis: that "policy-makers in the United

States played a major role in bringing about the decline of Britain, although those who saw the decline consummated did not understand what they were doing and regretted it when they realized what they had done."

Since 1940 in particular, the "special relationship" between the two countries has too often been characterized by U.S. refusals to heed British advice. American leaders were as unwilling to back Britain's hard anti-Soviet line during 1944-45 as they were to support a British "Monroe Doctrine" for the Middle East during 1944-46—with bad consequences in both cases, Watt believes. When the British did succeed in getting their points across, it was by "patient, ad hoc, issue by issue discussion," especially during the Clement Attlee and Ernest Bevin years, which coincided with the Truman administration. Only by what he calls "interpenetration," by working individually with American colleagues, could British interests be preserved. But even this process broke down between 1953 and 1956, with Britain's attempted invasion of Egypt in 1956 as its nadir. It foundered again during 1963-64, after Harold Macmillan's departure from office and John F. Kennedy's assassination.

Particularly troublesome to Watt is what he calls America's "sentimental anti-colonialism." He finds naive the American assumption that its goal during World War II was to assist "popular democracies" (in India, Indonesia, New Guinea, and Vietnam). This faith in government by consent of the "people" blinded Washington policy-makers to the fact that colonial independence movements might reflect less the will of the "people" than that of "a native group of would-be authoritarians struggling to replace a European group of actual authoritarians."

Ironies abound. America's painful disenchantment, during the Vietnam War, with its own earlier view of Southeast Asia meant that when Britain finally did relinquish its responsibilities east of Suez in 1968, America's dissatisfaction with its ally increased. "America was suffering the worst defeat in her history in Vietnam, her forces stretched to the limit, her budget desperately unbalanced. Britain's withdrawal was seen by many as a simple betrayal."

—Prosser Gifford, Deputy Director

**THE FACES OF
CONTEMPORARY
RUSSIAN NATIONALISM**
by John B. Dunlop
Princeton, 1983
353 pp. \$32.50

Western specialists on the Soviet Union have long taken note of nationalist tendencies among the USSR's many non-Russian ethnic groups. But they have tended to ignore *Russian* nationalism and the special problems of the *Russian* people. John B. Dunlop, a Hoover Institution Fellow, has remedied this oversight.

In the aftermath of the 1917 Revolution, Dunlop writes, "words such as 'patriotism' and 'motherland' virtually disappeared from the Russian vocabulary." The Bolsheviks, after all, were "essentially 'anti-patriots' whose aim was world revolution and the disappearance of all national distinctions." The revival of Russian nationalist sentiment that followed Josef Stalin's death in 1953 was part of a broader critique by intellectuals both of Stalinism and the condition of Soviet life. Russian nationalists were particularly concerned with what they saw as the consequences of rapid, forced modernization: the decline of the village, the razing of priceless architectural treasures, the deterioration of the environment, social and moral decay.

During the 1960s and '70s, the new nationalist movement became a creative force in Russian life, inspiring the work of village writers and introducing nationalist themes into literature and literary criticism. It also inspired the formation of popular societies, notably the All-Russian Society for the Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments, a group now boasting 12 million members.

The Russian nationalist movement is by no means monolithic. Its ranks include religious moderates, typified by novelist Aleksander Solzhenitsyn, and ethnocentric, atheist extremists, including the so-called National Bolsheviks, whose notions of Russian superiority smack of simple racism. Relations between Russians and other ethnic groups, particularly Jews, remain a touchy issue. Certain Russian nationalists, Dunlop observes, "are almost obsessed with this small group of people [the Jews]." Though constituting less than one percent of the Soviet population, Jews are resented by some Russians for the key role they played in the Bolshevik Revolution, as well as for their professional achievements and (relatively) high standard of living.

Dunlop describes the Moscow government's complex and fluctuating official response to the various currents of Russophilia. At times, he notes, the regime is remarkably permissive, at other times severe; it is always seeking to co-opt and exploit but is ever conscious as well of the contradiction between Russian nationalism and the official ideology of "internationalism." Dunlop reminds us that "Russia" and the "Soviet Union" are not synonymous, and he makes a persuasive case that the Russian "nation" is as much a captive of Communist power as the other "nations" of the Soviet Union.

—Herbert J. Ellison, Secretary, Kennan Institute

SLAVERY AND HUMAN PROGRESS

by David Brion Davis
Oxford, 1984
374 pp. \$25

A half century ago, in 1933, Great Britain celebrated with much pomp and pamphleteering the centennial of the abolition of slavery in the imperial colonies. Dignitaries hailed a century of progress against chattel slavery—in French and Danish territories, in the United States, in Cuba, Brazil, and elsewhere. In the view of leading British historians such as G. M. Trevelyan and Sir Reginald Coupland, emancipation constituted “proof of progress,” validating the then-fashionable interpretation of history as a record of mankind’s continuous ascent.

Yale historian David Brion Davis here demonstrates how far away from Whiggish optimism historians have moved. Davis ranges widely, from ninth-century Iraq to the 20th-century Soviet Union, but his focus is on the experiences of Britain and America. In both nations, abolitionists saw slavery not only as an odious moral wrong, but as an “intolerable obstacle to human progress” as well.

Davis deems “fluid” and “ambiguous” the connection between emancipation and the idea of progress; his key sections on British emancipation are entitled “A Deceptive Model.” It was deceptive, he believes, on many counts. By insisting that free labor would be more economical and efficient than slave labor, abolitionists created expectations that went unmet after emancipation. One result: a hardened resolve among white southerners in the United States never to follow Britain’s example. British emancipation was *legislated*, achieved without bloodshed, leaving Anglo-American social thinkers and reformers with an unrealistic faith in the “moral power” of peaceful collective action. Emancipation’s unintended consequences were legion. British efforts to stamp out the slave trade became a justification for imperial expansion. At the same time, the reluctance of former slaves to work as before on plantations only “magnified prejudices” and “reinforced racist theories.”

Davis challenges the traditional equation of abolition and progress on other grounds. He asserts that for thousands of years (until about 1770) the idea of progress was in fact more closely linked to the *expansion* of slavery than to its abolition. Plantation slavery, he writes, was created by “the most progressive peoples and forces in Europe—Italian merchants; Iberian explorers; Jewish inventors, traders, and cartographers; Dutch, German, and British investors and bankers.” This theme strikes me as more of a *tour de force* than a compelling argument. No one before 1750 is quoted as describing slavery as one component of a universal movement toward moral and material improvement. Indeed, until the 18th century, the very idea of progress is difficult to discern in social thought.

Such reservations, however, do not diminish Davis’s achievement. His book is an apt reminder that the calculus of human liberation is not simple, that every step forward is not necessarily a step up.

—Seymour Drescher, '84

NEW TITLES

History

1676: The End of American Independence
by Stephen Saunders Webb
Knopf, 1984
440 pp. \$25



One gift of the master historian, it is said, is a knack for attributing "unexpected importance to uncelebrated dates." The year 1676, one of plague, Indian insurrection, and civil strife in the American colonies, was also the year in which the colonists lost their independence, according to Webb, a Syracuse University historian. Preoccupied with its own problems (including civil war in England and rebellion in Ireland), Britain had allowed the colonies virtual autonomy beginning in the late 1630s. But the reign of colonial oligarchs foundered in '76: Virginia colonists, angered by Governor William Berkeley's failure to provide adequate defenses against the Indians, took up arms against their government in what became known as Bacon's Rebellion. In New England, similar turmoil followed King Philip's War, an uprising of Algonquin and Iroquois Indians, led by Metacomet ("King Philip") as "revenge on the puritans." Fighting during this year cost more lives, in proportion to population, than any other war in American history. The English Crown, its own troubles finally over, responded with both troops and absolutist decrees to American appeals for civil order, economic reorganization, and protection. Hitherto semi-independent colonial capitals such as Boston and Jamestown ceded authority to the headquarters of England's continental empire at Fort James, New York City. Ironically, Webb observes, the English intervention created stable geographic boundaries, a prospering economy, and political assemblies, thus paving the way for revolution 100 years later.

**ZHOU ENLAI:
A Biography**
by Dick Wilson
Viking, 1984
349 pp. \$17.95

During the battered Chinese Red Army's 1934-35 Long March, Zhou Enlai made a decision that shaped subsequent Chinese history: He acknowledged his errors of leadership—both military and political—and prepared the way for Mao Zedong,

whom he for years had criticized, to take over as the sole leader of the Chinese Communist movement. The reversal was vintage Zhou: Consistently boosting others to the top of the party bureaucracy, he did almost nothing to advance his own position. Yet he alone, among all of Mao's former superiors, "survived as a continuous member of Mao's team." Wilson, former editor of the *China Quarterly*, serves up a full life: Zhou's early years in an impoverished mandarin family; his brilliance as a student, leading to studies in France, where, in 1922, he joined the Communist Party; his role in the Red Army's struggle against, variously, the feudal warlords of Canton, Japanese invaders, and Chiang Kai-shek's Guomindang; his installation as premier of the State Council and minister of foreign affairs when the People's Republic of China was formally created by the triumphant Communists in 1949. Serving ably until his death at age 78, Zhou mixed pragmatism, intelligence, administrative acumen, and a disarming candor to survive in China's shifting political climate. "Zhou never committed the mistake of elevating policies into principles," Wilson writes, "or condemning himself to going into opposition or disgrace, when confessing 'errors' would enable him to hold down his job."

**THE HAYMARKET
TRAGEDY**

by Paul Avrich
Princeton, 1984
535 pp. \$29.50

Among the offshoots of what Richard Hofstadter once described as the "paranoid style" of American politics have been periodic "Red scare" episodes. In this detailed narrative, Queens College historian Avrich investigates the first such scare. It grew out of a workers' protest meeting, organized by anarchists in Chicago's Haymarket Square on May 4, 1886. Near the end of the peaceful gathering, the police inexplicably arrived. When someone hurled a bomb into their ranks, wounding several (of whom seven later died), the police responded by firing blindly into the crowd. The civilian toll: some 40 dead or wounded. Though the bomb thrower was never identified, eight local radicals were



charged with conspiracy. And despite the prosecution's failure to produce any hard evidence linking them to the crime, four of the "Chicago anarchists" were eventually hanged, a fifth committed suicide in prison, and the other three received long prison terms. Behind this miscarriage of justice, Avrich finds, was a widespread fear of nefarious "continental" influences—both of radical European ideas and of the immigrants who brought them to America (five of the defendants were German-born). Anarchism not only challenged Americans' right to property ownership; it called forth the specter of the Paris Commune of 1871, a bloody uprising that briefly threatened France's bourgeois order. Some prominent Americans supported the anarchists, including novelist William Dean Howells, who called the execution "civic murder." Too late for most of the eight men, they were officially exonerated by Illinois governor John Peter Altgeld in 1893.

Arts & Letters

HEROES ARE GRAZING IN MY GARDEN

by Heberto Padilla
Farrar, 1984
250 pp. \$16.95

Fidel Castro's Cuba has not been kind to the artists and writers it once courted. The career of poet Heberto Padilla is a case in point. Recipient of an award from the Cuban Writers Union in 1969, he was jailed two years later, forced to recant his liberal political views, and put under house arrest. Padilla's disenchantment comes through strongly in this novel about two Cuban intellectuals, Julio and Gregorio, both victims of the revolution they once supported. The daily betrayals of the revolutionary ideal by Castro and his inner circle have embittered Gregorio, a writer of great promise; he has taken to the bottle to forget his failing marriage and his inability to write the great Cuban novel. Julio's outspoken criticism of Castro has left him in reduced circumstances: Once a respected intellectual in the Communist Party, he now works as a tour guide and translator. The heart of the novel is the imaginary escapes the

two men fashion for themselves: Gregorio's fantasies focus on a past stay in Moscow; Julio imagines mythical dialogues with Castro, Karl Marx, and Herbert Marcuse. Appropriately, perhaps, for a novel about lost illusions, there is no real conclusion. As Padilla, who finished the novel before coming to the United States in 1980, explains in the afterword: "Everything written in a suffocating political atmosphere is inconclusive and fragmentary."

**PRODUCTS OF THE
PERFECTED
CIVILIZATION:
Selected Writings
of Chamfort**

translated by W. S. Merwin
North Point, 1984
284 pp. \$12.50

The philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, generally parsimonious with praise, found nothing but good to say of the 18th-century French aphorist Sébastien-Roch Nicolas Chamfort: Without his "tragic spirit" and "sting," wrote Nietzsche, the French Revolution "would be considered a far more stupid event, and would not exert its present seductive fascination." Of uncertain parentage, Chamfort (1740?-94) was brought, at about the age of five, from the province of Auvergne to Paris and enrolled in a Catholic school for the poor. Trained for the clergy, the young man announced to the principal of his college that his distaste for "bickering, hypocrisy, honors, and money" made him unfit for the priesthood. His wit and his pen quickly won him a place as a journalist, a maker of light comedies, and a luminary in Parisian salons. He was a supporter of the 1789 Revolution, but his deep pessimism about human nature prepared him for its bloody failure. Poet Merwin preserves the Gallic economy and bite of Chamfort's posthumously collected maxims; he also offers a representative sampling of topics, from fashion ("The changing of fashion is the tax that the industry of the poor levies upon the vanity of the rich"), to social inequality ("Society is made up of two great classes: those who have more dinner than appetite, and those who have more appetite than dinners"), to psychology ("All of the passions lead to exaggeration. That is why they are passions"). Merwin's biographical introduction serves as a nice apéritif.

MUNCH: His Life and Work
by Reinhold Heller
Univ. of Chicago, 1984
240 pp. \$39.95



"I do not believe," said Norway's greatest painter, Edvard Munch (1863–1944), "in an art which is not forced into existence by a human being's desire to open his heart." Coming from most people, the utterance would sound melodramatic. From Munch, whose devotion to his art helped him overcome the loss of loved ones, alcoholism, and the threat of insanity, it rings true. Heller, an art historian at the University of Chicago, mixes straightforward narrative, critical commentary, and the artist's own jottings, or *optegnelser*, to present the life and work of a 20th-century master whose densely symbolic paintings helped spawn the expressionist movement. Munch was a death-haunted man; as a child, he had seen first his mother and then his sister die of tuberculosis. He came to see the specter of mortality almost everywhere—particularly in the act of artistic creation and in that of sexual procreation. Both acts enervated; both consumed; yet both were equally capable of generating life. Indeed, believing that art and sex tapped the same wells of creative energy, Munch increasingly withdrew into a solitary world. He abandoned the erotic adventures of his early bohemian days to devote himself to his painting. In his monumental works (*The Sick Child*, *The Kiss*, *Jealousy*, *The Scream*), Munch gives a troubled rendering of the human cycle of birth, love, death, and rebirth. His last works were often compulsive replications of earlier images, notes Heller, emptied of their "demonic power." But to the end, they expressed one of Munch's most famous jottings—"I was born dying."

Contemporary Affairs

CITIES AND THE WEALTH OF NATIONS: Principles of Economic Life
by Jane Jacobs
Random, 1984
257 pp. \$17.95

Why is macroeconomic theory, whether Keynesian or monetary, incapable of explaining, much less solving, such current economic tangles as "stagflation"—inflation combined with growing unemployment? According to Jacobs, a Toronto-based author of books about urban decay and revival, eco-

conomic theory has always been flawed. It has taken the nation rather than the city as the basic economic unit. Certain types of cities—what she terms “import-replacing” cities—are, along with their surrounding regions, the true engines of prosperity and growth. Jacobs’s explanation of what makes an import-replacing city—including a base of industrial and entrepreneurial “skills,” a network of ties with the surrounding region—draws on the experiences of specific cities, ranging from 14th-century Venice to 20th-century Tokyo. She distinguishes these wealth-generating centers from cities that enjoy a false prosperity: The last 30 years saw Montevideo, the capital of Uruguay, go from boom to bust, as the world market for leather collapsed—a pattern typical of cities dependent on a single source of wealth. Cities that depend on transplanted industries, such as the U.S. Sun Belt cities, are equally fragile. Jacobs’s theory has wide ramifications: It helps explain why the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) failed to produce long-term economic prosperity (the region never developed an import-replacing city), and why capital cities, such as London, often prosper during periods of national economic decline.

**THE CROWDED EARTH:
People and the Politics
of Population**
by Pranay Gupte
Norton, 1984
349 pp. \$17.95

The grim statistics of overpopulation have been recorded in countless studies and reports, but Gupte, a former *New York Times* reporter, does what no mere chart or table can do: He brings his readers face to face with the problem. He also shows, in the course of his five-continent tour, how the pressure of too many people affects health care, migration, education, urbanization, and the environment. Everywhere the focus is on people. A Nigerian, oblivious to the fact that Africa has—and can ill afford—the world’s highest birthrate, describes his 15 children as a “matter of his manhood.” A cab driver in Mexico City complains: “We are choking to death here. It is not just the pollution but also the sheer boredom of being in traffic jams all the time.” (The three million autos in this metropolis of 17 million people combine with

35,000 factories to spew forth three million tons of nitrous oxide into the air each year.) In Cairo's Khan al Khalili—the "city of the living dead," Gupte calls it—there are about 1.4 people to every square foot. Gupte notes some hopeful trends: In such countries as Bali, Sri Lanka, and South Korea, where women have attended school and found jobs outside the home, birthrates have declined. Still, the war on population growth is far from won. By the end of this century, at least 11 countries' populations will exceed the 100 million mark. Gupte sees the need for more birth-control programs such as the one Mexico employed to bring down its population growth rate, during one five-year period, from 3.5 percent to 2.5 percent, the fastest decline registered by any nation in recent history.

**MEASURING MILITARY
POWER: The Soviet Air
Threat to Europe**
by Joshua M. Epstein
Princeton, 1984
288 pp. \$22.50

Why, in assessing the Soviet military threat, do U.S. analysts tend to assume that the Russian military is free from the inefficiencies that plague the rest of Soviet society? Epstein, a Rockefeller Foundation Fellow, looks specifically at the USSR's tactical air wings committed to the European theater, but his methods and conclusions have broader application. New jet aircraft and increasingly sophisticated weapons systems have posed even more problems for the Soviets than they have for the U.S. Air Force, contends Epstein. The reason: the absence of any Soviet intermediate maintenance capability between the forward Air Regiments and the rear depot. As a result, fighter aircraft with anything more than simple mechanical failures are "deadlined" for lengthy periods. Furthermore, writes Epstein, Soviet pilot training is woefully inadequate to the complex demands of modern combat. Epstein applies a mathematical "threat assessment" formula to various hypothetical Soviet assaults on NATO forces. And while he finds that the Soviet threat is overestimated, his conclusion is not comforting: Uncertain of their ability to sustain operations, Soviet military leaders are likely to favor a "short war" doctrine, involving mass, surprise, and pre-emption.

THE ECONOMIC ILLUSION: False Choices between Prosperity and Social Justice
 by Robert Kuttner
 Houghton, 1984
 308 pp. \$19.95

"The pursuit of equality," observed Britain's prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, "is a mirage." The conventional wisdom among many U.S. and British government leaders today is that well-intentioned state efforts to promote citizen equality—through public spending and progressive tax policies—merely stifle the individual initiative, personal thrift, and productive investment that produce greater overall wealth. "Inequality," the argument runs, "is good for everyone." Kuttner, a contributing editor of the *New Republic*, weighs such "theoretical claims" against the "practical policy experience of different nations." He compares the actual tax, welfare, labor, trade, and capital formation practices in Western nations. He shows that, in such states as West Germany and Norway, prosperity and relative equality *do* coexist. Between 1970 and 1980, for example, Austria enjoyed not only the highest growth rate per capita of all Western nations—including Japan—but also a relatively egalitarian distribution of income, a generous social-welfare program, low inflation (peaking at 6.8 percent in 1981), and low unemployment (never over four percent). Kuttner does not recommend wholesale U.S. adoption of the policies that have simultaneously increased wealth and equality in other nations: There is no single "right" mix of policies, and "these issues," he knows, "are deeply political." His aim is merely to question the economic assumption of the day—that "social justice is bad for economic growth."

Science & Technology

THE APOCALYPTICS: Cancer and the Big Lie
 by Edith Efron
 Simon & Schuster, 1984
 589 pp. \$19.95

"Apocalyptic chic," as Efron sees it, describes the fashionable belief that virtually every synthetic substance causes cancer. It is environmentalism pushed to its absurd limit. Yet, to the American scientific community currently involved in cancer research, being chic is no laughing matter. Efron, a research associate at the University of Rochester, charges foul play and foul science, and backs up her

accusation with a mass of documentation. Not all "apocalyptic" are cynical or opportunistic, says Efron, but a good number of them have adopted the environmental "paradigm" because theirs has become a field "where one is only rewarded—where one is only published, and where one is only hailed as a savior of public health—by finding something [in the environment] to 'suspect.'" Efron notes that much of the environmental case is built on the results of animal research, even though top scientists admit that there is no proof that animals and humans react the same way to carcinogens. She overstates her case, but her attack on the thoroughly institutionalized narrow-gauge approach to cancer research is timely and important.

**MONTEFIORE:
The Hospital As
Social Instrument,
1884-1984**
by Dorothy Levenson
Farrar, 1984
338 pp. \$19.95



Perhaps no managers of an American hospital have been more concerned with its social role than the men who have run New York City's Montefiore. This chronicle, written by staff historian Levenson, is an illuminating attempt at institutional self-scrutiny. Founded in Manhattan in 1884 by German-Jewish immigrants, Montefiore has grown from a 26-bed home for chronic invalids to a vast medical empire now located in the Bronx and comprising four hospitals, several outpatient clinics and community centers, and a medical school. Its first director, Simon Baruch (known as the "Apostle of Bathing" for his advocacy of hydrotherapy for an assortment of illnesses), initiated occupational therapy as well as social and family services for his patients. Ephraim Bluestone, director for the first quarter of this century, trained black and female physicians; he also stopped fee-for-service treatment and began establishing a full-time salaried house staff in 1929. Like all hospitals during the 1960s, Montefiore faced soaring costs. (From 1966 to 1969, the average rise in all prices was 12.9 percent; for medical care, 21.4 percent.) Montefiore responded by instituting one of the nation's first health-maintenance organizations (HMOs), replacing the prepaid group practice

**THE NATURE OF
THE CHILD**
by Jerome Kagan
Basic, 1984
309 pp. \$22.50

that Bluestone had installed in the late 1940s. Bringing medical care to city jails, offering programs for juvenile delinquents, drug abusers, and the elderly, Montefiore has actually expanded its social role in recent years.

William Wordsworth's declaration that "the Child is father of the Man" was no piece of poetic whimsy. It encapsulated the view of human development dominant in the West from the 17th century to the present, enjoying such persuasive exponents as John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Sigmund Freud. However, Kagan, a Harvard psychologist, argues that people, rather than being "fixed" by their early childhood experiences, have a lifelong capacity for intellectual and emotional change. Kagan's theory of psychological development is firmly rooted in the biological sciences, particularly neurology. He holds, for instance, that the acquisition of various "cognitive competences," including moral judgment, depends, to a far greater extent than has previously been thought, on the maturation of the central nervous system. Kagan turns to anthropology to examine a number of established notions. The critical importance of maternal nurturing and affection to a child's future happiness has considerable sentimental force but, says Kagan, little objective support. In Polynesian societies, parents become almost aloof when their offspring reach their third year, and many a weaned infant is farmed out to a relative for rearing. Yet these same youngsters become secure and happy adults. Kagan's view of human development as a series of discrete and qualitatively different stages rather than as an unbroken continuum will provoke debate. And so will his conviction that it is not "what parents do to children . . . that matters, but rather the intention the child imputes to those who act on and with him or her."

PAPERBOUNDS

FLASH OF THE SPIRIT: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy. By Robert Farris Thompson. Vintage, 1984. 317 pp. \$9.95

Anyone doubting the legitimacy of the term *Afro-American* should read this book. Thompson, a Yale art historian, traces the influence of five West African tribal groups (Yoruba, Kongo, Fon, Mande, and Ejagham) on the culture and folkways of Afro-Americans throughout the Western Hemisphere. Some links between the Old World and the New are direct: Clay or concrete images of Elegba, a Yoruba deity, guard thresholds of hundreds of black homes and meeting places throughout the United States, particularly in New York City and Miami. From the Kongo came herbalism, mental healing, and funeral customs adopted by black Americans in the Deep South. Many influences are subtle, such as the attitude of "cool," or *itutu*, a calm demeanor, which was hailed among the Yoruba as the mark of nobility and grace. From music to textile design, whether in Havana or Harlem, African civilization has proved to be what Thompson lauds as "one of the great migration styles in the history of the planet."

ENEMIES OF PROMISE. By Cyril Connolly. Persea, 1984. 265 pp. \$6.95

First published in 1938, this book was intended by its author, one of England's foremost literary critics, as an "inquiry into the problem of how to write a book which lasts 10 years." It is a curious and brilliant amalgam. In the first part, Connolly (1903-74) conducts a synoptic tour of the dominant writers of early 20th-century Western literature. His main theme, and the subject of his lament, is

the passing of the leisurely "mandarin" style, last created by such masters as Henry James. The culprit, and Connolly's nemesis, is journalism—the art of writing "what will be grasped at once." But the road to decline is full of detours, last ditch stands by such artful writers as Virginia Woolf against the straightforward prose of H. G. Wells and G. B. Shaw, and the shorn, understated writing of Gertrude Stein and Ernest Hemingway. Connolly's judgments are sharp, sure, often iconoclastic. The second section of the book is an *autobiographia literaria*, full of glimpses into an English upper-middle-class childhood and education ("Yet Eton, like all public schools, had no solution for sex"). Mordantly self-deprecating, Connolly here shows himself to be as unforgiving of his own shortcomings as he was of bad books.

STATES OF MIND. By Jonathan Miller. Pantheon, 1984. 316 pp. \$7.95

This book is a series of illuminating "conversations with people who have devoted their lives to the task of making the human mind intelligible." Miller, an M.D., author, and stage director, interviews linguists, philosophers, anthropologists, neurologists, psychologists. Sir Stuart Hampshire, for instance, brings a philosopher's concern for semantic precision to his discussion of the distinctions among the conscious, unconscious, and preconscious. Anthropologist Clifford Geertz explains how the human brain may have evolved from that of a lower animal and why "there's no missing link to be found." In all the dialogues, Miller brings out not only what psychology has accomplished and could accomplish—but what it probably never will.

John Dos Passos And His Invention of America

Asked to name The Great American Novel, most critics would pick from the trio of national classics—*Moby Dick*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *The Great Gatsby*. A few others would claim that the great book has not yet been written. But if there were a prize for The Great Novel of America, it would go, with far less debate, to John Dos Passos's three-part movie-in-prose, *U.S.A.* (completed 1936). Capturing the voices and faces of Americans from virtually all walks of life, Dos Passos presented an ironic, kaleidoscopic portrait of the nation's experience during the tumultuous first three decades of the 20th century. Here, Alfred Kazin looks at the man and at his remarkable book.

by Alfred Kazin

In June 1932, a discouraged month and year in the history of the United States, John Roderigo Dos Passos sat down in his Provincetown, Massachusetts, house at the end of Commercial Street to write a new preface to his antiwar novel of 1921, *Three Soldiers*, published when he was 25.

Three Soldiers was being reissued by the Modern Library, a reprint series so inclusively "modern" in its taste that Petronius's *Satyricon* was in it along with Ernest Renan's *Life of Jesus* and John Reed's *Ten Days That Shook the World*. The reissue of *Three Soldiers* was a tribute to Dos Passos's emerging reputation in the 1930s as a solidly "social" novelist with distinctly radical views. His trilogy *U.S.A.*, which was to be completed in 1936 with *The Big Money*, had already taken shape with *The 42nd Parallel* (1930) and *1919* (1932). In his preface, Dos Passos responded to the honor with heartfelt memories of the hopes with which he had written *Three Soldiers*:

The memory of the spring of 1919 has not faded enough. Any spring is a time of overturn, but then Lenin was alive, the Seattle general strike had seemed the beginning of the flood instead of the beginning of the ebb, Americans in Paris were groggy with theatre and painting and music; Picasso was to rebuild the eye, Stravinski was cramming the Russian steppes into our ears, currents of energy seemed to be breaking out everywhere as young guys climbed out of their uniforms, imperial America was all shiny with the idea of Ritz, in every direction the countries of the world stretched out starving and angry, ready for anything turbulent and new, whenever you went to the movies you saw Charlie Chaplin. The memory of the spring of 1919 has not faded enough to make the spring of 1932 any easier.

But it *was* 1932, and American radicals were countering the national breakdown with militant new hopes of their own. Dos Passos, in the spirit of the '30s, dutifully went on:

Today, though the future may not seem so gaily colored or full of clanging hopes as it was thirteen years ago . . . we can at least meet events with our minds cleared of some of the romantic garbage that kept us from doing clear work then. Those of us who have lived through have seen these years strip the bunting off the great illusions of our time, we must deal with the raw structure of history now, we must deal with it quick, before it stamps us out.

The left-wing novelists of the '30s never matched Dos Passos's springy style and inner gaiety. But his contempt for the "romantic garbage that kept us from doing clear work then" was right in style and dominated left-wing literary thinking about the decade just past. By 1933, the great United States, with a quarter of its work force unemployed, thousands of people wandering the roads looking for jobs, food, shelter, and with a desperately pragmatic FDR trying any stratagem to keep America together, was a country of punctured illusions and was virtually bankrupt. Roosevelt, who had not been superior to the speculative madness of the '20s, now decried the period as an "age of mammon, full of self-seekers."

If you traveled about the country as frantically as Dos Passos always traveled and were sensitive to common, unliterary persons (unlike his friends E. Hemingway and e. e. cummings), you put them into your books. Dos Passos was not contrite about the "jazz age" like his friend Scott Fitzgerald, who by 1936 was regaling the readers of *Esquire* with the news of his "crack-up." Nor was he so heavy-footed in the direction of Communism as Theodore Dreiser, whose *Tragic America* (1931), the usual writer's journey through depression America, would not replace *An American Tragedy* (1926) in the affections of those who obstinately respected Dreiser as a storyteller despite the great man's untrustworthy mind and derivative opinions. On the other hand,

Dos Passos was not so smug as that great satirist of the American scene, H. L. Mencken, who never seemed to know that there *was* a depression, and who made light of Hitler as if he were just another redneck demagogue from the Deep South.

Dos Passos, though a distinctly upper-class product of Choate, Harvard, and the Norton-Harjes Volunteer Ambulance Service, and a diffident, elusive, elaborately hesitant character in public, was the grandson of a Portuguese shoemaker from the island of Madeira. The shoemaker's son, John Randolph Dos Passos, was born early enough in the 19th century to be a drummer boy in the Civil War, a dominating corporation lawyer in the palmiest days of the age of enterprise, and counsel to the American Sugar Refining Company when the Have-meyers controlled virtually all the sugar refined in the United States. He was a Republican stalwart, an authority on the law of the stock exchange, and the author of *Commercial Trusts: The Growth and Rights of Aggregated Capital*. "It is a primary object of every well-founded government to encourage the acquisition of individual fortunes."

His son, with his sardonic view of American capitalism and American character, had good reason to scorn official pieties. Born in a Chicago hotel room in 1896, Dos Passos was the illegitimate son of a 42-year-old Southern gentlewoman, Lucy Sprigg Madison, and the 51-year-old John Randolph Dos Passos, who was a married man unable to divorce his Catholic wife. Lucy was a widow, and until her son was 16—his birth was never registered—he was known as John Roderigo Madison. The father, a great figure in respectable business and political circles of the time, tried to hide his son's existence. Mother and son were forced to live abroad, and the son remained John Roderigo Madison for two years after his parents finally were married.

Mr. Wilson's War

John Randolph Dos Passos, the self-made son of the Portuguese shoemaker, was an extraordinary character; whatever pains he inflicted on his isolated, sensitive son, he was a godsend to a future novelist. It is easy to see why the novelist derided authority figures who resembled his innocently pompous father, why he was obsessed by American history, which immigrants' children used to consider the great romance. Lucy and little John Madison had to be kept out of the way. Dos Passos had even more of a "hotel childhood" than Henry and William James: mostly in Brussels and London, with furtive visits to the father in Washington and Virginia. It was from growing up among

Alfred Kazin, 69, is Distinguished Professor of English at the City University of New York. Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., he received a B.S.S. from the City College of New York (1935) and an M.A. from Columbia University (1938). Among his many books are On Native Grounds (1942), Bright Book of Life (1973), and New York Jew (1978). This essay is adapted from An American Procession, copyright © 1984 by Alfred Kazin. Reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.



Dos Passos being arrested in Boston, Massachusetts, for protesting against the Sacco-Vanzetti death sentence in 1927.

foreign languages that Dos Passos became convinced that ordinary speech is the index to a society; he was to say in his most famous book, "But mostly U.S.A. is the speech of the people."

With his earliest feeling that "the voyages never stopped," he was to register in his prose not just the speedup of history but his Victorian mother's attempts to escape the "shame" of her son's illegitimacy. For the rest of his life, Dos Passos was to think that the way out of any problem was to keep moving. The constant movement of his characters was to be more memorable than their personalities. The rapidly flashing, image-crackling style of physical sensation he developed not only came out of the painful but exciting unsettlement of his early years; it became his way, in the early "Camera Eye" sections of *U.S.A.* that relate the author's personal experiences, of blurring everything he still needed to conceal. Dos Passos clearly felt himself to be a special case, thrown into a succession of contradictory situations and scenes, to which a highly stylized literary response was sufficient. Even the "Jeffersonian" tracts he wrote after his disillusionment with the Left, books that were politically simple-minded, were invigorated by the physical images that dizzyingly moved his style.

Dos Passos was a naturally impressionistic talent deeply influenced by painting and poetry; *U.S.A.* was to interpolate biographical

and historical pictures of American life in free verse. Dos Passos would always depend on some fast-running mixture of prose and verse to project the many "pictures" of travel he carried in his head. At Harvard, he offered his famous teacher of composition, Charles T. Copeland, an exercise called "Trains: Fragments of Mémoires" (collage and the use of French words were lifelong habits), in which he described endless travel as "the trembling joy that is akin to terror."

Dos Passos was later to write that his "continuously scuttling about the world was ridiculous—like a cockroach running away from the light." He had difficulty in talking to strangers but a gift for friendship with Europeans (and his literary peers in America) that somehow put him in the most eventful places at the most interesting times. The "cult of experience" so important to writers in America had no more anxious devotee than Dos Passos. Just out of Harvard in 1916, he roamed Spain, studying architecture. As a volunteer ambulance driver, he saw French soldiers drugged with *agnol*, a combination of rum and ether, go into the most terrible battles.

As a Red Cross driver in Italy, he met another driver, Ernest Hemingway, who during the Spanish civil war was to irritate Dos Passos into conservatism. Dos Passos was even in Russia just when certain days shook the world. He got into the army medical corps by persuading an examiner to let him memorize the eye chart, traveled back and forth between America and Europe during the most restrictive war conditions, got to the Near East with handy advice on where to go and whom to see from the famous explorer Gertrude Bell.

Dos Passos's career would have been nothing without what one of his last books called "Mr. Wilson's War." When Woodrow Wilson saved an exhausted England and France by taking America into the war, he certainly saved Dos Passos and his friends Cummings and Edmund Wilson from being safe and bored at home. Dos Passos, even in his last years among the Virginia gentry in Woodrow Wilson's native state, kept a grudge against the great war leader who separated America forever from its supposed age of innocence.

It was natural for Hemingway, Dos Passos, Cummings, and Wilson to deride the rhetoric with which the President of the United States told Congress that

it is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance. But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest to our hearts . . . to make the world itself at last free.

But if "Professor Woodrow Wilson" (as Ivy League rebels regularly called him) had not thought and written in that imposing style, Hemingway and his friends would not have formed *their* style in opposition to such public rhetoric.

In "The Body of an American," a section of *1919* that sums up his

outrage at "Mr. Wilson's War" by constructing the life and death of the Unknown Soldier who was buried at Arlington National Cemetery, Dos Passos concludes his description of the funeral rites by dryly adding, "Woodrow Wilson brought a bouquet of poppies."

"Dos" was looking forward to a revolution in Europe. Although "the" revolution never came to Western Europe, the sense of new things opening up everywhere as "guys climbed out of their uniforms" helped to promote the irretrievable memory of the 1920s as a golden age for modern art, free expression, and American individualism. The century was new, Americans were still such a new factor in the world that they seemed new even to themselves. The buoyancy and openness of Americans (especially in Europe) had led the painter Georgia O'Keeffe to situate the new century perfectly as the time of "the great American thing."

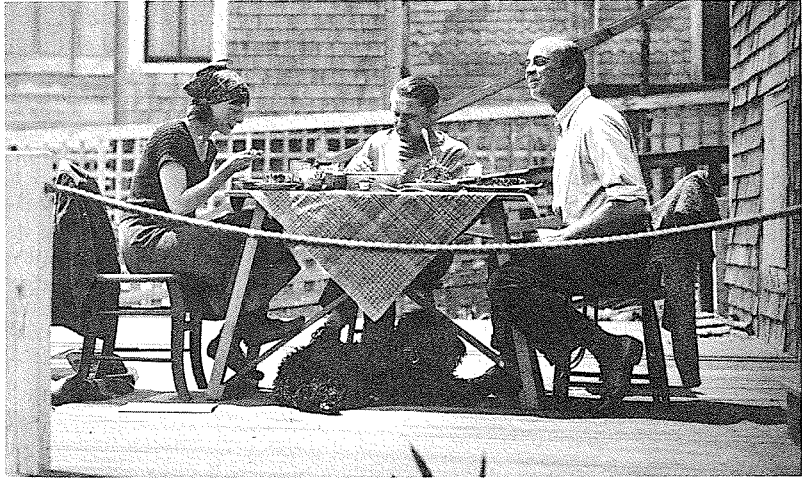
No Love for the Masses

There was a gaiety on the part of writers and intellectuals that every woebegone later generation reads about with envy. The young Edmund Wilson, meeting Dos Passos at the offices of *Vanity Fair*, turned a somersault as they were waiting for the elevator. Dos Passos plunged into Greenwich Village with a special excitement about New York's brilliance and turmoil that led to his first notable novel, *Manhattan Transfer* (1925). He joined the radical playwright John Howard Lawson in the New Playwrights Group and somehow wrote *The 42nd Parallel* between travels to Latin America and repeated forays into France and Spain.

The execution of Sacco and Vanzetti in 1927, the Great Crash, the powerful example of Edmund Wilson were radicalizing influences on Dos Passos. (Wilson was undergoing the trial by Marxism that resulted in *To the Finland Station* but that would not last out Stalin's bloody career.) Dos Passos was never a Marxist, was never so interested in Marxism as Wilson became in the 1930s; he was always more "agin the system" than *for* anything in particular except personal freedom and the "working-class stiffs" whom he tended to romanticize. He clearly put himself into the homeless boy Vag—like himself, forever on the road—who opens and closes the *U.S.A.* trilogy.

Dos Passos's scorn for the ruthless methods of American business, his growing regard for Jefferson and agrarian democracy, had less to do with political thinking than with his personal myths; he was always an upper-class man who had been deeply humiliated in childhood. Among the *typical* Americans with whom he peopled *U.S.A.*, he remained a loner, ruthlessly dramatizing a mass society that was without the slightest tinge of love.

Dos Passos's digs at the Communist faithful at the end of *The Big Money* show that he was fast losing whatever sympathies he may have felt for Communist friends such as John Howard Lawson. In the Spain of 1937, such sympathies were dashed forever by the secret murder of his friend José Robles, a Spaniard teaching at Johns Hopkins who had



A 1932 photograph of Dos Passos's wife, Katy, her brother Bill Smith, and Dos Passos lunching in Provincetown, Massachusetts. Katy was killed in a car accident in 1947.

gone home to serve in the Loyalist Ministry of War during the Spanish civil war. Like Dos Passos, Robles was averse to authoritarian methods; he was shot, apparently by Communist militia. Dos Passos suspected that Robles had protested political intervention by the Russians. Dos Passos was horrified by the conspiracy of silence surrounding Robles's fate; he came to hate the Communists everywhere and the nefarious statist philosophy he saw behind the New Deal.

Dos Passos soon turned sharp right and wrote tracts, novels, biographies in an increasingly somber attempt to offer for the political salvation of a mass society the example of Thomas Jefferson and the aristocratic republicanism of the 18th-century Virginia planters. His one lasting book, *U.S.A.*, continued to dazzle readers as *the* American experimental novel of the 1920s. Dos Passos's originality as a stylist, his ability to bring the whole new century into his trilogy, made it not at all ludicrous for Jean Paul Sartre, a demanding critic, to say in 1938: "Dos Passos has invented only one thing, an art of storytelling, and that is enough. I regard Dos Passos as the greatest writer of our time."

Whatever that meant in 1938—Hemingway in Toots Shors's talked about knocking Tolstoy out of the ring, but no one cared any longer about being "the greatest writer"—*U.S.A.* brilliantly succeeded as a novel because it reflected the inventiveness of the '20s and "the religion of the word." Dos Passos had written a "collective" novel about the "march of history" with mass society as his protagonist. But with his gift for putting on display all the social events and stylistic novelties of his time, he made his trilogy seem the work of many American minds.

In the gray and anxious 1930s, U.S.A. reflected the buoyant '20s as freshness and irreverence. It offered no bright hopes for the future, and the Communists were right to complain that it lacked a political direction—theirs. But like certain Elizabethan playwrights and Italian painters of the Renaissance, Dos Passos was less a great artist than one of several hinges operating the same great door. That door did open to “the great American thing.”

There would yet be an American literature and art equal to the promise of American life. Without Dos Passos's invention of his cinematic machine to record the momentum carrying an industrial mass society headlong into moral chaos, a good deal of our present sophistication in fiction, in the classy new journalism, even in the formal writing of American history, would not exist. Dos Passos was a writer whom other writers will always imitate without knowing it. He created a tight-lipped national style that was above all a way of capturing the million alternatives of experience in America.

History As Structure

The “big money” all around them certainly stimulated writers in the '20s. John O'Hara, who came in just at the end of his favorite decade and was never really a part of it—except in his envy—said that the development of the United States in the first half of the 20th century was the greatest possible subject for a novelist. Scott Fitzgerald, O'Hara's icon, was fascinated by the rich but thought them as tragic as everyone else in this society of excess. Dos Passos, though he was swept along by American history, thought that the function of art was to resist.

It is a fact that the secret strength of the 1920s was the reliance on American power as the greatest of social facts. There was a respect for status, an innate sense of social class, that would distinguish Dos Passos and friends from those writers after another war—Saul Bellow, Ralph Ellison, Carson McCullers, Norman Mailer, Flannery O'Connor—who grew up in depression and war, who would never think the United States to be so unusual in history as Hemingway and friends used to think it was.

Writers emerging in the 1940s, too late to take in the legends of America's special destiny, were quickly persuaded that histories sooner or later become the same. And all history is essentially obscure and problematical, in some ways too “cunning” ever to be fully understood by the individual novelist, who can no longer feel that history is on his side—that *he* can depend on history to hold him up, to supply him effortlessly with material, to imbue him with the vitality that only confidence in one's subject can.

Dos Passos was still in the groove of Henry James's firm belief that “the novelist succeeds to the sacred office of the historian.” The old faith that History exists objectively, that it has an ascertainable order (if no longer a purpose), that it is what the novelist most depends on and appeals to, that History even supplies the *structure* of the novel—this is what distinguishes the extraordinary invention that is U.S.A.

from most novels published after 1940. And it is surely because History as order—to say nothing of History as something to “believe” in—comes so hard to later writers that Dos Passos sometimes resembles one of those early movie directors resurrected for his “technique” at the Museum of Modern Art.

Most oddly for someone with his “aesthetic” concerns, Dos Passos in *U.S.A.* was sympathetic to the long tradition of radical dissent in America. *The 42nd Parallel* opens on the story of Mac, a typically rootless wobbly and “working-class stiff” of the golden age of American socialism before 1917. *The Big Money* ends on the struggles of Mary French (and John Dos Passos) to save Sacco and Vanzetti in 1927. To round out his trilogy when it was finally published in a single volume, Dos Passos added, as preface and epilogue, his sketches of the young man, hungry and alone, walking the highways.

A Cheer for the Wright Brothers

Vag, the American vagrant, expresses Dos Passos’s fascination with the alienated, the outsider, the beaten, the dissenter: the forgotten in American history (with whom he would finally include Thomas Jefferson). Mac, the American wobbly and drifter at the beginning of *U.S.A.*, is as much an expression of what has been sacrificed to American progress as Mary French, the middle-class Communist, is at the end of the last book. These solitaries, along with the young man endlessly walking America, frame this chronicle of disillusionment with the American promise. The loner in America, the homeless like himself when young, interested Dos Passos as examples (not as fully exposed, interesting individual souls) long before he became interested in the American as protester. And despite his revulsion from the radical-as-ideologist, the Communist-as-policeman (at the end of *The Big Money*, the lonely Mary French identifies with a Stalin orthodoxy to which she will fall victim), Dos Passos remained fascinated by the true dissenter, whether on the highway or, like Thomas Jefferson, alone in the White House.

Although Dos Passos’s sympathies, at least in *The 42nd Parallel*, were clearly with the radicals who were off the main track, he did not particularly like them. It was inventors such as the Wright brothers, scientists such as Charles Steinmetz, intellectuals of the highest creative ability such as Thorstein Veblen, politicians with rare moral courage such as Robert La Follette, who became the heroes of his “biographies” in *U.S.A.* And rousing as Dos Passos’s prose stanzas were in style, even these heroes remained *careers*.

There are no such heroes and heroines among the fictional characters of his novel; they are mediocre, futile, forgettable. The tonic edge of *U.S.A.*, its stylistic dash and irony, its gay inventiveness, finally reflect Dos Passos’s own practicality in getting down the sweep of national existence in our century. The people are just case histories—as more and more Americans are to themselves. But Dos Passos’s own sense of his art as something new is one of the great themes of the books—a tribute to the original structure of the novel.

THE CAMERA EYE (49)

Townsend Ludington, a Dos Passos biographer, described the function of the "Camera Eye" sections of U.S.A.: "by rendering impressionistic autobiography in the Camera Eye he would chart the growth of the narrator during the era chronicled. . . ." In number 49, the narrator reflects upon the meaning of Bartolomeo Vanzetti's prosecution.

walking from Plymouth to North Plymouth suddenly round a bend in the road beyond a little pond and yellowtwigged willows hazy with green you see the Cordage huge sheds and buildings companyhouses all the same size all grimed the same color a great square chimney long roofs sharp ranked squares and oblongs cutting off the sea the Plymouth Cordage this is where another immigrant worked hater of oppression who wanted a world unfenced when they fired him from the cordage he peddled fish the immigrants in the dark framehouses knew him bought his fish listened to his talk following his cart around from door to door you ask them What was he like? why are they scared to talk of Bart scared because they knew him scared eyes narrowing black with fright? a barber the man in the little grocery store the woman he boarded with in scared voices they ask Why won't they believe? We knew him We seen him every day Why won't they believe that day we buy the eels?

only the boy isn't scared

pencil scrawls in my notebook the scraps of recollection the broken halfphrases the effort to intersect word with word to dovetail clause with clause to rebuild out of mangled memories unshakably (Oh Pontius Pilate) the truth

the boy walks shyly browneyed beside me to the station talks about how Bart helped him with his homework wants to get ahead why should it hurt him to have known Bart? wants to go to Boston University we shake hands don't let them scare you accustomed to smokingcar accustomed the jumble of faces rumble cozily homelike towards Boston through the gathering dark how can I make them feel how our fathers our uncles haters of oppression came to this coast how say Don't let them scare you how make them feel who are your oppressors America

rebuild the ruined words worn slimy in the mouths of lawyers districtattorneys collegepresidents judges without the old words the immigrants haters of oppression brought to Plymouth how can you know who are your betrayers America

or that this fishpeddler you have in Charlestown Jail is one of your founders Massachusetts?

Reprinted with permission of Mrs. Elizabeth H. Dos Passos.

What Dos Passos created with *U.S.A.* was in fact another invention—another American *thing* peculiar to the openness and stress of American life, like the Wright brothers' airplane, Edison's phonograph, Luther Burbank's hybrids, Frank Lloyd Wright's first office buildings. All these fellow inventors are celebrated in *U.S.A.* We soon recognize that Dos Passos's contraption, his new kind of novel, is in fact (reminding us of Frank Lloyd Wright's self-dramatizing Guggenheim Museum) the greatest character in the book itself. We find that our primary pleasure in the book is in its scheme.

A real ingenuity went into *U.S.A.* Dos Passos invented a remarkable tool for evoking the simultaneous frames of existence. History in the most tangible sense—what happened—is obviously more important to Dos Passos than the people to whom things happened. The matter of the book is always the representative happening and person, the historical moment illustrated in its catchwords, its songs, its influences, above all in its speech. What Dos Passos wanted to capture above anything else was the echo of what people were saying, exactly in the style in which *anyone* might have said it. The artistic aim of his novel was to catch the litany, the tone, the issue of the time in the voice of the time, the banality, the cliché that finally becomes the voice of mass opinion.

On to Jefferson

The voice that might be *anyone's* voice reduces human uniqueness to the vibrating resemblances of history "in our time." All becomes newsreel. In the flush of Wilson's New Freedom in 1913, Jerry Burnham, the professional cynic, says to Janey Williams, "I think there's a chance we may get back to being a democracy." Mac and his comrades talk about "forming the structure of a new society within the shell of the old." Janey Williams's "Popper" grumbles, "I don't trust girls nowadays with these here ankle-length skirts and all that." Eveline Hutchins, who will find life just too dreary, thinks early in the book, "Maybe she'd been wrong from the start to want everything so justright and beautiful." Charley Anderson, leaving the sticks, thinks, "To hell with all that, I want to see some country."

1919, the second volume of the trilogy, is sharper than *The 42nd Parallel*. The obscenity of "Mr. Wilson's War" is its theme, and since the war is the most important political event of the century, Dos Passos rises to it with a brilliance that does not conceal his fury behind it. His contraption is running better with practice. Apart from the book's unforgettable ironic vibrations as a picture of waste, hypocrisy, debauchery, *1919* shows History as a bloody farce, now unspeakably *wrong*, a mockery of the hopes associated with the beginning of the century.

The fictional and historic characters come together on the same plane. One character is both "fictional" and "historic": the Unknown Soldier. He is fictional because no one knows who he is; yet he was an actual soldier, picked at random from so many other dead soldiers. The symbolic corpse has become for Dos Passos the representative American. His interment in Arlington National Cemetery Dos Passos blaz-

ingly records in "The Body of an American," the prose poem that ends *1919* and is the most brilliant single piece of writing in the trilogy:

they took it to Châlons-sur-Marne
 and laid it out neat in a pine coffin
 and took it home to God's Country in a battleship
 and buried it in a sarcophagus in the Memorial Amphitheater
 in the Arlington National Cemetery
 and draped the Old Glory over it
 and the bugler played taps

What above all else invests *1919* is the contrast of the official and popular idealism with the hysterical hedonism of young gentlemen in the ambulance service. The echoes of popular speech are now our last ties with the doomed. This monument to a generation sacrificed is built up out of those mythic quotations and slogans that make up the book in its shattering mimicry. "In Paris they were still haggling over the price of blood, squabbling over toy flags, the river-frontiers on relief maps"; "tarpaper barracks that stank of carbolic"; "did Meester Veelson know that in the peasants' wargrined houses along the Brenta and the Piave they were burning candles in front of his picture cut out of the illustrated papers?"

The Versailles peace conference is reduced to the style of Dos Passos's generation—"Three old men shuffling the pack, dealing out the cards."

Woodrow Wilson is caught forever when he says in Rome, "It is the greatest pride of Americans to have demonstrated the immense love of humanity which they hear in their hearts." Dos Passos's mimicry is brought to a final pitch of indignation in the person of the Unknown Soldier: "Say feller tell me how I can get back to my outfit."

He is anybody—and (as Dos Passos thought in 1932) everybody. In "The Body of an American" we can see that this is not so much a novel of a few lives as it is an epic of the mass society that has replaced "our storybook democracy." In other famous American books about democracy—*Representative Men*, *Leaves of Grass*, *Moby Dick*—the subject is that dearest of all American myths, the self-made man as hero. Dos Passos's subject is the degradation of democracy, the emergence of mass society, and the transformation of politics into sociology. His conviction is that the force of circumstances—call it the State, and "war is the health of the state"—is too strong for the average man, who may never rise above mass culture, mass superstition, mass slogans.

Completing his trilogy in 1936 with *The Big Money*, an account of the boom, Dos Passos portrayed a society gone mad with greed. The only fictional character in *The Big Money* who gets our respect is Mary French, the doctor's daughter and earnest social reformer who becomes a fanatical Communist in her rage over Sacco and Vanzetti. The emotions arising from the Sacco-Vanzetti case provide Dos Passos with his clearest and most powerful memories—"all right we are two nations." But Mary French is giving her life to the Communist Party. The only defense against the ravages of our century is personal integrity.

U.S.A. was distinguished by its clarity, its strong-mindedness, the bold and sharp relief into which it put all moral issues, all characterizations—all human destiny in America. There were no shadows in the book, no approximations (except of individual character), no fuzzy outlines. Everything was focused, set off from what was not itself, with that special clarity of presentation that Americans valued above all else in the arts of communication. Yet by the end of his book, Dos Passos had made it clear that, although the subject of his book was democracy itself, democracy had meaning for him only through the superior man, the intellectual-elect, the poet who can never value what the crowd does. The philosophy behind *U.S.A.* was finally at variance with its natural interest, its subject matter, its greatest strength—the people and the people's speech.

U.S.A. turned out to be a book at war with itself. Its America was finally all external. Not a single character Dos Passos imagined mattered to him in the slightest. When he was through with the radical mood, he was ready for no other American mind and hero but Thomas Jefferson. Mass society now equaled America—and modern America was Dos Passos's adversary. What was begun with the high spirits of "Mr. Wilson's War" was concluded with the energy of disenchantment. Dos Passos wrote like a stranger in his own country.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Readers may wish to consult two recent biographies, John Dos Passos: *A Twentieth Century Odyssey*, by Townsend Ludington (Dutton, 1980), and *Dos Passos: A Life*, by Virginia Spencer Carr (Doubleday, 1984).

FDR and The 'Secret Map'

During the bleak autumn of 1941, the United States had yet to enter World War II. President Franklin D. Roosevelt faced strong "anti-interventionist" sentiment at home despite the growing Axis threat abroad. Hitler's invading Panzers menaced Moscow, and German submarines threatened to cut off Britain, now resisting alone in the West. Winston Churchill sought more help from FDR, who pledged to make America a "great arsenal of democracy" and quietly ordered the U.S. Navy to escort trans-Atlantic convoys. But influential Americans—Socialist Norman Thomas, publisher W. R. Hearst, GOP Senator Robert A. Taft, aviator Charles Lindbergh, Progressive Robert M. La Follette, Jr.—led the fight against efforts to aid the Allies or prepare for war; on August 12, 1941, the House of Representatives renewed the year-old peacetime draft by only one vote. Here, historians John F. Bratzel and Leslie B. Rout, Jr., supply an intriguing footnote to FDR's campaign against the isolationists—before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor ended the argument.

by John F. Bratzel and Leslie B. Rout, Jr.

In 1941, as the undeclared war in the Atlantic escalated, President Roosevelt grew increasingly bold in his campaign to undercut his isolationist foes in Congress. In a nationally broadcast address delivered at the Navy Day dinner on October 27, 1941, Roosevelt denounced German U-boat attacks on U.S. warships and promised that convoys bound for Britain would get through.

The President then made a startling disclosure:

Hitler has often protested that his plans for conquest do not extend across the Atlantic Ocean. I have in my possession a secret map, made in Germany by Hitler's government—by planners of the new world order. . . . It is a map of South America and a part of Central America as Hitler proposes to reorganize it.

This map, Roosevelt told his audience, took 14 Latin American republics and reduced them to "five vassal states . . . bringing the whole continent under their [Nazi] domina-

tion." The scheme, FDR added, was a clear threat to "our great life line, the Panama Canal." Furthermore, he explained, "the map makes clear, my friends, the Nazi design, not only against South America but against the United States as well."

Not unexpectedly, at a press conference the next day, Roosevelt was asked for a copy of the "secret map." The President demurred, stating that "it has on it certain manuscript notations, which if they were reproduced would in all probability disclose how . . . where the map came from." He added that disclosure would "also dry up the source of future information."

No Accident

Another reporter wanted Roosevelt to respond to Berlin's charge that the map was a forgery. Roosevelt started to change the subject, but the newspaperman persevered: "Let me pursue my question. . . . What would you say to the charge of the suspicion that that map was—had been foisted on you in some way? That it was also a forgery or a fake of some sort?"

FDR again tried to sidestep the query but finally replied that the map came from "a source which is undoubtedly reliable. There is no question about that." And that, aside from an angry disclaimer from Berlin, was the last official statement

about FDR's mysterious map.

Roosevelt's main reason for disclosing the secret map was to generate support for the de facto war then being waged in the Atlantic by the United States Navy against German submarines.* But his concern about German activity in Latin America was not feigned. Furthermore, many Americans shared Roosevelt's apprehensions about German designs on America's "soft underbelly." A poll conducted in February 1941 revealed that 86 percent of the respondents would favor a declaration of war if "any European power" attacked a Latin American country. This figure held steady in polls conducted during the remainder of the year.

Mark S. Watson, a military historian, summed up the situation from the President's perspective: "Politically in that day (1940–41) it was wiser to ask Congress for support in defending South American approaches . . . than in providing resistance to Hitler elsewhere: It was more visibly a 'defensive' measure."

There has probably never been a politician who understood the predictions of the American people as well as Roosevelt did. He realized

*On September 4, 1941, the U-652 fired a torpedo at the destroyer USS *Greer*. Seven days later, falsely depicting this incident as an unprovoked attack, Roosevelt ordered the Navy to "shoot on sight" German U-boats and surface raiders. Undeclared hostilities in the Atlantic may be said to have begun on this day.

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The secret map, FDR's "proof" of Nazi designs on the Western Hemisphere, shows South America and part of Central America re-portioned into five large republics. The handwritten notes, in German, pertain to questions of fuel—its production, storage, and shipment. That map is today kept in the FDR Library in Hyde Park, N.Y.

that the notion of hemispheric defense was a popular one. Besides being far simpler than sophisticated explanations of how the British Navy served as America's first line of defense against Hitler, it conjured up no terrifying images of American doughboys dying, as in World War I, on European battlefields. By implying that aid to Britain was a necessity if German tanks were to be prevented from landing on Rio's Copacabana Beach, Roosevelt came up with an argument that would satisfy

public opinion and erode antiwar isolationist sentiment.

For over two decades, historians could only speculate about the origins of Roosevelt's secret map. In 1963, however, H. Montgomery Hyde, a former British intelligence agent, supplied the first account of how FDR received the map. He stated in his book *Room 3603* (1962) that it had been purloined from a German courier, who "met with an accident." William Stephenson (codename: Intrepid), chief of British

Security Co-ordination (BSC),* took the map and passed it on to William Donovan, the U.S. coordinator of information. Donovan then had the map taken to FDR. Years later, another William Stevenson, writing in *A Man Called Intrepid* (1975), confirmed most of Hyde's account and added that Gottfried Sandstede was the luckless "German courier." According to Stevenson, Sandstede paid for his bungling with his life: "His identity as the source of information found its way back to the German Gestapo agents in Buenos Aires. They had Sandstede killed in yet another of the many 'accidents' that marked this secret battle."

This account *seems* reasonable enough. The trouble is that in September 1941 Sandstede, the head of the Nazi *Auslandsorganisation* (overseas organization) in Argentina, returned to Germany neither dead nor disgraced. Indeed, upon his arrival he was promoted to the rank of *Legationsrat, I Klasse* (consul of legation, first class). He left the diplomatic corps in April 1943 to join an SS combat unit. Both the German Federal Republic Foreign Office and U.S. military intelligence agree that Sandstede was killed in battle on the Russian front on March 9, 1944. Unless this is the "accident" both Hyde and Stevenson were referring to, we must consider their explanations of events to be inaccurate.

The history of the secret map is even more bizarre than the Hyde-Stevenson accounts would suggest. Sandstede was, in fact, involved. As *Auslandsorganisation* chief for Argen-

*British intelligence was divided into MI-5 (counterintelligence) and MI-6, which is also known as the SIS (Secret Intelligence Service). William Stephenson took charge of MI-6 operations in the Western Hemisphere in May 1940. Thereafter, MI-6 in that region was known as the BSC.

tina, he was party to, if not responsible for, the decision to put up a huge map of Latin America in the Buenos Aires Nazi Party headquarters in 1940—a map reputedly showing some provocative territorial rearrangements. Incorporated into Argentina were the *Islas Malvinas* (Falkland Islands), Paraguay, southern Bolivia, and Uruguay. Brazil was given a slice of northeastern Argentina (Misiones Province) and the rest of Bolivia, as well as Dutch and French Guiana. Panama was added to Colombia; British Guiana, to Venezuela. And Ecuador was shared by Peru and Colombia. What the map implied was clear: If Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela cooperated with the Nazis, they might expect support for their territorial ambitions once Germany won the war.

Doctoring the Evidence?

The first report on this controversial map was sent to Washington, D.C., in March 1941 by Lt. Col. M. A. Devine, U.S. military attaché in Argentina. He described it as a heavy-handed but effective propaganda ploy designed to appeal to the expansive ambitions of the larger South American countries. Devine also reported that this German map was drawing favorable responses:

At the appropriate time, I had an opportunity of asking the assistant chief from military intelligence in the Argentine government if he had seen the map, and he replied in the affirmative, voicing no objection to the contemplated territorial adjustments.

When and exactly how the British obtained a copy of the map in Nazi headquarters must remain a matter of conjecture. What is certain, though, is that the BSC obtained one or more maps from Nazi sources in



FDR and Winston Churchill aboard the Prince of Wales just off the coast of Newfoundland in August 1941. At this meeting, the two leaders agreed upon the Atlantic Charter, an eight-point proclamation of democratic principles.

Argentina. We believe that these were forwarded to Canada, where they were "doctored" at "Station M" (the BSC's technical laboratory in Ontario, Canada). Even today, the British will not say what changes they made on the map. But neither do they deny what we allege—that they made the territorial alterations of Latin America appear to be even more extensive than those reportedly proposed on the original Buenos Aires map. Furthermore, the changes were different. (The Guianas, for example, were all given to France, that is, to Vichy France, and Chile was now shown as one of the expanded republics.) A "touched-up" map was then passed on to Donovan, who in turn had it delivered to Roosevelt.

Then comes the most intriguing question: Did the President think that the document he received was the genuine article, or did he suspect that it had been altered by the Brit-

ish for propaganda purposes? Ex-operative Hyde informed us that Intrepid "never told anyone apart from trusted members of his own staff, such as myself, of these activities. I am sure that Donovan and FDR believed the map to be genuine."

An even more reliable account was supplied by James R. Murphy, an executive assistant to Donovan in 1941 and currently a Washington, D.C., attorney. Murphy, who actually delivered the map to the White House, said this:

I am sure that neither I nor Donovan was ever told that the "map" was not authentic, or had been "doctored," and I am also certain [that] if Donovan had been told, or knew that it was not authentic, he would not have given it to the President.

Hyde and Murphy are both probably correct. FDR knew that the British were decoding top secret German messages by means of the "Ultra"



William Stephenson (left), chief of British Security Co-ordination, and William Donovan (right), U.S. coordinator of intelligence information.

process.* Thus, it was reasonable for him to assume that British intelligence might also have obtained the map by supersecret means. Still, FDR may have wondered privately how His Majesty's Secret Service had come up with a document that so perfectly suited his (and Britain's) needs.

In fact, at the time, State Department officials were troubled by British attempts to gull their Washington allies. In a September 5, 1941, memorandum forwarded to Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles and Secretary of State Cordell Hull, Assistant Secretary Adolf Berle warned that British intelligence agents were manufacturing documents detailing Nazi conspiracies in South America. What most disturbed Berle was that the British were seeking U.S. diplomatic cooperation in order to validate these forgeries and thereby create a hemisphere-wide

*Codename for method developed by British scientists headquartered at Bletchley Park (England), whereby messages coded on German "Enigma" coding machines were intercepted and decoded.

Nazi bugaboo. His conclusion was understated: "I think we have to be a little on our guard against false scares."

On the other hand, policy considerations made it unlikely that FDR was going to question too closely the authenticity of potentially useful material. Roosevelt's greatest concern was the threat that Hitler posed to the security of the United States. And his most pressing need during October 1941 was to repeal the last restrictions of the Neutrality Acts of 1936-37. This legislative action would allow him to arm merchant ships and convoy them all the way into British ports. If German U-boats attempted to interfere with these activities, the U.S. Navy, with the consent of Congress, would retaliate. After a sharp debate, the legislation cleared the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by a vote of 13 to 10 on October 25.

Roosevelt probably knew that he had the votes necessary to push the repeal statute through the Senate,

but the floor fight in the House of Representatives would be bitter, and the acrimony would do nothing to unite the nation behind his policies. Then, on October 21, when Donovan informed the President that the secret map had been made available by the British, it would have been immediately obvious to FDR that the map could bolster his position while undermining that of his isolationist foes. Moreover, so long as FDR allowed none of his adversaries to examine the map, the design for aggression that it supposedly documented could not be challenged.

We presented our conclusions to Joseph P. Lash, the author of *Eleanor and Franklin* (1971) and *Roosevelt and Churchill, 1939-1941: The Partnership That Saved the West* (1976). On the question of the map's relationship to Roosevelt's foreign policy, he wrote the following:

It was Roosevelt's policy to wage war without declaring it. United States rationale in the Atlantic had shifted from freedom of the seas to hemispheric defense against Nazi penetration. And this map seemed to fit the new approach.

Actually, some of the most convincing evidence supporting our in-

terpretation was supplied by FDR himself. Speaking to Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr., on May 14, 1942, the President expanded upon U.S.-Argentine relations and, at the same time, revealed his larger strategic design:

I may have one policy for Europe and one diametrically opposite for North and South America. I may be entirely inconsistent, and furthermore, I am perfectly willing to mislead and tell untruths if it will help us win the war. . . .

Perhaps the ultimate significance of the secret-map episode is what it shows about Roosevelt—and, in particular, about his increasing determination to stand up to the Axis powers. In dealing with the Nazis abroad and with the isolationists at home, he had come to believe, well before America went to war, that truth must often take second place to national security and political expediency. As it turned out, the final restrictions on the Neutrality Acts were repealed by the Senate (50 votes to 37) on November 7, 1941, and by the House (212 to 194) on November 13, the latter occurring just 24 days before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor ended all debate.



COMMENTARY

We welcome timely letters from readers, especially those who wish to amplify or correct information published in the Quarterly and/or react to the views expressed in our essays. The writer's telephone number and address should be included. For reasons of space, letters are usually edited for publication. Some of those printed below were received in response to the editors' requests for comment.

The More Things Change

Paul B. Henze's lucid exposition of the history that has shaped Ethiopian culture ["Ethiopia," *WQ*, Winter 1984] is most helpful in evaluating recent political events in Mengistu's "new" Ethiopia.

As a former resident of Ethiopia (1967-74) and a periodic visitor during the past 10 years, I am amazed by how little the apparently "radical" Marxist revolution has affected the economic and political lives of most Ethiopians.

Mengistu continues to rule his "empire" in a manner astonishingly similar to that of Haile Selassie, the only political model the junior officer had. And his subjects respond to authoritarianism, supported by a well-disciplined Army, much as they always have.

Mengistu has effected land reform in limited areas of the empire, and the Kebeles have politicized city dwellers to some degree. But he still rules through the Army, while keeping a wary eye on the church, as always.

The rhetoric of Marxist ideology has little effect on Ethiopian life and is generally directed to international issues for the benefit of Mengistu's Soviet patrons. Just as Haile Selassie, to facilitate entrance into the League of Nations, issued decrees in French and Spanish abolishing slavery, but not in Amharic (to avoid disturbing traditional thought), Mengistu often issues several versions of a speech—one containing anti-American diatribes in Russian, a more benevolent version in English, and a version delivered in Amharic for home consumption that ignores the whole irrelevant subject.

In bowing to Soviet pressure to establish a workers' party, Mengistu has care-

fully kept workers therein to a minimum, leaving power clearly with the military. To have done otherwise would probably have insured intervention by a very traditional military establishment threatened by this new and *ferenji* (alien) institution. Indeed, he may have gone too far as it is, should the party's civilian component begin to usurp the Army's established role of providing for political unity and the survival of traditional Ethiopian values.

*Jerry Funk
Washington, D.C.*

On Venezuela

Robert D. Bond's review of the politics, economics, history, and future of Venezuela ["Where Democracy Lives," *WQ*, Autumn 1984] was interesting and informative. Having lived in Venezuela from 1952 to 1960, I am curious as to your assessment of Rear Admiral Wolfgang Larrazabal, who led the junta that overthrew the Pérez-Jiménez dictatorship.

Larrazabal ruled for several months and then resigned his commission and ran for the presidency as the candidate for the Unión Republicana Democrática, accepting Communist support. He lost to Betancourt. To his credit, Larrazabal did not use the military to remain in power and allowed Acción Democrática to take over as the duly elected government.

I heard that Pérez-Jiménez had returned to Venezuela after several years in exile. How was he received, and what is he doing now? Finally, what is the status of the Venezuelan Communist Party now? What became of its leader, Gustavo Machado?

*R. D. Harris, M.D.
Rockville, Md.*

Space constraints prevented the mention of Larrazabal's role in the restoration of democracy. Today, he is a member of the Venezuelan Congress. Pérez-Jiménez was extradited from the United States to Venezuela (1963), then tried and sentenced to five years in jail. Upon his release, he went to Spain. Supporters successfully nominated him as a senator in the 1968 elections, but the Venezuelan Supreme Court, citing his absence from the country, nullified the nomination. A 1973

constitutional amendment that barred convicted public officials from elected office permanently ended his hopes of a political comeback. He remains a resident of Spain. Finally, Machado continues as the standard-bearer of Venezuela's Communist Party, which today is a political force in name only.

—Ed.

Thrice-Told Tale

In Richard Restak's "Is This Cat Necessary?" ["The Mind," *WQ*, Winter 1984], we are told the old story about Samuel Johnson's kicking the stone to refute Bishop Berkeley, with the usual implication that Johnson was being obtuse—"Of course, all that Johnson knew of the stone was his own experience of it—precisely Berkeley's point" (see p. 51). Everyone knows that story, but everyone gets it wrong. The implications of kicking the stone are anything but simple. First, as James Boswell reports, Johnson struck the stone "till he rebounded from it." The point is not that Johnson feels the stone, but that it resists and affects him, thereby proving its independent existence. Second, actions such as kicking do not depend on perceptions. To kick with the foot, or to see with the eye, is not the same as to perceive the foot or the eye—the eye does not see itself. Johnson was a sophisticated thinker, quite capable of intending this refutation. And it might be added that no better refutation of Berkeley has yet been devised. Perhaps it is time to lay the story to rest, at least until we get the point right.

Lawrence Lipking
Professor of English
Northwestern University

Editor's Note

Since the Autumn 1984 *Quarterly* appeared, we have received many thoughtful responses to Charles Murray's essay "The War on Poverty," drawn from his book *Losing Ground: American Social Policy 1950–1980* (Basic, 1984). They will be featured in our next issue.

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(signed) Peter Braestrup, Editor

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