



ETHNIC AND CULTURAL FACTORS IN NATIONAL
STRENGTH (AND WEAKNESS)

Dr. David Riesman

NOTICE

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Reviewed by Dr. M. S. Reichley on 9 December 1963.

INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES
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(AND WEAKNESS)

26 November 1963

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Reviewed by: Dr. M. S. Reichley Date: 9 December 1963
Reporter--Grace R. O'Toole

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ADMIRAL ROSE: Ladies and Gentlemen: This is the first of our evening lectures for this school year. The next one will be next spring. It is a great pleasure to have the wives with us tonight. We hope that you will not be bashful when the time comes to ask questions.

I'd like to express a warm and special welcome to our other guests. We are honored here tonight by your presence.

As you know, this is one of the regular lectures of the school year. Your husbands have to be here, but it is very nice that you are here, too. It's a regular lecture and a serious one.

Our subject tonight, "Ethnic and Cultural Factors in National Strength (and Weakness)," is one which certainly has an important part and influence on our Nation's position as the leader of the free world.

To address us on this subject we are most fortunate to have Dr. David Riesman, who has distinguished himself in the field of American culture and character. Dr. Riesman is a graduate from Harvard, where he also obtained his law degree. He followed his legal career for some eight years and then, in 1946, changed careers to sociology. He spent some 12 years at the University of Chicago, where he helped develop the courses in social sciences, in addition to teaching and doing research. Since 1958 he has held the Henry Ford II Professorship of Social Sciences at Harvard.

Harvard.

He is the author of many books, including The Lonely Crowd and Faces in the Crowd. Dr. Riesman holds degrees from seven colleges and universities. His last lecture to the resident course was in 1958.

It is my pleasure to introduce to you Dr. David Riesman, the Henry Ford Professor of Social Sciences, Harvard University.

Dr. Riesman.

DR. RIESMAN: Thank you, Admiral Rose. Members and Friends of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces: I want to add a footnote to what Admiral Rose said about his hope that the wives will not be bashful. It reminded me of an experience that I had two years ago when I was in Japan and when I spoke at the Tokyo Christian Women's College, in the chapel, to a large audience of all the students. I decided that I wanted a discussion. I always want discussion. And yet I was aware of the extreme shyness of Japanese girls. I put them to a test. I said I was going to have a question period, which was unprecedented in Japan. Professors hold forth in good Germanic style and students listen, or appear to. So I was going to have a question period. When my formal talk was over and I opened matters for discussion, my heart sank, because I didn't want the school to be embarrassed by the failure of any of the students to ask questions, and I had already intimidated the faculty.

I waited. I said I was patient and that I was sure that there would be questions. But I wasn't sure. Then a girl in the front row broke the ice and asked a question. I had explained that I would have an interpreter

so that they could speak in their native tongue. Then a whole flood of questions came. The pride of the students in themselves and their faculty in them was wonderful to behold.

What I want to talk about tonight in the time that couldn't be sadder is something about the ways in which in our country the divisions of our national life and the nationalization of our national life proceed hand in hand.

The main story, it seems to me, in America is nationalization, is the degree to which the various ethnic and regional and religious sub-cultures in America have tended to create a national culture. There are many exceptions. The South has its eccentricities. The Negroes and the poor, at the bottom of the society, don't share in the general middle-class court culture of America. At the very top of our society one finds an upper class, very small--not simply those who have more money but those who have a different style of life--which nevertheless is infiltrated, so to speak, by the values from the middle class. And yet one can say in general that the upper class and the lower class share certain values which differentiate them from the middle class.

The middle class has tended in America to be the saving class, though that is hardly true any more, the forward-looking class, the class that thinks of going to college and has its youngsters going to college. What we have of an upper class is closer to the lower class in thinking of the present and closer to its own partners in other countries in looking to the past.

One of the things that have happened with the growth of the affluent middle class in the society is described by Stimson Bullitt in his little book, To Be A Politician. He points out that the political leader in this country in an earlier day could mobilize the poor against the rich because the poor were, as in every land, the majority. Today the relatively well off are the majority and our society no longer takes the shape of a pyramid, with the small top and the large bottom, as we would see it, let us say, in Latin America, but rather takes the shape of an egg, with a very large middle, and the people in the middle usually have large middles.

So it is not possible for a political leader to prospect, so to speak, among the underprivileged, except the Negro, to build a constituency, and even the Negro constituency is, of course, but a tenth of the national population.

This development which has thrown into a kind of national middle class what in another country would be still the poor has come together with the admittance to American status of the former immigrant groups, so that what we find is that more and more people have been admitted to participation in American middle-class life. And now the last, or nearly the last, of these groups, namely, the Negro, also asks to be accepted as a middle-class American. And indeed, if one knows, as I'm sure many of you do in your own lives, middle-class Negroes, you will agree with me, perhaps, that nothing more middle class is to be found in all of

America.

This has transformed the older class struggles and it has transformed much of the sectional struggles, and we might ask before we turn to the exceptions or qualifications about this: How has it come to pass? We were talking at supper, a few of us, about the way in which Navy people and Army people, as part of their careers, move about the country, but this is now the all-American norm. The average American moves once in five years. Whereas, for example, in 1900, 9 out of 10 Negroes lived in the South, now only half of the Negroes do, and most of those have moved to the big cities, like Houston and Atlanta.

An interesting fact here is that those who do not move but who stay in the same place are influenced by the fact that the others move around them.

For many years my wife and I have run a dairy farm in Brattleboro, Vermont. It's one of the less intelligent things we do. We have watched young people grow up in this town, and when they go to college they go to college never to come back. Indeed, college is their route away from small-town New England. But there are other college-educated people in Brattleboro--the lawyers, the doctors, the county agents--and they come from other places which they've left to go to Brattleboro. The result is that those who stay are altered by those who come. Their society, so to speak, has been pulled out from under them and this takes the shape of many conflicts over how much to pay for the schools, or who is to belong to the country club, and what the values of the community are to be.

These conflicts, one might say, are to be found generally in most small towns in America and in many sizable ones, between the locals and the cosmopolitans.

Occupational mobility also has been transformed. For the first time in history there are fewer blue-collar people in America than there are white-collar people. Unskilled and semi-skilled work, whether on the farm or in the factory, is, as you know, at a discount, and this is one of our sources of weakness, in that we don't know what to do with these people. Technically trained people, service people, are at a premium, and these people are increasingly employed by national employers, including the Nation itself and its various agencies. These people, if they are not in fact moved about, expect to be moved about as part of their careers. The whole society has developed in such a way as to make this movement less traumatic because they find where they go posts with the same brands of goods and, in some measure, the same brand of people.

Higher education is one of the chief routes for sorting people around the country. The consequence of higher education, by and large, is to uproot people from their traditional provincialisms. People, when they go to college, many studies show, become less attached to the prejudices with which they came. They meet more kinds of people, and they meet more kinds of ideas. This worries many parents, and this worries many communities. But those who are cut off by attending college from their local roots become attached all the more firmly to national ones.

A study I recently read of a California college indicates that

those who go to the college--and they are a very unselected group of high-school graduates--go to college with much more bigotry than they leave with. They come to college disliking Negroes or orientals, for instance, and they leave college with greater tolerance. They also leave college with a stronger nationalism.

There is in this way developed something of a national, upper-middle-class style of the educated with a national series of mass media and journals, and of course the three recent wars--Korea and the First and Second World Wars--have had a large hand in moving people about and in getting them to have a wider sense of the world outside.

I mentioned the mass media. They provide for us a national agenda so that we now don't get only the local weather but we get the weather everywhere, more, perhaps, than we are interested in. Then, in the local press, we have a national agenda of national celebrities. The Gallup Poll recently did an interesting study, a study of how many Americans were visible and recognized by other Americans. The purpose of the poll was to test the visibility of such Republican presidential possibilities as Governors Romney and Scranton, who are known to a very small proportion of the electorate. What was striking was how many of the figures known to virtually the entire electorate were figures in the mass media. Elizabeth Taylor was known to 98 percent, General Taylor to hardly that many.

The television debates, which now come back to sadly to me, between Nixon and the late President, had an extraordinary and, I think, little

understood effect in nationalized America, because for the first historic time, partisans of the opposition that lost were made to see the other man. Ordinarily, as many studies of campaigns have shown, most Americans exposed themselves only to their side and therefore believed the worst of the other side, and in a close election would naturally believe that if the other side won the country would necessarily go to ruin. The very fact that the Nixon supporters had seen the other man on television changed all this. It meant that they could no longer believe what their press and their partisans said about him. They were readier to accept him as President.

But, beyond such specificities and figures in the national agenda there are certain matters of national style or national rhetoric, and here all the agencies of mass communication come to bear--our billboards, our movies, our advertising, as well as what is written--and these praise youth and pep and a kind of realistic moderation, of which we haven't had too much, and these provide a kind of sense of what it is to be an American, and make it very hard for old Americans or homely Americans or Americans who aren't in the shape of the Coca Cola ads.

So much, then, to begin with, for those elements in American life which have^{made} us mobile, occupationally and geographically, and also psychologically, in the sense that we communicate with each other as a nation. Let me say now something about the localistic, ethnic, and regional pressures which remain.

We are all familiar with the enormous changes which have occurred

in the American South, but let me remind you of some of them. Ten years ago the South was the most pro-British part of the country, in favor of free trade, and the part of the country most opposed to Senator McCarthy. It was opposed to him because he was Catholic, because he was Republican, and because he was attacking President Truman, a kind of Southerner, by grace, shall we say.

Now at least much of this has changed. The South has become rapidly industrialized, rapidly urbanized, and the South is eager for industry, eager for urbanization, and yet at the same time the very processes that it invites upset it, and Southerners, many of them, especially of the older generation, feel estranged. For my sins I attended a White Citizens' Council Meeting in New Orleans seven years ago, where I listened to many of the leading spokesmen. One got the sense, or at least I did, that, when they talk about States' rights, what they really mean is Federal wrongs. They have no great love for the States, it seems to me. They have no sense of the State as an appropriate boundary. In this meeting there were Senator Eastland from Mississippi, Leander Perez and others from Louisiana, representatives from Arkansas, from Georgia, and from Texas, a kind of internationale of Southern rhetoric, all of it anti-Federal, little of it devoted to love for a particular location. And yet, while what I say is relevant in thinking of domestic politics, its bearing on foreign policy is quite different.

There were, at the time of Pearl Harbor, some Southern Negroes

in the Deep South who had a momentary lift because colored people were giving it to white people. This is not the feeling among American Negroes today, and there was no such ambivalence among whites in the South toward the tragedy of the Cuban invasion or anything of the sort, no feeling that at the water's edge the Nation was not a good thing.

In general, if one thinks about these Southerners and their regional antagonism, one identifies them with the displaced elderly in our society at large. In New England there have been a great many studies of communities torn apart on the issue of fluoridation of water. In these studies one turns up again and again the fact that older people, who, of course, have very little vested interest left in their own teeth, have a kind of cultural negativism in which they feel suspicious. Their arguments against fluoridation are really arguments against an alien invasion. The water can be chlorinated, and that doesn't trouble them, but fluorate it and it can be a political issue of great moment, and they can vote no. They can vote no on school bond issues, and if one talks with them about this one gets a sense of their feeling of helplessness and powerlessness in the face of the new and the strange. All they can do is express their negativism.

In a number of studies, in the South as well as in the North, it has been shown that tolerance goes together with education and, of course, the young have more education. There is more of it to go round, and more of it is available to more people. In the South this is especially striking, where there is less education, so that the Southerner who goes

to college joins the national upper-middle class, and cuts himself off very decisively from those in his own community who do not attend college.

A few years ago Time Magazine commissioned a study of college seniors in 20 colleges and universities across the country, asking them what they would expect of life and what they would want 15 years out. Then they turned the interviews over to me. In studying them I was struck by the fact that again and again, in the Southern institutions included in the sample--whether it was Georgia Tech or the University of Houston or Tulane--the college seniors were saying, "On the race question all we have to do is wait for the old folks to die off. It's nothing to us." They wouldn't be passionate, usually, about it. They weren't going to fight for civil rights, but they would be glad when they arrived. They were quite cut off from all their people, even high-school graduates, much more so than in the rest of the country and especially in the Far West, where going to college does not have quite this decisive effect of moving one out of the regional culture into the national culture.

Now, of course, I say this only on specific issues, because on many other issues, such as the desire for material progress, the South has nothing to learn from the North. Any Yankee who has done business in the South can tell you that there are plenty of Yankees who speak with a Southern accent.

Ethnic factors also have a very considerable survival, and these

differ regionally as well. They have to do with the order in which people came to whatever part of the country. It was a shock to me on returning from Chicago to Harvard to find out still alive was the traditional conflict between Irish-Americans and Brahmins. I had thought that this would have died out. It is kept alive by memories of the burning of convents and of the days when signs were up saying, "No Irish need apply." If one spends time in Boston College or in the other Catholic Universities and Colleges in the New England area, one gets a sense that some of the older traditions persist which limit the occupational mobility of Irish Catholics, although they are fast disappearing. Protestant resentment of the political domination, not yet coupled with economic domination, of Irish-Americans has not yet taken account of the fact that the Italian-Americans resent the Irish even more, after having heard Irish spoken in too many Catholic Churches over too many decades instead of the right Italian accent on the Latin.

But, if one moves from Boston College to Marquette, in Milwaukee, or to the University of Seattle, or the University of San Francisco, all Jesuit institutions, one realizes that in other parts of the country these issues take a very different form. In San Francisco, for example, the Irish were there as early as anybody else, and this kind of old, ethnic contentiousness is greatly modified. Even in Connecticut it's different, because the Poles, the French Canadians, the Italians, the Jews, and all the other ethnic groups within Connecticut politics create a different mix than they do in New Hampshire or Massachusetts. Again,

Rhode Island is different.

And yet the old, ethnic hostilities are becoming unglued, so to speak. Italians no longer necessarily vote Democratic. Immigrant Negroes in the North, of course, no longer vote Republican. West Virginians who have gone to work in the auto plants around Detroit no longer vote either Democrat or Republican, depending on the county of their birth. What we see all over is the rise of a kind of independent vote, separated from ethnic origins, separated from class origins, separated, to a large degree, from regions.

At the top of society there is more class consciousness than at the bottom, but in the business community one finds at least two very divergent strains, familiar to all of you from the struggles within the Republican Party, and representing different traditions or sub-cultures within America, which have little in common except the label, "business."

There is on the one side the managerial, highly educated business man whose life is spent in complex organizations, whose work is similar to that of you, although his career line may have many differences. He moves about the country and, indeed, the planet and has very little in common, as I suggested, let us say, with a small-town car dealer, who has more in common with the hay and grain-feed dealer of the 19th century than he does with General Motors.

One must often ask, indeed, in the political scene, why these two business classes even talk the same language when they have such different life experiences. I often think that big business men have such

humility that they pretend to be small business men and have tax problems and getting-along problems like the small business men. Of course, one can be a small business man in America and still be very rich. One of the sources of support for the radical right is this kind of small business man who has more money than managerial experience.

Now, of course, in all I have said I have been talking about tendencies or in a very rough way about percentages of pressures and historical trajectories, but we know that individuals cannot be defined in this way. There are always exceptions, and there are many individual factors that determine the way a person in America identifies himself, whether with a region or an ethnic group, and so on.

I have said a word about the radical right. I will say another, because I think it represents one of the paradoxical nationalizing forces in American life. At the time of Senator McCarthy, as I said, the South was opposed to him. The South was anti-Catholic, the South was pro-Democratic, that is, against the Republican who was attacking the Democrats. The South was pro-British in the tie that went back to the Civil War and before. The South is an importing culture, which has agricultural produce, and the South is the most Anglo-Saxon part of the country.

The election of the late President meant in 1960, for the first time, I think, the coming together of Protestant and Catholic fundamentalism.

I have talked, for example, to many Jesuit priests, teaching in some of the leading Jesuit universities, who have asked me, as a social scientist, to explain something which puzzled them greatly. As one of them put it, "We could understand the fondness of our boys for Joe McCarthy. He was our bastard. He was our kind of an Irish fighter. Maybe we didn't like what he did, but we could sympathize. But John Birch was a Protestant missionary, a fanatic from Mercer, Georgia, who went to Mercer College, and was violently anti-Catholic. What are our boys doing in the Birch Society? And since when is Goldwater an Irish name?"

I think this illustrates the way in which the old alliances and the old ethnic histories have become unstuck in America today, but not yet totally deprived of power to affect our national life. People still identify themselves in one or another way with the country from which they came or against the country from which they came. Much of the fight over isolationism both in the First and in the Second World War can be more properly seen not as isolationism but as the feeling of mid-Western Germans and Irish that it was a bad thing to fight on the same side as the British and against the Germans. They wouldn't have minded so much fighting in the Pacific or in the Caribbean.

All this is attenuating today, as I have said, and yet there are still differences, as one can see if one traces the trail of missionary expansion from this country and where missions go from different parts of the country.

Now, I have talked all too briefly about the groups in America who are dividing up and who are coming together again on the national scene. I want again to return to the fact that we are becoming a national culture and that this creates now its own problems, and I would think the chief problem is the feeling of powerlessness, the feeling that one cannot affect one's destiny, and that one's destiny is increasingly a national one. I spoke of the big business men who act like small business men.

Let me illustrate this in another way. One finds in many large cities that the big business men live in the suburbs. In Chicago, for example, many of the big business men live on the North Side in such communities as Glencoe or Winnetka. They have given Chicago up as a bad case, and one finds important men of large ability concerning themselves as to whether dogs should be on the leash or not in Glencoe or what the zoning regulations should be, while Chicago and even larger entities have a difficulty in being governed at all.

One reason for this is that Glencoe is still a manageable unit and Chicago is almost too big, too sprawling, too ethnically and culturally subdivided to be manageable.

There are some communities which are still controlled by people whom one could gather in a room in a club, who can have a say in what the fate of a city or a community will be. But the largest entities--New York, for instance, or Chicago--seem beyond this, and the Nation,

above all, has seemed to me, and not only in the last days, almost un-
governable.

Many people withdraw from this scene altogether. We all know that in this country there is a high proportion of nonvoters, and beyond non-voting, of nonparticipation generally. This reflects in part the looseness of our party system which does not act as a recruiting agency, bringing people into a feeling of identification with the party as part of their total identification with an aspect of life.

If we compare Sweden, for example, we see there a country where a worker would identify himself with the Social Democrats as part of being a worker. But by no means in this country do all members of unions consider themselves Democrats, or if they do they are certainly not necessarily followers of the National Democratic Party. In the same way, recruitment into an occupation doesn't necessarily bring one into political activity on the business side either. The saying is common, "We're all Republicans on Main Street," but that may have very little to do with the actual political activity of the business man.

The truly oppressed in this country do not vote. It does not occur to them that their condition could be better. What we see today in the civil-rights movement is a beginning discovery by oppressed Negroes that things could be better, and if they get only slightly better then, of course, people imagine that they can get much better.

As I have said before, party partisanship as part of an inheritance is fading, and people identify instead with the sophisticated,

educated style, clean-cut personalities who represent that style, which seems to be above parties, as against an earlier day when the immigrants coming to this country and helpless, most of them not speaking English, could be herded to the polls by the one English-speaking immigrant group who hated the English, namely, the Irish.

Among the young college students one sees divergent tendencies. When the Time Magazine materials were turned over to me there was a general feeling that politics was a dirty business, that some vague "they" control it, and that one should live one's life without contamination from politics. Indeed, there is a general decline of campus politics. In most of the better universities and colleges today, the big man on campus is not the big man any more. These students seek decency in personal life. They are not greedy for power or possessions, and politics seems alien to them. Thus, as the old, ethnic recruitment into politics has tended to become diminished, new less interested and more disinterested invitations into politics have become more imperative.

This has begun to happen among students. Much of it is the result of President Kennedy's election, for many identified with his intelligence, his energy, his youthfulness, his vitality, his wit, and this had many consequences. I met this afternoon with some former Peace Corps volunteers who had returned to work in a slum school in this city. Many students have this kind of dedication today, which they didn't so much when those interviews were done.

Yet they are a tiny minority. They provide at best a very little salt, and as one looks over the scene one asks where are the more universalistic groups who are willing to take on the issues of national politics in their own terms. Here, of course, one sees many new elites entering into the political scene from an occupational base rather than an ethnic base. One sees the scientists, the academicians of all the different guilds, one sees the League of Women Voters. When these studies of New England communities were done, a very interesting thing was discovered about the League. An effort was made to see who knew the most about these towns where, let us say, fluoridation battles were going on. Was it the mayor, the Chief of Police, the newspaper editor, the leading lawyer? None of these. It was the Chairman of the League of Women Voters Branch. These women had cased the joint better than anyone else.

All over the country new recruitments into politics have shown themselves in tentative form. In California, the new Democratic clubs, some of the right-wing groups, and the student movements generally are concerned with single issues rather than identification with Republicans or Democrats. They are concerned with peace or with civil rights. Then in the Church groups there is much the same thing, for instance, in the Methodist Church, which has such a strong social-action emphasis, and in the new social-action emphasis in Catholicism.

These are minority tendencies today. They do not affect what I

said at the outset concerning the development of a national, educated, upper-middle-class style which has a certain agenda and to which people are being recruited by mobility and occupation. They do not affect the resisting groups as yet, in the South and elsewhere and among the older generation, who see all the changes in American society as for the worst, who don't like the world that they see around them and blame some simple scapegoat for that world, and who want to turn the world back to a place where they again understand it, although I suspect that they never really did understand it.

I do not mean to say that our ethnic groups have lost concern with their countries of origin. Poles in Buffalo, Jews in New York, Germans in the Middle West all look abroad, whether in fear or in favor, although much less intensely and monolithically than earlier.

The general story I would say is this: Urbanization and education favor toleration, favor cosmopolitanism, favor a more generous and humane view of the world and of this country. The question is: Will we have enough time?

COLONEL MULLER: Ladies and Gentlemen, Dr. Riesman is ready for your questions.

QUESTION: Doctor, in regard to your speech, it seemed to me that your comments were on the negative side. What positive views did you glean from the questionnaires?

DR. RIESMAN: I think much of this is in the eye of the beholder. For example, one of the things that impressed me about the young people

in the survey was their lack of greed and their concern for personal decency, their tolerance, and the breadth of compassionateness in their view. From an older generation's perspective one could say that they were lacking in ambition or zealousness. One could also say they were lacking in fanaticism. On the whole they were very nice, very decent. What they lacked, I think, most of all, was a kind of passionate commitment, and this I think has changed. This I think one finds much more, as I suggested, in the last years. This questionnaire was done in the middle of the Eisenhower monarchy, and during this period many young people felt, you know--how should I say?--that to be bewildered, in a fog, was legitimated from the very top.

Now I have the feeling that young people quite differently view the matter, that the world now looks more explosive to them. All of what I have said was in the most general terms. I was talking in the coffee hour in the first instance to one of you who pointed out, quite rightly, that it was wrong to speak of "the South." Of course it's wrong. Northern Alabama and Southern Alabama have quite different traditions, for instance. Alabama isn't Florida, neither is it Louisiana, and neither is it North Carolina. Then we were talking in the same period about how even more simplistic the view of America is from abroad--just as within this country other countries look to us more monolithic and homogeneous than in fact they are, especially if they are enemy countries, but not only they.

So I think that, if one looks at these interview materials and other

such materials, one sees that young people differ in tendency, not overall--not everyone--in having more complicated goals in life, in wanting more out of life, in not being quite so willing to see the purposes of life attained only in the work sphere. The life with the family looms larger. One index I have of this will interest you, which I used in this study. I used year books of alumni of colleges over a period of 25 years and tried to see what the college graduate said about himself and therefore what seemed salient to him. One thing that struck me/^{was}that, if one takes the year books of the 1920's and early 1930's, people would say of themselves, let us say, "I am Vice President of the Oklahoma City Bank and a member of the board of Delta Airlines, and I have served a term on the Federal Reserve Board from my district, and I'm active in the Community Chest, and I serve in the Chamber of Commerce." Then they would go on to mention their families. Today, if one looks at more recent materials, there is a shift of style holding colleges constant, which goes something like this: "Janie and I love boating, and we and our four children are enthusiasts." Their families are usually quite of a considerable size, so that one almost believes that youth has gone in for a fertility cult. These young people say of themselves first of all what the family is and how much the family means. So that one could say, looking at it from the point of view of an older epic, as William White does in his book, The Organization Man, that this is bad, that these people lack drive, that they are indulgent. One could say also that, if the world holds on its course, these young people are

not going to hurt anybody, that they are not going to turn the world upside down to please some private grudge.

So I think that how one looks at it and whether one concludes that this is a positive or a negative development depends so much on the whole context that it is not easy to answer your question as flatly or as simply as one might like.

QUESTION: Doctor, you spoke of a sort of shift of culture to a national culture. Can you draw any correlation between this shift toward centralized political activities, that is, greater government activities, which some people call government intervention into the economic field? We seem to have two things on simultaneously. Do you see a correlation, as a social scientist?

DR. RIESMAN: I sometimes feel, when I think about this issue, that in some measure we are undergoverned for what is required of us in this nationalized society and economy. Let me give a few examples of how this strikes me. On the same visit to Louisiana I mentioned earlier in another connection, I went to speak at LSU in Baton Rouge, and I saw there the enormous ESSO plant which perhaps some of you have seen, a magnificent complex of oil refineries, petrochemicals, and so on, a brilliant job of a corporate welfare state--junior welfare state--operation. All around was urban and suburban sprawl--mess. Another example--the Technical Center of General Motors outside Detroit, a superb example of modern architecture, modern design, landscaping, and so on, wonderfully efficient within itself, leading out to a highway that is just the

characteristic urban monstrosity of our landscape. That is, we have islands of rationality of planning responsibility, and in between these islands, because of many, many problems, constitutional and cultural, we have lacunae--vacuums. The Federal Government tries to fill these vacuums and does so on the whole badly, expensively, irritatingly, and obviously. Some people feel that if only the Federal Government would let them alone everything would be fine. But, of course, this seems to me mythical, because the problems are created by this speed of technology, the way it crosses State boundaries, and the way our cities sprawl, often crossing State boundaries, as Philadelphia and Camden, or New York and Newark, or any number of others, do.

The talk about Federal intervention or centralization overlooks the impotence of the Federal Government to deal with major issues. Or perhaps the two are related. That is, by attacking Federal intervention, except in the sphere of your own concern, where there is little resistance to it, Federal intervention itself becomes awkward and lacks style, lacks confidence.

One other thing which I have noticed, being a very part-time farmer and a member of the Farm Bureau Federation, is that the more farmers get from the Federal Government the more they hate the Federal Government, as if they felt very guilty, as I think they do, for not living up to some 19th-century economic ideals. The same is true of many business men, of many doctors who practice in hospitals financed by the Federal Hill-Burton Act. Anyplace you look in the landscape, you find that the

people who are gaining most from the Federal Government are often the most antagonistic. There is a kind of guilt. It shouldn't be like that. This wasn't the way we were brought up. Hence the talk of Federal centralization I think fudges the issue. It doesn't quite cope with the actual fact that we are a society of 200 million people; and the management of such a society seems to me almost, if not quite, impossible.

I have talked many times about this with George Kennan, who knows another society of equal size or greater, and who feels that it is impossible to run a society like this from a central point. One of the reasons why our society is difficult to manage and is in some ways relatively decentralized is that its Capital City, in which we now are, is only the Capital City for government. It's not the Capital City for intellectual life, for commerce, for industry. If one wants to see real centralization one must go to Japan, and one must look at Tokyo, or to London, or Paris. We have nothing like this. We have a tremendous, sprawling society which is over-organized in some respects and quite under-organized and chaotic in other respects.

I don't say this in criticism of the question at all, because this is the way the matter is so often put. I think that the discussion in terms of Federal centralization doesn't really deal with the kind of world in which we live and try to make go a society as huge as ours.

QUESTION: Do you think that the tragedy of the President's death will help to heal some of the rifts and the extreme bitternesses in our

society? When we enter into a new era, will the people start to become more mature? Do you think people will be ashamed and sad enough?

DR. RIESMAN: I hope so. I am not at all sure. I think there may be a hiatus here for a time. But I must say one thing about hate, and that is that it is on the one hand contagious, so to speak, in a contemporary sense, when it becomes legitimated and supported by the mass media or by leading figures. On the other hand hate is also a character trait. That is, there are people who are hate-filled, and who look for opportunities to exploit their hate. Then the world makes sense to them, and otherwise not.

I could describe this by saying that there are people whose engines idle with hate, constantly, constantly, and who scan the planet for ways to make this irrational emotion inside them, constantly driving, seem rational. Such people may be timid. They may feel--if there would be such a feeling of shame, as you suggest--hesitant to express what they feel inside. But I don't think it can be, you know, washed away in this sense. That is, I don't think that, as adults, such people are readily really changed.

Now, if you ask, "How did the hate arise?" then one must go back to the experience of such people when young, when the hate was not an idling motor but a defensive reaction against direct experience. Then the hate defended the child against more powerful adults. But what happens so often to people is that something which begins as a necessity ends by become a necessity, even when its cause no longer remains.

I think, along the line of your question, it is conceivable that we now might inaugurate an era of good feeling, that we might have a kind of sense that we are all in the same boat and that the same kind of savagery that could make this country so precarious must not happen. I hope so.

QUESTION: You spoke of the League of Women Voters. I wonder what impact on our national life you think will result as the result of the education and the role of women in our society.

DR. RIESMAN: I think the educated women, as I suggested with my example of the League of Women Voters, are an enormous political resource. They have often a greater opportunity for disinterested political and public service than their men folk. I want to come back to this group in a moment, but let me just go down the class ladder for a moment. The less-educated women are less politically capable than their men folk. They don't get around. They're often embittered. They have too many children too soon. Their husbands play around. If one looks, for instance, into the women who screamed and picketed outside the New Orleans desegregated schools, most of whom had no children in those schools, if one looks at the women who rioted in Baltimore against the desegregation of an amusement park last summer, one sees, working-class, lower-middle-class housewives who look now older than their men folk, who are kept in narrow orbits while the men folk have at least the experience of bouncing around, belonging to a union, joshing in the plant. These women have very, very parochial outlooks on life.

So that I would say that, while the League of Women Voters and women like them represent some of the most enlightened tendencies in our society, these other women represent some of the most bigoted.

Now to return to the effect of college education on women, what I see as a teacher of women as well as of men, and as a student of the higher education and continuing education of women, is a kind of throttling down among many women today in our colleges in spite of their great capacities and talents because they fear to be thought unfeminine by the boys and by the other women. I see a kind of temptation on the part of these women, who are very, very intelligent, to pursue jobs only up to the point when they marry, and jobs not of such a character as to threaten any man. This limits the political experience of these women. They may get back into what one might call the political labor force of America after their youngest child is old enough to be in school or has grown and flown, and at this point they join the League of Women Voters or some like group and become again politically active.

But there is a hiatus here which is less characteristic of women in other countries, other industrial countries, where women play a much larger political role, even though there are fewer educated ones. If one looks at India, for example, or Sweden, or many, many other countries, where women are very active in politics, where they are so little active here at the top levels, one sees, I think, again and again this tendency in America for too great activity to be associated in women with the fear that they aren't sufficiently frilly and sufficiently fluttery-eyed

to the boys. This, of course, is one dynamism which keeps women's energies throttled down.

QUESTION: You described our social structure as being egg-shaped. What effect do you think the explosion of automation and technology will have on this shape?

DR. RIESMAN: I wish I knew the answer to that. Eleven years ago Fortune had a conference on automation and called together a number of people from industry and from the automation industries to discuss this. What struck me then was what a small sense of foresight people had as to the consequences for human beings of this process, or the speed with which it would occur, or how it would effect our educational system.

What is obviously happening now is that, while there aren't enough engineers or doctors or secretaries or people that do the white-collar and white-paper jobs of our society, as many of you have all too much reason to know in your daily lives, we have an increasing group of unskilled people who drop out of school, or did drop out long ago, for whom there is no place. I see this process speeding up now, and it is speeding up on grounds that have very little to do with the actual economic savings of automation taken in its technical form but have much to do with other elements in our economy. One of them is the difficulty of controlling the labor force. If it's mechanized it can't talk back; it can't go on strike; it can't take coffee breaks; it can't annoy you in any other of these manifold ways in which the work force can sabotage its employers.

I think one strong element in automation has the component that it isn't necessarily a saving but that it is simpler. You have more quality control and you have more control.

Another is the phenomenon I have come to call conspicuous production. That is having the kind of plant that makes you look like the kind of company that went to the Harvard Business School. This is the modern, the streamlined, with the receptionist who went to Vassar, and this kind of company buys automatic equipment which is sold to it by IBM and all the other companies which make it, not necessarily on a very clear sense of cost to the company but because this is the kind of proper plant one ought to have.

If one looks at social costs, overall costs to the society, one sees a very different picture. A friend of mine, whom I was talking with the other day, worked at the Boeing plant in Seattle, and he described the way in which this company installed automatic equipment which cut down unit cost--very attractive to the GAO--but created a great many social costs. The workers who were kept had to pay the taxes for the unemployment compensation to the workers who were laid off. Society will have to pay for decades the social costs of the workers who were laid off.

When I began to think about these matters and wrote about them 15 years ago, in The Lonely Crowd, I thought this was fine. I thought we were a society which was going to be rich and affluent, in which the people wouldn't have to work, in which we could have a four-hour day, but I don't think that any more. My experience with the casualty of

nonwork has convinced me that Americans, unlike other peoples, cannot live without work. In the great depression in this country one group did not suffer psychologically from this depression--the Spanish-Americans. In Latin America you are a man above all, and whether you work or not is not important. What matters is your sex. This is not true of Americans. The Puritan revolution has done its work for good with us. If we don't have a job we don't feel that we can really enjoy our leisure or our families, or belong, or have a place, or really a framework. So that even people who don't like their work, when asked, "Would you like not to work?" say, "No." About 80 percent of Americans would say in a survey that their jobs were meaningful to them, even if they don't like them.

This being so, I have a feeling that we have to adapt the pace of automation to our ability to retrain the people who are displaced by it. How this is to be done, politically, educationally, or culturally, I have no idea. I think it is a problem which is upon us now, which has been upon us for a long time, and for which we are not prepared.

QUESTION: It has come to our attention that there are cities becoming so large that it is becoming impossible to govern them. This may be one reason why we could have a tragedy such as the recent one which saddened our country and our people. I would like to know how we should go about solving such a problem.

DR. RIESMAN: One of the reasons why the tragedy from which we have suffered is so enormous is that the late President was one of the

few people since Jefferson with a wide enough intellectual range to comprehend and take in the kinds of information which might begin to answer such a question. I have seen very few people in public life, certainly in my lifetime and in our history, with this capacity, with this detachment, with this breadth of view.

I think constantly about the question you raise without coming to very good answers. One of the ways I think about it, and again not satisfactorily, is regionalization, the possibility of dividing the country in other less irrational ways, less small-scale ways than State boundaries, having large metropolitan units, for example, or doing what the people in the University of North Carolina began to do in the 1920's, which was to talk about the South as a region, with special problems and special opportunities.

This, in a way, is already part of the national structure. We have the regions of the Federal Reserve Board, of the Army commands, and the various districting arrangements in America. We gave no loyalties attached to these. They are not uniform the country over. They are arranged for different purposes.

One of the questions raised earlier was about the growth of Federal power. Much of this is because of the abdication of local power. What ideally one would like to see is a kind of sense of responsibility taken by people for different orbits, not necessarily based on, so often now, and as I suggested in talking about Chicago, feelings that only the local is manageable.

For example, when I talk to college students, I find that they feel that their universities are unmanageable by them, that they cannot control their education or have any say in it. I say to them, "Look. If you think that an institution of 20,000 is one on which you, as an individual, and on which your fellows have no effect, how can you possibly feel the sense of potency of affecting the destiny of a nation?"

That is, I think that at every level people are trained to feel powerless by the educational system and by the world in which they grow up. I think if they had more experience in affecting policy in their local milieu this might draw a larger number of people into feeling that they could shape larger entities.

So, on the one side I would like to see greater experiments in more rational forms of decentralization and federalization, and on the other side a growth of a sense of confidence and political know-how on the part of people who would not feel put off by the immense scale of things.

These are not very good answers to an overwhelming question.

QUESTION: Doctor, my question has to do with the Presidency. We used to think that everybody could become President someday, on reaching manhood. Would you say that our requirements now and our processes of selecting the President are narrowing the sector from which he could come?

DR. RIESMAN: I don't know whether in the back of the question lay the feeling that we were developing, like the British, a patrician class of wealthy men who were beyond amassing more wealth, who were beyond the playboy stage, and who could, therefore, devote themselves to

public service.

We have a large tradition of such men. We had one in the days of the Founding Fathers. We lost it in the Jacksonian revolution, when certainly the doctrine was that any man could become President if he had not been distinguished in any way hitherto. When the Whigs took over from the Jacksonians there were the same models, and they rolled in "Tippecanoe and Tyler too" on a kind of log-cabin demagogy. Theodore Roosevelt began to change that at the end of the last century, and I think he is the model for our late President as much as anyone in recent history, by showing that one could be a member of the educated elite and also a cowboy, and therefore sufficiently male, to become President.

I think the general question could be widened. One looks at the Senate and one sees what is often called the Millionaires' Club, and one sees in general that it costs more and more money to run for office, particularly since television has become so all-important.

Now, it still is true that talent and ambition may substitute for family backing. What this really means is finding some other backer and possibly less freedom of action. But, what the question really presents us with is: Is there any other way than we have now to finance political campaigns and, you might say, even political careers? One of the problems involved here is that one either has to be rich or part of a kind of political-patronage law office to afford to be defeated in politics. What are you going to go back to? We have no career for the ex-politician, even for the ex-President. We have no career for the people

who haven't made it. This means, of course, that the person in political life has terrible pressures on him to stay in it, no matter what the risk to his integrity, because he has nothing else.

Let me compare, for instance, in this connection, the career of the union official with the career of a management man. An economist at Hopkins made a study a number of years ago of how companies grew, big companies. One of the things she discovered was that big companies had to have stockpiles where they put unwanted executives. They put them in charge of the warehouse business or The Netherlands trade, or something like that, and then the warehouse business or The Netherlands trade developed and you had a whole new branch of the company, if these people turned out to be better than the boss thought they were when he parked them over there.

Management people on the whole don't get fired, and when they do they are rewarded. The labor union leader has no career line. If you've been the head of Hodcarriers Local No. 342 and you get fired by your constituents, you don't become the head of Auto Workers Local No. 318. There isn't even the career line of foundation executive available to the retired university president. So a union leader has to have a tremendous dedication to ideals, not to try to control a captive constituency, the way Jimmy Hoffa does, because there is no way out other than staying where you are.

The politician is a little more like the union leader than he is like the business executive. He has a career only while he is there.

In that sense the problems raised by your question seem to be very much with us.

QUESTION: Doctor, would you please comment on the possible long-range effect on our national culture emerging from sociology? If we should continue to enforce laws which require that prorata shares of jobs be parceled out by raise, regardless of qualification, is this a gaining of equality or is this passing laws which really discriminate against the majority in a vain effort to cure a national illness?

DR. RIESMAN: We have in effect such a law already in political life. That is, we have racial balance on the ticket in our big cities. In New York or Chicago, or any major city, we do not give our jobs on the basis of merit alone. We give them symbolically. When the first Italian judge was appointed in Rhode Island, he was not necessarily the best judge. It was a statement to the Italians in Rhode Island, "You've made it. You've arrived." In other words, our society is symbolic or expressive as well as rational and efficient. Or, to put it another way, part of our rationality and efficiency is to try to deal in some fashion with the feelings of inferiority or betrayal or injustice of large groups in the population. At a certain point every group that has come up in American life has demanded its share.

Now, the question you raised, I think, should better be put this way: What can Negroes do to train themselves and lead other Negroes so as to abuse less the opportunities that will be offered to them when their turn comes? This is really a difficult question, because here

we find that the Negro is not ready even now for the opportunities that are available to him, without such a law as you state.

To give an example--I was at the Anthropology Convention several days ago in San Francisco, and I was talking there to an anthropologist who had been retained by a number of large companies, and this process has been going on for three years now before the active civil-rights protests of the last years.

A number of large companies feel that they owe it to the society to employ more Negroes in executive positions. Their problem is to find the Negroes. When one goes to the Negro colleges today, one finds that the Negro students in these colleges by and large still see themselves as entering jobs in which they will be sheltered behind the wall of segregation--they will be doctors, lawyers for Negro clientele, ministers for Negro clientele, undertakers, insurance men, architects for Negro clientele. They're not yet ready to enter the large economy of the United States as managers. They are too timid; they feel too mistrustful both of themselves and of the whites. They can't believe that the change has really occurred.

This isn't new. When our Southern Negro colleges were training Negroes as blacksmiths and farmers the society was already having less and less need of blacksmiths and farmers. What people like myself have been saying to Negroes now for some time is something like this: "For Heaven's sake, don't waste your energy trying to get quotas on jobs in dying industries, like the railroads. Whatever injustices have been

done you by the railroad white brotherhoods in the past, forget it. Move now into computers and into high-level technical positions where there is more than full employment and where everybody wants anybody they can get. Overstep the next level of development in the economy."

But the Negro colleges and the Negro schools and the Negro homes are not ready for this. They haven't trained the generation for this. Consequently, I think the quota pressures you speak of are regrettable. This is a denial of equality of opportunity for the whole society, but it is understandable. This seems to me regressive from the standpoint of the minority group itself, because it will fasten itself into an occupational pattern which is a vanishing one, rather than into the new occupational patterns of the future which are more open.

For this to happen enormous changes have to be made in the education of young Negroes today. These changes are of a magnitude that our school people and others who deal with the matter, and our Negro leaders, are only dimly beginning to appreciate.

COLONEL MULLER: Dr. Riesman, I am afraid that we have run out of time. I would like, on behalf of the students and their ladies, to express to you our sincere appreciation for a most interesting and a most informative lecture. It has been a real pleasure to have you with us tonight, sir.